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William McMillan, 89, architect, yachtsman

By Fred Rasmussen
Sun Staff Writer

William McMillan, a Baltimore architect and yachtsman who was responsible for saving the dome of the administration building at Johns Hopkins Hospital from demolition, died March 22 of cancer at Sunny Hill Farm, his home near Glyndon.

He was 89.

He was a trustee of Hopkins Hospital from 1938 to 1979 and was chairman of the building committee from 1949 to 1973.

It was during his tenure on the building committee that he saved from destruction the John Shaw Billings Administration Building and its dome, which has become the symbol of the East Baltimore medical complex.

During a period of planned expansion, the building and its dome had been recommended for removal. It was because of Mr. McMillan's efforts that the building was spared and placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Paula Einaude, acting director of development at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, said Mr. McMillan "had a real knowledge and appreciation of older buildings and realized the importance of them."

The Detroit-born architect was a graduate of St. George School in Newport, R.I., and earned his bachelor's degree in 1928 and his master's degree in architecture in 1931 from Princeton University.

He began his architectural career in the offices of John Russell Pope, then established his own firm, William McMillan Architects in Baltimore.

Several of his local commissions include Alfred Vanderbilt's residence at Sagamore Farm, the Garrison Forest School chapel and the president's house at the Johns Hopkins University. He was also associated with the architectural firm Smith and Veale until he retired in 1965.

A well-known yachtsman during the early 1930s, he competed with his 59-foot schooner Water Gypsy in many ocean races and, in 1931, raced across the North Atlantic to England.

In 1934, in a highly publicized



1955 PHOTO

As trustee of Johns Hopkins Hospital, William McMillan saved the dome of the administration building from demolition.

wedding in Oyster Bay, N.Y., he married Grace G. Roosevelt, a granddaughter of Theodore Roosevelt and cousin of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Her father, Brig. Gen. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who had been a decorated World War I hero and was later to become a World War II hero, had met Mr. McMillan while hunting in Indochina and introduced him to his daughter. Mrs. McMillan died in February.

During World War II, Mr. McMillan served in the Navy aboard the battleships Alabama and South Dakota as an intelligence officer in the South Pacific. He was discharged with the rank of commander in 1946.

He was a member of the Maryland Club, the Elkridge Club, the Greenspring Valley Hunt Club and the Bachelors Cotillon.

He is survived by a son, William McMillan Jr. of Glyndon; a daughter, Eleanor McMillan of Washington; and three grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be sent to the William McMillan Scholarship Fund at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, 1830 E. Monument St., Room 233, Baltimore 21205. Mr. McMillan established the fund in 1986.

Services were held March 25 at St. John's Episcopal Church in Glyndon.