BREVARD ACTOR THEODORE EILAND DIES

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By Laura J. Brown
FLORIDA TODAY

COCOA BEACH - Theodore A. "Ted" Eiland, a retired television executive, died Wednesday, Feb. 4, at Wueshoff Hospital in Rockledge. He was 81.

Mr. Eiland grew up in Logan, W.Va. After graduating from the University of West Virginia with a journalism degree, he served in the Navy as a lieutenant during World War II. Mr. Eiland began his career in broadcasting in Charleston, W.Va.

"Capt. John Kennedy was a speaker at his graduation and was very impressed with Ted. He owned a radio station in Charleston and asked Ted to come and work for him," said his wife of 51 years, Lillian Eiland of Cocoa Beach.

In 1970, Mr. Eiland moved to Brevard to own and operate WKKO radio station in Cocoa. He retired from broadcasting in 1975, and became a lecturer in communications at Western Carolina University. The Eilands returned to Cocoa Beach in 1978.

Throughout his life, Mr. Eiland maintained an active interest in the theater. He appeared in numerous plays in Melbourne and Cocoa Beach and traveled with the one-man show "Clarence Darrow". Matt Roush, a former *Today* critic, was quoted as saying, "'Clarence Darrow' is a provocative, stirring entertainment delivered with great style and energy by one of Brevard's best actors."

Mr. Eiland also wrote the play "The Most Dangerous Woman," which won a national award and was performed in New York City. The play also was aired on PBS.

"He was a very talented, compassionate man with a sense of humor and a great deal of integrity along with that," his wife said.

Other survivors include his sons, Howard Eiland of Sharon, MA, Stuart Eiland or Winchester, VA, Robert Eiland of Northborough, MA, and Richard Eiland of Orlando; and seven grandchildren.

No calling hours are scheduled. Services are at 11:30 a.m. today at Surfside Playhouse in Cocoa Beach. Burial will be in West Virginia. Beckman-Williamson Funeral Home in Cocoa Beach is in charge of arrangements.

Donations may be made to Surfside Players, P.O. Box 320053, Cocoa Beach, FL 32921; or to Wuesthoff Brevard Hospice, c/o Wuesthoff Health Systems Foundation, P.O. Box 565002, Rockledge, FL 32956-5002.

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An Appreciation of Dad

There are zillions of ways my dad influenced me. But I think one of the things I find most inspirational is his courage at taking risks, even big ones, like investing all his money - and losing it - in a UHF TV station in WVA. It was an innovative idea before its time. His capacity to remain optimistic even in trying times was also something I try and hold to whenever I can. He was joking on his last day, even though his words were incoherent. Whether or not I always agreed with him, he always cared as much as, or more than, anything about being a good and caring father and husband. And he listened and learned as he aged. As his graciousness and timing were impeccable in life, so too in death. He went before the whole ordeal with nursing homes could get under way. I believe he chose to. His love, and ours for him, endure.

-Bob

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The Weekend of Dad's Unveiling – Poignancy, Joy and Curiosities, August, 1998

Dad's unveiling in Huntington, WVA was an occasion of poignancy and joy, a time for indulging memories and making new ones. On a drizzly Friday afternoon, Rabbi Wucher led a meaningful service, emphasizing the theme of carrying on Dad's memory through the good we do in our family lives and in the world. Among other things, these are certainly values Dad stood for.

A few lasting impressions: various Eilands' placing small stones on the grave markers of all the Eilands, Wilczeks, Gruners and Kohns, as well as Jaffes and Cuttlers (Lillian's family); the kids' (Matty, Rudy, Mason, Logan, Jack and Grace) playing on top of Papa Rudy's / Grandma's grave marker; the emergence of the cutest sidekick tandem you'd ever want to see - Mason and Gracen.

Besides the above-mentioned kids, those in attendance for the weekend included: Lillian, Helen Mae, Eddie and Evelyn, Miki and Fred Caplan, Fred and Anne (VA), Skip and Julia, Tip and Lisa, Bob and Sharlotte, Rick Eiland, Dan (Bill/Helen's) and Farrol, Lillian's Aunt Ida Cutler and cousin Rosie Aronson, Harold and Dorothy Kohn.

Saturday during the day marked the visit to Camden Amusement Park by all the parents of the group with their kids. All went extremely well; with the exception that Tip was unable to find his stuffed animal, Tiger, whom he lost at that park some 43 years ago or so. Sharlotte and I visited some of our family's old haunts in Huntington, as well as the art museum. The Keith Albee Theater, where all of us Ted/Lillian Eilands saw our first movies ("The Vikings" for Skip & Tip, "The Wolf Man" for Rick & me), still boasts the ornate grandeur of bygone days. One of the new owners of Bailey's Cafeteria, which looks exactly the same, took Shar and me into a private room to show us their historic newspaper clippings. Our grandmother Rae's old Milady Shop is now an antique store. On the whole, however, downtown Huntington is quietly declining. On Saturday night, it was our delight to celebrate a little early Aunt Ida's 90th

birthday at Savannah's Restaurant in Huntington. We were joined by the Rabbi Wucher, whose wit and affability graced us all, and his charming wife Tory.

By the way, it's interesting to note that Rabbi Wucher once held the eminent position of Rabbi of the Huntington Cubs, former minor league affiliate of the Chicago Cubs. Wonder what the Talmud says about that!