



Frank H. Irish

May 25, 1929 - June 7, 2012

Frank Irish, 83, of Quinnesec, MI, passed away on Thursday, June 7, 2012 at his home, surrounded by the music, tears and prayers of his family and friends.

Frank was born in Elkhart, IN on May 25, 1929, the son of Marian Tuttle Irish and French Irish. He graduated from Central Michigan University with a Bachelor of Music Degree in 1951. He served in the U.S. Army Counter-Intelligence Corps from 1951 to 1953, then earned a Master of Arts Degree from the University of Michigan.

Frank married Virginia Rae Otterbein on December 28, 1951 and they celebrated their 60th anniversary last December. They moved to Rochester, MI in 1953. He was the vocal music director at Rochester High School for 31 years, the minister of music at St. Paul's United Methodist church for 25 years, and the director of the Southern Michigan Youth Chorale for eight years. Throughout that time he directed 18 high school musicals and countless concerts for the school, church and community. Highlights included his annual alumni choir singing of the Hallelujah Chorus, his retirement concert in the Detroit Orchestra Hall, and singing the National Anthem in Tiger Stadium.

After retiring, the Irish's moved to Quinnesec in 1984, where Frank became involved in a number of community service programs. He held various director positions with the Dickinson County Community Theater, the Dickinson

County Area Concert Association, the First Presbyterian Choir, and the Dickinson County Community Chorus. He served as a church deacon from 1985 to 1988 and was a church elder until his passing. In 1992, Frank was influential in founding the local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity, serving as a board member from 1993 to 2000. He was also a founding board member for the Pine Mountain Music Festival, serving on the board from 1990 to 1994.

In his free time, Frank enjoyed travel, woodworking, birding, tennis, golf, fishing, camping, singing to his children, and considering his favorite type of pie, which was usually the one he was eating at the moment.

Frank is survived by his wife Virginia (Dinnie) Irish of Quinnesec; and his children, Sandy and (Mark) Ehlert of Crystal Lake, IL; Wendy Irish of Escanaba, MI; Nancy Irish and (Vince Villa) of Marquette, MI; Tim Irish and (Maricell Morrobell-Irish) of Crystal Lake, IL; Jeff Irish and (Michelle Chapin) of Enterprise, OR; and his exchange student son, Adelbert (Mike Hoff) Hallewas of Lake Orion, MI. He is fondly remembered by 11 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

Visitation will be on Saturday, August 11th from 10:00-11:00am at First Presbyterian Church in Kingsford. Memorial services will follow at 11:00am at the church. Rev. Michael March will officiate.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the First Presbyterian Church, the Frank Irish Young Artists Award with the Community Foundation of Greater Rochester, or the Menominee River Habitat for Humanity.

Condolences may be expressed on line to the family of Frank Irish at www.ernashfuneralhomes.com

The family has entrusted the Erickson-Rochon & Nash Funeral Home with the

arrangements.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG 11. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
395 Hamilton Avenue
Kingsford, MI 49802

Memorial Service

AUG 11. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Presbyterian Church
395 Hamilton Avenue
Kingsford, MI 49802

Tribute Wall

GP

“ Glenn Parker. My Rev J Douglas Parker. We were in Rochester, Michigan. My Dad. I live in Sarasota Florida. 443-783-4676. I always knew him in HS. (1965).

Glenn T Parker - June 22, 2024 at 04:46 PM

BS

“ in 1977, he led the Southern Michigan Youth Chorale through a fantastic multi-country tour of Europe, conducting a bunch of teenage kids, singing in Grand Cathedrals and quaint towns. I never had him as a teacher, but he and that European experience changed my life. May he bring music and peace to heaven. Betsy (Allen) Smith.

betsy smith - October 17, 2020 at 03:25 PM

PA

“ I remember the incredible kindness from both Frank and Ginny during my first travel abroad after my husband died. They helped me to restart my life.

Paula - November 17, 2015 at 01:31 AM

LS

“ "Uncle Frank", as we all knew him (but not to his face) in the year 1972, was a glorious year of Fiddler on the Roof and, not only our concert choir but our Madrigal acapela who took FIRST PLACE at least regionally if not state. Mr. Irish was THE teacher in high school that helped form my life.

Lori McCullough-Walker - Bradenton, FL - Student - July 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ I just now found out about the best music man, and teacher I have ever known. I loved him and his music that came from his heart which he was so passionate about. I loved that about him, and I learned so much from him. The world is less then what it was when we lost this great man.

Mark A. Pratt - St. Clair Shores, MI - Student @ Rochester High School -
February 10, 2013 at 12:00 AM

N1

“ Mr. Irish was a wonderful, decicated, awesome teacher and choir director! He shared his love of music with his students. He was a sweet family man also. I had the pleasure of experiencing "The King and I", "Where's Charlie?" and "Annie Get your Gun" during summer theater and Concert Choir.He lead us to many number 1 ratings at regional and state competions. Many life long friendships were cemented in his classroom. You will be missed dearly here by friends and family, but the angels will have one more choir member now. Thank you for all the wonderful experiences and fond memories Mr. Irish! My life experiences would not have been complete without you!

Nancy Lind Krus - Oakland Township, MI - Former Student RHS 1975 - June 27, 2012 at 12:00 AM

VS

“ My prayers for the family of Mr. Irish. He was such a wonderful teacher and awesome man. All of my sibilings had Mr. Irish for a teacher and loved him. He had so much patience with everyone. I will never forget him telling me that I had such a good ear when I tuned my guitar perfectly. It was one of the only times I ever remember anyone being so encouraging in my life at the time. Thank you, God for giving us Mr. Irish for as long as you did!!

Verne Schoonover Freeman - Conyers, GA - Student - June 24, 2012 at 12:00 AM

PC

“ Dear Cousin Dinnie and family, I am so sorry for your loss. While the miles that separate us didn't afford me the opportunity of getting to know Cousin Frank, having read his obituary, and the tributes written by his students, I've no doubt that he was a man of sincere character and genuine good-heartedness.

Cousin Frank, you are truly a great man who made a difference in many lives. How fortunate so many are to have known you.

In greatest respect,

Paul Larsen, son of Robert Larsen

Paul Larsen - Marietta, GA - Cousin - June 23, 2012 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ It was a beautiful early October day in 1974 - my wedding day. At the very last minute the person singing during our ceremony said her voice condition prevented her from singing. I immediately called Mr. Irish to see if he knew someone who would sing The Wedding Song on such short notice. He did. He got off his ladder where he was painting the outside of his house, donned his tux and came immediately to the church to share his gift for music with my family and friends. I am so fortunate to have had him as a very special teacher, to have known such a wonderful human being and to have had the ultimate person of choice to sing at our wedding. Thank you Mr. Irish for being such a blessing in my life. We will all see you in heaven some day - what a mighty choir we will have.

Carol Honeywell Ruscoe - Rochester, MI - student - June 20, 2012 at 12:00 AM

DF

“ Thanks to Frank Irish, I loved my high school years! The wonderful experiences in the choir are delightful memories to this day. The friends I made then have lasted a lifetime. I am profoundly grateful to have known and loved Frank. I honor him for his accomplishments, his compassion, his enthusiasm, and a life wonderfully lived. God Bless you, my friend; I know you are already singing the THE Choir!

Dianne M. Evans, class of '71 - Sedona (formerly Rochester), AZ - Student and Friend - June 19, 2012 at 12:00 AM

GS

“ My fondest memories of HS are all centered around choir. Mr. Irish, some how got me to try out as a dancer for the choir's production of Music Man. From there he encouraged me to take on a speaking part and then to sing as part of the Barbershop Quartet. His gentle leadership encouraged all of us in the choir to reach higher, strive to do better, to always seek that perfect pitch. He certainly was a important and positive influence in my life. Thank you, Mr. Irish. Shalom.

Gary L. Eubanks - West Bloomfield, MI - Former Student - June 19, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ As I look back on my high school years at Rochester High, all of my best memories and best friends were found in choir class. Franks patience with 50 or so "off the wall" teenagers before a choir concert or musical performance now totally amaze me. I was a part of Oklahoma and Music Man - experiences that I will cherish and never forget. How he mustered up the energy and courage to put on 18 of these is amazing - and all with only what he had in his concert choir class.

Thankyou Frank Irish for the never ending love, energy and kindness you poured into the thousands of us who will always think of you when we hear the Hallelujah Chorus - I still can't stop my self from joing in.....

To the Irish family, I send you hugs full of love and special memories.

sharon johnston meyer - rochester, MI - former student - June 18, 2012 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ A fine man, a wonderful and dedicated teacher, and a positive influence for those that knew him. You'll be missed, Frank. Mark Lyon, Rochester, Class of '63.

Mark W. Lyon - Rochester, MI - Student/Friend - June 18, 2012 at 12:00 AM

MS

“*When you teach, you form future generations". Mr Irish loved music and it was evident in every lesson. He taught us so much about life, cooperation, PRACTICE and team effort. When all the choir sections came together (after a lot of practice and instruction/mentoring) it was analogous to a baker, chemist, painter or carpenter producing something incredible, and the results were memorable. Thank you Mr Irish for all the years you devoted to showing teens that music is ageless and joins humanity. And thank you to his family for sharing him with us, even though it sometimes meant he wasn't available to you.*

Mary Ann Blatchley-Margosian - Temecula, CA - former student - June 18, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RF

“*Wonderful memories of our times together at St.Pauls in Rochester and singing in Frank's choir. He was always so patient with those of us who loved to sing, but were short on talent. Somehow he made it all come together. It is so comforting as Christians, to know he now sings with angels.*

Ralph and Barb Darby - Rochester, MI - friend - June 16, 2012 at 12:00 AM

SS

“*A kind man that I remember from my high school days of Rochester High School. I loved when he and his wife took us all to the Ford Symphony.I never would of gone otherwise. All our prayers and sympathy to the family.*

SUZY WOIGDKA MARGSH - Cape Coral , FL - Student /Rochester High School - June 15, 2012 at 12:00 AM

RS

“ *This is sad news. I used to love his warmup lessons; left left left right left ... He used to get us all riled up and ready to sing. :) I will never forget Mr. Irish! He kept me singing and staying with it... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jn5DjlUK0jg&feature=plcp>*

Rachel Delaurier - Dryden, MI - student - June 14, 2012 at 12:00 AM

DA

He had wonderful warm ups with The southern Michigan youth chorale that I belong to when we toured Europe summer of 1977

daisy - October 17, 2020 at 02:33 PM

DA

I was a member of the southern Michigan youth corral in 1977

daisy - October 17, 2020 at 02:34 PM