



Paul R. Vanarsdale

October 19, 1920 - March 29, 2018

Vanarsdale Paul R. Of North Tonawanda, peacefully March 29, 2018, while under the care of the angels of Niagara Hospice. He leaves behind a daughter, Joan E. Mahar of Wilson, NY and a son, William Paul Vanarsdale of North Tonawanda, also a nephew Charles Recktenwalt (Sheila) Hamburg, NY. He also leaves behind two sons in laws he was fond of; David J. Mahar, Wilson, NY and David Greaves of Niagara on the Lake.

Paul was the proud grandfather of Michael Hartz, he was also just as proud of his other grandsons; Kristen (Bonnie) Lawrence, Daniel (Caitlin) Lawrence, James (Amy) Hartz and Robert (Lauren) Hartz. He is also survived by many other nieces, nephews and cousins across the states. He appreciated and was very grateful for all the help and support he received from his son's golden friends; Dave, Donna and Tari and also his wonderful neighbors who took the time to help him.

He was the son of the late Phillip and Della (nee Martin) Vanarsdale on October 19, 1920 in Akeley, PA

Mr. Vanarsdale was a tool grinder for 41 years at Bell Aerospace in Wheatfield, NY. He was an accomplished grand master Dulcimer player, teaching, learning and sharing tunes from one festival to another and forming lifelong friendships along the way including; John McCutcheon, Nick Hawes,

Sam Rizzetta, Jean Lewis, Rick Thum, Paul Goeltz, Bill and Ann Robinson and family, Heather Pennington, Verna and Ted "Hondo" Sprague.

He was preceded in death by his wife Fern (December 2006) and his daughter Janet (August 2004) he also is predeceased by brothers; Phillip, Ken, Perry, Charles, Hail, Sterl and his sisters; Izora Knapp, Vivian Johnson, Catheren Andrews and Peggy Newman.

He will be sadly missed by all those who knew him well.

No prior visitation, Funeral Services will be Private

Cemetery Details

Greenwood Cemetery

Wilson, NY

Tribute Wall

JL

“ I have many treasured memories of Paul who I first met in the early 1980s in Sam Rizzetta’s class at the Augusta Heritage Arts Festival. During his wonderfully long life, he was an inspiration to so many of us. He was a friendly gentleman, a patient teacher, and, of course, a master hammered dulcimer player who so generously shared his musical heritage with all of us. Every time I play one of the tunes I learned from him, I picture a very relaxed Paul, wearing his hat, sitting back in his chair, and playing with joyful abandon. He was a cultural gem, and I will miss him. My condolences to Bill and the rest of Paul’s family.

Jean Lewis

Jean Lewis - April 09, 2018 at 08:54 AM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album *Evert mi*



bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:17 PM

BA

Paul's favorite teacher, Jesse Martin.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 08:18 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album *Evert mi*



bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:13 PM

BA

Paul, Greg & Bill....The Fun Fest Evert MI.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 08:19 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album *Evert mi*



bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:12 PM

BA

Bill Robinson , Paul & Rick Thum.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 08:19 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album *Evert mi*



bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:11 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album *Evert mi*



bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:11 PM

BA

Jamming at the Pavilion.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 08:20 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the album *Evert mi*



bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:10 PM

DB

“ So sorry to hear of the passing of your father. I only knew him for short time but he and your mother were good people. I remember your father took time to take me out driving when I was first learning to drive. and I always was grateful for his help. He will be missed by family and his many friends he made over the years. He has gone home to be with loved ones. You are all in our prayers and thoughts .

Duane Bace - April 05, 2018 at 09:13 AM

BA

Thank you Mr. Bace he taught me how to drive too. First lesson drive out in the country and take it up to 80 mph to see how it handles. I was blessed to have too wonderful, loving & caring parents.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:32 PM

 Paul
M. Gifford

“ *Paul (and his brothers Phil and Sterl) amazingly preserved the music of their grandfather, Jesse R. Martin, in a way that few other traditional musicians did. My dad heard Martin play in the '20s and '30s and raved about his playing, which we thought in the '60s was long gone. Then in 1973, Sterl played a tape of Paul and Phil (with Bill on guitar) made the previous year at the family reunion, and everyone who heard it was amazed! He was so enthusiastic about playing it that in 1976 he and Sterl left at 3 a.m. to go to Michigan for an Original Dulcimer Players Club meeting! In subsequent years, with the revival of the instrument, he played at all kinds of places and influenced a lot of people. It is wonderful that he continued to play until such a ripe old age. May his memory be blessed.*

Paul M. Gifford - April 05, 2018 at 12:02 AM

BA

Thanks Mr. Gifford he sure did influence so many aspiring musicians & he never bothered to have the songs he wrote published, he just wanted everybody to be able to share & learn.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:34 PM

RB

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



Rich Brizell - April 04, 2018 at 04:36 PM

BA

Thanks for posting this picture Rich i remember that day Paul had so much fun with your hat, & of course playing his grandpa's music with his relatives.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:36 PM

CM

Is this PAUL VAN Arsdale grauated from Hudson Falls N,y12839 greater athlete in Hudson Fall High School

Cathy middleton - May 03, 2025 at 10:36 AM

MM

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Marj Mountainsong - April 04, 2018 at 09:51 AM

BA

Thank you for this memorable picture Marj Mountainsong. Paul really enjoyed the fun fest at evart mi. Teaching & learning he will be missed.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:39 PM

CB

“ *I'm one of the thousands Paul touched with his wonderful playing. I met him at several festivals. There was no reason he should remember me, but he always seemed to. As a dulcimer player he influenced me, but what I really remember is his kindness and gentleness. Yes, we can learn from his dulcimer playing, but there is much more to be learned from his interactions with others. Thank you Paul for both kinds of lessons.*

Chuck Boody - April 03, 2018 at 03:09 PM

BA

Thank you for the kind words Mr Boody, he loved to play but he also enjoyed sharing the stories. Some of the more memorable festivals: Pine Ridge in Kentucky, Evert mi, Gebhard woods, Wolf Trap & two trips to Washington DC at the Smithsonian.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:43 PM

BR

“ *I had heard of Paul, playing his dulcimer from a former student, Richard Waterbury, who would share recordings of Paul. I didn't meet him until early 1980's, when Sam Rizzetta asked if I would share a teaching week with Paul, attending Sam's class at Elkins W. Va. Paul cancelled due to heart issues so Ann and I drove up to see him. We hit it off right away, sharing our family heritages, his Grandpa and my Gramma. We talked about the tunes we like and where they came from. We weren't supposed to play very long but it did go into the night. That started a beautiful friendship. Paul always talked up other players and played himself down. Wrong, he didn't have to play 2nd fiddle to anyone. He was so gracious, then give that HA! HA! laugh of his. Loved it. Paul would say " I haven't played for a long time and I slowed down." Paul and Fern treated us as family as we did them. It was always sad to see them go. Sometimes wet eyes. Paul and I played several festivals with the band (and Friends) and he would tell people that I took him out of retirement. We would talk every few months, laugh and tell stories (always clean). Then it was always SO LONG and not GOOD BYE. We looked forward to our next visit, and I still do. Paul you are a Prince of a Man.*



Bill and Ann Robinson and Friends

Bill Robinson - April 02, 2018 at 07:23 PM

BA

Bill i could write all night about you & Paul, Gebhard woods & Evart MI were the best times in my opinion you both excelled & played & shared, teaching so many. And Meeting Ann & Monica & Monte was such a treat for me to play alongside & share our love of music. He will be missed but he will never be forgotten.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:47 PM

JM

“ *I was lucky to meet Paul in 1977, thanks to his daughter, Janet, who recognized our shared love of the hammer dulcimer. We became immediate friends, traveled to many festivals and concerts together, Paul always treating me as a peer, when he was my better and my elder in every imaginable way. We loved music and musicians, loved playing and it was not unusual that Paul was the last to leave a jam session at night's end. He was ever-curious, learning his entire life, ever-joyful and welcoming. I am poorer for his death, but far, far richer for his life. The Great Heavenly Angel Band has gained a stellar member and I'll look forward to sitting next to him again when the Jam begins. I love you, Paul, and will treasure that part of you that continues to live in my music.*

*John McCutcheon
Smoke Rise, GA*



John McCutcheon - April 02, 2018 at 04:34 PM

BA

John where do i start to say thank you for helping dad share his love of the hammered Dulcimer. You discovered him Young Squire & you featured him on your albums & helped out with the recording of his own album. Then the invitations to play at festivals around the country you both played your hearts out on stages across our country & all those who sat in the audience were richer at the end when the playing stopped, remember what you said in June 2009 take a picture of this, Bill Robinson, Paul vanarsdale & myself on one stage. It will never happen again.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:55 PM

MA

“ *May you Rest In Peace Mr.V. Although I never got to meet you in person I heard a lot of great things from Billy about you and your adventures. You should be proud in the man you raised in Billy, I know you'll be missed.*

Mark.S - April 02, 2018 at 04:30 PM

BA

Thanks Mark just like your dad my dad was the best & we made a good team running the house in the north end of town. we shared so much together, playing music, fishing, road trips, & just relaxing on the porch on a warm summer's day, He will be missed for a long time.

bill van arsdale - April 07, 2018 at 07:57 PM