



Dr. William Warren Rogers

August 18, 1929 - October 7, 2017

William Warren Rogers, a resident of Tallahassee for fifty-seven years, passed away at his home on October 7. Affectionately known as Captain Midnight, he had a long relationship with Florida State University and was widely known in the community. Born on August 18, 1929 in Sandy Ridge, Alabama, he was the youngest of four children and was raised in Greenville, Alabama by his father (a Christian Church minister) and mother. As a boy, he demonstrated a love for reading, and was awarded an academic scholarship to attend Auburn University. He would never lose a deep affection for Auburn and avidly followed its sports teams. It was at Auburn that he met his wife, Miriam Arnold, also raised in Alabama, and they married in 1951. Pursuing a Ph.D. in history, Bill attended the University of North Carolina, and received that degree, two years delayed by his service in the Army. After a single year at FSU's program at Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta, Georgia, in 1960 he joined the history department on the main campus in Tallahassee.

That began what Dr. Rogers always described as a stroke of great fortune and the beginning of a richly rewarding career. He would be an integral part of the history department for the next thirty-six years. There, he taught a wide variety of courses in American history that ranged from the large freshman sessions (he liked to refer to them as the "Thundering Herd") to seminars composed of a handful of graduate students. Professor Rogers was a truly gifted teacher and mentor. In 1961, he was awarded the highly prestigious Coyle Moore Award for outstanding teaching. Many in Tallahassee who were not FSU

students also enjoyed Dr. Rogers. They took various night courses concerning Tallahassee's past that Rogers recounted in colorful fashion. In the meantime, he began to build a fine reputation as a scholar. He would author over two dozen books and some 80 articles in professional journals in a long and prolific writing career. Dr. Rogers wrote about the South. He devoted most of his efforts to Alabama, Florida and Georgia. His several volumes on Thomasville, Georgia helped make local history a respectable field for scholars. Among his most significant works is a study of Populism in Alabama and also serving as one of the authors of the widely respected *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* (1994). Dr. Rogers also found much in his backyard to address. He co-authored *Favored Land: A History of Tallahassee and Leon County, Outposts on the Gulf St. George Island and Apalachicola From Early exploration to World War II*, and *At the Water's Edge – A Pictorial and Narrative History of Apalachicola and Franklin County*.

After he retired in 1996, he became the editor of Sentry Press where he worked with other prospective authors and published their books. During his tenure, the local press brought out some forty books. Dr. Rogers' position as editor suited him well. He improved what were often raw manuscripts. And by taking a generous and encouraging approach, he assured many first time authors of the worth of their labor and book's contribution.

Bill Rogers greatly enjoyed a long and wonderful life. He skillfully played tennis, and as a self-described Anglophile, he traveled widely, even leading tours of Europe and as far away as New Zealand. A natural warmth and infectious enthusiasm made him many admirers and friends. They and his family will miss him very much. He is survived by his devoted wife, Miriam, four children - Warren Rogers (Lee), Arnie Rogers (Linda), Kate Berry (Jim), Amy Lindsey (Brett), and eight grandchildren – Betsy (Ralph), Will, Madeline, Caroline, Emma, Fred, Warren, and Benjamin.

A memorial service honoring Dr. Rogers will be held at 11:00 am on Saturday, October 14, 2017 at Bevis Funeral Home, 200 John Knox Road, Tallahassee, Florida. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations can be made to the

Tallahassee Historical Society, P.O. Box 3713, Tallahassee, FL 32315-3713 or
WFSU (Radio), 1600 Red Barber Plaza, Tallahassee, FL 32310.

Rocky Bevis at Bevis Funeral Home of Tallahassee (850/385-2193 or www.bevisfh.com) is assisting the Rogers family with their arrangements.

Tribute Wall

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“ I am so very sorry to hear of Captain Midnight's passing. He was a friend and mentor to me when writing my thesis back in the mid-70s, especially since I was attending UGA, not Auburn or FSU, as he frequently reminded me. His knowledge of Thomasville and Thomas County history was incredible, and we are lucky he found it of interest and worth writing about so often. My sincere condolences to his family in their loss. Sincerely, Adriane Kelly Wood, a.k.a. Peppermint Patty.

Adriane Kelly Wood - October 12, 2017 at 10:33 AM

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“ The Florida Sheriffs Association purchased the Serenity Wreath for the family of Dr. William Warren Rogers.



The Florida Sheriffs Association - October 10, 2017 at 01:40 PM