



## Harry H. Anderson

February 17, 1931 - May 21, 2024

Harry H. Anderson of Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, age 93, died peacefully on May 21, 2024. Harry is survived by his loving wife of nearly 66 years, Evelyn Anderson; and daughters Susan Anderson Clayton (Ronald) of Waukesha, Karen Anderson Crawford (Alan) of Milwaukee, and Signe Anderson of Whitefish Bay; and grandchildren Jack and Julie Clayton. Harry is further survived by his sister-in-law, Nancy Anderson, and his niece and nephews Mary, Doug, and Greg Anderson. Predeceasing Harry were his parents, Harry H., Sr. and Signe Anderson, and his brother, Rev. R. Peter Anderson.

Harry was born in Brooklyn, New York on February 17, 1931, grew up in St. Albans, Queens, New York, and graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School. Harry was a basketball and baseball star at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where he obtained a BA in Social Studies and Secondary Education in 1953. Fascinated by the stories of the American West from boyhood, he chose to pursue graduate studies in American history, focusing on the frontier. In 1954, Harry received his MA from the University of South Dakota.

Due to his low draft number, Harry returned to St. Albans to await his letter from Uncle Sam. During this time, Harry worked as a carpenter building homes in the New York area while pursuing research on the Northern Plains Indians. In 1956, Harry's plans for graduate school and a teaching assistant

position at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL were deferred when his draft number came up. Harry served his US Army tour at Fort Dix in New Jersey.

Just prior to his induction into the Army, a member of Harry's church and a teacher at the Norwegian-Lutheran Hospital in Brooklyn, introduced him to one of her students, Evelyn Larsen and Harry introduced Evelyn to his favorite sport: ice hockey. In the Summer of 1958, Harry, following his discharge from the Army, married Evelyn on June 7th, and began his graduate studies at Northwestern. After some time in Evanston, Harry, and Evelyn—and by now Susan—moved west to Pierre, South Dakota upon Harry's appointment as the Assistant Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society.

In 1963, the Andersons moved to Whitefish Bay, and Harry became the Executive Director of the Milwaukee County Historical Society. As the first professional historian to lead the Society, Harry oversaw an development and expansion of the Society and its collections throughout his 35 years of service. During Harry's first years at MCHS, the organization moved its home from the unfinished seventh floor of the Milwaukee County Courthouse to the former Second Ward Savings Bank building, allowing for greater public access to Milwaukee history through exhibits of its collections and archival materials. Harry's leadership also led to growth of the Society's publications and public outreach programs for various organizations and schools. Dubbed "Milwaukee County's Primary Pack Rat" upon his retirement in 1998, Harry left an indelible mark on the Society and on Milwaukee community's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of its history. In recognition of Harry's dedication and commitment to MCHS, and his love of historical research, the MCHS Board of Directors renamed the Society's archival center the Harry H. Anderson Research Library.

Harry's expertise in Northern Plains Indians and the 19th Century Indian Wars

resulted in two unique opportunities in Harry's professional career, both of which took him to Washington, DC. In 1962, Harry served as an expert witness on behalf of Sioux tribes suing the US government for the return of the Black Hills of South Dakota. His testimony before the Indian Court of Claims resulted in a monetary judgment in favor of the Sioux tribes. Harry returned to DC to serve as a consultant to the US Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on the Separation of Powers. The issue before the subcommittee was the reparations to the Indian victims of the 1890 hostile engagement between the US Army and the Indians on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

Both in South Dakota and Milwaukee, Harry's role as a historian also encompassed research and writing. Harry was the author of over one hundred fifty articles, and innumerable "talks", as he referred to them. Harry and his long-time friend, Frederick I. Olson, co-wrote Milwaukee at the Gathering of the Waters, a pictorial and entertaining commentary on the growth and development of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Harry also edited the prize-winning English translation of German American Pioneers in Wisconsin and Michigan; a compilation of letters of the Frank-Kerler Families. Harry returned to the West by editing writings of Milwaukee Indian fighter Gen. Charles King in — Indian Campaigns: Sketches of Calvary Service in Arizona and the Northern Plains—.

As a natural and gifted teacher, Harry taught Milwaukee and Wisconsin history at UW–Milwaukee for many years. He was an enthusiastic member of the Lutheran Church wherever he lived, active in the youth sports and education programs. Harry was a long-time 4th grade Sunday School teacher at Bay Shore Lutheran Church and served as president of the Church Council. He was a founding member and served as President of the Swedish American Historical Association of Wisconsin. For a time, he even became a local

television personality regularly appearing on “Dialing for Dollars”. Throughout his life, Harry was associated with an innumerable number of local and national organizations.

Harry was devoted to his wife, Evelyn, their three daughters, and later their two grandchildren. Harry often found creative ways to weave stories of the past into most family events. MCHS events soon became Anderson family events. Research trips evolved into family vacations, often with new and unusual activities. Of course, Harry was a regular on the Whitefish Bay and Waukesha school circuits, guest teaching at his children’s and grandchildren’s schools whenever asked. Although he never fully recovered from departure of his beloved Dodgers from Brooklyn, he quickly became an enthusiastic fan of all Wisconsin sports teams, but especially the teams on which his daughters and grandchildren were members.

Harry enjoyed many decades-long friendships. Those friends will remember his wit, willingness to serve when called upon, and the great love he had for his family and friends. Harry will be dearly missed.

The family would like to thank the staff at Linden Grove Waukesha – Rehab Unit for their care of and friendship with Harry during his stay there.

Services for Harry will be held on Wednesday, June 5th at 1:30 pm at Bay Shore Lutheran Church at 1200 E. Hampton Road in Whitefish Bay, WI. A visitation with the family and reception will take place at the Church following the ceremony. The interment will be privately held at Arlington Park Cemetery.

Please refer to the Northshore Funeral Services website for further memories and details of the service.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Harry H. Anderson Research Library at the Milwaukee County Historical Society or Bay Shore

Lutheran Church.

# Previous Events

## Service

JUN 5. 1:30 PM.

Bay Shore Lutheran Church

## Visitation

JUN 5 (CT)

Bay Shore Lutheran Church

*A visitation with the family and reception will take place at the Church immediately following the ceremony*