



## George Michael Anthony Antoniak

September 20, 2023

Age 72, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, passed away in Halifax, on September 20, 2023. George was born to first generation Polish and Ukrainian, Canadian Immigrants, and Holocaust survivors, Nina (Nee Pudlak) and Michael Anthony Antoniak on December 6 1950 in Woodstock, Ontario. George was the youngest of three children; Raymond, Robert (Bud) and George.

Spending the earlier years of his life living on Prince Edward Island, George was forever a student of learning and life. He was educated in Philosophy at the University of Prince Edward Island. As well as self taught on a multitude of subjects especially Music.

While still living on Prince Edward Island, George found his soul mate in Jane Breimer. Their love blossomed and they were married on December 27, 1976. They moved to Halifax, and began their life together but the fruits of their love didn't end there as they bore three beautiful children together: Tanja, Michael, and Kristin. As a family, George and Jane loved travelling for family gatherings,

whether it was to see George's family or Jane's and their many cherished nieces and nephews and grandchildren. George took a deep pleasure in making people laugh, kids especially. Sadly, Jane passed unexpectedly on July 29, 1990 and the family would forever be lovelorn in her absence.

Even though Jane was George's Soul mate, the love he had found first in life was music. George was a prolific guitar player. Humbly proud of his self-trained skill with the guitar and referred to by many as "one of the best players I've ever known." His talent with the guitar can not be overstated. George's skills enabled him to travel the world and play with many bands such as Lougarou, Storm, Ram, Ought to Be, The Mingledwood Band, and Barbara-Mae and the Nashville Renegades. He was an in-demand session player and is considered a legend among East Coast guitarists. George has performed with artists Matt Mingledwood, Raylene Rankin, Gene MacLellan, Sam Moon and Laura Smith to name a few. He also became a sought after song-writer, writing for such artists as Lisa MacDougall, John Chiasson and Laura Smith. George received a 2007 ECMA award for his musical contributions to East Coast Musicians. His soul spoke in music and the people who knew George, whether briefly or for many years, were able to share in the joy that music brought to him.

As George was brought home to spirit on the four year anniversary of his son Michael's passing, the

family feels comforted by the thought that Michael must have come to relieve him of any suffering and to help him on his path to reunite with his loved ones who are awaiting him.

George is survived by his eldest daughter, Tanja (Glenn) and his youngest daughter, Kristin (Ryan); and grandchildren, Theo and Miles (who always made him smile and brought him such joy). George was predeceased by his parents; his brother, Raymond; his wife, Jane; and his son, Michael.

George's family will be hosting a funeral service on Monday, October 2, at 4 p.m. The service will be held at 2535 Robie Street, All Nations Church in Halifax (at the corner of Robie and Charles Street). There will also be a reception at the church following the service, all are welcome. If you are unable to attend but would like to witness the service, All Nations Church website will be streaming it. In lieu of flowers, please share a memory of George with the family or support them in settling George's estate through the Go-Fund Me link which has been set up for them and which will also help to support the cost of services being held in celebration of George's life. The family wishes to express deep gratitude to all who have reached out to share their memories of George and their condolences on his passing and, who have been of help and support to the family in any way



# Tribute Wall



“ My favourite memory of George is going to Bruce Richard's studio to do some recording in 1999. Listening to his music through headphones while sitting three feet away from him running the recorder was an amazing inspiration and blessing.

*He was a peaceful man with incredible talent. He was kind and generous as my guitar teacher, and a loving husband and father.*

*The loss of his wife and later his son prior to his own departure were devastating events in his life, and his struggle with diabetes was very challenging, making the later part of his life a mix of sweetness and suffering.*

*Through all of it, he never lost his smile, his dedication to friends and family or his positive deportment. He accepted loss and illness with tremendous grace and taught me a lot about life while teaching me guitar.*

*He was always willing to give positive feedback and encouragement. He was always fair and honest with me. I will always have fond memories of George and his children. I hope peace will find all of us who miss him.*

*Thank you, George. Thank you for the gifts you bestowed upon me. Thank you for the wonderful daughters you gifted to this world, and I hope there is a place after this where you can see your wife and son again, and they can see you.*

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**Wil Senger** - November 15, 2023 at 11:34 AM

CS

“ George was such a kind and thoughtful soul. We knew each other while attending UPEI, I never knew anyone who spent as much time perfecting his craft; as George did. You knew right away he was going to be a fantastic musician, and he was that. It was always such fun to watch George and his bandmates in a couple of his bands play at the Rec. Centre; especially The Storm. They put on fantastic shows and really had a great time performing. Will never forget what a great smile and sense of humor George had. Condolences and prayers to family and friends. R.I.P. George, you left us too soon!

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**C. Sherry** - October 03, 2023 at 02:32 PM

JS

“ George was such a kind, gentle man He was also a very gifted musician and song writer. My heart, condolences and prayers are with you. He will be missed by so very many.  
Janice

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**Janice Sampson** - October 02, 2023 at 01:08 PM

BM

“ My deepest condolences to the family of George who was a mentor of mine in music and life .RIP my dear old friend. Blaine Murphy

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**Blaine Murphy** - October 02, 2023 at 06:59 AM

MR

“ I was honored to spend Christmas Day of 2012 , along with my family with George and his family!  
George was a gentle and bright spirit!  
We celebrated a wonderful occasion. My sincerest condolences and prayers to Tonya, Kirsten and George’s grandsons.  
Special thoughts and prayers to George and his ‘beautiful son, Michael ‘s soul,

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**Margaret Rouse** - October 02, 2023 at 04:14 AM

MC

“ I worked with George when he and I played with the Corvettes. It was great sharing the stage with him. We used to play off each other. As well as being a superb soloist he was a wonderful accompanist to other peoples’ solos. He was never one to overplay. His ability to emulate a steel guitar was amazing too. Above all, George was a real gentleman- a fine person. I offer my sincerest condolences to you, the family.  
Mark C.

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**Mark Cuming** - October 01, 2023 at 07:17 PM



“ Played with George once. Incredible musician and great guy. Would have loved to have spoken to him once more.

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**Carter Gosbee** - September 29, 2023 at 07:02 PM

DK

“ Oh my word, I can't believe it. Tonya and Kristin my deepest condolences. I loved your father and mother so much. I talked with George on the telephone once in awhile. In the last year I couldn't get a hold of him. My heart aches, and the tears of my love for him will stay with me forever. He was the most positive man I've met. All my wishes to you both for to ease the pain. Love, Dennis W Kelly.

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**Dennis Kelly** - September 29, 2023 at 04:26 PM

TF

“ I got to play in The Press for a few years with George & Brian & Russ on sound in the late 80's. It was quite an adventure traveling around the maritimes playing music with that group. I have always felt so fortunate to have answered that ad. I learned so much from George in that band by just paying attention to how he played with such sensitivity and dynamics. I also learned that he basically set the standard for being a wonderful person. What a legacy that is. You rest in peace brother , all my love and condolences for your family and friends Tim

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**Tim Frauzel** - September 29, 2023 at 02:23 PM

DC

“ George , along with Terri Hatti, Pat Riley and Wilie Acorn made up the band we all loved as Storm . I have known George since he was my neighbour on Grafton Street. Always loved to hear him pulling off those riffs on his guitar as he practiced endlessly. A great guy and a true mentor for many of us young people who folloed his music and career . Sad to hear he has passed :( Condolences to his Family and friends .. Go rest high on that mountain .

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**David A Campbell** - September 29, 2023 at 10:19 AM

GE

“ George never had a mean bone in his body. Gerard Ellsworth

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**Gerard Ellsworth** - September 29, 2023 at 09:56 AM

JM

“ my first guitar mentor. Learn to play "House of the rising sun" and you can be a guitar player. I remember in Jr High and he was in a band called "The chosen Few" George was so shy he played behind the curtains on the stage. Farewell my true brother, sad to see you go. Safe travels friend.

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**jim macmillan** - September 28, 2023 at 10:55 PM

AF

“ George was a great man. I was friends with his son growing up, and spent many days at his house. Later in life, every time I say him we would stop and talk. Condolences to his family.

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**Amos Farmer** - September 28, 2023 at 07:15 PM

CG

“ I was lucky enough to play in a band called "Taquila" with George. One night in Tignish we heard that some guys were going to beat the band up. George was the biggest guy in the group and I said I was glad he was there. He said he wasn't a fighter and that he would turn the other cheek if he had to. Wow. Luckily we didn't end up being ganged up on. I'll never forget his gentleness. God bless you George. Carol (O'Hanley) Gillan.

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**Carol Gillan** - September 28, 2023 at 04:53 PM

TD

*What a loss to the Atlantic Canada music scene! There really was no one like George, what a wonderful man he was, always so happy to see you and always had time to stop and talk regardless of his busy schedule. I was honored to be one of the musicians who played for his late wife's benefit dance at the Basilica Rec Centre. The centre was packed to the rafters in support of George and his wife Jane. I can remember him and another great guitarist Blaine Murphy practicing together at the green house which was across the street from the Holy Redeemer church on Pond street. What incredible music they made!*

*Finally I remember being in a band called The Sunn a back in the late sixties early seventies and we entered the bandarama contest at the exhibition grounds during Old Home Week. We thought we were hot stuff until we heard The Chosen Few that day! George, Bobby and the rest of the guys were great, lol they won the contest by a mile !*

*We were happy with second place! George came up to us after the contest and told us how good we were ( which was not really true but that was George just being nice). I never forgot how good he was and what great person he was. My sincere condolences to his family and musical friends.*

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**Terry Dunsford** - September 29, 2023 at 02:54 PM

BD

“ How does one even begin to pay a little tribute to someone like George when you been friends as long as we have been. Long before he ever picked up a guitar or for that matter, even held one. I lived on Pownal Street and George lived on Kent about 6 houses apart and I would stop by his house and we would walk to Birchwood together, every day. Mrs Antoniak and my Mom were good friends as well, what a lovely lady she was. She as well, always had that infectious smile when I came to their home. One day we decided to form a little band called the “Chosen Few” consisting of Ron Jeffery on Vox guitar, Bill MacIntyre on homemade bass I think his father made, myself the drummer with no drums but different size empty buckets, and yes George Antoniak as our lead singer. We practiced three or four times a week, getting a little better each time, what great fun. Then we got good enough to take our music public and got hired to play a little kind of talent show at the Basilica Recreation Center about 1966. We did it and they payed us \$20. So we decided to put the money away and save to buy each member an instrument. We played a few more times and eventually made enough money to buy some equipment and what we didn’t have we rented off Smith Sound, such as PA systems. I was lucky as we knew someone who had drums, but didn’t really play, in fact a few of them, and they would lend me their drums so they would be part of the band. George just kept singing along, lol. Then we entered a talent show at the Lobster Carnival Festival and won as nit the best, but the youngest playing band on PEI at the time. things really took off fir the Chosen Few then, as we were getting gigs all over the Island, some of which we won’t get into, but fun fun fun at everyone. George always kept us laughing with his onstage antics, which leads me to George’s entry into the Guitar playing world.....We were playing at the Rec Center one Friday night and having a blast, with all our great friends in the hall. I was perched up on a couple of 6x6 staging with my borrowed drums from Terry Berguoin and during a break in a song that George was singing, he went behind my staging, where we kept guitar cases and such, picked up Billy’s bass guitar case and pretended to be strumming a guitar. George turned to me after the

*song as we were all laughing and said to me, Bobby , I'm going to learn to "play guitar". I said m go for it.*

*The next morning, George ad I went to Eatons on Kent St, and they had a pinkish colour Beltone Guitar on sale for I think it was \$29 or \$39. George had to have it, but we nay had about \$6 between us. So Eatons allowed George to buy it on a layaway plan. Every week George would make a payment from monies he would get from Shovelling Snow or doing odd jobs for people and he payed off the guitar. Wow, what a day that was. He brought the guitar home, would never let it out of his hands while at home, slept with it, ate with it, studied with it, never out if his hands. He would fall sleep at night playing and wake up in the morning playing. Near drove Mama up the preverbial wall. One day when I came by to pick up George for our walk to school , Mrs Antoniak said to me " Bobby Bobby Bobby what have you done to my Georgie, he never puts that thing (Guitar) down". I will be ok Mrs Antoniak, one day he will be the best. And you know what, "He reached that goal", he was the best, not only in his music ability but in being my friend.*

*May you "Rest In Peace" in the arms of the Lord George my dear Friend. Good knows you deserve it. Say hello to our close friends that have helped prepare you days in Heaven.*

*So to all the Antoniak family, please accept my deepest heartfelt condolences for your loss and the loss of everyone who ever knew him.*

*Bob Doyle*

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**Bob Doyle** - September 28, 2023 at 01:43 PM

JM

*well said and I do remember most of those days*

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**jim macmillan** - September 28, 2023 at 10:54 PM

JA

“ I met George thru the late Laura Smith-they made such beautiful music together and both are such a loss to the music world

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**Janet** - September 28, 2023 at 11:01 AM

KK

“ my husband and I knew George from the Rec Center in Charlottetown when we were just entering our teen age years , he was an amazing musician even then and a great guy everyone wanted to know , he was a special person with a quiet soul , tall and lanky with long dirty blond hair and the most happy smile and he was always happy to see you with a big hug . Of course thru the years we all moved about but his name often came up when we would meet up with the old crowd . Both My husband and I were sad to hear of his passing and send our love to his family and all he knew . love George and Kelva (Josey) Kitson

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**Kelva Kitson** - September 28, 2023 at 08:11 AM

LD

“ I remember George when I worked with Gene MacLellan and George played lead. He was such a great guitar player but an even more, a great human being. Always a smile and always time to talk with you..

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**Louis Douse** - September 28, 2023 at 06:47 AM

JP

“ Being a kid and watching Storm play was amazing especially the guitar player. I knew at that moment it was something I would want to do. But George was so much much more with a bright sense of humor and love of good fun and how fortunate he felt that Jane loved him and gave him the best three presents of his life. Deepest sympathies to George's children, grandchildren, family and friends a good man who will always be missed.

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**Joe Perry** - September 27, 2023 at 06:01 PM

DM

“ We met George and Jane in the co-op where we lived for a few years. George and Jane always had a big smile when you met them..... love them both  
Debbie McPhee and family

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**deborah mcphoe** - September 27, 2023 at 01:54 PM

SD

“ George was an amazing musician and a wonderful man! I have special memories of him growing up on PEI and I know he will be missed by many.  
My condolences to his family and all who loved him. 💔

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**Sharin Duffy** - September 27, 2023 at 01:08 PM

AN

“ As a huge Minglewood fan I heard George play many times. His contribution to all he worked with was huge. So sorry to hear of his passing.

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**Andy** - September 27, 2023 at 11:33 AM

TM

“ I met George in Charlottetown when we were around 11 years old. He was a great guy and I was so proud of him and his music. I'm so sorry he passed. My sincere sympathy to the family

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**Trudi Stewart McAskill** - September 27, 2023 at 10:51 AM

DM

“ Dear Tanja and Kristin,

We were very sorry to learn of your dad's passing. We remember fondly our years living on Elm Street, when you were just little ones. We were blessed to know George and Jane and we remember the sad day when she passed. Your dad truly was a gifted musician and the music world will be less because he is no longer with us. Be assured he is in our prayers.

*Doug and Bev Mader  
Mandeville, Louisiana*

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**Douglas Mader** - September 27, 2023 at 09:05 AM

BS

“ Sincere condolences to George's family and many friends. Rest in peace.

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**Beverly Smith** - September 27, 2023 at 08:30 AM