



Donald Owen Hedman

January 23, 1941 - March 5, 2021

Comments



“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Terri - April 03, 2021 at 08:50 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Terri - April 03, 2021 at 08:48 AM



“ Donald Owen Hedman was born to Edella and Joseph Hedman on January 23, 1941, and died on March 5, 2021. He was a late life baby, and no one but the immediate family knew of his impending arrival. The day he was born, Edella asked Joe to hurry to the McIntosh Times to get the birth announcement in that week's edition, delighted to surprise everyone. He grew up on the homestead farm outside of McIntosh, MN, and graduated from McIntosh High School, where he edited the yearbook and was an accomplished musician, playing piano, organ, saxophone, and trombone, and surprising his family by winning a top rating as a vocal soloist his senior year.

Don earned a degree in journalism at the U of M (and played with the U band at the Rosebowl). After graduation he married Nancy Davidson and worked as a newspaper reporter in Crookston and a magazine editor in Duluth until drafted in 1966 into the Viet Nam conflict. There he published a weekly newspaper for the 9th Infantry Division; he said that his job was to witness horrible things and then make them palatable for readers. After his return to civilian life, he and Nancy divorced, though they spoke of each other with great fondness for the rest of their lives.

Don settled in Minneapolis, spent a year working for the St. Paul United Fund, and then began what became a 35-year career in the Minnesota State Department of Health. In 1980 he earned a Master of Public Health from U of M. He worked as a grants manager for the Emergency Medical Services section and then the newly created state Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board. While on educational leave from the Health Department, Don lived in Oslo, Norway, where he polished his Norwegian and worked as a church organist.

Don developed a wide, rich circle of friends, was an active member of Mt. Olive Lutheran church for many years, and was a fine host to four generations of family visiting him in Minneapolis, and, later, St. Paul. His oldest niece and her husband treasure the memory of Don's taking them out for a grand night on the town to celebrate their first anniversary in 1970. The annual Hedman reunion at Ruth and Jay's lake home was a must for him; his longtime partner, Don Van Ert, attended with him, at least once even after they separated. Donald was a model son, and his life enriched the lives of the whole family, as did his driving north for graduations, funerals, and weddings (he was organist at several). One sister, Ellen Burslie, survives, along with nieces, nephews, and their families; his brother, Jaynes, and sister, Mary Ann Simonson, preceded him in death.

Terri - April 03, 2021 at 08:43 AM



“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



L Hedman Hoffman - March 24, 2021 at 10:45 PM