



Tommy Anderson

November 30, 1941 - September 21, 2023

***** Tommy's LIVESTREAM/service video can be found on our website on the PHOTOS AND VIDEOS tab and clicking WEBCASTING VIDEO on this tribute page*****

James Thomas “Tommy” Anderson III, 81, of Garland, Texas, and formerly of Terrell, Texas, entered eternal life on September 21, 2023. Tommy passed away in Plano, Texas, while recovering at Prestonwood Rehabilitation Center following a month-long illness with pneumonia.

Tommy was born to the late James Thomas “J.T.” and Margaret “Peggy” O’Grady Anderson, on November 30, 1941, in Chicago, Illinois. The family purchased a ranch near Terrell when Tommy was a small child and, as Tommy grew older, he could be seen riding his Shetland Pony “Tony” on the ranch property. Tommy and his three younger siblings lost both of their parents at a very young age, and they were raised by their paternal aunt, the late Billie Anderson Bates of Terrell, whom they referred to as “Nuna.” Nuna ensured that Tommy and his siblings grew up with faith, discipline, education, and a sense of community with their fellow citizens of Terrell. Tommy would apply these lessons of faith, community, and good citizenship throughout his life, finding ways to serve the needs of others in both his professional and private endeavors.

Tommy excelled at many things while a young man attending Terrell schools, including academics, as Nuna no doubt would have ensured. Tommy was an honor student at Terrell High School. But it was in athletics (most notably football) and in music (especially vocal performance) that Tommy's gifts and accomplishments were most recognized. A standout offensive lineman for the Terrell Tigers during their 1950s heyday, Tommy won multiple-All State honors – twice a unanimous choice, as well as winning a State Championship in 1957 (and nearly winning another one in 1958, losing on a Semifinal tie-breaker to the eventual State Champion). Tommy was more recently recognized for his contributions to Terrell football when he was inducted into the Terrell Tiger Athletic Hall of Fame in 1994. But, as accomplished as he was on the gridiron, it was in the performance hall and the church sanctuary that Tommy may be most remembered by those who knew him and were blessed to hear his beautiful tenor voice. Twice during his high school years, he was selected to All State Choir.

After graduating from Terrell High School in 1960, Tommy was able to parlay both his football and musical skills into scholarship offers from Baylor University. But it was music that ultimately won out, as Tommy left Baylor's football program after his freshman year to focus on his love for musical performance, and especially church music. He graduated from Baylor in 1964 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Vocal Performance, and then went on to study Church Music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. After serving in music ministry at churches in Georgia and Texas in the 1960s and early 1970s, Tommy's professional career took a decidedly different turn upon returning to Terrell in 1970, when he began working in music therapy at Terrell State Hospital. He went on to become Director of Vocational Rehabilitation at the Hospital, in which capacity he served until retiring. Following his retirement from Terrell State Hospital, Tommy continued to work and serve his community as director of the Goodbar Senior Center in Mesquite, and working the circulation desk at the Garland Public Library. But Tommy still had his love

of church music and vocal performance, and he used this gift for many years as the long-time director of music ministry at First Christian Church in Terrell.

Despite excelling at so many things throughout his life, there was at least one thing at which Tommy DID NOT excel, and that was downhill skiing, which he learned much to his own chagrin and much to the hysterical delight of his younger sister, Maureen (“Sissy”), during a ski trip to Steamboat Springs, Colorado in 1977. Admonished by another skier for laughing at Tommy tumbling down the slopes, Sissy replied “You don’t understand. I’m his sister, and all our lives, he’s been great at everything he’s ever done. So, it’s funny to see him not be good at something.”

Tommy is preceded in death by his parents, J.T. and Peggy Anderson, adopted parents Jack and Billie Bates, brother Paul Anderson, nephew Michael Anderson, niece Shannon Henzell, stepdaughter Sherri Stroud, and wife Linda. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Kay Anderson, sister Maureen “Sissy” Anderson, brother Jerry (Claire) Anderson, brother Dr. Bob (Sheri) Anderson, half-brother Mark Anderson, half-sister Cathy (Dr. Byron) Bonebreak, the mother of his sons Betty (Ron) Wilson, son James T. “Jay” (Sarah) Anderson, son Jeff (Jennifer) Anderson, stepdaughter Angie (Bobby) Helms, stepson Brian (Sonya) Worley, stepson Barry (Connie) Gee, granddaughters Emma Richardson, Molly Anderson, Mary Virginia Anderson, Grace Anderson, Ally Helms, Brooke Worley, and Heather Lee, grandsons James T. “Jamie” Anderson V, Aidan Anderson, Ben Anderson, Andrew Helms, Shane Stroud, and Brent Gee, nieces Claire Anderson and Laci Unruh, nephews Patrick Bonds, Jonathan Bonds, and Trace Anderson, and many beloved Anderson and O’Grady cousins.

A memorial service celebrating Tommy's life will be held at 2:30 p.m., Sunday, October 1, 2023, at First Christian Church in Terrell, with interment

immediately following at Oakland Memorial Park.

Cemetery Details

Oakland Memorial Park

1000 W. Moore Avenue
Terrell, TX 75160

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT 1. 2:30 PM (CT)

First Christian Church
405 N. Adelaide St.
Terrell, TX 75160

Tribute Wall



“ *Max Slayton Funerals and Cremations created a Webcast in memory of Tommy Anderson*



Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations - September 29, 2023 at 07:05 PM

ES

“ *My father, Robert Smith, was Tommy’s pastor at First Baptist Terrell in the early ‘50s. We were in Jr High and Royal Ambassadors together. When we moved to McAllen, Texas, I lost track of him and his siblings. I’ve thought about them many times through the years, and am blessed to read about the exemplary life he lived. —Eddie Smith*

Eddie Smith - August 17, 2024 at 10:53 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Additional Photos of Tommy*



Jay Anderson - October 26, 2023 at 03:21 PM



“ *Tommy Anderson*

October 08, 2023 at 07:43 PM



“ 2 files added to the album *Additional Photos of Tommy*



Jay Anderson - October 06, 2023 at 02:59 PM

GO

“ *I just heard of Tommy's passing. His brothers and sister have been dear friends since childhood. Joe and I were blessed with Tommy's beautiful singing at our wedding. My prayers and sympathy for all of Tommy's family.*

Gayle Blasius Owen

Gayle Blasius Owen - October 03, 2023 at 11:55 PM

AP

“ *Tommy & Kay became my and my late wife's church friends first. Then we became real friends and shared many fun times. Then I became their Deacon and I have done my best to be a friend and dedicated shepherd to both. The loss of Tommy leaves a big hole in my heart; only knowing the time will come when we can be together again.soothes the pain. Al Palmer SGBC Deacon*

Al Palmer - September 30, 2023 at 07:01 PM

BA

“ 3 files added to the album *Additional Photos of Tommy*



Bob Anderson - September 30, 2023 at 02:56 PM

LP

*I am broken-hearted to learn of Tommy's passing, as it feels almost like losing my big brother. Tommy watched over his sister and brothers, and set a good example. Maureen and I were close friends for years, and Tom was always close by, and a Super Brother. Our Sympathies to You.
Linda Kay (Choate) & Ivan Placko*

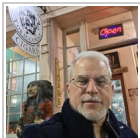
Linda Kay Placko - September 30, 2023 at 10:00 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams* was purchased for the family of Tommy Anderson.



September 29, 2023 at 03:51 PM



“ 1 file added to the album *Additional Photos of Tommy*



Jay Anderson - September 29, 2023 at 10:25 AM

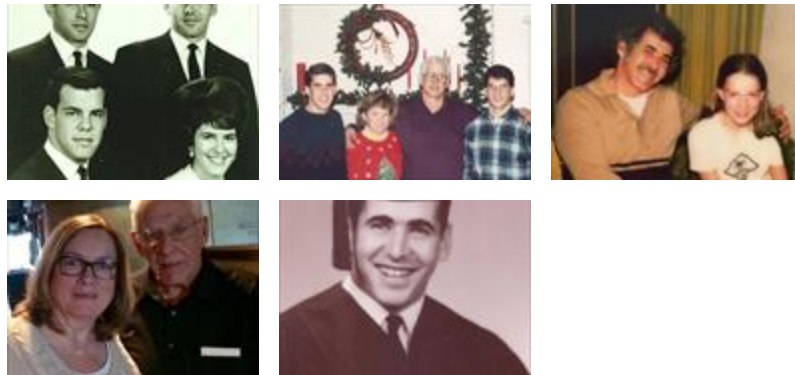
VL

“ *My sincerest condolences to the Anderson family whom I have known for many, many years.*

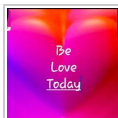
Vickie Parker Luckenbach - September 29, 2023 at 07:18 AM



“ *13 files added to the album Additional Photos of Tommy*



Jay Anderson - September 28, 2023 at 03:11 PM



I loved all these pictures! I'm sad that I never knew Tommy even though he was my first cousin Prayers to his whole family Love Therese O'Grady Brown.

Therese Brown - September 29, 2023 at 05:35 AM

JC

“ *I have such good memories of Tommy, as he was our choir director at FCC and Director of Rehab at TSH. I have a strong feeling he was how I got into Rehab when I did. Any time I see or hear of the hymn "The Solid Rock:, I think of him. That apparently was one of his favorites, and he sang it on occasion. As I think back, I believe the words of this song were a testimony of Tommy's belief and love for Jesus. I am so glad to have known him.*

Janell Cech - September 28, 2023 at 01:49 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Tommy Anderson.*



September 28, 2023 at 10:21 AM



“ *2 files added to the album Additional Photos of Tommy*



Jay Anderson - September 27, 2023 at 10:30 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Tommy Anderson.*



September 27, 2023 at 06:30 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Tommy Anderson.*

September 27, 2023 at 06:30 PM

PM

“ Tommy was one of my classmates and I enjoyed knowing him. I loved his voice and listening to him sing any kind of music. My husband, Bill Marshall, shared a lot of adventures with Tommy on the Anderson Ranch and Bill thought a lot of Tommy too although Bill was older. Some ties never sever!

Patsy Marshall - September 27, 2023 at 05:56 PM

BW

“ Tomny was one of my heroes growing up in Terrell. Great person, football player, beautiful voice, and a genuinely kind and nice person.
Tommy and the entire Anderson family contributed greatly towards the betterment of Terrell for decades.
Bruce Wood

Bruce Wood - September 26, 2023 at 10:36 PM

MF

“ I can't say enough good about Tommy. He was the kindest man I have ever known. I'll always remember his beautiful singing voice at FBC. I appreciate all he did & meant to me. He was an amazing supervisor & friend. I will always be thankful for him hiring me in 1988 at TSH . RIP Tommy you will be missed by so many.



Marsha Flowers - September 26, 2023 at 09:21 AM