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Democracy Dies in Darkness

Obituaries



July 1, 2003 at 1:00 a.m. EDT

Viette Count Sandbank

Government Employee, Poet

Viette Count Sandbank, 93, a National Security Agency cryptologist and Armed Forces Institute of Pathology editor who was also a published poet, died June 23 at her home at Goodwin House in Alexandria. She had cancer.

Mrs. Sandbank was born in Bulgaria to American Methodist missionaries and was a graduate of Barnard College in New York. She settled in the Washington area in 1945.

She worked at the National Security Agency in the 1950s and was editor of a tumor pathology encyclopedia for the Armed Forces Institute in the early 1960s. Over the years, she used her knowledge of Bulgarian and Russian to do freelance translation work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

She was a member of the Poetry Society of Virginia and the National League of American Pen Women's Alexandria branch. Her poetry appeared in anthologies and periodicals.

At Goodwin House, she was music coordinator and poetry editor of the publication GH Miscellany.

She acted in productions of the Little Theatre of Alexandria and the Fairlington Players.

She was a member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Alexandria. She sang with area church choirs and toured with a local group of English hand bell ringers.

Her husband, Harold Sandbank, died in 1994.

Survivors include four children, Linda Smith of Chardon, Ohio, Peter Sandbank of Falls Church, Viette Patricia Bohanan of Virginia Beach and Joe Sandbank of Houston; nine grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Irvin Melvin Kramer

Real Estate Investor

Irvin Melvin Kramer, 85, a real estate investor who had been a home and apartment builder in the Washington area from the late 1940s to the late 1950s, died of pneumonia June 25 at the Washington Home. He was a resident of the District.

Mr. Kramer, a native of Norfolk and a World War II Navy veteran, came to the Washington area in the early 1940s. A certified public accountant, he was a graduate of Benjamin Franklin University. Before becoming a builder, he worked briefly for the government and as an accountant.

He was a 33rd-degree Mason and a member of Adas Israel Congregation.

Survivors include his wife of 59 years, Lillian, of Washington; a son, Richard, of Greenwich, Conn.; two daughters, Joan Friedman of McLean and Susan Beram of Olney; a sister; and eight grandchildren.

Joseph E. Crowley

GSA Employee

Joseph E. Crowley, 78, a retired General Services Administration contracts administrator and program manager who had lived in the Washington area from 1950 to 1991, died of a heart ailment June 27 at his home in Horwich, Mass.

Mr. Crowley, a former McLean resident, was a Massachusetts native and a 1950 graduate of Boston College. During World War II, he had served with the Third Army in Europe and received two Purple hearts.

He worked in communications analysis with the Central Intelligence Agency, both in this area and in Japan, from 1950 to 1959. He spent the next decade with the Westinghouse Corp. as a contracts manager at Baltimore-Washington International Airport.

Mr. Crowley had been a member of St. John's Catholic Church in McLean and had been a manager with the McLean Little League.

Survivors include his wife of 51 years, the former Jean McCarthy, of Harwich; three sons, Robert, of Fredericksburg, Va., Richard, of Harwich, and Joseph "Ted" Jr., of Great Falls, Va.; two daughters, Sheila Gosselin of Alpharetta, Ga., and Suzanne Monteiro of Brewster, Me.; a sister; and eight grandchildren.

William Benton Fisher

Navy Commander

William Benton Fisher, 81, a retired Navy commander who was an engineering consultant at Logistics Management Institute from 1969 to 1982, died June 27 at Georgetown University Hospital of complications from a fall the previous day.

Cmdr. Fisher was in the Navy from 1939 to 1968. His final active-duty assignment was as engineering support program officer at the Naval Electronic Systems Command in Washington. Earlier, he had served in Vietnam.

At LMI, he helped develop a computerized model to process information about the use of spare parts. It aided Air Force maintenance and procurement programs.

He was a native of Bemis, Tenn., and an electrical engineering graduate of Union College in New York, which he attended on the Navy's V-12 program. He received another bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a master's degree in management and industrial engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

He settled in the Washington area in 1958 and lived in the District.

Survivors include his wife of 45 years, Elizabeth Weil Fisher of Washington; two daughters, Elizabeth Fisher-York of Ithaca, N.Y., and Anne Fisher Vollen of San Francisco; three sisters; eight brothers; and four grandchildren.