



Fred W Neuman

February 15, 1925 - January 19, 2021

Fred William Neuman was born February 15, 1925 in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. He passed away Tuesday, January 19, 2021 in Alva, Oklahoma. Fred's journey to Alva started when he was leading music at the United Methodist Canyon Camp as a college student and was recruited by Alva First United Methodist Church to lead music. Fred accepted the job having never been to Alva. He purchased a one-way bus ticket from Oklahoma City to Alva and finished his Bachelor of Music Education at Northwestern Oklahoma State University, while directing music at the Methodist church. Upon his graduation in 1950, Fred moved to Guymon to teach high school vocal music. In 1952, Mrs. Mildred Starr-Ryerson, the daughter of Starr lumber founder W.W. Starr, reached out to Fred, asking him to return to Alva to open a music store. With her support, Fred returned to the town he loved, and ran Neuman's Music and Books for almost 40 years, until his retirement in 1990.

But the music store was not the only musical contribution Fred made to the community of Alva. In the early 1950s, Fred formed the Alva Boys Choir, which enjoyed a 50 year run of performances across the United States and Mexico. The annual traditions of vaudeville shows, Irish Stew suppers, and peanut brittle sales were just some of the many activities Fred and the Alva Boys Choir were known for. In addition to the Boys Choir, Fred directed the adult and children's choirs at the First United Methodist Church for over 50 years. Fred's love of music was passed on to many who sang in his choirs. Fred was rarely seen without one of his Dalmatian dogs, all of whom were

named "Nipper." Fred is survived by his son, Steve who is married to Molly, and their three boys, Will, Cooper, and Henry.

Cemetery Details

Alva Municipal Cemetery

1698 Flynn Street
Alva, OK 73717

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 8. 10:30 AM (CT)

Alva First United Methodist
Alva, OK 73717

Tribute Wall

SG

“ I didn't know Fred had died. I seems I've come across this just the day before his memorial service. I remember Fred from when I was in Cherub Choir at the United Methodist Church. I must have been 5 years old, and Fred seemed God-like to me. Next I remember him coming to tune Mrs. Stout's grand piano while I was taking a lesson on the small piano in the next room. Fred was probably college-age then. He is a mythical part of my youth and I will be with you in spirit tomorrow.

Sharen VanPelt Garner

Sharen Garner - October 07, 2021 at 07:36 PM

SB

“ I was in Neuman's Boys Choir in the 1950s. My fondest memory was when Fred took us all to Oklahoma City to see the Vienna Boys Choir. We got to meet some of them. Communication was difficult because none of us could speak German but their concert was magical and inspiring. Thanks, Fred.

*Stephen Baird, MD
Solana Beach, CA*

Stephen Baird - May 23, 2021 at 01:09 PM

SE

“ So many memories from my childhood at his house and him with my parents. Trying to ride his bike when it was nearly as tall as me. Showing off a new dress. He was always an important part of my life.

Susan Hill Egan - February 13, 2021 at 12:21 PM

TO

“ I had no idea Fred passed . My brother was in the Alva Boys Choir and I always watered the plants at Fred's house when they were traveling . When he build his house I had my own bedroom . Our Mom Lillian Ray passed 2/2/2021 . They are having a reunion I'm sure .

Toni - February 10, 2021 at 07:03 PM

RT

“ That my voice took so terribly long to change, at least enabled me to be in the choir longer than anyone else, to the best of my knowledge.

I got some first-hand exposure to some of Fred's heritage, when once I sold enough tickets to the "Big Show" to win a "50 ticket club" excursion which included a visit to his mother.

She was hard as nails. It was obvious to me where Fred got his Gruff manner of speaking. Yes, she needed to know how many kids to cook and make arrangements for, but she did so completely devoid of any apparent interest or sentimentality toward us. In fact, I don't think she even talked to any of us. (if there was a general characteristic of us choir members, it wasn't "cute" or "adorable." It was: Loud!)

I am convinced that this lady was pure Vaudeville to the core. I later pieced together that it had to be by means of her stage career that Fred somehow acquired the original scripts to the minstrel shows we performed. They were a genuine piece of History, for which I say, "Lord, forgive us, for we knew not what we did."

Fred's genius was his audacious vision. It's like it never occurred to him to wonder, "what if this endeavor never done before, fails?" In one show, we supplied both the males--and the females--for the cast. The audience was surprised and delighted.

The lake lodge was a stunning example. He took some of us with him to the auction of an old one-room schoolhouse--by no means near the Salt Plains Lake. Our presence was to convey our good cause, if not guilt to the competing bidders.

Having won it, he moved the building to a property at the lake! From his own original plans, work that included willing child labor transformed it to an amazing capacious facility for weekend sleepovers and fun.

Planned events there also included our parents, with homemade potlucks and outdoor films at night.

Fred was obviously a prominent figure of versatile community service. So naturally, at Christmas time we sang carols in the downtown Square. But unpublicized were the seasonal times when he would take some of the choir to homes of shut-ins for private

performances!

For me, the choir helped provide a musical foundation, and introduced me to theater and Broadway musicals. So glad to have had so many opportunities through one person, I'm also glad I had the chance to thank him.

Rudy Tanner

Rudy Tanner - February 09, 2021 at 05:51 PM



“ *Kathryn Racette lit a candle in memory of Fred W Neuman*



Kathryn Racette - February 07, 2021 at 11:28 AM

GT

“ Memories came flooding back when I heard of Fred's passing. What an amazing person! He poured himself into the lives of so many kids like me. I was in the first choir group that met in the basement of the Methodist Church. I remember some of the first songs we learned "Get Along Home Cindy Cindy", "Fifteen Miles on the Erie Canal", "Johnny Schmoker", Bless This House". So many memories: Weekly practices over the music store with Ryerson at the piano; Riding in that old bus to our concerts with Fred blowing the musical horn; Concerts with skits ... all music memorized; Spending the night in the same hotel with the Vienna Boys Choir; Irish Stew and peanut brittle fundraisers; And, those standing-room-only "Vaudville" shows at Herod Hall (can you believe we did that!); Annual trips to Turner Falls ... Flour fights ... Belt lines! ... Waking up to "That Crash You Heard a Minute Ago was Me Falling for You" ... Swimming and gagging on the sulfur water at Sulfur Springs; Cake Walks and Snow Cones at county fairs; Skiing on the glass-like water near the Salt Plains dam, and sleeping in the Lodge (renovated one-room school house) ... being careful not to wake up Nipper in the night (belt line again). Getting flooded out of our tents on the island during a monster storm, and bailing out the boat while Fred ferried kids off the island to Cottonwood Point; Things that just wouldn't be possible to do today. What a blessing to have experienced the one and only Fred Neuman. There will never be another!

Gary Tanner

Gary Tanner - February 04, 2021 at 03:49 PM

AA

“ I recall Mr. Neuman, the Boys choirs, store, FUMC music. Whar a legacy.

AK, Shirley Armstrong - January 28, 2021 at 10:31 AM

FR

“ Fred said he remembered my mom bringing me in as a baby while he was visiting with my dad about building some cabinets for his music store ! He always told me that story every time I would see him ! Fred would let you take a guitar home for the weekend to try it out , I don't know how many he sold that way, but I do know that's how I bought my 12 string in 1973 ! He will be missed ! Fred Riggins

Fred Riggins - January 27, 2021 at 02:31 PM

MD

I know way back in the years, you just had to stop at Fred's House. He gave away 45's to put in your record player!

Mark Dubben - January 27, 2021 at 07:03 PM

MD

At Halloween! Left out the main part

Mark Dubben - January 27, 2021 at 07:05 PM

LL

My mother bought a player piano from Fred. It belonged to Dr. Ben and his wife. Neither 1 knew how to play but with the rolls they made the keys look like they were moving the keys and could sing anytime they wanted. Mom ended up with over 200 rolls. People wanted to fix it to run without pedal power. She stood her ground. Wish I had a home for it. But the oldest granddaughter has it in Guymon.

Lisa Lopshire - January 30, 2021 at 12:39 AM

SM

Fred is a true legend. My late husband, Roger was in the boys choir in his young years & when our son, Randon came along, he too was in the boys choir. There were many great trips they took. Randon used to talk about how Fred would open an ice cream container & slice off slabs of the three flavor ice cream for each boy. They visited channel 9 tv once & he was interviewed. Wish I still had that recording. I hauled him around town to sell peanut brittle & he even won a malt machine for his high sales that year. So many memories of going to the concerts & enjoying their sweet voices singing their little hearts out! Fred was appreciated!!

Sharon Miller - October 09, 2021 at 10:14 AM

RM

“*Unfortunately another iconic Alva legend has passed away. I always thought that if I could live to be 95, I would like to do it as Fred did. With passion, excitement, bigger than life, and just a little dose of crabby. You will be missed.*

Randy Mitchel - January 26, 2021 at 05:38 PM

CW

“*My father, Howard Roepke, and Fred loved to talk and share stories about everything. My dad loved music and my mother, Margaret, had a beautiful voice and sang in the church choir. Dad purchased a piano from Fred and we all played it, but my sister, Nancy, enjoyed it most. Fred brought music into our family in many ways and we are sorry to hear of his passing.*
Carolyn Roepke White

Carolyn S. White - January 23, 2021 at 02:27 PM

NG

“ I remember Fred hiring me to work at his music store and I just loved the job. He was so patient with me as I learned on the job. I must have been in High School at the time. He was such an asset to the community. He started the Neuman's Boys Choir which was just a great fun chorus. I am sure he is organizing a group in Heaven!

Nancy Roepke Gwaltney - Pensacola,Fl

Nancy Roepke Gwaltney - January 22, 2021 at 11:17 PM

JU

“ Fred I really can't believe you are gone... I am so so glad I got that last fun dinner with you at Xmas. I think we all laughed more than anyone can imagine- I am glad you didn't suffer and lived your life fully lived. Please watch over us and make sure you remind us to speak our MIND LOL and make sure we keep laughing... Nipper will be the one that misses you the most and that is a high standard bc we miss you already...I had some wine as your last request you gave me at Xmas.

Julia - January 20, 2021 at 08:05 PM

VS

When a child, I was always attracted to accordions, & it was my dream to have one. In early '60's, I was working in Alva. After visiting with Fred in his music store, he agreed to let me make payments on an accordion. At \$20 a month, made the final payment! I was so appreciative of Fred allowing me to doing that! Thanks again, Fred!! He's a guy who should be around forever!!

Vaughna Schmidt - January 20, 2021 at 10:06 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Fred W Neuman.



January 20, 2021 at 06:06 PM



“ Beginning in 1950 in the third grade until I became an overnight baritone I had the honor, privilege and just plain fun of being in the Neuman Boy's Choir. Later did some solo work for Fred with other chorus works.

With the Covid Virus I'll be unable to attend his funeral but I believe this applies:

Fred will be met at the pearly gates by St. Peter who will be asking Fred to join them in heaven and is there anything he could desire?

Fred's immediate comment would be something like: “Well, let's see. The orchestra should be about 2,000 of the best musicians in history.”

St. Peter would say it might take some doing but he could put that together.

“Then for the chorus I'll need 1,000 First soprano's, 1,000 second soprano's, 1,000 first alto's, 1,000 second alto's, 1,000 first tenor's, 1,000 baritone's and 1,000 basses.”

Naturally St. Peter will say OK but what about the lead 2nd tenors? And of course, Fred will say “Oh, no problem. I'll sing that”.

Bob Hayden, Austin, TX.

Bob Hayden - January 20, 2021 at 05:03 PM

MS

“ Fred will be dearly missed. His impact on the lives of generations will never be forgotten. Praying for your family in this time of loss. The choirs of Heaven have just become even more glorious.

Meagan Shafer-Caldwell - January 20, 2021 at 12:01 PM

GM

“ George De Marco lit a candle in memory of Fred W Neuman



George De Marco - January 20, 2021 at 11:56 AM

RO

“ Roberta Obrecht lit a candle in memory of Fred W Neuman



Roberta Obrecht - January 20, 2021 at 11:43 AM

DC

“ Mr. Neuman was a true Alva icon. His Alva Boy's Choir was amazing and had such a huge impact on so many boys and the town of Alva itself. I can remember helping one time with their peanut brittle making. It was a huge production and lots of work, but everyone was having fun. I also remember always being sure to drive by Mr. Neuman's house at Christmas time to see the beautiful outdoor decorations. Mr. Neuman was such a friendly and personable man. He will be greatly missed, but he definitely left a wonderful legacy in all the lives that he touched. Rest in peace, Mr. Neuman, you definitely earned your wings.



Donise (Sterba) Cinnamon

Donise Cinnamon - January 20, 2021 at 11:26 AM

MB

Fred Neuman was such a great music store owner. Back in the 50's my friends and I would stop i. His store and the more talented among us would sit down and play a short recital on his wonderful pianos. Never a cross word from him. Alva was treated to the fruits of his talents in years of performances of the Neiman Boys Choir. May he r(and Nipper, rest in peace. How lucky our town was to have him.

Mary Ann Roepke Bachus - January 23, 2021 at 01:56 AM

KR

“ Kathryn Racette lit a candle in memory of Fred W Neuman



Kathryn Racette - January 20, 2021 at 09:12 AM

BS

“ Fred was one of a kind! I have many fond memories of Vaudeville shows, boys choir concerts, trips, Methodist Choir practices, performances, and cantatas, all inspired by Fred. Trips with Fred were also unforgettable!



Who else would you ask to find an orange stuck under the seat of one of his blue vans while he's driving up a mountain pass on the way to Taos? Who else could you wave at from one train car to another zipping across the mountains from Chihuahua City to Mazatlán? Who else would you grin at from beneath a waterfall at Turner's Falls State Park. Who else could you learn how to serve ice cream to the masses with a machete from? We literally got to see the world and learn a ton about ourselves and how to entertain and make great music all at the same time from Fred. We'll miss you greatly - thank you for the memories!

Bart Sneary - January 19, 2021 at 10:46 PM

JU

Oh Bart there are so many funny stories and there are more I am sure..... I had him in for dinner at Xmas I have never laughed so hard at him in my life... He was truly in Fred form. I am so glad I got such a big hug at the end of our dinner. I had no idea it would be my last... Sending you lots of hugs this year...

Julia - January 20, 2021 at 08:02 PM

KP

“ Keith Purcell lit a candle in memory of Fred W Neuman



Keith Purcell - January 19, 2021 at 06:00 PM