

Eric Bjornlund, Class of 1950

Eric Bjornlund passed away on April 13 in Bethesda, Maryland. Eric was born in Ogdensburg, New York, in 1926 and grew up in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada. He enlisted in the Navy in 1944 during World War II. After finishing radio school training in Indianapolis, due to unexpected transportation problems, he missed his assigned ship departing from California. That ship was the *Indianapolis*, and its voyage was one of the most consequential of the war, first delivering the atomic bomb and later going down in the South Pacific taking the lives of hundreds of men with it. Eric never forgot that twist of fate and would forever consider his entire life a lucky break. In the Navy, he was the recipient of the Victory Medal, the American Theater Medal, and the Asiatic Pacific Medal. He was honorably discharged in 1946.

After the war, Eric attended Williams College on the GI Bill and graduated in 1950. He went on to have a successful career in investments, starting in New York City and later working in Albany, Pittsburgh, and Boston, before settling in Sarasota, Florida, in 1973, where he lived for the next 45 years. He married Suzanne Weisser in 1956, and they had three children.

Eric loved investing and followed stocks closely until his death. He was an animal lover, avid reader, and green thumb. Eric especially loved cultivating orchids and at one point had more than 200 plants at his Sarasota home. He enjoyed music and attended the symphony and opera regularly. He spent his summers in the Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River, near where he had grown up. He loved all things ice hockey and anything his grandchildren were interested in. He had a gentle nature, a wonderful sense of humor, and loved to tell stories. He never turned down an invitation to a party or an offer of dessert.

Eric maintained a life-long commitment to Williams, which many members of his family also attended. His cousin Chris Acker was a classmate in the Class of 1950. His three children all attended Williams: Eric (Class of 1980), Lydia (Class of 1983), and Britta (Class of 1988). His granddaughter Marit Bjornlund will graduate this spring with the Class of 2018 and granddaughter Elsa Bjornlund is a member of the Class of 2020.

Eric passed away at home surrounded by his family. He is survived by his three children and their spouses, six grandchildren, and two older sisters.