



Byron W. Hanson

February 27, 1942 - March 19, 2021

Byron Winslade Hanson, 79, passed away Friday March 19, 2021 at Munson Hospice House in Traverse City. Byron was born on February 27, 1942 to the late Byron and Louise Hanson in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Following his graduation from Edina High School, Byron attended the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in music as well as a performer's certificate in euphonium. His connection to Northern Michigan began in 1958 when as a teenager, his high school band teacher received a request from the director of the National Music Camp (now Interlochen Arts Camp) for a euphonium player to join the National High School Band for the Camp's 31st season. This sparked a lifelong commitment to the institution - Byron made his home there, teaching for almost 50 years and inspiring generations of students to go on to careers in the arts and beyond. Byron's dedication to Traverse City's music community was evident in its variety: conducting the Central United Methodist Church's annual Messiah Sing and participating in worship through many different facets of music making, accompanying and coaching local students for Solo and Ensemble competitions, singing in NMC Grand Traverse Chorale, and playing piano weekly for the Traverse City Rotary Club. Byron also spent many summers in Fish Creek, WI, serving as assistant conductor, playing piano, and managing guest musicians for the Peninsula Music Festival, forming deep connections with colleagues over the years and passing along a love of that area to his family.

Byron is survived by his daughters, Meredith Hanson of Lake Placid, NY, and Lindsay Hanson of Pennington, NJ; his sister, Eileen Combs, and niece, Dana Fox, of Knoxville, TN; his sister-in-law, Kathie Herkelmann of Traverse City; and many dear friends. Byron was preceded in death by his parents and his wife, Ann.

A service celebrating Byron's life is planned for a later date.

In lieu of flowers, Byron can be remembered through memorial contributions to Central United Methodist Church's music fund, 222 Cass St, Traverse City, MI 49684, or the Ann and Byron Hanson Camp Scholarship or the Byron Hanson Guest Teacher Endowment

Fund at Interlochen Center for the Arts, P.O. Box 199, Interlochen, MI 49643 or online at <https://www.interlochen.org/give>.

Please feel free to share your thoughts and memories with Byron's family at his tribute page at www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com.

The family is being cared for by the Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 26. 2:00 PM (ET)

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home
305 Sixth St
Traverse City, MI 49684
info@reynolds-jonkhoff.com
<http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com/>

Celebration of Life

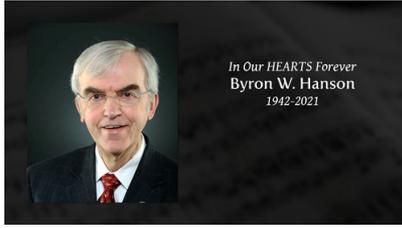
JUL 26. 3:00 PM (ET)

Reynolds-Jonkhoff Funeral Home
305 Sixth St
Traverse City, MI 49684
info@reynolds-jonkhoff.com
<http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ Video Tribute



Reynolds Jonkhoff Funeral Home & Cremation Services - July 25, 2021 at 09:46 PM



“ Send *BEAUTIFUL* Flowers Locally to the family of Byron W. Hanson. Express your condolences, giving comfort and support. [Click here to view selections on our website](#)

Send Flowers - July 22, 2021 at 03:39 PM

BS

“ *I never met Byron until Rotary but knew his work in the community. The word “kind” starts and ends all my thought of Byron. His musicianship and dedication making sure everyone had the best musical experience possible were legendary, but his kindness . . . perhaps that drove all his other qualities.*

I know he loved his daughters at some point on every conversation he would bring us up to date on what was going on and say how proud he was of them!

I had the privilege of helping Byron and Ann design their master bedroom addition—unfortunately they had little time to enjoy it but I loved planning it with them.

Bob Stow

bob Stoe - July 26, 2021 at 04:58 PM

AB

“ *Byron was one of the musical giants in my life. It was through his role as educator and gentleman that he gave so freely to me and other amateur musicians in the Rotary world. His skill, wisdom and kindness to those of us loving music yet needing his advice and assistance helped us grow and practice the art we loved. As your friend and student, I will miss you Byron. Thanks for the memories and all your love. Al Bonney*

Al Bonney - July 16, 2021 at 10:18 AM

ER

“ It is hard to speak or think of Byron without wanting to say "Our Byron" for, despite his genius and remarkable talents, he became such a deep part of those of us blest to have shared many years with him. Of course, there was Byron of the conductor's baton and those wonderful concerts at Interlochen. Then Byron as our leader for eleven years in what later became Grand Traverse Chorale. Byron coming to us at Central United Methodist Church to conduct, accompany, arrange, sing and consult and encourage in his quiet way. We have been left to admire his many wonderful attributes of humility, kindness and regard for others. My thoughts go back to an incident when he was conducting G.T.Chorale, we would at times present a concert at small nearby towns. Don and I went up a little early and there was Byron; he had placed all the chairs, set up the sound system, had the programs ready and was busy tuning the piano. Our audience was small that day but Byron introduced each piece, speaking with the dignity and insight respecting his audience and singers. It was wonderful when Ann, Meredith and Lindsay came into his life to fulfill him as a loving husband and father, my heart goes out to you now in your great loss. I hope you can feel the love and respect we share.

Elsie Randall - April 06, 2021 at 03:46 PM

MM

“ I was in awe of this brilliant man long before I could appreciate how unusual it was, the level of excellence he expected and drew from within us. Didn't every public high school choir do a Mahler Symphony with the IAA symphony and choir?

I recall a Handel oratorio at a local church where Byron surreptitiously conducted the small orchestra from the harpsichord because the minister's baton skills were more theological than helpful.

My one summer on faculty, I'd picked up mutterings of nepotism (my mother worked there), so I asked him if he would find a violist and then play piano on the Brahms Alto Viola songs with me on the first faculty recital (the next day). He was terribly busy. I told him why. He made it happen then and there.

When I thought an opening for a resident advisor at IAA would make a good haven for me, he said no, that I needed to go to New York.

Joy and artistic genius and wisdom: Byron's talent could have taken him anywhere. He chose to stay at Interlochen; to touch lives, to open ears, and to flood hearts with the love of music. I'm hearing gentle strings, and know he is, at last, resting. Or, more likely, he's getting the other angels interested in exploring a new composer.

Meredith Parsons McComb - March 29, 2021 at 12:24 AM

JW

“ My love and appreciation for Byron go beyond words. He has been and will continue to be in my heart and mind daily, for he not only was key to the evolution of Interlochen, which inspired me to become a musician, but he opened the door to my opportunity to serve on the faculty of that wonderful institution. And further he mentored me once I was on the faculty in simple and complexly deep ways.

There was never in my experience a thought of self interest to Byron, everything was about the music, the education, and the mentoring of souls.

My heart goes out to his family and closest circle of friends.

God bless you my friend as you joyfully ascend from these earthly bounds.

John Wunsch - March 24, 2021 at 10:43 PM

JS

“ I had the true honor of knowing Byron Hanson during the last 3 years or so of his life. His intelligence, energy, musical gifts, sense of humor, kindness, compassion, story telling ability, and courage are forever imbedded in my memories. I feel so blessed to have known Byron and no one will ever play the University of Wisconsin “fight song” better than he did. Thank you Byron - Your fight is over - May we meet again.

Judy Straubel - March 22, 2021 at 09:30 PM



“ Interlochen is what it is because of Byron Hanson. I've carried all the lessons he taught me for 35 years. I was an IAA student in 86-87 in the orchestra, and Byron prepared us for the 25th-anniversary tour with patience and brilliance. But he did so much more than teach music -- he taught life lessons. In orchestra, he heard what everyone did, and had encouragement and attention for each kid. I'm so lucky that I visited IAC in the 2010's and my husband and daughter got to meet him. He was incredibly kind and generous with his time, always. I'll miss Interlochen's keeper of stories and wisdom more than I can ever say. Thank you, Byron, for being an inspiration and mentor for all of us. I'm wishing the family comfort, healing, and peace during this difficult journey.

Deirdre Rasmussen - March 22, 2021 at 06:41 PM



“ *Deirdre Rasmussen lit a candle in memory of Byron W. Hanson*



Deirdre Rasmussen - March 22, 2021 at 06:26 PM

DS

“ *I was a student at IAA for all 4 of my high school years, graduating in 1974. My most indelible memories of rehearsals and performances include Byron Hanson. He devoted his entire career to Interlochen. He was the busiest person on campus in those days but he ALWAYS had time for you. He conducted the band and the orchestra and he was the accompanist for many a recital. Interlochen could not have been what it turned out to be for many of us without his dedication and the dedication of a few like him. Byron Hanson WAS Interlochen and I'll never forget him.*

Donald Shelton

Donald Shelton - March 21, 2021 at 07:21 PM

CR

“ *I was always awed by the depth of Byron's understanding of music fundamentals. His talent as I amateurishly attempted to perform my privileged Rotary Club song leader duties to instantly transform my ideas to musical accomplishments will be something that I will treasure forever. I will also remember his graceful handling and perseverance dealing with his medical deterioration the past few years. He will always remain an inspiration to me, and to so many others who had the privilege of making his acquaintance. God speed Sir Byron .*

cindy Ruzak - March 20, 2021 at 10:01 PM

BA

“ *The Allen Family loved Byron & appreciated his many gifts & talents. He gave so many wonderful years of music to Central United Methodist Church. He will be greatly missed, but always remembered.*

Betsy & Maurie Allen - March 20, 2021 at 09:05 AM

MB

“ My family and I visited the National Music Camp at Interlochen in the summer of 1965. Joe Maddy was still alive and we saw him on campus a couple of times. There was also this guy who was scurrying from one rehearsal to the other and seemed to be everywhere on campus. Then, in the summer of 1967, I spent 2 weeks at Interlochen in the "Allstate Intermediate Band" program. By this time, Maddy had died in April 1966, but I still saw this guy constantly running from one rehearsal to another. Next, I went to the Interlochen Arts Academy in the fall of 1967. I still saw this guy running all over campus from rehearsal to rehearsal. I finally learned that this guy was Byron Hanson - who was a phenomenally gifted musician. He was constantly running from one rehearsal to another where he was accompanying students or faculty on piano for their recitals. During the time I was at IAA, Byron was the band director and occasionally conducted the orchestra. He taught a class in acoustics during the Open Curriculum winter session one year. From time to time, Byron and Howard Hintze (English teach), who shared a house on the south side of the Lake over which Kresge Auditorium looked, would invite a few students to their house for pizza and conversation. We would listen to some of Byron's vast collection of vinyl classical music recordings and discuss the music. Byron would pick us up on campus and drive us to the house. These rides were always harrowing experiences because Byron would conduct conversations with those of us in the back seat while turning around to look at us instead of the road, which was 2 lanes, dark, lined with pine trees, and had many twists and curves. He often would drift into the oncoming lane while talking to us, but as far as I know, he never got into an accident because of it. Byron had the energy of 10 people and was the glue that kept Interlochen together during the years I was there (1967-70). RIP Byron Hanson.

Max Bonecutter - March 20, 2021 at 08:20 AM

KG

“ Amazing musician, excellent teacher, mentor and friend to many of us at Interlochen. Byron Hanson personified the artist who promotes world friendship and respect.

Ken Giles - March 20, 2021 at 07:39 AM

LS

“ It was my pleasure to be a colleague with Byron Hanson at Interlochen Arts Academy. He was a great friend, and was an example of one who lived for others. I learned much about teaching in conversations with Byron and observing his working with students. Larry Starr

Larry Starr - March 19, 2021 at 06:09 PM