

Helen Elizabeth Armstrong Hutheesing

March 16, 1943 (Rockford, IL)

April 28, 2006 (Greenwich, CT)

Helen Elizabeth Armstrong Hutheesing, internationally known violinist, died suddenly on April 28, 2006, in Greenwich, CT, while performing at an Armstrong Chamber Concerts Salon Concert in a Greenwich home. She was 63 and lived in Washington Depot, CT and Greenwich, CT. The cause of death was not immediately known.



Helen Elizabeth Armstrong was born in Rockford, IL on March 16, 1943, to Dr. Robert and Hannah Armstrong. In New York City she studied under renowned teachers, Ivan Galamian and Dorothy DeLay. Ms. Armstrong made her Lincoln Center debut in 1976 and went on to perform with orchestras such as the Boston Pops, the Indianapolis Symphony, the New Polish Philharmonic and the Martha Graham Dance Company.

Helen was all about classical music, but she was much more. She exuded love for her musicians, and they gave it back generously. She captivated children with her smile, and they responded by calling her an angel. She engaged her audience with warmth, and they became her friends for life.

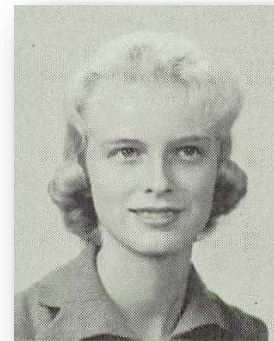
Ms. Armstrong, known for her dazzling technique and passionate style, was the Founder and Artistic Director of Armstrong Chamber Concerts, Inc. (ACC), a not-for-profit chamber music organization organized over 22 years ago. The creation and development of ACC was inspired by Avery Fisher and Skitch Henderson who suggested Helen's artistic mission should be to broaden public interest and knowledge of chamber music through performance and education. Her dedication to that mission brought musical education to public and private schools through its unique Students' Music Enrichment Program. Over 100,000 students have participated in the Program in Connecticut's Litchfield and Fairfield Counties and in New York's Harlem and the Bronx.

Helen developed ACC's reputation by building a roster of over 100 world-renowned artists who contributed to the education programs. Helen's dedication, artistry, and love of music and musicians inspired those who met or performed with her - including Itzhak Perlman, Skitch Henderson, Martha Graham, Peter Duchin, Kathie Lee Gifford, Senator Christopher Dodd, Ezra Laderman (the renowned composer

and former Dean of Music at Yale), and June Dunbar (formerly the head of the Dance Division at the Juilliard School of Music). At the Juilliard School, she was among few chosen by Ivan Galamian and Dorothy DeLay to teach the finer points of the violin to those wanting a solo career; other famous violinists in that group were Itzhak Perlman and Pinchas Zukerman. Helen's career as an international virtuoso violinist was interrupted by the long illness and eventual death of her first husband. Helen then directed much of her attention to achieving the mission of ACC and only occasionally performing on the international stage. During the past 22 years her focus has been concert performances in elegant private homes in Greenwich and venues in Washington, DC, New Milford, CT, and Carnegie Hall. She had a sterling reputation as a teacher and one who brought the talent of top artists to her educational mission.

Most recently, Ms. Armstrong's career turned in yet another direction: Bruce Swedien, arguably the most famous sound engineer in the world, convinced her to join him in producing a popular music recording. True to Bruce and Helen's vision, they made early cuts of a remarkable recording that was interrupted by her death.

Ms. Armstrong was widowed by her first husband in 1978. After a long relationship with husband-to-be, Ajit Hutheesing, they married in 1996. Ajit, an investment banker, is the nephew of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and cousin of Indira Gandhi. He took Helen to India several times where she performed in concerts. In addition to her Husband, she is survived by Daughter, Debbie Howser, (Washington, CT); Son, David Cohen, (Denver, CO); Grandchildren, Brenden, Tyler and Cailey; Sister, Nancy Potter, (Big Rapids, MI); and Brother, Robert Armstrong (Dallas, OR).



A memorial service will be held at 4:00 p.m., Sunday, May 14, 2006, at the Tomes-Higgins House, 216 East Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Armstrong Chamber Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 367, Washington Depot, CT 06794; a special scholarship fund will be established in memory of Helen Armstrong.

References:

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<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/greenwichtime/obituary.aspx?n=helen-armstrong&pid=17653407>