



Joe Dunlap

April 26, 1936 - April 9, 2022

Joe Charles Dunlap, age 85, of Columbus, Ohio passed away on April 9, 2022. Born in Mount Vernon, Ohio on April 26, 1936 to the late Ruth (Reeser) and Joseph Dunlap. He is survived by his children Janielle, John, Brittiny (Dusty), Michael (Vivi), and his grandchildren Addilyn, Grayden, his first wife Janis, and second wife Trina. He is preceded in death by his mother and step father, Ruth (Reeser/Dunlap) and Herb Agnew, his father, Joseph Dwight, sister, Patricia Pouslon, and son, Joseph Grant Dunlap. Joe graduated from Mount Vernon High School in 1954. After briefly attending Wheaton College Joe enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he honorably served from 1955 To 1960. He returned to Columbus to attend The Ohio State University where he graduated in 1965. Joe had an illustrious career as a pianist playing all over the country and headlining at notable Columbus hotspots including Benny Klines, The Scot's Inn, The Carousel, The Radisson Inn (Bowties), The Grandview Inn, The Worthington Inn, and The Knotty Pine.

In his early career Joe led the Joe Dunlap Trio and the house band on the television show, Celebration! He was known for using groundbreaking techniques and tools in the industry, which could be heard, not only in his live performances, but also on his many recorded albums. Joe was also a long-time supporter of the Charity Newsies. Joe was regularly seen performing at the Ohio State Fair, City Center mall, and more recently he enjoyed playing for the patrons of Von Maur at Polaris Mall. Joe passed on his love for music by teaching piano to hundreds of beloved students. Joe was a voracious reader,

lover of history, politics, The OSU Buckeyes, and all things music. He was an old school gentleman with a dry wit and a tender character. Nothing made him prouder and happier than his family. He will be dearly missed. Visitation will be held from 2:00 to 4:00p Wednesday, April 13, 2022 at RUTHERFORD-CORBIN FUNERAL HOME, 515 High St, Worthington, OH 43085. A brief service will be held at 4:00p.

Cemetery Details

Walnut Grove Cemetery

5561 Milton Ave.
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-5033

Previous Events

Calling Hours

APR 13. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home
515 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-4006
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

memorial service

APR 13. 4:00 PM (ET)

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Tribute Wall

IF

“ I went to middle school with Michael and in music class I learned that his father was Joe Dunlap, who I had enjoyed hearing at the Worthington Inn many times with my parents and grandparents. I told Michael that I was interested in taking lessons and I soon got in touch with Joe. I loved Joe's style and took after him in my own way. We thought a lot alike musically, and I would often sit at Joe's piano watching in awe as he wrote music out for me on the spot. I still have a binder of all of the music he ever gave me. When I turned 21, my family and I dined at the Worthington Inn, while Joe, his bass player, and singer performed. My grandfather with advanced Alzheimer's began dancing with the singer and she just went with it. Although I am sad to learn so late after the fact of his passing, know that he held a special place in my life, and my family's life.

Ian Funderburg - May 14, 2024 at 12:25 PM

BL

Just saw this. Thank you for sharing this memory with us, Ian. These memories are a way for us to remember Dad and we cherish it.

Brittany (Dunlap) Lenz - October 21, 2024 at 01:22 PM



“ *Joe Dunlap*

January 28, 2023 at 10:24 AM

CS

“ I just got word of Joe's passing. His mother, Ruth Agnew, was my piano teacher. She was a perfectionist who brought out the very best in her students without ever raising her voice or uttering a harsh word. She taught primarily from sheet music instead of the boring old method books. Anyway, she often suggested that I take some lessons from her son, Joe. He taught in her studio in Mount Vernon on Saturdays. Joe was so good at rhythm and chords. After four years at Indiana University, I returned to The Ohio State University College of Medicine from 1974-77. Although I had little spare time, I frequently went to Scotts Inn and later Carousel to hear Joe and his trio. What a fantastic musician! And so soft spoken and kind. Both Joe and Ruth were formative people in my life. I cherish the memories.

Craig Stoops - December 26, 2022 at 10:57 AM

JD

So kind of you! Thank you for sharing these special memories with us

John Dunlap - May 21, 2023 at 08:03 PM

VS

“ Back in the late 70's, my parents were avid fans of The Joe Dunlap Trio and would go to the Carousel Inn in Columbus to listen to them play. When Shellie Jacobs joined them as their singer, the place was packed every weekend, and I remember going with them to see her sing and to hear Joe's amazing playing. We adored them so much, that it was our honor to have them as our band at our wedding reception 40 years ago (on June 13th). We have wonderful memories of Joe's smile and his easy-going style. We have a few pictures of his group in our wedding album, and I will see if I can find something and send it your way. He will be missed, but is in our hearts forever!

Valerie Sorkin-Wells - May 18, 2022 at 06:00 PM

JD

Thank you so very much! Wonderful reason these stories

John Dunlap - May 21, 2023 at 08:05 PM

SS

“ Joe was our "orchestra" for the 8 week summer repertory "Merry-Go-Round Theatre at the Carousel Inn, late 70s. We daily rehearsed each show in a week, then performed Fantasticks in the evening, rehearsed Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum, then performed both shows in the evening alternately, while rehearsing Once Upon A Mattress daily, then performed all 3 shows alternating each night! Joe was definitely up for the challenge!! After our show he would lend his piano stylings with Shelly Jacobs in the lounge of the Carousel and a few of us would wander in to sing with Shelly! Joe was more than the Piano Man, he was truly an entertainer and good friend!!

Stan Stine - April 27, 2022 at 08:43 AM

JD

Such a Great story! Thank you for sharing

John Dunlap - May 21, 2023 at 08:06 PM

JS

“ *His work with a baton was a highlight at football games!*

Janet Stetson - April 18, 2022 at 06:14 PM

JD

Thank you so much! We live MVHS!

John Dunlap - May 21, 2023 at 08:07 PM

ST

“ I am sorry that I missed Joe's funeral. I was on crutches due to leg pain. Joe and I go all the way back to the 60s OSU college days. Joe was a wonderful person-always with a bright smile. He was a great musician and pianist. I played bass with Joe's band at Benny Klins restaurant and with Joe's Trio at Scott's Inn. We also played many single engagements throughout the years. It was a joy to play with him. He will be missed!

Sidney & Bonnie Townsend - April 18, 2022 at 12:55 PM

JD

*So nice to hear about time spent at Benny Klins!
Thank you*

John Dunlap - May 21, 2023 at 08:08 PM

DC

“ *His eyes always shone, and a big smile was never far if he became thoughtful for a moment. The music, the piano - crisp, clear, passionate expression that made us all feel the joy he must have known from the music that inspired him. Rest In Peace Maestro - one of the best.*

Deborah Cornelius - April 14, 2022 at 08:56 AM

LF

*I worked at Scot's in when Joe played there .He was a wonderful gentle man.It was my pleasure to know him.Prayers for his family
LorraineDavis French*

Lorraine Davis French - April 18, 2022 at 06:56 PM

JD

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



John Dunlap - April 13, 2022 at 07:46 AM

PH

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Paul Hoy - April 12, 2022 at 08:01 PM

MW

“ What a loss, Joe will be sorely missed by many people. I worked with Joe for years at Scott's Inn, then The Carrousel Inn as a bartender and cocktail waitress putting myself through college at OSU. There are so many memories I don't know where to begin. I can tell you we had a lot of fun with that group and often pulled pranks on each other with the staff and the musicians. The stage was set head level behind the bar and we called the drop to the floor the alligator pit. There was the night Joe was playing a beautiful slow soft ballad and I dropped ice cubes in his socks. His reaction was hilarious and he just kept playing like nothing happened. But his face was about to bust up with laughter. Drummer Charlie Brown was not forgotten, we put flash paper in the ashtray he kept sitting by his drums. When he put out his cigarette he thought he started the place on fire. Oh My God, it was priceless! I was there the night Shellie Jacobs auditioned. We agreed she was the female vocalist he had been looking for. The place was packed all the time, standing in line to get in the bar to listen to Joe, Shellie and the band. Shellie and I became best friends and are still to this day.

There was a period of several weeks that an all out squirt gun fight broke out using guerilla warfare tactics. Even the chef got in on it. No one got fired!!!

I know this is long, not sorry. Joe, Donny, Charlie, Mark and Shellie created pure magic. I got to listen to it every night at work. We laughed and had life together. Joe literally trained my ears to understand and recognize true talent. He spoiled me for life. I will never think of Joe without a smile and great appreciation of his wonderful talent and how he shared it with all of us. Rest in peace Joe.

Mary Dee Wiseman - April 12, 2022 at 07:33 PM

TS

*I send my condolences to Joe Dunlap's family. Joe's smile I will never forget.
RIP JOE .*

Tom Daniel Swisher - April 12, 2022 at 07:45 PM

NB

I took piano lessons from Joe's mother, Ruth Dunlap Agnew in the late 1940s. Joe's drum set also occupied the room where Ruth taught. Joe was about a year younger than me but already had a reputation as an outstanding drummer/ musician. We ended up attending different high schools and playing in different high school bands but I would visit my cousin in Mount Vernon and attend Mount Vernon's band concerts partly for the chance to see Joe play his drums. I graduated in 1953 and had left Mount Vernon by the time Joe graduated in 1954 but I tried to keep track of his career in later years. His mother, by the way, was an excellent teacher.

Nancy A. Black

Nancy A. Black - April 19, 2022 at 03:26 PM

DB

“ I first learned of Joe from my parents who I am clear back from Benny Klines. My drum teacher was the late Charlie Brown Who was Joe's drummer for many many many years. During my career as a professional musician, I always took time out to go hear Joe whether it was worth a group, a singer or solo piano. He was an amazing musician with an incredible set of ears and style that can never be duplicated. RIP Joe - I play your CDs regularly. Doug Blakely

Doug Blakely - April 12, 2022 at 03:53 PM

JD

So sorry to hear of Charlie Brown's passing. We had wondered what happened to him after his divorce in the 1970s.

Janielle Dunlap - April 13, 2022 at 04:11 PM

JD

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



John Dunlap - April 12, 2022 at 03:42 PM

JB

“ I'm sorry to learn of Joe's passing. Joe gave my 3 brothers and me piano lessons at his home in the mid to late 60's. Each of us got a 30 minute lesson so while each was getting his lesson the other 3 of us waited in the living room where his young children would be watching TV and his wife was busy getting dinner ready for the family. He was indeed a gentleman and a great teacher...patient beyond words! My wife and I saw Joe playing once back in the 80's and I went up to him on his break to say hello. He remembered all of us and was so gracious. Rest in peace, Joe.

John Botti - April 12, 2022 at 10:29 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Joe Dunlap.



April 12, 2022 at 07:29 AM

DC

“ I was a classmate of Joe's in the 1965 graduating class at OSU. He was a true gentleman and a great friend. My sympathy to his family - may your wonderful love and memories give you some peace and comfort.

*Donna Holt Craig
Miami, Florida*

Donna Craig - April 12, 2022 at 04:39 AM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Joe Dunlap.



April 11, 2022 at 10:33 PM



“ No one would dispute the fact that Jo Jo was the best musician in our Class of 1954 at old Mt. Vernon High School. Seems there was music and rhythm in his blood. And we all know that he spent his career showing everyone just how good a musician he was. Joe, not RIP, but RIM (Rest in Music).

*David Warren
Chapel Hill, NC*

David Warren - April 11, 2022 at 10:06 PM

JD

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



John Dunlap - April 11, 2022 at 07:23 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Joe Dunlap.



April 11, 2022 at 01:50 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Joe Dunlap.



April 11, 2022 at 11:34 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Joe Dunlap.



April 11, 2022 at 05:58 AM

JD

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



John Dunlap - April 10, 2022 at 06:52 PM

TB

Go Rest High on that Mountain, Joe. You will be missed. Tannia Bond

Tannia Bond - April 10, 2022 at 07:38 PM

JG

Joe was such a beautiful man. His talents gave such joy and pleasure to so many for so many years. The years at The Worthington Inn on Thursday nights was a must. The crowd followed him wherever he played. Saturday was 17 years since Joe played for our wedding, never accepting a dime from his friends. The Christmas CD's are still part of our holiday celebration. You don't have many lovely people like Joe touch your life.

Cheri and John Grant

John/Cheri Grant - April 12, 2022 at 10:42 AM



I am sorry for your loss. I see Joey in him. ❤️

Regina Haft - May 19, 2025 at 07:59 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Joe Dunlap.



April 10, 2022 at 06:27 PM