



William Lawrence Crozier

October 23, 1928 - September 23, 2023

Crozier, William Lawrence, PhD

Bill died peacefully surrounded by his family on September 23, 2023, a month shy of his 95th birthday. Bill was born in Beatrice, NE on October 23, 1928, the third son of Robert and Mary Elizabeth Crozier. His mother died when he was nine months old and his Aunt Julia Crozier came from Scotland to raise him and his brothers. Bill grew up in Omaha, NE and began working as a newspaper boy at the age of eight. Never lazy, at last count he had held over 50 jobs. During the Korean war he served in the Navy as helmsman of the USS Chopper and Sea Poacher submarines. Bill and Selma Gress were married on November 14, 1953; this was their 70th wedding anniversary year. They were blessed with eight children. Bill taught at both the high school and college levels. The family moved to Winona in 1968 where Bill taught history at St. Mary's University, eventually becoming chairman of the department. A creative thinker, Dr. Crozier developed innovative methods for teaching social history using computer data.

He traveled to London, Montreal, Moscow, and Edinburgh to give talks on how to use these computer-based techniques. A successful grant writer, he applied for and received many grants to help promote the study of history. In addition to his academic career, he devoted himself to social justice issues in the Winona area and worked for Semcac. Bill happily spent time on the North Shore watching the ships, following the Delta Queen on the Mississippi River,

playing tennis, reading, watching NE Huskers football and Twins baseball, and being with family. He also enjoyed his nightly Irish whiskey!

Bill was preceded in death by brothers Fr. Robert Crozier, SJ, and Jack Crozier and children Thomas and Mary. He is survived by his wife, Selma; children Dan (Roberta), John, Billy (Julia), Robert, Kathleen (David) Eikens, Jon Sauer (son-in-law), and Elizabeth; grandchildren Alice (Dan) Crozier, Bridgette (Phil) Miles, Theresa (David) Sieberg, Luka Crozier, David Crozier, Michael (Tamara) Sauer, Kieron Sauer, Patrick Eikens, William Eikens, Meghan Eikens; great-grandchildren Penny and Oliver Miles, Finn and Lars Crozier, Leo Crozier, Roger Sieberg; sister-in-law Nancy Ryan, and many nieces and nephews.

Thank you to the staff at Callista Court, Good Samaritan, Sholom, and The Glenn Minnetonka for their compassionate care of Bill.

A funeral Mass will be offered at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Minnetonka, MN at 11:00 on Thursday, October 5, preceded by Visitation starting at 10:00. The funeral will be live-streamed at ihm-cc.org. Burial will be at Fort Snelling at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorials to Catholic Charities or Southern Poverty Law Center. Immaculate Heart of Mary Church is located at 13505 Excelsior Blvd., Minnetonka, MN.

Washburn-McReavy.com

Strobeck Johnson 952-938-9020

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT 5. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church
13505 Excelsior Blvd
Minnetonka, MN 55345

Church Service

OCT 5. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church
13505 Excelsior Blvd
Minnetonka, MN 55345

Tribute Wall

EW

“ We knew the Crozier family through St. Mary's Church and Cotter High School. I worked with Bill on the St. Mary's History in 2011. I enjoyed working with him. God's blessing to all. Edwina Wolfe

Edwina Wolfe - October 22, 2023 at 04:21 PM

SO

“ it is with deep sadness that i send condolences to the Crozier family. i had the great pleasure to be the assistant to Doc and Brother John as we developed the Winona Social History project.. i, in fact, still have most of the materials that were developed. Doc was the kindest and most fascinating person i ever had the pleasure of working with. his smile and humor would brighten your day from beginning to end. His knowledge, love of history and teaching skills brought a wealth of knowledge to our teacher participants across Minnesota. i thoroughly enjoyed the many social activities that he and Selma hosted. There was never a dull moment ! :) He will be greatly missed!
RIP my dear friend.
Sandy Olson

Sandy Olson - October 04, 2023 at 02:36 PM

AM

“ Alex Matug SMU '99. Dr. Crozier had a tremendous ability to relate to his students. Coupled with that, he was a fantastic teacher. I'm not a Math guy. That is one reason I was a History Major after all. I took a class examining the U.S. Census of the Lower East Side of New York. There was a lot of statistics involved. In the beginning of the class, I was lost. By the end, I mastered what was required and received an A. My purpose for this post is not to brag about an A I received more than a quarter century ago, but rather to highlight the true teaching ability Dr. Crozier had. Subsequent to my experience in the said class, I recognized his talent. Any time an elective was available, and he was teaching a class I took it. I must've had Dr. Crozier 5-6 times. Rest In Peace Dr. Crozier. May you enjoy the comforts of heaven.

Alex Matug - September 30, 2023 at 03:04 PM

R7

“ Bill Crozier was my first connection to Winona and St. MARYS. Since he was a distant relative I may have visited his home, young family some of the Winona backstory before I even visited the campus! Remember the pipe smoke smell when entering his office? The ever present dry humor? More than just a great prof and mentor, Bill helped me get my first job at SEMCAC which let me stay near Winona for 2 more years and all those fun memories some of us didn't want to leave behind. I think Bill may have the first to tell me the story Bubs beer and the bi line "love in a canoe" I was shocked to hear the punch line which had a profanity come from his lips! So blessed to say he was a friend and mentor!

Rick Ryan Class of 74 - September 30, 2023 at 02:08 PM

M'

“ I did research for Bill Crozier’s Doctoral Dissertation and had the good fortune of being tasked with reading through the newspapers of that era at the Winona History Center. My best college friend worked in the history department office and I spent a fair share of time there. The history office was always a welcoming place. I will never forget the abundance of humor. One of my favorite incidents was observing the ongoing discussions between Crozier and a student over his final grade. The student wanted an F upgraded to a D. He desperately needed it to graduate. His parents believed his studies had been successful. Days of negotiating turned to begging and eventually Crozier relented. He reached into his desk drawer, stood up, turned to looked out the window, put on a rubber Richard Nixon mask, spun back around with his arms up in Nixon fashion, took the form from the bewildered student now staring into Nixon’s face, sighed and said, “Now I can sign it.” My heartfelt condolences go to his family. We are all better for knowing him. Margaret Walsh

Margaret M Walsh '74 - September 30, 2023 at 12:34 AM

MA

“ I worked with Bill on local history projects for Winona Middle School. I enjoyed working with him, learning from him, and knowing him.
Mary Alice Anderson

Mary Alice Anderson - September 28, 2023 at 09:22 AM

“From his supreme integrity and his humble brilliance, to his impeccable character, infectious wit and the sparkle in his eyes, Mr. Crozier was a giant among men... and he would just as surely wave off the compliment as unnecessary and deflect with a wonderfully engaging anecdote.

That was the magic of Mr. Crozier.

He didn't just talk, he truly listened and cared - always with a perpetual smile. He was tennis long before tennis was cool. He openly adored his bride. He always made adult or child feel welcome in his home or office. He gave back selflessly to his community, field of study, coworkers and friends. And he genuinely lived a life of authenticity.

He taught me more than almost anyone else. He always saw the best in those around him and I admire and love him as one would a surrogate father.

As a child, I had one goal each and every morning: to get invited to the Crozier Family dinner table - for the delicious food, the engaging conversations, the laughter, the camaraderie and for the love. I also mastered blending into the pack and slipping into the Crozier's station wagon for Mr. Crozier's outings to the Winona Public Library. To me, Crozier life was better than Disney World or the Super Bowl, combined. Mrs. Crozier created the most nurturing and welcoming home and Mr. Crozier made every outing fascinating. His natural curiosity and optimism were infectious. I was in awe of how he saw the world.

But most of all, Mr. and Mrs. Crozier taught us all about unconditional love for our fellow man, the solace of faith, the sanctity of marriage and the true gift of devotion to family. They represent the very best in humanity.

In today's world of material distractions, immediate gratification and

superficial connections, what Mr. Crozier and Mrs. Crozier intentionally created was rare, priceless and wise beyond measure. They had a richness of love, character, faith and family that could never be bought. If life were a race, they won.

Mr. Crozier will be deeply, deeply missed, but his legacy and the inspiration of his ethos will live on for generations.

My sincere condolences to the entire Crozier Family, especially Mrs. Crozier. May your memories be a comfort.

Love, Cindy Ochrymowycz Murphy

Cindy Ochrymowycz Murphy - September 28, 2023 at 01:33 AM

SS

“ It's hard to know where to start--or stop--in talking about Bill Crozier, but I'll try to be brief. Bill would like that, being the humanitarian he was.

It goes without saying that Bill was a good human being, a fine historian and a wonderful faculty colleague. He helped me get work (at Semcac) when I needed work; he and Matt Vetter, in their role as management consultants there, deserve a lot of credit for helping Semcac do its good work of helping low-income people. Bill later helped me establish myself as a faculty member at St. Mary's. But what stands out most to me about Bill is that he publicly defended me when I'd been criticized for something I'd written. He defended me even though he had nothing to gain from doing so, nothing, that is, except standing up for a friend and a principle. That's the kind of man Bill Crozier was.

Bill always had something in the hopper, some project under way or in the planning stages. And he always did so with a gleam in his eye, a gleam that reminded me of an eighth-grader who'd just gotten away with something. I don't remember who, but somebody once described him a "so damned optimistic," somebody who always kept plugging away at something good, something worthwhile. I'll remember his zest for life as long as I'm capable of cogent thought. I consider myself very lucky to have known him and worked with him, and my sadness at his passing will always be overshadowed by the many good things he brought into my life. I miss him already, but I smile to myself whenever Bill Crozier comes to mind.

Steve Schild

Steve Schild - September 27, 2023 at 01:45 PM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of William Lawrence Crozier.*



September 27, 2023 at 12:26 PM