



Max Weissengruber

December 13, 2022

1938-2022

Max Weissengruber was born July 9, 1938 and raised in Hamilton, Ontario. On December 14th he passed away after a short illness. His life and those of his 3 sons were sadly altered by the passing of his wife, the former Ann Ireland, a retired nursing Instructor at Toronto's Sick Children's Hospital. He is predeceased by his sister Eleanor Smith, survived by sons Erik (Robin and granddaughter Tabitha), Jon (Tara) and Adam (Gail). A niece Jennifer Smith and nephew Mark Smith both reside in North Carolina.

After early success as a track and field athlete at Delta Secondary Collegiate, winning 7 medals in a national age group track meet in 1954, he received a track scholarship from Michigan State University graduating in 1963 with a joint major in Psychology and Sociology. His training in social sciences enabled him to work in such varied areas as human resources, marketing and advertising, leadership and sales training and opinion surveys.

His initial career was spent in the public sector with the Province of Ontario and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Constantly in search of occupational variety, he spent the remainder of his working life in the private sector as a management consultant with three major national firms, finally founding Acris Partners, his own opinion survey firm.

He was ever eager to question orthodox thinking. That was a dominant feature of his perspective on life which he often found amusing or bizarre.

Despite the unpredictability of the human condition, he still found it worthy of understanding. He was also quite skeptical about his own behaviour, believing that he should not spare himself the same scrutiny to which he gave to other people and situations.

Ever ready to amuse, puzzle or annoy listeners, he delighted in arcane word play from a wide-ranging vocabulary. Possessed of an amazing memory for trivia for movies, popular and classical music and horticulture, he would often surprise others with his significant feats of memory.

Max was always a restless and mercurial soul. He was often a disruptive presence in any gathering, where his rejection of politically correct thinking would always surface. “Gadfly” is the word that best summarizes Max Weissengruber, “A person who interferes with the status quo by posing novel or potentially upsetting questions, usually directed at established authorities.” Like the legendary Don Quixote, he tilted at imaginary windmills, often to no avail or resulting in major and costly miscalculations.

Music was his lifelong passion. His own parents emigrated to Canada from Austria, bringing that country’s rich musical heritage into their home.

Max Sr. was a fine singer who would accompany himself on the guitar and lute. His mother would regularly sing folk songs and operetta selections in German. Even after 70 years, he could still remember the German lyrics and the melodies which he played from memory. He began piano lessons at age 5 and studied for 8 years. Knowing so many popular songs, he preferred to play by ear, freeing him to play melodies as expressively as possible. His vast collection of sheet music also covered the best classic popular songs of the past hundred years. A singable melody was the defining criterion.

He was doubly fortunate in marrying Ann Ireland. She also had a passion for remembering an astounding number of all kinds of songs. Folk songs, church hymns, songs from Broadway, Hollywood and classic American popular songs. Many times, she would burst into a song prompted by a word reflecting that very phrase or idea. He proclaimed her Ann of a Thousand Songs.

Their shared love of songs and singing was a unifying aspect of their married

lives. It was a tradition passed on to their three sons. They also liked show tunes as well as the latest pop music genres.

Ann provided funds for the purchase of an upright Baby Grand piano along with a firm command to “keep the music playing”. Her generosity provided daily pleasure and the opportunity to explore more and more song selections. He would happily perform mini-concerts and original compositions for family, friends and Rosedale United Church services.

Till the very end of his life, Max would happily play those familiar songs, once again bringing Ann’s memory to life.

Although cremation was chosen, if a headstone was to be erected, it would boldly state.

“The Only Thing to Revere, Is Irreverence Itself!”

No funeral service is planned.

Donations to The Burlington House Museums Foundation, who support the Ireland House Museum in Burlington Ontario, would be appreciated: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/burlington-museums-foundation>

Tribute Wall

PM

“ Just found this.
We lived across the road from the Weisengrubers on Vansitmart in Hamilton.
We all knew of Maxie's accomplishments as a runner.
My young cousin moved into their house and after I told her that we knew the family, she told me that she found books with writing in them.
I did have a chance to connect to Max to relate our similar track and field experiences.
RIP Sir

Patrick Moore - February 02, 2023 at 11:23 AM

CV

“ I was very sad to hear of Max's passing. He would come for a visit & play beautiful music at the piano. He left a beautiful book of Austria by his granddaughter Tabitha. I want to return this to his family.
Colleen (Connor) Vali ecvali@sympatico.ca

Colleen Vali - January 04, 2023 at 02:27 PM

JR

“ Max was very generous. He always made time to call and see how I was doing. He was well read, extremely smart and spoke his mind. He also had a great sense of humor. I will miss him.

My deepest condolences to Max's son's Eric, Jon and Adam.

Jim Rorris

James Rorris - January 02, 2023 at 04:59 PM

AW

“ 1 file added to the album Max



Adam Weissengruber - December 26, 2022 at 03:37 PM

AD

“ 4 files added to the album Max



Adam - December 26, 2022 at 02:57 PM

DH

“ I attended Delta Secondary School and remember Max very well. He was such an accomplished person, even at that young age. We all marveled at his track and field brilliance, too. Max and I reconnected several months ago, via email and phone. He came to my home once and we shared many coffees together, talking about old times and people we knew from Delta. Max told me about his various medical problems, including many surgical interventions on his leg. He suggested we meet again, but sadly, that never happened, although we did maintain some contact via email and phone.

I'll always remember Max and what a special person he was.

*Donna Huxford (nee Burgess)
jeanharrison2@cogeco.ca*

Donna Huxford - December 26, 2022 at 02:43 PM



“ I would like to thank everyone for their messages of support. My father was lucky to have so many wonderful, interesting, and caring friends. I feel very fortunate in that both my wife and my daughter had a chance for one last meeting before he passed. The very last words I heard my father speak were "I love you, Tabitha." I miss him greatly at this Christmas season.

Erik Weissengruber - December 26, 2022 at 09:36 AM