

## Robert Edgar Pennington

November 27, 1931 - September 29, 2020

After 21 years of battling Parkinson's disease, Dr. Robert (Bob) Edgar Pennington of Vienna, Virginia passed away peacefully on September 29, 2020 at the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center in La Plata, Maryland in the presence of his friend and caregiver, Anders Lundegård. Bob was 88.

Bob was born in West Line, Missouri, the third son of the late William Ray Pennington and Edna Marie Pennington (née Johnson).

On Thanksgiving Day in 1931, Edna Marie thought she had overeaten at her sister-in-law's restaurant. But instead, her water broke and Bob was born the following day. At a young age, his mother realized Bob's aptitude for music and provided for piano lessons. Bob went on to study classical piano at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois where he attained his Undergraduate as well as Master's and Doctoral degrees in music.

He served on the faculty of West Chester University of Pennsylvania as a piano professor for 39 years, from 1966-2005. During these years, he also spent the summer months in Vienna, Austria where he often practiced at the Bösendorfer showroom and so became a well-known profile to the residents of Vienna. This classical music capital became his second home where many locals adopted him as the visiting American professor of piano. Endless dinner

invitations and concert events became Bob's alter existence in contrast to his disciplined teaching schedule at West Chester University.

Upon learning of his Parkinson's diagnosis in the summer of 1999, Bob, unable to mask his declining piano technique, cancelled his trip to Vienna and the 30-plus yearly tradition of practicing at the Bösendorfer headquarters and instead remained at the West Chester Campus for the summer. In doing so, Bob befriended a Swedish visiting saxophone instructor, Anders. They initially bonded over the translation of Bob's maternal grandmother's baptismal certificate from Fyrunga, Sweden. The following summer, Bob and Anders set out on an ancestry trip to Sweden where they together met up with distant cousins of Bob and his late mother Edna Marie.

In the years to come, Bob became the mentor, steadfast friend and kindred spirit of Anders. After retiring from West Chester University in December of 2005, Bob followed in Anders' footsteps and relocated to Vienna, Virginia on the outskirts of Washington, DC.

In retirement, Bob took in all of what the Washington metropolitan area had to offer in terms of music, the arts and, most especially, friends and good food. As his Parkinson's symptoms increased, he was surrounded by his extensive, eclectic collection of books and his in-house devoted caregiver, Anders. Until recent times, despite his physical limitation, Bob maintained his fluency of German by attending weekly local foreign language conversation groups. His classmates became an integral part of his life as they cheered him on which, with all certainty, helped keep his debilitating condition at bay.

Bob was predeceased by his oldest and youngest brothers, Bill and Jim. He is survived by his older brother, Richard, and by Linda, the wife of his late brother, Jim, as well as nieces and nephews.

Bob will be laid to rest next to his parents at the Palestine Cemetery in Kansas City on his birthday, November 27, the day after Thanksgiving.

A memorial service for friends and acquaintances will be held in the Washington, DC area at a later date in 2021.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a charitable donation to a musical organization of your choice.

# Tribute Wall

SB

“ My husband was diagnosed of Parkinsons disease 2 years ago, when he was 49. He had a stooped posture, tremors, right arm does not move and also a pulsating feeling in his body. He was placed on Senemet for 8 months and then Siferol was introduced and replaced the Senemet, during this time span he was also diagnosed with dementia. He started having hallucinations, lost touch with reality. Suspecting it was the medication I took him off the Siferol (with the doctor’s knowledge) and started him on PD natural herbal formula we ordered from AKANNI HERBAL CENTRE, his symptoms totally declined over a 3 weeks use of the AKANNI HERBAL Parkinsons disease natural herbal formula. He is now almost 51 and doing very well, the disease is totally reversed! (Visit [w w w.aknniherbscentre .com](http://www.aknniherbscentre.com))

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**susan baker** - August 01, 2024 at 04:55 PM

SB

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**susan baker** - June 02, 2024 at 05:18 AM

DM

“ I started out taking only Azilect, then Mirapex, and then dopamine for my Parkinson disease, as the disease progressed they didn't help much. A year ago I started on PD TREATMENT PROTOCOL from Aknni Herbs Centre ([www.aknniherbscentre.com](http://www.aknniherbscentre.com)). One month into the treatment, I made a significant recovery, my symptoms were gone including tremors . It's been months since I completed the treatment, I am symptom free and I live a very productive life all thanks to Aknni herbs centre !!!

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**donna morris** - January 22, 2024 at 06:08 AM



“ Robert Edgar Pennington

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October 08, 2023 at 10:45 PM



“ Robert Edgar Pennington

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October 04, 2023 at 03:12 PM

MB

“ My husband was diagnosed of Parkinsons disease 2 years ago, when he was 59. He had a stooped posture, tremors, right arm does not move and also a pulsating feeling in his body. He was placed on Senemet for 8 months and then Siferol was introduced and replaced the Senemet, during this time span he was also diagnosed with dementia. He started having hallucinations, lost touch with. Suspecting it was the medication I took him off the Siferol (with the doctor’s knowledge) him on PD natural herbal formula we ordered from TREE OF LIFE HEALTH CLINIC, his symptoms totally declined over a 3 weeks use of the TREE OF LIFE HEALTH Parkinson's disease natural herbal formula. He is now almost 61 and doing very well, the disease is totally reversed! (w w w. treeoflifeherbalclinic .com)

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**mary belinda** - January 19, 2022 at 01:23 AM

MK

“ Bob & I both roomed our freshman year together at Northwestern U. He was a groomsman in my wedding in Gary Indiana on 2/13/1953. Though not close friends I knew he would be a great person. Found this after reviewing our wedding picture. We have now been married 68 yrs. RIP old friend.  
Maynard A Krueger StoryPoint Chesterton IN 46304

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**Maynard A Krueger** - August 27, 2021 at 08:25 PM

CD

“ Excellent Professor of Music! Superb pianist! It was an honor to have studied under such a wonderful human being.

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**Charles Dalrymple** - August 18, 2021 at 01:25 AM

MM

“ My wife was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease at age 59. She had severe calf pain, muscle pain, tremors, slurred speech, frequent falls, loss of balance, difficulty in getting up from sitting position. She was put on Sinemet for 6 months and then Sifrol was introduced and replaced the Senemet. During this time span she was also diagnosed with dementia. She started having hallucinations, lost touch with reality. This year, our family doctor started her on Tree of life Health Clinic Parkinson's Disease Herbal mixture, 1 month into treatment she improved dramatically. At the end of the full treatment course, the disease is totally under control. No case of dementia, hallucination, weakness, muscle pain or tremors. all thanks to Tree of Life Clinic, Visit Tree of life Health Clinic website [www.treeoflifeherbalclinic.com](http://www.treeoflifeherbalclinic.com) She is strong again and able to go about daily activities.

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**Maclean Makon** - February 17, 2021 at 01:26 PM

MM

“ Bob is for me like a spiritual family which i cherish so much. I was truly lucky having him as my piano mentor and appreciated so much his precious advice, approach, how to solve some musical issues. I have never experienced him out of balance, nervous or in bad mood. Sometimes i felt so ignorant in comparison with his amazing encyclopedic brain and sharp intellect but he was so tolerant and humble. Bob cared for others so much, expressed charity and empathy.  
I will always be grateful to him for his warm kind heart, friendship, professional help, patience. You are in my heart. ❤️  
Bob, sorry for my unperfect english.

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**Monika Mockovčáková** - November 04, 2020 at 12:37 PM

TG

“ I met Bob on April 1, 1966 when we both showed up at what was then called West Chester State College to interview/audition for positions that had opened. Most years I made it a point to see or call Bob on that date to wish him a happy April Fool's Day anniversary and have a chuckle. My former wife Pam and I used to pal around quite a bit with Bob in those early years. We had some good times and made some nice memories. Bob, as everyone will tell you, was unfailingly good company. I guess I could say that he was kind of like an older brother to me. As such, he was always completely tolerant of the immaturity and sometimes foolishness of his friend. He also showed me, and anyone else that could notice, how to gracefully make the most of a less than ideal situation. We used to joke and say that Bob was a walking encyclopedia. But for someone that knew so much I never saw him exhibit the slightest arrogance. Also, for a person who could be so intellectual/cerebral, he could show a fine empathy and charity toward others. Perhaps, in the end, Bob's greatest quality was simply that he knew how to be a good friend.

*Terry Guidetti*

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**Terry Guidetti** - November 03, 2020 at 12:05 PM



“ *Uncle Bob was the third oldest of four talented and special sons of Ray & Edna Pennington. My father Jim was the youngest brother.*

*My fondest memories of Uncle Bob are when he would come home to his parents in Kansas City every Christmas. My family was very fortunate since we lived in Kansas City we got to see him every year he came. The highlight of Christmas was when we were able to convince him to play the piano for us (even the warmups were amazing).*

*Uncle Bob would take the time to talk with each of us about what we had been doing. When he visited with us he gave his full attention and had many caring questions showing real interest, especially in piano lessons and school band of course. The next year he would pick up where we left off remembering everything, he was amazing.*

*When I was young I thought Uncle Bob was the most perfect person in the world outside of my dad, and I was proven correct. His accomplishments were just outstanding. I envy those who spent time with him in his younger days and his life in the East.*

*We miss him greatly.*

*Also, thank you Anders for being there for him!*

*David Pennington & Family*



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David Pennington - October 27, 2020 at 01:24 PM

SC

*David- thank you for sharing those memories. It is wonderful for those of use who knew him later in life to understand more about what a special person he was. My sympathies to your family.*

**Sigita Clark** - November 02, 2020 at 08:41 AM



*Thank you Sigita.*

**David Pennington** - November 05, 2020 at 11:35 AM

FV

*“ I only had the chance to meet Bob once but his open heart and wide knowledge was striking.*

*Persons like him is hard to find and leave a big empty space when they past away.*

*It will never be the same but it's impossible to turn back time.*

*However, the memories will never leave us and in the end it's better to have known the persons we loose, then to never have known them at all.*

*Fredrik & Vanessa*

**Fredrik & Vanessa** - October 19, 2020 at 05:12 PM

SC

“ Robert was a member of our German conversation class ( through Fairfax County Adult Education in Virginia) for many years. Sadly, we witnessed his decline through Parkinson's week by week as he attended class first by driving himself to class and all the way to his last attendance in Fall of 2019 , when he was in a wheelchair and could no longer speak. Certainly his spirit did not decline. As our instructors would sometimes change over the years, the new teachers would marvel at Robert's knowledge of the German language. He would occasionally come up with such an obscure German word or proverb. Such a humble and quiet man, many did not know of his career accomplishments or all those summers spent in Vienna , Austria.

Our class members cared deeply for Herr Pennington and as his mobility declined, we all pitched in to offer a ride to class, help him turn pages of a text in class, feed him his medication and water at a designated time during class- whatever we needed to do to keep him comfortable and able to attend our weekly 2 hour conversation class. His dedication ( and Anders's to get him to class) was admirable.

Before Robert lost his ability to speak , I remember when our class would resume after summer break, he always would ask me about my family - even remembering specific details about my children etc. He was always asking/thinking about others and not focusing on himself or his ailments. It was something that always stayed with me whenever I spoke to him- his genuine interest in people and life around him.

We saw Robert in the final years of his life on a weekly basis. His life was full and active due to all the efforts of Anders. Our class marveled at the trips that they still took - California , Sweden, etc. , at how tan Robert would look after weekends spent outside looking at the water on the Eastern Shore. Some of our students attended the Swedish Jazz concerts and would enjoy seeing Robert there with friends around him. Despite his decline in health and mobility,

*Anders brought whatever life he could to Robert.*

*I enjoyed reading the other tributes to Robert - about his time as a high school student and as a teacher - other parts of his life that I did not witness. His life certainly touched mine. I send my sincere sympathy to his family and Anders during this time.*

*Sigita*

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**Sigita Clark** - October 19, 2020 at 10:49 AM

LC

“ I realize now that when I saw Dr. Pennington address the steps to his 3rd floor music building two at a time and at a pace I was unable to match at thirty-one years old, that he was in turn seventy-one, and three years into his Parkinson diagnosis. That will tell you something about Dr. Pennington. He was quietly one of the most formidable people I have ever met. He was understated and if you were unaware you would miss his exceptional dry humor. He was also one of the kindest souls I have ever met. As he would listen to me do my absolute best to not butcher what he had assigned for the semester, pieces always chosen with care and an ear toward my talents and ability, he would fold his hands and slow his breathing in an effort to curb the slight twitch I had caused in his right eye. As I finished, he would always tell me what he liked about how I played, and then he would suggest we try some things. I learned how to captivate a student's interest from Dr. Pennington with these kind tactics, always leading with praise and following with practice. I loved the time of day when it was my turn in his studio, and he would call from the doorway, "Leslie, is that you?"

*I was blessed to have this great, gentle, brilliant and kind man as a teacher. I am forever grateful to him for his kind words and patient manner. He was formative in my life, and as a teacher myself, I think of him and what he taught me daily. Sometimes it took years after he imparted some kernel of wisdom for the realization of what he meant to become clear to me, and on more than one occasion I have exclaimed aloud at the epiphany and wished I could tell him. I have missed him and will continue to miss him. I am so glad to hear he had such a loving friend and companion in Anders.. My heart and thoughts go out to Anders at this most difficult time.*

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**Leslie Carey** - October 19, 2020 at 01:41 AM

NA

“ Anders,

*Our hearts go out to you during this tough moment. Lena and I were happy to have been able to know him. He was a delightful, kind man and surprised us with his ability to speak French so well. We are here to support you and we hope you are taking it easy. We are praying for Bob, you, and his family.*

*Nathalie & Lena*

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**Nathalie** - October 18, 2020 at 07:30 PM

ÅB

“ Älskade Anders.

*Vi beklagar förlusten av Bob. En nära och god vän till dig som lämnar ett stort tomrum. Ett avsked är aldrig lätt att acceptera. Vi vet att när det sker en så närstående vän famlar man efter något som kan ge trygghet. Din omtanke och skötsel av Bob och hans tacksamhet är det ljusa minne som kan hjälpa dig att hantera sorgen. Tro oss saknaden kommer alltid att finnas kvar. Minnet av er vänskap är en hjälp att hantera förlusten*

*Många Kramar*

*Åsa o Bosse*

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**Åsa o Bo Berntsson** - October 18, 2020 at 11:09 AM

AB

“ 2 files added to the album timeline photos



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**Amy Bauer** - October 18, 2020 at 12:11 AM

AB

*Bob was among the first to welcome me when I came to West Chester University. We bonded immediately over our shared fascination with the music of György Ligeti, but so much else as well, and discussed favorite books, music and music theory at great length. Bob was a brilliant interlocutor, and I have many fond memories of meals, parties and laughs shared with Bob, Anders Lundegård, Maria Jose Martin, and other friends at West Chester. Bob and I kept in touch over the years, and I was fortunate to be able to visit him several times even as I moved to the opposite end of the country. I was fortunate that Bob was able to visit me twice in California . I was so gratified to find that Parkinson's had not dulled his sharp wit, keen mind and generous sense of humor. Bob was a kind and giving friend; his memory will live on in the musical accomplishments of his students and the hearts and memories of his many friends and admirers.*

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**Amy Bauer** - October 18, 2020 at 12:22 AM

KJ

“ *I have so many memories of Bob, from so long ago. He graduated from Ruskin HS in 1949, my first year there as a 7th grader. When he was home from Northwestern in the summer he taught a Sunday school class at the Hickman Church. He sent a clever post card every week as a teaser for the next Sunday's topic. I think I still have some of them in a scrapbook in the garage. He also directed a youth choir at the church, and taught us to sing "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place" from the Brahms Requiem. He didn't tell us it was hard, so we just did it, LOL. I can still sing the alto part from memory, and have done so many times, always remembering Bob. When he was home at Christmas he would take a group of us caroling through the Orchard, and we would stop at the Schumachers' or the Palmers' and he would play the piano. I lost touch with Bob after he went to teach in Pennsylvania, but I knew where he was and vaguely thought we would get in touch sometime. Alas, it never happened. But I will never forget him.*

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**Katie Jaques** - October 17, 2020 at 07:21 PM



*Katie,  
I love your comments. They took me back to your time with Uncle Bob and made me wish I shared them. The caroling sounds like a really fun time and knowing Uncle Bob they were very good memories. He was the nicest and most talented person. Always looked forward to his visits. Thank you for sharing.  
David Pennington (son of his brother Jim)*

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**David Pennington** - October 27, 2020 at 09:57 AM



*Katie,  
I remember you and hearing your stories of Bob. I met you at a Ruskin reunion I think. Thank you for your comments, it means a lot to hear these wonderful memories.*

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**Linda Pennington** - October 27, 2020 at 05:18 PM

KS

“ So very sorry to hear of Dr. Pennington’s passing. He was my piano professor at WCU in 1986-88.  
So many grateful memories of him:  
His absolutely powerful playing.  
His quiet, patient demeanor.  
The look overtop his glasses.  
His classic “well, one would think so.”  
Red and blue pencils.  
Sweater vests.  
Such a lovely person.”

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**Katie Soukup** - October 17, 2020 at 07:17 PM

LC



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**Leslie Carey** - October 19, 2020 at 01:45 AM

SP

“ Bob was a beautiful, sincere man who accepted his Parkinson’s diagnosis with great dignity. I was fortunate to know him during during his last few years at West Chester University and equally fortunate to reconnect with him over the last couple of years. I will always have fond memories of this gentle soul.

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**Steve Prentice** - October 17, 2020 at 03:40 PM

LP

“ My fondest memories of Bob was when he would come home for Christmas & it was tradition that he & I would go to the Country Club Plaza and Christmas shop for the family. Then we would have a great lunch & go visit the Nelson Art Gallery & he would explain the art to me. He was sooo smart & I loved being around him & learning. Of course the crowning glory would be when he would play the piano for us. He was always so positive about life. Linda Pennington, sister in law.

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**Linda Pennington** - October 17, 2020 at 01:38 PM

AL

“ 1 file added to the album timeline photos



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**ANDERS LUNDEGARD** - October 17, 2020 at 12:06 AM

PM

Andres,  
Sending you our deepest condolences 🙏 and prayers. Losing a very dear to us is battle to get to the right path again, but know that Bob is now in a better place and no more pain. He was bless to have you as a friend all those years. We will continue to pray for you and the family of Bob 🙏🙏  
Kevin and Pacita Miller

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**Pacita and Kevin Miller** - October 17, 2020 at 09:41 AM

JK

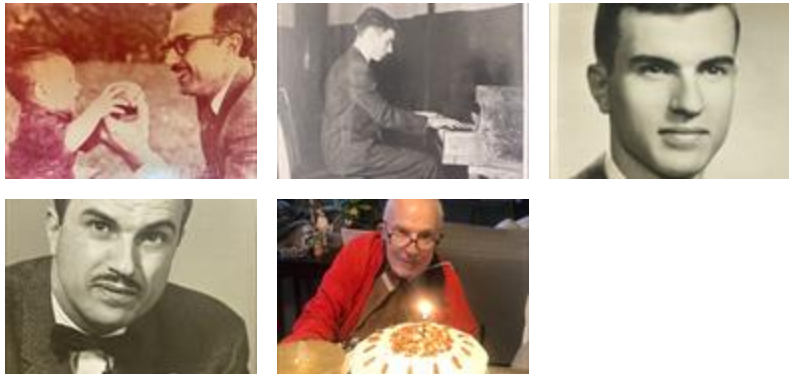
Anders, My heart goes out to you and to the entire Pennington family. This photo is so beautiful, a moment of pure joy. In Jewsih tradition we always say "may his memory be for a blessing' but we do not mean it in a passive sense. What we wish for you is that you carry his lessons of kindness, joy, and curiosity forward. Doing so, will both honor his memory and guide you forward. So, may his memory be for a blessing and may you be comforted in the strenght of your friendship with Bob.

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**Jane Klinger** - October 19, 2020 at 11:28 AM

AL

“ 6 files added to the album timeline photos



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**Anders Lundegard** - October 16, 2020 at 11:39 PM