

Robert King

Biography

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Robert Davis King of 7 Canton St., North Easton, Mass. husband of Sally Greenleaf (Currier) King, died on December 2 after a yearlong battle with cancer.

Born November 27, 1914, he was the son of Fred D. and Marion (Searle) King and a lifelong resident of North Easton. He was a direct descendant of Mayflower passengers Myles Standish, John Alden, and James Chilton.

He graduated from Boston University with a Bachelor of Music degree in 1936 and received a Master of Music degree from Harvard University in 1938 where he studied music composition with Nadia Boulanger, Walter Piston, and Edward Burlingame Hill. King taught at Boston University where he formed and conducted a brass choir. He also founded the Boston Brass Quartet in which he played euphonium. During World War II he served as Bandleader of the 81st Infantry Division, which saw action in the Pacific Theater, and he was awarded the Bronze Star.

To many musicians around the world, the name Robert King is synonymous with brass music. From 1940 to 1991 he ran the Robert King Music Company, publishing the Music for Brass Series that had a seminal impact on concert music for brass instruments. King edited works from earlier centuries and also published new music from both established and little-known composers. The scores that King published were in his own hand and he printed the music himself on a press in his own home. His mail order company also sold all other publishers' music for brass instruments. The King catalog Brass Player's Guide is still the primary source for information about brass music in print

From 1984 until his death he was a member of the Board of Overseers of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He donated scholarships for Brass Legends who studied at the Tanglewood Institute, and he endowed the principal trumpet chair of the Boston Symphony Orchestra that was named after his longtime friend and colleague Roger Voisin, former principal trumpeter with the BSO. He compiled a Primary Study of the Personnel and Repertory of the

Boston Symphony, an exhaustive multi-volume work that is now in the Library of Congress.

In 1994 he received an honorary Doctor of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music in recognition of his service to the art and profession of music.

Robert King is survived by his widow Sally, two daughters Judith Drake King of Farmington, Conn., and Nancy Page King of Cambridge, Mass., a son-in-law Stephen M. Gryc of Farmington, Conn., and a grandson William E. Gryc of Amherst. Mass.

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