



Wheaton B. Byers, December 14, 1925 - April 21, 2017,
North Canaan, CT – Wheaton Bradish Byers, 91, of Canaan Valley died peacefully at his home on Friday, April 21, 2017.

Husband of Laura Breckinridge (Ten Eyck) Byers, he was born in Scranton, PA to the late George Edward and Mary Crosby (Dimmick) Byers and is survived by Laura and their four children and their families. They are Karen Dimmick Byers and her wife Lillie Mikesell, Douglas Stafford Byers and his wife Virginia and her daughter Imari, Wheaton (Tony) Bradish Byers, Jr. and his wife Laury Alexander and their daughter Maria, and Elisabeth (Lisa) Cabell Byers and her wife Laurie Gallo and their daughters Muriel and Emma.

The Byers family, including Wheaton and his two brothers Ted and Ben, moved to Canaan Valley in 1938. Byers graduated from Pomfret School in Pomfret, CT, in 1944 and served in the US Navy in the Pacific Fleet before attending Williams College in Williamstown, Mass, graduating in June 1950. He joined the US Department of State and Central Intelligence Agencies in 1950, and served in The Hague, Netherlands; Belgrade, Yugoslavia; Salzburg, Austria; and West Berlin, Germany. He concluded his years of service to the Federal Government as Executive Secretary for the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) during the Nixon and Ford administrations.

After briefly doing consulting work for the private sector, he and Laura left Washington, D.C in 1986 to settle in North Canaan, where they built a home on the property of his mother and father called “Bywood.” In Canaan, Byers became very involved with the community, serving on the Board of Directors of Geer Nursing Center; as head of the Board of Finance for the Town of Canaan; as a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Canaan Community Trust, and a Co-Founder of the Canaan Foundation.

Byers always supported and fought to preserve the natural beauty of Canaan. He was a long term member of the Greenway Committee since its founding in 1991 and served on the Streetscape Advisory committee since its formation in 2004. When the one-acre parcel at the intersection of Route 7 and 44 was threatened by a proposed fast-food restaurant he was at the forefront with the Canaan Community Trust in gathering donations to save the corner lot as a Town Green.

He was a founding member of Canaan Community Trust that assists teenagers in getting summer jobs, serving as its treasurer for 24 years. He also sparked a successful effort by Canaan and Norfolk residents to oppose the Yale Farm Golf Course. On June 15, 2014 the Town of North Canaan presented Byers with a key to the town in honor of his years of service; he was only the seventh person to receive this honor. That same day, the Canaan Community Trust dedicated a shagbark hickory tree to honor Wheaton, his service to the community and his love of Canaan and nature.

A Celebration of Wheaton’s Life will be held on Friday, May 19 at 2:00 p.m. at the North Canaan Congregational Church, Rte. 44, 172 Lower Road, East Canaan, CT. A reception will follow from 3:00 to 5:00 in the Hollenbeck Room of Geer Village, Rte. 7, North Canaan. Memorial Donations may be sent to the Canaan Foundation, PO Box 823, Canaan, CT 06018. Burial will be a private ceremony at Center Cemetery, Norfolk, CT. Arrangements are under the care of the Newkirk-Palmer Funeral Home 118 Main St. Canaan, CT 06018.

