



Dwight L. Oarr

April 11, 1935 - January 19, 2016

Dwight L. Oarr, died on January 19, 2016. He was a resident of Sarasota for 17 years after moving here with his wife, Katherine, from Greenwich, CT in 1997. He grew up in Greenwich where he began his long career in music as organist at a local church at the age of 12. He was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Trinity College in Hartford, CT and earned his master's degree in music (organ) from Yale, where he received the Horatio Parker Scholarship for outstanding musicianship. Oarr was Music Director at the New Canaan Congregational Church and organist at Temple Beth El in Stamford, CT. and also Professor of Music at Wells College in Aurora, NY. Mr. Oarr gave many organ recitals at cathedrals in the U.S. including the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., St. Patrick's Cathedral, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Church of the Heavenly Rest and St. John's Cathedral in New York City. He also performed in England, France and Holland, including Notre Dame, Paris. His greatest love though was accompanying and he enjoyed working with singers in NYC voice studios and playing for choral groups. He accompanied the Greenwich Choral Society on a tour of England in 1985. In Sarasota, he accompanied the Belle Canto women's chorus and several local singers. After retiring to Sarasota, Mr. Oarr became active again as an organist and pianist. He was organist at Trinity United Methodist Church in Bradenton, FL and at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church in Sarasota. He volunteered at the Music Archive and served as the head of the sheet music department. For many years he performed in chamber music groups on the Music Sundays series sponsored by the Music Archive. He was also sub-Dean of the Sarasota American Guild of Organists chapter. Until recent years, his favorite relaxation, besides playing chamber music with his wife and friends, was playing bridge and swimming. Dwight Oarr is survived by his wife of 45 years, Katherine, his brother, Royce Oarr, and several nieces and nephews. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. His family requests that any donations in his honor be made to the Lewy Body Dementia Association, 912 Killian Road, S.W., Lilburn, GA 30047 or to the Sarasota Orchestra, 709 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL. 34236.