

BEATLES

Fans, musicians mourn George Harrison death

BY HILLEL ITALIE
Associated Press Writer

Paul McCartney called him "my baby brother." A fan thought him "quiet and nice and powerful." Musicians and music lovers on Friday mourned the death of George Harrison, the "quiet Beatle" who fit in famously, if not always happily, alongside his more colorful bandmates.

"I am devastated and very, very sad," McCartney told reporters outside his London home. "He was a lovely guy and a very brave man and had a wonderful sense of humor. He is really just my baby brother."

Harrison, at 58 the youngest Beatle, died at 1:30 p.m. Thursday at a friend's Los Angeles home after a battle with cancer, longtime friend Gavin De Becker told The Associated Press late Thursday. Harrison's wife, Olivia, and son Dhani, 24, were with him.

"He left this world as he lived in it, conscious of God, fearless of death, and at peace, surrounded by family and friends," the family said in a statement.

With Harrison's death, two Beatles survive: McCartney and Ringo Starr. John Lennon was shot to death by a deranged fan in 1980.

The Beatles were four distinct personalities joined as a singular force in the rebellious 1960s, influencing everything from hair styles to music. Whether meditating, dropping acid or sending up the squares in the film "A Hard Day's Night," the band inspired millions.

The story of the Beatles was as much a story of their fans: the rebels who identified with Lennon, the girls who fell for Paul, the little kids who adored Ringo.

Harrison's appeal was harder to define. He wasn't the cleverest Beatle, that was John. Paul was the cutest and Ringo the most lovable. But something about Harrison — the mysticism, the quiet competence, even the moodiness — endeared him to fans and musicians alike.

Edna McDonald, 49, from the Welsh mining town of Llanelli, recalled seeing the Beatles perform in Bristol, England, as a teen-ager. While her friends chose Paul McCartney as their favorite Beatle, she said she was drawn to Harrison.

"He was quiet, different from the others," McDonald, vacationing in New York, said softly at Strawberry Fields, a Lennon tribute site in Central Park. "I respected him more for that. I was always influenced by how he was a silent partner but had a lot of influence on the group. It showed me that you could be quiet and nice and powerful at the same time."

Ayessa Rourke, 43, a giraffe keeper at the Los Angeles Zoo, brought roses and wiped away tears at the Beatles star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"He was just a lovely person and a great example of what a human can do, and the great things we are all capable of," she said.

As the news of his death spread, radio stations played music by the Beatles and by Harrison, and fans grieved. They gathered at Strawberry Fields and left bouquets and tributes at the gate of Harrison's 19th century Gothic mansion in Henley-on-Thames in England.

But Harrison never cared for all the attention. He preferred being a musician to being a star, and soon soured on Beatlemania — the screaming girls, the hair-tearing mobs, the wild chases from limos to gigs and back to limos. Like Lennon, his memories of the Beatles were tempered by what he felt was lost in all the madness.

"There was never anything, in any of the Beatle experiences really, that good: even the best thrill soon got tiring," Harrison wrote in his 1979 book, "I, Me, Mine." "Your own space, man, it's so important. That's why we were doomed, because we didn't have any. We were like monkeys in a zoo."

Still, in a 1992 interview with *The Daily Telegraph*, Harrison confided: "We had the time of our lives: We laughed for years."

Peers enjoyed his company. He was close to Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne.

George Harrison 1943-2001

The 'quiet Beatle' who moved us



The Beatles perform on the CBS "Ed Sullivan Show" in New York Feb. 9, 1964

Feb. 25, 1943: Harrison is born in Liverpool, England, to Harold and Louise Harrison.
August 1958: He joins The Quarrymen, a group that includes schoolmate Paul



Harrison in 1964

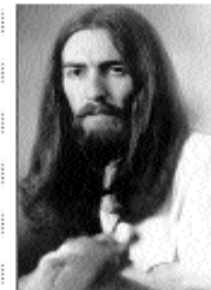
McCartney and John Lennon.
1959: He joins McCartney, Lennon and Stuart Sutcliffe in a band called the Silver Beatles.
August 1960: The band, now called the Beatles, goes to Germany, quickly becoming a popular local act.
May 9, 1962: Producer George Martin, of EMI subsidiary Parlophone, signs Beatles to first record contract.
October 1962: The Beatles' first single, "Love Me Do," becomes a top-20 hit in Britain.

February 1963: "Please Please Me" becomes the Beatles' first chart-topping song in Britain. The band's first album, also called "Please Please Me," is released the following month.
Dec. 23, 1963: "I Want to Hold Your Hand" becomes the band's first U.S. release; weeks later, it is their first song to top the Billboard charts.

February 1964: Beatles appear on Ed Sullivan show and immediately become the biggest band in America.
Jan. 21, 1966: Harrison marries Patti Boyd.
Aug. 29, 1966: Beatles play last live show, at San Francisco's Candlestick Park.

November 1968: Harrison releases film score "Wonderwall Music," his first solo recording and first LP for Beatles' Apple label.
1969: Harrison's song "Something" is No. 1 hit in United States for the Beatles.

April 10, 1970: McCartney announces he is leaving the Beatles, prompting the band to split up.
1970: Harrison releases solo album, "All Things Must Pass."
Aug. 1, 1971: Concert for Bangladesh is held at Madison Square Garden with friends including Ringo



Harrison in 1972

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Harrison on vacation in Italy with his wife, Olivia, in 2001.



With J. Castello/AP

Starr, Bob Dylan and Ravi Shankar.

Nov. 2, 1974: Harrison becomes first Beatle to stage solo world tour.

June 9, 1977: Harrison divorces Patti Boyd, who later marries Eric Clapton.

Aug. 1, 1978: His son Dhani is born.
Sept. 2, 1978: Harrison marries Dhani's mother, Olivia Arias.

1979: He establishes Handmade Films to produce Monty Python's "Life of Brian."

July 1981: Harrison's tribute to John Lennon, "All Those Years Ago," featuring McCartney and Starr, peaks at No. 2 in United States.

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July 9, 2001: He confirms that he had radiation treatment in Switzerland for a tumor.

Nov. 29, 2001: Harrison dies of cancer.

January 1988: He hits No. 1 in the United States with "Got My Mind Set on You."

1994: Handmade Films sells for \$8.5 million.

November 1988: Harrison releases "Traveling Wilburys: Volume One" with Roy Orbison, Tom Petty, Bob Dylan and Jeff Lynne.

June 1998: Harrison discloses that he has been treated for throat cancer.

Dec. 30, 1999: He suffers a collapsed lung as he is stabbed several times by deranged man who breaks into his home near London.

July 9, 2001: He confirms that he had radiation treatment in Switzerland for a tumor.

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SOURCE: Associated Press