



Leonard M. Thomas

September 26, 1931 - May 31, 2023

Leonard M. Thomas, age 91 of Cambridge, passed away on Wednesday, May 31, 2023 at Astoria Place. He was born on September 26, 1931 in Cambridge, a son of the late Merrill A. Thomas and Edna G. (Patterson) Thomas.

Len graduated from Cambridge High School at age 16 then went to Muskingum College for his Bachelors, and Boston University for his Masters. He then served his country in the U.S. Army and played sousaphone in the band. Upon his return from the service, Len worked in Zanesville as a parole officer and was a church choral director with five choirs. Three years later Len became director of choral music in Brooklyn, New York at McKinley Jr. High School for 11 and a half years. Len was best known as a performer, soloist, accompanist and arranger for Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. While with the Pennsylvanians, Len played at the White House and Carnegie Hall and toured the U.S. and Europe. After Fred's passing, he was the editor and arranger at Shawnee Press for 17 years. Len was a life-time member of the American Legion in East Stroudsburg, PA. After retiring from Shawnee Press, he came back and worked at Muskingum University first directing their concert choir then continued on as an accompanist and often giving piano lessons. Even in retirement, he still performed many area events including the Muskingum Jazz Group, Cambridge Singers and various church and community opportunities. Len was a lifetime member of the First Christian Church in Cambridge and had most recently attended Christ United Methodist Church. He was inducted into the first class of the annual Cambridge High

School Distinguished Hall of Fame in 1988 and the Guernsey County Hall of Fame in 1999. He had also received the Sinfonia Lifetime Achievement Award. Len's focus was to mentor and serve others with a passion to influence people, whether through words or music, to trust in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

He is preceded in death by: his parents; his siblings, June Armstrong, William Thomas, Betty Ronshausen, Patricia Jones, and Lowell Thomas; and a nephew and a niece

Surviving are: 21 nieces and nephews and multiple great nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be on Monday, June 5, 2023 at Bundy-Law Funeral Home from 11 am to 1 pm with the service to begin at 1 pm. Pastor Steve Smith will officiate with burial to follow in Guernsey Memory Gardens. Military Graveside Rites will be performed by the Guernsey County Veteran's Council. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to either, Christ United Methodist Church, 2167 North Avenue, Cambridge, Ohio 43725 or to First Christian Church, 1127 Beatty Avenue Cambridge, Ohio 43725. Leonard's online guest book may be viewed and signed at www.bundy-lawfuneralhome.

Cemetery Details

Guernsey Memory Gardens

St. Rt. 40 East
Cambridge, OH

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 5. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Bundy-Law Funeral Home
120 North 11th Street
Cambridge, OH 43725
(740) 432-5705
info@bundy-lawfuneralhome.com
<https://www.bundy-lawfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Services

JUN 5. 1:00 PM (ET)

Bundy-Law Funeral Home
120 North 11th Street
Cambridge, OH 43725
(740) 432-5705
info@bundy-lawfuneralhome.com
<https://www.bundy-lawfuneralhome.com>

Tribute Wall

TK

“ *I'm a huge fan of his choral works, especially the arrangement of 'He's Got the Whole World,' and recently found out that he passed away almost a year ago. His music has touched countless lives and continues to inspire both performers and listeners alike. The depth of emotion and technical mastery in his compositions are truly unparalleled. His legacy will live on through his beautiful music. May you rest in peace.*

Timothy Kim - May 25, 2024 at 03:35 PM

BT

“ Mr. Thomas was my music teacher from 1962-65 at McKinley Junior high School in Brooklyn NY, as well as my prefect teacher in my senior year at McKinley. We first met in 1962 when he came to my grammar school PS 176, when he came to audition singers and other musically inclined students whom the teachers recommended. I remember standing by the piano in the auditorium, singing these scales he'd play--and by September when I started McKinley JHS, there he was directing the orchestra! Mr. Thomas was my favorite teacher of my entire scholastic career--he taught countless students how to sing harmony. Best of all, he lived in the new apartment building just two doors down from where I lived, and drove a brand new 1965 Ford Mustang, thus making him the hippest teacher in that school. He used to hold rehearsals for various vocal ensembles at his apartment, and I had attended a number of them. We remained friends even after he left Brooklyn to move to Ohio to work for Fred Waring. I had eventually started a career in music as a bandleader and guitarist, and when we appeared in Pennsylvania, Mr. Thomas would come to see us, as two other members of my band were also former students of his! I, too was a long time member of AFM Local 802, and the last time we'd spoken was in the winter of 2021, where we'd enjoyed a long telephone conversation. Mr. Thomas will always be my favorite teacher as well as a great friend. Sincerely, Bill Trimarco



Bill Turner - October 09, 2023 at 06:22 PM



“ 3 files added to the album Memories Album



Bundy-Law Funeral Home - June 05, 2023 at 03:35 PM



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,*

*May your memories of Leonard M. Thomas, give you peace,
comfort and strength...*

*Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete.
I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom. You
will not be forgotten.*

*My thoughts
and prayers to the family of*

*US Army Veteran, Leonard M. Thomas, is “A True American Hero”
God Bless†*

*† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life
for his friends. John 15:13 †*

Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum - June 04, 2023 at 06:34 AM

SA

“ Leonard Thomas was my vocal music teacher 60 years ago at McKinley Junior High School in Brooklyn, New York! He instilled in me and so many other students a love for choral singing that continues to this day. He also trained me to be piano accompanist for school choruses. Our chorus concerts of both classical and contemporary music were exquisite. He is still remembered with great affection by alumni. Len was an inspiration to us all, a fine man who enriched the lives of countless people with his musical gifts and humanity. I am so grateful for his presence in my life.

Sandra Arida - June 03, 2023 at 08:22 PM

GG

Leonard Thomas was my vocal music teacher 60 years ago at McKinley Junior High School in Brooklyn, New York! I credit him for my lifelong love of music and my involvement in many choirs, bands, stage productions and choruses during my life time. There are hundreds of his former students who credit him with their talents. He truly left an everlasting mark here in New York. May his memory be eternal.

Gareth Ganim - June 04, 2023 at 11:37 PM



I lived in the same community of Cambridge, Ohio with Len. A few years back I recorded him talking to the Cambridge Singers group about a song we were singing which Len wrote called “He’s Got The Whole World In His Hands”. He told us about how they won the Brooklyn Choral Competition with that song and how much he adored the students he had at McKinley Junior High.

Lucas Pattison - June 05, 2023 at 09:23 AM

CH

Uncle Lenny was my mother's brother---the fun uncle. I don't live in Cambridge, so the only time that I got to hear Lenny sing was at family funerals. One time Lenny and I traveled to Phoenix, AZ to be the family representatives for his oldest brothers funeral, Uncle Billy. It was a time I will never forget, he was remarkable. He could put a musical program together on the fly, it was second nature to him. Such talent, but he was more fun. His head was filled with so many stories of famous people and famous places, I could listen to him for hours. I can only imagine the family song fest that is going on in heaven right now--- Grandma ('I don't sing purty, but I sure sing loud') and all of her children singing and praising the Lord for all of His goodness. May you rest in peace and enjoy the glory of Heaven.

Cheryl Henderson - June 05, 2023 at 12:47 PM

SO

“ Prayers of condolence to the family of LEN. What a beautiful person he was to ALL he met. Also what a gift of music he shared with the world. He will be truly missed. May he be resting with the heavenly choirs of angels & participating! Sister Sharon Paul, O.S.F.

Sr. Sharon Paul, O.S.F. - June 03, 2023 at 10:21 AM

SW

“ I was part of the Muskingum University Concert Choir from 2008-2012 when Len did a fair amount of arranging and accompanying for us. In 2011, we performed a lot of his arrangements he originally made for the Pennsylvanians, and were even able to sing in the old rehearsal hall, later performing with former members of the Pennsylvanians themselves! He had a profound effect on my musical career, and I know all of us felt the same way. I will never forget him. Thank you, Len, for instilling your love of music in all of us. - Star Winter



Star Winter - June 01, 2023 at 04:55 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Leonard M. Thomas.



June 01, 2023 at 03:15 PM

CH

“ The heavens are resounding with such glorious music right now. I am sad but so honored to have shared making music with Lenny. May Guardian Angels enfold all of you in this time of loss. Love to everyone.



Cheri Harding - June 01, 2023 at 12:33 PM

BW

LEONARD THOMAS TRULY TRAVELED FAR IN HIS 91 YEARS. FROM A ONE ROOM COUNTRY SCHOOL - ROCK HILL - JUST EAST OF HIS HOME. HE WAS PLAYING THE PIANO THAN BY EAR. HE TOOK PIANO LESSONS FROM A NEIGHBOR LADY, TRADING MOWING HER YARD WITH A PUSH LAWN MOWER, TO PAY FOR HIS LESSONS. WHEN AT SCHOOL LEN WOULD PLAY "PAPER DOLL" FOR ME TO SING - THEN HE WOULD JAZZ IT UP AT THE END JUST TO GET ME UPSET. THIS WAS EARLY GRADE SCHOOL. WE KEPT IN TOUCH DURING HIS TIME AT MUSK. COLLEGE. IN NEW CONCORD, OHIO. THEN I MOVED ON TO MODEL AND SING IN COLUMBUS, O. THE LAST TIME I SAW LEN WAS A PERFORMANCE HE PLAYED IN AKRON, O WITH FRED WEIRING & THE PENN. I WENT BACKSTAGE TO SAY HELLO. I WAS PROUD OF HIM AND GLAD OF HIS SUCCESS. HE WAS ONE OF THE LAST PEOPLE LEFT TO KNOW ALL MY FAMILY. IT SADDENS ME TO KNOW LEONARD AND HIS MUSIC IS GONE FROM THIS EARTH, PERHAPS IN HEAVEN! BUT I REMAIN A 93-YEAR-OLD BATMAN'S DAUGHTER BETTY BATMAN WHARTON OF THE HAYWIRE RANCH, CHARLO MT. YES, IT HAS ALSO BEEN A LONG JOURNEY! BLESSING TO A DEAR FRIEND AND TO HIS FAMILY!!

BETTY WHARTON - September 25, 2023 at 03:10 PM