

Arthur Emerson Unsworth, Jr.

November 30, 1935 ~ April 8, 2025

Arthur Emerson Unsworth, Jr., age 89, of South Jordan, Utah, passed away peacefully on April 8, 2025, leaving behind a legacy defined by music, education, and faith.

Born on November 30, 1935, in Atlantic City, New Jersey, he was the eldest of four children born to Bessie Mae Barker Unsworth and Arthur Emerson Unsworth, Sr. Music was a constant presence in his life from an early age, as he began playing trumpet in his father's jazz quartet at just fourteen. His lifelong passion for music carried him from club stages in the Northeast to orchestral performances with the Sun Valley and Phoenix Symphonies, and later to academic halls across the country.

Arthur was a dedicated music educator whose career spanned several decades and institutions. After earning degrees in music education and composition from Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey) and a doctorate in music theory from Arizona State University, he taught at Delta State University and Brigham Young University, where he led lower-division music theory and created an innovative video series on music instruction. He later served for eleven years as Associate Dean at the Crane School of Music (SUNY Potsdam) before becoming Dean of the Hayes School of Music at Appalachian State University in 1989. His leadership there helped shape generations of musicians and educators.

After stepping down as Dean, Dr. Unsworth returned to teaching, directing the Music Industry Studies program and continuing to inspire students in the classroom. His work earned him multiple honors, including the Student Government Association Excellence in Teaching Award (2001) and the School of Music Excellence in Teaching Award (2002). In 2003, he co-authored the music appreciation textbook *Crossroads in Music*, which continues to influence music education curricula.

In everything he did, Arthur improved the world around him with his inventive spirit and dedication. From his own musical compositions and arrangements to constructing his own house, from playing jazz piano for academic and local venues to helping his children repair and improve their homes, creativity, hard work, and love were defining values in his family life and his professional and community endeavors.

He was a committed member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and gave much of his life to service in his callings, including Branch President, Bishopric Counselor, Seminary and Institute Instructor, Young Men's President, and Primary Pianist (his favorite) among many others. With his wife, he served as a full-time missionary for the Church in the New York, New York North Mission.

Arthur was preceded in death by his wife, Shirley (February 2025), and is survived by his six children (and spouses): Arthur Erik (Paloma), Adam Edward (Amy), Andrew Emerson (Alison), Austin Everett (Elizabeth), Allison Elizabeth (Daniel O'Bryant), and Alan Ethan (Megan). He is also survived by his 17 grandchildren: Ian, Eleanor,

Graham, Matthew, Sarah, William, Amelia, Adam, Katherine (Ben Merritt), Adison, Ashton, Emerson, Erik, Cate, Jack, Ethan, and Grayson.

Funeral Services will be held at 11:00 a.m. at the Eastlake Stake Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, located at 4517 West Mille Lacs Drive, South Jordan, Utah 84009. A viewing will be held prior to services at the stake center beginning at 9:30 a.m. Interment will follow at the Larkin Sunset Gardens Cemetery in Sandy, Utah.

Funeral services will be streamed via Zoom for those wishing to attend virtually. To watch the previously held services, please click the “Watch Services” icon above.