Some people just can’t take no for an answer. Bill Snow was one of them. John English, Don Foresman, Mary Morgan, Jim Rice, and Murray Rust weren’t any better at it. Many people told them Cape Cod didn’t need a community foundation and couldn’t sustain one. Someone even recommended they work with the bigger and better Boston Foundation. That didn’t go over well at all. So, the group said no to the naysayers and established The Community Foundation of Cape Cod, now known as The Cape Cod Foundation.

The H.H. Snow Family Scholarship Fund was the new foundation’s first asset. Ten thousand dollars. Its goal was to raise $5 million more. Back in 1989, the earnings from a $5 million investment could generate from $450,000 to $500,000 each year to help meet community needs. Well, the visionaries worked their networks. They raised that—and more. Now, 30-plus years later, The Cape Cod Foundation has more than 320 funds and assets in excess of $82 million. To date, we have distributed more than $80 million back into the community in the form of grants and scholarships.

You may know all this already. What you may not know is that Bill Snow passed away recently. He was the last surviving founder. Like the others, he will be greatly missed. Bill served as the Foundation’s first Chairman and President, remained on the Board for many years, and stayed involved with this organization throughout his life. His son, Sid Snow, said that, despite health challenges, Bill was determined to visit our new location in 2017. That was the last time I saw him. He was beaming with pride—not for what he had contributed, but for how far the Foundation had come. He knew firsthand how many people had believed in it and supported it along the way.

Bill was always very modest about the role he played; he helped create a legacy and blazed a trail for hundreds more to follow. Some publicly. Some quietly.

Last year, we received a $6.4 million bequest from an anonymous donor. While she wanted part of her gift to support the arts in general, she also wanted to ensure that two specific arts organizations on the Cape had flexible resources to support their operations for years to come. In addition, she also wanted part of her gift to support other aspects of community life here.

Similarly, we recently received a $3.9 million anonymous bequest. This donor also identified a few of her favorite organizations to support and entrusted the Foundation to determine how the remaining funds could best meet the changing needs of the community.
Other donors leave very specific gifts. We just received a bequest approaching $500,000 to establish music scholarships for local students and another that will provide a $10,000 per year, four-year scholarship to students from Truro.

Regrettably, we never meet some of our legacy donors. We feel fortunate to have had many very long and close relationships with donors like Bill Snow. If you are considering a charitable gift as part of your estate plan, we’d like to get to know you. As your philanthropic advisor, we can make recommendations that meet your long-term goals, interests, and values.

You also have the option of establishing a current use fund with us now to develop a more immediate and ongoing relationship with the team, take advantage of the resources the Foundation offers, and review and revise your philanthropic plan with us over time. This strategy works especially well if you plan to appoint successor advisors. By working closely together, we can help ensure that your charitable gift will continue to serve the community as you intended.

Every fund is different. Every fund is personal. The common thread is community. And that’s where every conversation starts, “How do you want to support the community?” Thanks to Bill, John, Don, Mary, Jim, and Murray--and hundreds and hundreds of other people who have contributed along the way--you have a community foundation here to help you.

It’s not all about assets. In the Foundation’s first Progress Report, Bill Snow wrote, “Our only assets were the interest and the foresight of a small group who saw the opportunity for what could someday be one of the Cape’s greatest resources.” What are you interested in? What do you foresee? What does your “someday” dream look like? Let’s get started now.