

David Allen Hurd, Sr. aka The Father of the Folk Club

The first time I met Dave was the second time the Folk Club's Open Mic was held at the Tortilla Factory. It was the fall of 1987 and, the moment I walked in the door, I knew I had found my family. Along with Bill Davis, Tim Davis and others, Dave Hurd was as welcoming as anyone I'd met. Dave and I became close, over the years, and like his daughter, Gail Vetter, has said, "Once you are Dave's friend, you are always Dave's friend. He never leaves anyone behind." Even in his passing, his guiding hand can be felt in our Folk Club Family.



Some of the fondest memories of Dave were when he sang The Fox (...went out on a chilly night...) on his old Martin guitar. He sang with a twinkle in his eye and an uncomplicated style that made it easy to sing along. Dave was a fan of Burl Ives and their voices shared the same warm, deep reminder that folk songs give us a common thread and a bond that can last a lifetime. Dave was often the emcee, and you could always expect to hear The Christmas Angel story at our annual holiday parties. I swear, every year that story got longer and the good-natured groans from the crowd made Dave laugh and laugh. Oh, how I miss that laugh.

As an original Board Member, Dave was the calming voice of reason when we developed the Folk Club Bylaws. There were two camps in the group, one pushed for quality controls on the musicians, the other pressed for inclusiveness, regardless of talent. Dave successfully reasoned for inclusiveness, and that continues to be the overriding tenet in all the Folk Club does. I believe that is why the Folk Club has been so successful all these years, and for that we have Dave to thank.



I think I'm not alone when I say it was always to Dave we turned when a critical decision needed to be made. He was the stabilizing influence in our folkie family, he was the mediator, the voice of reason. I remember once, when Ray Kaminsky and Dave had a difference of opinion, the two of them talked for a very long time. Later, Ray told me, "Dave has a way of making you see the other side of the argument and, more often than not, how silly you've been." And he always did it with care, concern and love.

David kept us all grounded and, to me, was always the father figure in the Folk Club.

For 35 years, Dave Hurd has been the heart and soul of the Folk Club. When Dave passed into memory, on July 2, 2020, the Folk Club family breathed a collective cry of grief. The Father of the Folk Club is no longer among us, but his soul lives on in the music community he so lovingly helped create and curate.

- Ellen Kaminsky, Folk Club lifetime member

He will always be remembered with treasured memories of his longtime generous contributions to the Folk Club. I can't imagine the Folk Club without Dave. Such an anchor!

– Rose Haskell, Folk Club founder and first president

My heart broke with this news. Dave was the Folk Club to me. He was there the first time I went, at The Red Caboose in Reston's Tall Oaks, and at all the stops along the way since. While I haven't been able to be there the last few years, I knew the Folk Club was in Dave's good hands. Bless him, for all he has done.

- Ginna Brahms



I'm crushed. Dave was - and will remain - an enormous part of the Folk Club soul, as long as we can think back on all the things he took upon himself to make the Club what it is: the best (and maybe the only) one of its kind.

- Bob Hampton

David Allen "Dave" Hurd, Sr.

August 3, 1941 - July 2, 2020



David Allen Hurd Sr. was born in Warren, Ohio, the first child of Max Hurd and Maree (Forney). He came into the world with a ready smile and blonde ringlets to make Shirley Temple jealous. Throughout his life, Dave never abandoned anyone. If you were Dave's friend once, you were his friend forever.

Hiram College gave Dave a Bachelor's Degree before he joined the Air Force and met his first wife. That union produced a daughter, Gail Maree, and a son, David Jr. At Indiana University, Dave earned a Master's Degree in Computer Science. He worked as a Computer Systems Analyst for the US Army until he retired, but his time in the military and the people he worked alongside remained important to him even after that.

A feisty redhead named Beth Drumheller then captured his heart. Together, they moved to an idyllic home which they christened “Double Trouble”, where he finally was able to live the life he had dreamed of with a partner who understood and adored him.

The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon became a major part of his life, from its very first meeting through its growth into a 35 year institution. Dave’s steady hand and weekly presence assured that it will continue to grow and thrive into the future. The weekly Tuesday night performances and biannual weekend music parties were some of Dave’s favorite times. He was never happier than when his home was full of love and music.



Dave Hurd, Sr. passed away peacefully at home on July 2nd, 2020 at the age of 78, surrounded by family. His death leaves a hole that can never be filled, and he will be deeply missed by the many people who loved him. He is survived by his wife, Beth; brother John and family; children Gail and Rod, and David Jr and Tiffany; stepchildren Richard and Ji, Kurt and Alison, and Brian; and eight grateful grandchildren.



Dave never wanted much fuss made about him, so we won’t probably make much of one now. The family is hoping to hold a Celebration of Life, to which all of his many friends are welcome. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Folk Club of Reston-Herndon to support their continuing operation, or to Blue Ridge Hospice, who were invaluable in their kindness and care in his last days. Beth says weed-pulling is also welcome anytime.

- Gail Karuna-Vetter, Dave’s daughter