



## Mr. William D. Vernon

May 25, 1927 - August 5, 2020

William D (Billy) Vernon, 93, born in Tampa, May 25, 1927, to Frank and Lila Vernon, passed away peacefully at home on August 5, 2020.

Bill never knew a stranger!

After growing up on a dairy farm outside Tampa, he met the love of his life and high school sweetheart, Betty Jo Tanner. They married and had two sons, James and Christopher. They made their home in Plant City and were married for 72 years!

Billy was an amazing man, leading his family by example. He actively showed his family how to live a full and meaningful life. He was a proud American, serving in the Merchant Marines during WW2. He also served on the Tampa Airport Authority, was past President and active committee member of the Strawberry Festival, was a City Commissioner, a member and past President of the Lions Club and a founding member of the Vernon Golf Group! He was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Plant City and a friend to all that knew him.

Billy is survived by his wife, Betty Jo; their son Chris (Tami) and two daughters (Grace and Katherine) of Naples; daughter-in-law, Bett, and her two daughters, Brittany (Ryan Dodge) of Ottawa, and three children (William, Charlotte, and Benjamin) and Laura (David) Middleton of Orlando and their daughter (Kayleigh). He was preceded in death by his parents, his son, James

and 4 siblings. Bill's legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of everyone he interacted with as well as those he reached but never met. You may share your stories of remembrance or message of condolences to the family on Billy's webpage at [HopewellFuneral.com](http://HopewellFuneral.com).

Due to the pandemic, a private family burial was held at Oaklawn Cemetery. In lieu of flowers the family is suggesting a donation to Bruton Memorial Library, 302 W McLendon St. Plant City, FL 33563 or the United Methodist Children's Home, 51 Children's Way, Enterprise, FL 32725.

# Cemetery Details

## Oaklawn Cemetery

N. Wheeler Road  
Plant City, FL

# Tribute Wall



“ Hopewell Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mr. William D. Vernon



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**Hopewell Funeral Home** - August 10, 2020 at 03:24 PM



“ Dear Betty, I cannot tell you how grieved I am to hear of Bill's passing. I can truly say I have always thought of you two as my dearest friends. I have nothing but fond memories of our times spent together. Bill and I, through our association in MetLife, go back more than 50 years ago. I pray for God to be with you at this sad time. You always have my love and friendship and if there is anything at all I can do for you, please let me know.  
Sincerely, Bill Lankford

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**William Lankford** - August 11, 2020 at 09:37 AM



“ Just wanted to send my condolences. My mother thought he was such a wonderful man. She is gone also but I still have the memory of her being so happy whenever he would come by her house and visit. Thoughts and prayers are with the family.

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**Judith Owens** - August 10, 2020 at 11:07 PM

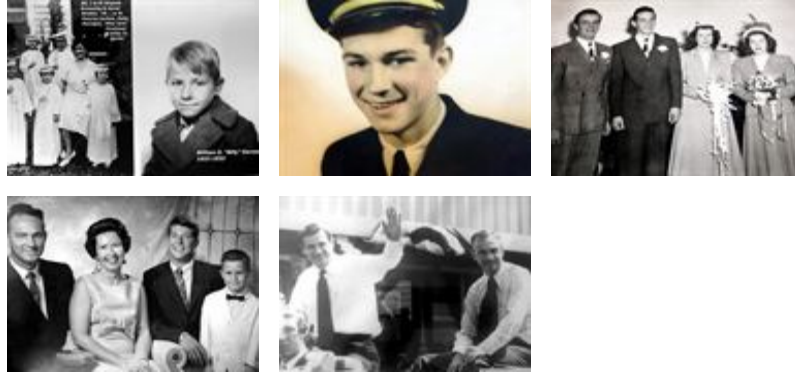
JO

*Meant to say that my parents were Alfred Jennings and Christine "Cricket" Gowan.*

Judith Owens - August 10, 2020 at 11:12 PM



“ 46 files added to the album Life Tributes



Hopewell Funeral Home - August 10, 2020 at 03:23 PM



“ Karen Brewer lit a candle in memory of Mr. William D. Vernon



Karen Brewer - August 08, 2020 at 06:34 PM



“ Condolences to the Vernon family. We spent a lot of good times together at Lake Nellie over the years. What a kind soul he was. He will be missed.

Karen Brewer - August 08, 2020 at 06:33 PM

DC

“ I knew Mr. Vernon from his trips to the library these past 25 years. He was an avid reader. He loved his westerns. I was honored to know him and choose books for him. He was always kind and caring. He was a true gentleman. I will miss him very much. My prayers go out to Mrs. Vernon and his family.

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**Danielle Croft** - August 07, 2020 at 09:56 PM

RS

“ I spent several years living on Sunset Road, across the street from the Vernons. You could not ask for better neighbors. I have many fond memories of Billy and the whole family. I feel Billy and Betty Jo are the definition of kind and gentle souls.  
Rob Sanchez

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**Rob Sanchez** - August 07, 2020 at 03:49 PM

HM

“ We were neighbor's of the Vernon's for many years and it was a pleasure to know Billy. I am sending my condolences to Betty Jo and family.....Love, Liz Brown



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**Heather McDonald** - August 07, 2020 at 03:03 PM