



Mr. Gail Ellsworth Menk

February 12, 1930 - March 16, 2024

March 16, 2024, the Finale for 94-year-old, Gail Ellsworth Menk. Gail was a kind gentle man who cared deeply for his family and friends. He was born in Edwardsville, IL on February 12, 1930, to Gail and Julia Menk. Growing up with a brother and sister, he became an avid reader and discovered a love of music which he carried with him throughout his life. He learned to play the trombone, piano and sing tenor.

After graduating from Edwardsville High School in 1948, he earned an M.S. in Music Education from Eastern Illinois University in 1953. He composed, March, Land of Lincoln, which was dedicated to the Eastern Music Camp of Eastern Illinois University. The piece was copyrighted in 1954.

In 1953 he joined the United States Army where he served, until 1955, as an Army Bandsman in the 199th Army Band in the 5th Armored Division at Camp Chaffee, AK. He was granted an early release so he could continue his education.

After earning his PhD in Music Theory from the University of Iowa in 1960, he headed south. He moved to Jacksonville, AL for his first job which started a long career of music education; working as the Assistant Professor of Theory and Brass Instruments at Jacksonville State University.

Missing the cold weather, in 1961, he moved to North Dakota and spent 3 years as the Associate Professor of Music Education, Music Theory and serving as Band Director at Valley City State college in Valley City, ND. He was extremely fond of ND where he made several lifelong friends. After working for a time in the North Dakota Public School System, he moved to El Paso, TX to become the Assistant Professor of Theory and Low Brass Instruments at the University of Texas. While in El Paso, he enjoyed serving as a music critic for the El Paso Times.

Gail then moved to Mississippi, taking a job at Delta State College in Cleveland, MS as the Associate Professor of Theory, Music Education and Low Brass Instruments. He also served in a part-time position there as the supervisor of music acquisitions at the Delta State College Library and editor of the music department's newsletter.

It was during this time, Gail decided to fill out a dating questionnaire through a match-making service. The service introduced him to Dorothy Raymo, a single mother of two (Terry and John). The matchmaking service proved to be a success for him as Gail and Dorothy married on December 27th, 1968. Gail finished his term at Delta State before moving his family to Tallahassee and earning an M.S. in Library Science with a specialty in music as part of the Florida State University graduating class of 1971.

He then spent several years working in the Georgia Public School System as an educator and part-time librarian before retiring in 1988. Gail had a lifelong interest in ornithology, which became a hobby consuming much of his time in his early retirement years.

His name became well known in the local birding community. He was a member of Apalachee Audubon Society and the Florida and Georgia Ornithological Societies. He assisted in tracking flight patterns and breeding

times for various local bird species at Tall Timbers, a research institute in Leon County. He has been cited and published in various articles, magazines and newsletters throughout the birding community and was a mentor to many beginning birders.

Although he truly enjoyed his time in nature, part of him missed working. He served in a part-time position at a local recycling company, always taking pride in collecting trash while on his bird watching nature walks and doing his part to keep the world clean.

Gail was superseded in death by his parents, his brother Jimmy, his wife, Dorothy, son-in-law, William Birch, and his niece Pamela Weatherford. To carry on his memory, he leaves behind his sister, Shirley Weatherford, San Antonio, TX; son, John Raymo (Sharon), Tampa, FL; daughter, Terry Birch, Tallahassee, FL; grandchildren: William Birch IV, Jennifer Birch, Katherine Birch, and five great grandchildren: Alexander Adkins, Emily Adkins, William Wages, Tristen Dewiest, and Thomas Dewiest and a number of nieces and nephews. Gail's life touched many and his presence will be missed.

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee Memory Gardens

4037 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 562-1518
<https://www.abbeyfh.com/>

Previous Events

Funeral Service

MAR 21. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Abbey Funeral Home
4037 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 562-1518
abbeyfh@comcast.net

Visitation

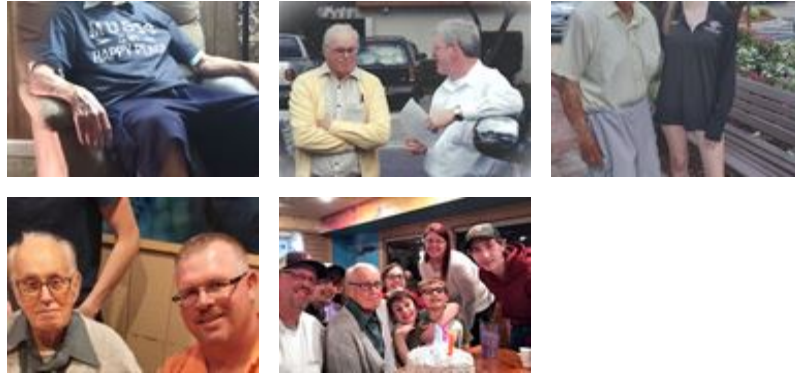
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Tribute Wall



“ 58 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Abbey Funeral Home and Tallahassee Memory Gardens - March 21, 2024 at 09:26 AM

BS

“ *We always enjoyed birdwatching with Gail.*

Brenda and Bob Scott - March 20, 2024 at 01:28 PM