

# WINDJAMMERS HALL OF FAME

## WARD STAUTH (1908-2001), WJU #82 - 1990 INDUCTEE

By Rod Everhart, #1351



When the Windjammers Meet was in Jeffersonville, IN in 1998, a special concert was held July 18 in Corydon in Ward's honor. It was a blazing hot Saturday afternoon -- the newspaper referred to it as "sultry". One hundred fifty-five Windjammers played that day.

At that concert, Ward ... now 90 and largely deaf ... was given the "Sagamore of the Wabash Award" from Governor Frank L. O'Bannon.



The award, created to equate to Kentucky's "Kentucky Colonel" designation, honors those who have made a significant contribution to life in the Hoosier state.

At least twice, Merle Evans (WJU Hall of Fame 1974) was in Corydon to direct concerts. And other celebrities, too. William "Boom-Boom" Browning of

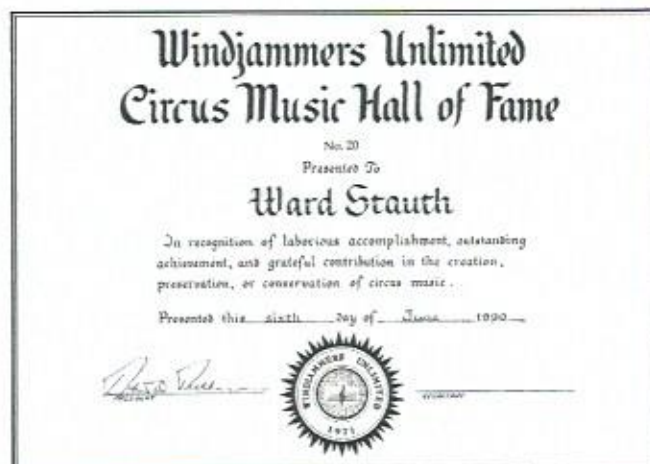
**Ward Stauth** was one of our more amazing and dedicated Windjammers Unlimited members. Truly, circus music was his life. During his lifetime he amassed more than a million feet of circus music tapes, and allegedly, knew where each recorded tune could be found. He had always hoped to start a circus music museum, but the project never became a reality and his tapes and other circus memorabilia were given to the **International Circus Hall of Fame Museum** in Peru, Indiana.

William Ward Stauth was born March 14, 1908 and he died on July 16, 2001. His obituary headline in *The Corydon Democrat* read: "CIRCUS MUSIC DEVOTEE WARD STAUTH DIES AT 93".

Ward began playing the tuba while he was in high school and he was in bands until 1993 when poor health impacted his playing.

Along the way he was bitten by the circus music bug and was an early member of Windjammers Unlimited, serving as our Secretary/ Treasurer for 21 years (1973-1993).

Newark, OH came to play drums. Composer and arranger Robert P. Hills, Jr. (WJU Hall of Fame 2013) came from Delaware, OH to play the piccolo and conduct the band, and Harvey Phillips (WJU Hall of Fame 2010) came from Indiana University in Bloomington to play tuba. In 1982, the concert



to program featured a female circus aerialist performing a "high-wire" act on a rope held by her husband.

Ward grew up on the farm owned by his father, Daniel Frederick Stauth (1866-1942). Daniel had two daughters and a son before his wife died. He remarried Elnora Belle (Sands) Liebert and they had William Ward, Clarence Curtis (1910-1987) and John Valentine Stauth (1917-2014).

Ward married Alda Fern Miller on October 5, 1934. During World War II, Ward served in the Navy. Upon his return home he became an active member of VFW Old Capitol Post 2950 in Corydon.

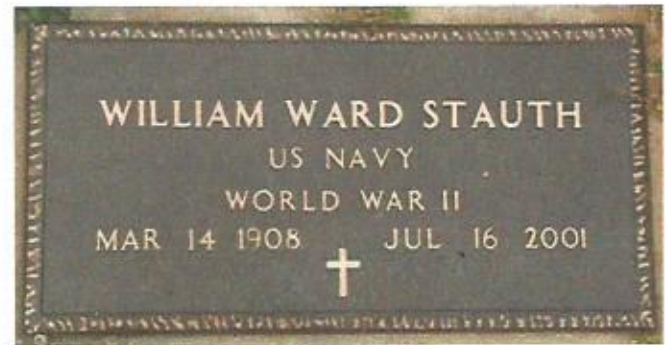


Like his father, Ward was a successful farmer with significant acreage and operations. In addition, he was co-owner of Stauth Brothers

Construction Company, a business he incorporated in 1969. In July 1978, Ward and Alda also created Stauth Bros.

American Circus Museum, Inc. but an actual museum never took form. However, the corporation likely had ownership of the music tapes Ward had recorded at the various Windjammers events and the other circus memorabilia he had collected. All of that was ultimately moved to Peru, Indiana for preservation and/or display there.

Ward and Alda did not have children. Alda pre-deceased Ward, dying on November 24, 1995. Ward lived another five plus years. The couple are buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Corydon.



Ward Stauth's Tuba on display at International Circus Hall of Fame, Peru, IN

Harvey Phillips quote: "Ward has been the strength of Windjammers. He represents the spirit and commitment of what Windjammers is trying to do."



Ward Stauth's WINDJAMMERS UNLIMITED promotional sign on display at the International Circus Hall of Fame: *Keeping Circus Music Alive in The Hearts and Minds of All America!*

Ward Stauth on cover of Indianapolis STAR Magazine, Sunday, Nov. 13, 1977.

Feature article: *CIRCUS MUSIC - Windjammers Keep Jamming.*

