



## William Henry Funke

April 2, 1925 - October 11, 2022

William (Bill) Henry Funke was born on April 2, 1925 and died on October 11, 2022. Bill grew up in Atchison, Kansas, during the Depression. When WWII broke out, he enlisted and served in Company A, 17th Armored Infantry Battalion (AIB), of the 12th Armored Division "Hellcats", US Army. Serving as a scout & a runner on the front lines in France, he was captured in January 1945, and held in a German POW camp (Stalag II-B). After being liberated, he received the Bronze Star as well as the Purple Heart for shrapnel injuries he received in a grenade explosion just before being captured. His service to the 12th Division continued when in the mid-1980's he discovered they had a yearly reunion. He and Lola joined the organization, and he soon became the chaplain and the unit representative for his battalion. He wrote a monthly article about the 17th AIB for the Hellcat News until retiring from that position in 2021 at the age of 96.

After his discharge from the service, he enrolled at the University of Colorado majoring in music education. He would influence & inspire many young lives, including those of his own children & grandchildren, for whom music continues to be held in highest regard. His first teaching job was in Haxtun, Colorado in 1950. In 1964 the Funkes moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, where he taught at Leshar Junior High and Poudre High School. He retired from Poudre in 1984 and was inducted into the Colorado Music Educators Association Hall of Fame. He was instrumental in helping to start the Colorado State University

Music Camp in the 1960's and was the voice for the CSU Ram Marching Band for nearly 4 decades. In retirement he continued to give music lessons and played in the Loveland Concert Band.

He was also active in the Lion's Club while living in Haxtun and Fort Collins.

Beyond this, though, his greatest accomplishment was in living out his faith in Jesus as his Savior that he received when he was baptized as a child. He grew up in a Christian home and was active in the church throughout his life. He and Lola were faithful church and Bible study attenders. He either directed or sang in the choir. He also led the effort at St. John's Lutheran Church to fill backpacks with school supplies for Laurel Elementary School before school started in the fall, as well as Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas gifts for Laurel families. After he retired from teaching he and Lola worked several years with Laborers For Christ traveling throughout the Midwest helping to build churches. He was able to continue attending church up to three weeks before he died. Even with all he did in his life, he knew that while he was living out his faith and using his God-given abilities to serve others, it was only by believing in Jesus that he would receive the gift of eternal life in heaven, a gift he is now experiencing. What a wonderful legacy he leaves to all who know him.

Bill met his future wife, Lola Mae Papke, when he moved to Haxtun and with whom he enjoyed what would have been 72 years of marriage on October 22. Spending time in the mountains was very important to them. Together they have two sons, Dave (Karen) and Ken (Linda). He is also survived by 7 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, a brother, and many nieces and nephews. He was pre-deceased by a baby son, a great-granddaughter, a brother, and 3 sisters.

The funeral for Bill is Wednesday, October 19, at 11:00 am at St. John's

Lutheran Church, 305 E Elizabeth Street. A time for viewing precedes the service between 10 and 11. A luncheon will be held in the church fellowship hall for those wishing to stay after the service. Interment will be in Haxtun, Colorado, on Thursday, October 20, at 11:30.

Memorials may be given to the St. John's Lutheran Church Foundation (305 E Elizabeth Street, Fort Collins, CO, 80524), or the 12th Armored Division Museum (1289 N 2nd St, Abilene, TX, 79601).

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Blessed, indeed, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them." - Revelation 14:13

# Previous Events

## Funeral Service

OCT **19**. 11:00 AM (MT)

Saint John's Lutheran Church  
305 East Elizabeth Street  
Fort Collins, CO 80524  
<http://www.stjohnsfc.org/>

## Interment

OCT **20**. 11:30 AM (MT)

Haxtun Cemetery  
111 N Westridge Ave  
Haxtun, CO 80731

# Tribute Wall



“ *William Henry Funke*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *Bill Funke was a blessing to our family when we came to St. John's Lutheran Church so many years ago. He shared his love of music and enriched our church family with his good humor and kindness. Thank you, Lord, for giving us such a willing and able servant as an example in our lives. Madeleine Glaser*

**Madeleine Gail Glaser** - October 24, 2022 at 11:58 AM



“ *Bill Funke was my favorite Haxtun High teacher/band & choir director/church choir director/assistant principal, with an amazing gift for building confidence in insecure teenagers. What a beautiful soul. Heaven is a better place and now has a better music department.*

**Kathy Bailey Higgins** - October 21, 2022 at 04:32 PM



“ *Mr. Funke was my Poudre High School Choir teacher from 67-69 and we all loved him. Such a good man. I hope we get to sing with him in heaven!*  
*Ann Arthur Everitt*

**Ann E Everitt** - October 19, 2022 at 03:51 PM



“ *Forever grateful...what a gift Mr. Funke was in all of our lives.*

**Karen DeVries** - October 19, 2022 at 10:54 AM

DS

“ Donald S. purchased a sympathy card for the family of William Henry Funke.



Donald S. - October 19, 2022 at 09:21 AM

CE

“ I extend my deepest sympathy to the Funke Family. Mr. Funke taught me how to play the cornet in grade school and instructed me all the way through my senior year when he transferred me to the baritone. I treasure memories of performing in his band throughout my time at school in Haxtun. I pray that his family is being comforted and granted the "peace that surpasses all understanding."  
(Chase/AKA Chuck Edwards--from the class of 1964 Haxtun)

Chase Edwards - October 18, 2022 at 05:19 PM

DE

“ My father, late Edward Dietsch, and I met Bill and Lola when we attended our first 12th Armored Hellcat Reunion. They greeted us with opened arms and a warm smile like Iffe long friends. That is the presence they carry about them. Meeting people like this in your lifetime is a Heaven sent gift...and for this we are forever blessed and better for it. Blessed to know Bill and his family. Stories worth retelling



Denise Dietsch Esham - October 18, 2022 at 07:42 AM

KV

“ Mr. Funke was also my choir director at Poudre and was such a wonderful teacher! I learned so much in his choral and music theory classes, and he just made it FUN! He would pop in each day with such energy, challenged us with a variety of music, taught preparation and the importance of rehearsal. I have sung to this day in part because of his love of music. Thank you, Mr. Funke, and I'm sorry for passing notes in music theory.

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**Karla (Jungmeyer) Vesey** - October 17, 2022 at 07:30 PM

RE

“ Mr. Funke was my choir director at Poudre High School. He taught me so much about music in Impalaphonics, so much about life. He lit up rooms, auditoriums, public singing venues with his joy in bringing to life everything from religious to choral to bebop arrangements. His patience, kindness, encouragement, honesty, high standards are at the core of what I try to do in every classroom I walk into, as a teacher. Thank you Mr. Funke - for your service, for your dedication to making each life you touched better.

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**Regula Meyer Evitt** - October 17, 2022 at 12:19 PM

RR

“ Mr. Funke was my music teacher at Poudre and he also gave me clarinet lessons. He took our concert chorale group to CMEA and I will always remember the Christmas concerts at Poudre especially all the choirs singing “Lo How a Rose”. His was a life well lived. Thank you for your service. Rest in peace Mr. Funke.  
Ruth Joder Rowedder

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**Ruth Rowedder** - October 17, 2022 at 10:10 AM

SL

“ I thank Jesus so much for Mr. Funke. I graduated in 1971 from Poudre and loved my music class. It was many years later that I realized how many scriptures we sang in the classical music that was put in front of us. Those scriptures stayed with me. I mentioned this to Mr. Funke once, and with a twinkle in his eye he said "Yes, very intentional!" Thank you for being true to your calling and caring for us so lovingly all those years. I am blessed to have encountered you in my life. Susan (Rowe)Labadie

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**SUSAN LABADIE** - October 16, 2022 at 01:44 PM

DD

“ Darwin D. purchased a sympathy card for the family of William Henry Funke.



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**Darwin D.** - October 16, 2022 at 08:38 AM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of William Henry Funke.



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October 15, 2022 at 11:00 AM

DB

“ Glad Bill was part of my world. When we first met, I mistook seriousness and humor for being grumpy. He was a delight to be with and I enjoyed our weekly visits at church. I appreciate his accomplishments, but only knew him as a fine man who I had the pleasure to call a friend. Del Benson

Del Benson - October 14, 2022 at 07:14 PM

MM

“ I'm going to miss you not "diving into" the lemon meringue pies I will continue to get over to Lola and the others when I bring them over to your home Bill, but I'm sure you won't be missing them because you will be eating "The Bread of Life" in your new home, heaven. See ya soon Bill when I get to where you are we can talk about Mary Mastin and her title she lived up to on earth: "Miss Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow" I told you all about that here on earth but perhaps it will pale in comparison to your achievement you racked up on earth - nonetheless - see ya soon Bill !

Mary Mastin - October 14, 2022 at 05:17 PM

MM

“ Mary M. purchased a sympathy card for the family of William Henry Funke.



Mary M. - October 14, 2022 at 05:09 PM