Eddie Oyer Taught Northeast to Vance



KANSAS CITY, Missouri - Mr. Eddie B. Oyer, 85. of Kansas City, Mo., passed away March 17, 2015, at home with his wife Patty and sister-in-law, Vickie by his side.

Eddie's memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 18, in the Main Sanctuary at the Independence Boulevard Christian Church, 606 Gladstone Blvd.

Eddie was born on Nov. 20, 1929, in Jacksonville, Mo., to Alfred and Jean Brooks. As an infant, he was adopted by his uncle and aunt, Clarence and Ida Mae Oyer of Kansas City, Mo. A lifelong resident of the Northeast area, he went to Gladstone Elementary School and graduated from Northeast High School in

childhood, City. To great acclaim, Ed- Later on, when she had a sengers. his adopt- die performed at the Omar child, Eddie took over the Even during his years Eddie was preceded in saw in him the Hotel Continental at was born. Mae and man, a musical genius.

mother had to be present. mander one day had heard method was to have chil- the Independence Boule- neighbors; old time friends At the age of 10, owing to Eddie playing the piano and dren play the piano from vard Christian Church. In the Robinsons; and his budhis music expertise, Eddie he decided that is was more small wooden fully func- 2005 the Northeast News dy sister-in-law, Vickie, who was given the extraordinary important for Eddie to entioning pianos that could published an extensive ardeeply misses him; Patty's privilege of playing on the tertain than to blow things be situated on a TV tray or ticle on Eddie's many ac- sister, Betty, Ioe the Bar-Viennese Steinway piano of up and was transferred into table. Even after retirement, complishments, in which ber and a special lady who the Ignacy Jan Paderewski, the Base band. It was dur- Eddie continued to teach they named him, the man helped "Mr. Eddie" - she the renowned pianist and ing this time in the Army, his one student up to the time who "Taught Northeast to knows who she is. composer who was the for- talent for music was being he passed away. mer Prime Minister of Porecognized and in 1954 was On August 25, 1967, Ed. In the spring of 2012, can be made to Indepen-Eddie was distinguished on the Arlene Francis televi- when he married the love of mato established the Eddie Church, 606 Gladstone for his brilliant smile and sion show in New York City his life, Patty Strohm. Their and Patty Over Scholarship Blvd., or to the Eddie and sequin costumes. He was where he took first place. love story continued for 49 at Vandercook College of Patty Oyer Scholarship

for music Avenue. Equally at home chased a small building His involvement included nor Mae Ryan. He is surand he was playing jazz, contemporary on 5240 St. John Ave., and memberships in: The Kan- vived by his beloved wife trained by music or concertos by Rach- called it "The Eddie Oyer sas City Tourist Commis- of 47 years, Patty; brothers his sister, maninoff, many considered School of Music and Dance." sion, The Musicians' Union, Donald Brooks (Mary Lee), Eleanor Eddie, a deeply humble There, he remained for al- the Northeast Community A.W. Brooks, Robert Brooks most 50 years until his re- Council (where Eddie and (Bernie), sister Linnie Di-He continued this ca-tirement in 2010. His thou-Patty first met), the Kansas Giamcomo (Robert); sisterdie's musi- reer until 1950, when he sands of students learned City Chapter of the National in-laws Vickie Strohm and cal accom- enlisted in the U.S. Army the gift of music, dance Professional Business As- Betty West; brother-in-law plishments and was stationed at Fort and pageant performance sociation, board member Charlie Strohm (Candace) d u r i n g Leavenworth, Kan. During from Eddie, showering him of the Kansas City Museum and many nieces and nephhis youth this time, he was trained as with great respect and love. and Chairman of the local ews, great nieces and nephwere many a combat engineer. Eddie Many of his students went Chautauqua Committee. ews and great-great nieces and leg- had admitted that his talents on to professional music ca- For many years, Eddie and nephews. endary. Eddie began per- did not extend to the han- reers, including performing performed for the Glennon Patty Oyer wishes to forming at the age of three dling of explosives and was at the Starlight Theater, lo-Nursing Home. He was an thank in a special way Dr. — a piano prodigy — some- always "getting blown up" cal music theaters and even Elder, Sunday School teach- Steiner and his staff, North times in lounges and cock- during exercises. Before his the Lawrence Welk Orches- er, and pianist at Budd Park Care Hospice, Rev. Lee tail settings, that because battalion was to shipped tra on television. Part of Christian Church, as well Chiaramonte and son, Jaiof his tender youth, his out to Korea, the base com- Eddie's inspired education as an Elder and pianist at me; their dear next door

1947. Dur- for The Jenkins Music her by playing the piano ued to entertain by playing worthy students in both the

Dance."

featured in a talent contest die's life was further fulfilled former student John Ar- dence Boulevard Christian known as "The Keyboard After his service in the years. During those years, Music, in Chicago. The Fund at Vandercook College Atom Splitter" because Army, he returned home to they were inseparable. To-scholarship was designed of Music, 3140 S. Federal of the meticulous way he Kansas City. His sister, Eleagether, they shared advento honor "the powerful im-Street, Chicago, Ill., 60616, played the "Boogie Woo- nor Mae, had a dance and tures traveling around the pact Mr. Oyer's presence also at www.VanderCook. gie." He played at the Muel- music studio on the third U.S.A. and Europe. Later has had" on the life of his edu. Online condolences bach Hotel, The Broadway floor of the house on N. on, they loved taking ocean many students. The schol- can be made to www.mcgil-Interlude, and at concerts Lawn Avenue. He assisted cruises, where he contin- arship is a gift awarded to leysheil.com.

ing his Company all across Kansas during student lessons. the piano for his fellow pas- Bachelor and Master of Music college programs.

ed mother Lounge that was located in business and a local legend as a teacher, he still found death by his parents; broththe time to involve himself ers, James and Michael talent 11th Street and Baltimore In the 60's, Eddie pur- with many civic activities. Brooks, and a sister, Elea-

Memorial Contributions

The Over Studios



Eddie Oyer - - Keyboard Atom Splitter Entertainer from Coast to Coast

By BRAD FINCH Northeast News

the Northeast News in Oct. of 1998.

years now, I hadn't heard of Eddie Oyer un- in starting him in music. "My mother had George Gobel. til I saw him playing for a Shepherd's Cenno musical training, but she had a good ear Now 68, Eddie Oyer has seen ter event just a few weeks ago. From the for it." he said. "She would listen in while I music take many turns. Popular very beginning, I was impressed.

The first thing that impressed me was you're doing, but that isn't right."

note of is his versatility. As I watched him ers would make when they saw the kid that his eyes seem brighter when he talks about is the same place in which his sister taught take "12th Street Rag," with its complex 3 would be accompanying them. Also an ac- Jazz. Especially improvisational Jazz. "It's al- dance over 50 years ago. "I don't teach over 4 structure, and effortlessly transform complished dancer, Eddie often performed ways going to be a little different each time dance as much as I used to." he said. "Arit into a Tchaikovsky-esque classical piece, at the Gladstone and Mainstreet Theaters. you listen." he said. "And you have to listen thritis." But nothing is slowing him down then take it straight into a Rumba, I knew By 18, Eddie Oyer began playing around closely, because you may not hear that parate the piano. Eddie Oyer can be heard each there was more Eddie Oyer than meets the the country. His fast paced style earned him ticular rift again."

and again I found myself impressed. "I be- shows and radio programs and Editor's Note: This article originally ran in gan playing when I was 3," he said, "and could be heard on WHB's "88 I've been practicing ever since." he added Keys" program along with new Although I've lived in Northeast for 10 with a grin. His mother was instrumental talents such as Liberace and

the fact that while it was obvious from the By age 15, Eddie Oyer was teaching mu- with young people. When asked start Eddie Oyer is a skilled pianist, he nev-sic at his sister's dance studio on St. John, about the come-back Swing muer over-played anything. That is to say that and playing at supper clubs in the Contisic is making, he said "Actually, he played each piece the way his audience nental, President and Belreive Hotels, and it was never really gone." When wanted to hear it; clean and straight for- the Zephyr Room, among others, around asked what his favorite musical ward, in a manner which captivated his lis- Kansas City. Since he wasn't old enough style is, he shows his diplomatic teners, and for many, seemed to take them to get into the clubs by himself, a family side. "I like them all. Classical, Latin, Show since I was 18 months old." he told me. He back to the time they'd first heard the tune. member had to escort him. He especially Tunes, Religious, War Songs, Swing, Boo- went to Northeast High School and played The second thing you can't help but take enjoyed the double-takes some of the sing- gie-Woogie, Jazz, Blues, etc." he said. But in the school band. The Eddie Oyer Studio

We got together the next week, He danced and played at USO

practiced and call down 'I don't know what music he was playing as a teenager is again becoming popular

Oyer's home. "I've lived in the same house Sunday at Budd Park Christian Church and the moniker "The Keyboard Atom-Spliter." Through it all, Northeast has been Eddie on Thursday afternoons at Glennon Place.

By DEAN HUGHSON

Northeast News

originally ran in the North- with Lawrence Welk's oreast News on Oct. 19, 2005. chestra. We caught up with

odds are pretty good you tions. took music lessons from long-time music and dance teacher Eddie Over. Literally thousands and thousands of hopeful musicians have

Editor's Note: This article reers - including playing classes also. If you grew up in North- Eddie recently by telephone east anytime since 1954, the and asked him a few ques-

How long have you been involved in music?

studied under this man, and I was 15 playing in bands. I always been piano, and now some went on to music caplayed for my sister's dance I teach keyboards a lot also.

How did you come to be involved in teaching music and dance?

Well, I joined the union family. I started as a dance when I was 12, but became teacher, but ended up teacha musician in earnest when ing music. My speciality has

My sister Donna Elnor and country and western. I May Over owned the studio, learned to be successful that and I took it over in 1954 you teach what it is that the when she left to raise her customers want.

Eddie, have you had a favorite music style personally and to teach?

I like classical, jazz, rock

Eddie, tell us about your personal life.

Missouri Pacific Railroad. My ed from Northeast in 1947. house are living anymore; I

lived here my whole life. Eddie, what changes have you

seen in Northeast during your My dad was a railroad man and worked for the 75 years of living there?

Well, it has changed a mom saw to it that I learned lot. None of the people who to play the piano. I graduat- originally lived around my I went into the Army as a have new neighbors. Most of combat engineer but ended the businesses in Northeast up in the music part of the have changed hands except military. I married my wife, just a few of us. My business Patty Oyer, 38 years ago. I've has changed a bit. I used to teach dance but my balance isn't as good at this age so

that and keyboards are what the kids are most interested in these days.

Music is my hobby also. a good teacher and stressed I guess. I play for Budd Park good music with a band but Christian Church on Sunalso had Glenn Miller ardays and also teach Sunday rangements for the band, which kept us interested. If

remember helping you

the most?

you are a musician, you play

Eddie, was there a teacher at

school there.

Eddie, what are

your hobbies?

they had school shows, like learned from him and from opinion. the Viking Varieties he used a singing teacher whose me in the orchestra. He was name I can't remember.

Eddie, what do you think is the considering music as a career? future of the Northeast Community?

It depends on the peo- is a tough business. ple. If they want it to be good, it will be. There are

I teach piano a lot because Northeast High School who you whatever music there is; too people who don't care but what his plans are for retire- from all of us who learned many people specialize and there are enough people ment and he laughed and so much from you, and your

Do you have advice for the young people of Northeast

Do the music but have something to fall back on. It

In closing, I asked Eddie sician's musician. Thank you day," October 23.

when their type of music who care and the future of told me "Die at my piano." Northeast Viking spirit is a Mr. Nebin Wassen. When dies, so does their career. I Northeast will be great in my Indeed, Eddie is one of a strong one. kind and an icon for Historic Eddie Oyer's Music Stu-Northeast. On behalf of the dio is located at 5240 St. many of us who love mu- John Ave. The studio's numsic, I would like to extend ber is 816-231-5242. Budd

sicians. Eddie Over is a mu- Day on "Bring a Friend Sun-

thanks to this wonderful Park Christian Church, 4925 man who has given so many St. John Ave., will be honorpeople the gift of being muing him with an Eddie Over