

## Ray Conniff Memorabilia and Memories



**Exhibition: February 15<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019**

**Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 5pm**

**Opening Reception: Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> from 2pm-4pm. Free & open to all.**

**Reception includes performances from the students of the Attleboro High School choral and instrumental programs.**

**Reservations are not required, but are appreciated by Thursday, February 14th: [508-222-2644](tel:508-222-2644) x10 or [office@attleboroartsmuseum.org](mailto:office@attleboroartsmuseum.org)**

↓ Tamara in front of the exhibition rooms with two of her dad's trombone cases



Doug Mitchell (right) and his daughter Jenna (center) attended the Conniff reception in Attleboro on February 16, 2019. He wrote on that date, 'It was a tasteful exhibit that included a few surprises, including Ray's very recognizable concert attire from the 1970s. There were performances by AHS students, who will soon be recipients of the Conniff's generosity, but the highlight was when they sang Ray's 1934 class song "Parting." Tamara told me that the Grammy shown here has required a few repairs over the years, including emergency welding at the high school yesterday.'



← Exhibition rooms  
(photo taken by  
Doug before the  
reception)

The reception →





Attleboro High School jazz band members, from left, Ryan Tangney, William Smith, Ryan Gordan (on drums), Evan Capar and Allison Morin (Photo by MARK STOCKWELL / THE SUN CHRONICLE)



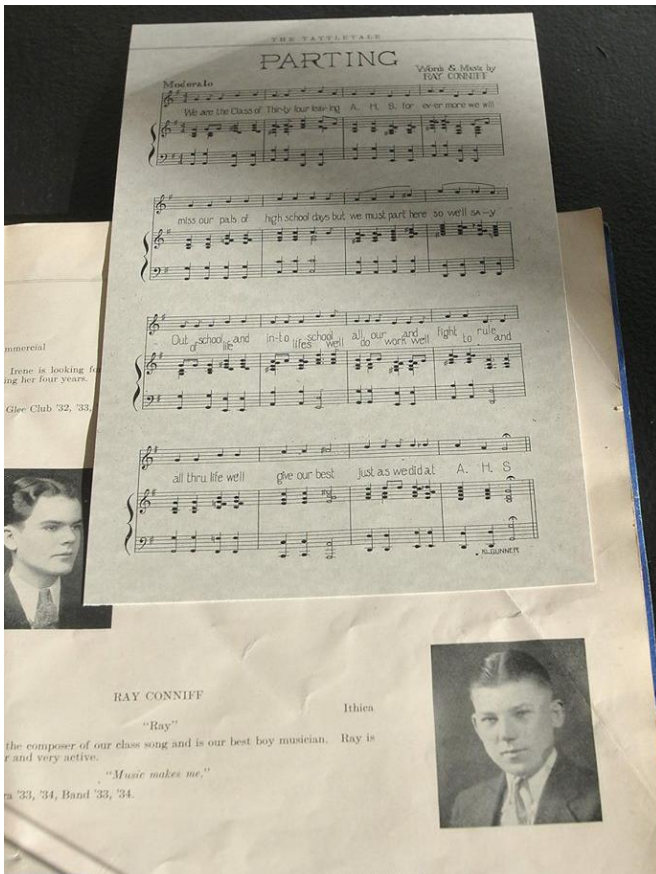
Tamara Conniff, acknowledges the AHS jazz band and gives a tip to the trombonists (Photo by MARK STOCKWELL / THE SUN CHRONICLE)



← Photo taken by Tamara's husband Kevin DaProza. He wrote on his Facebook page: "So proud of my Wife Tamara Conniff DaProza. She found a permanent home for her dad's memorabilia and set up a school music scholarship, a endowment for the Arts at Attleboro Arts Museum and Bought the Attleboro High School Marching Band new Uniforms. I was beautiful to see such heartwarming Gratitude. Tamara will be able to continue her dad's Legacy in his home town of Attleboro."

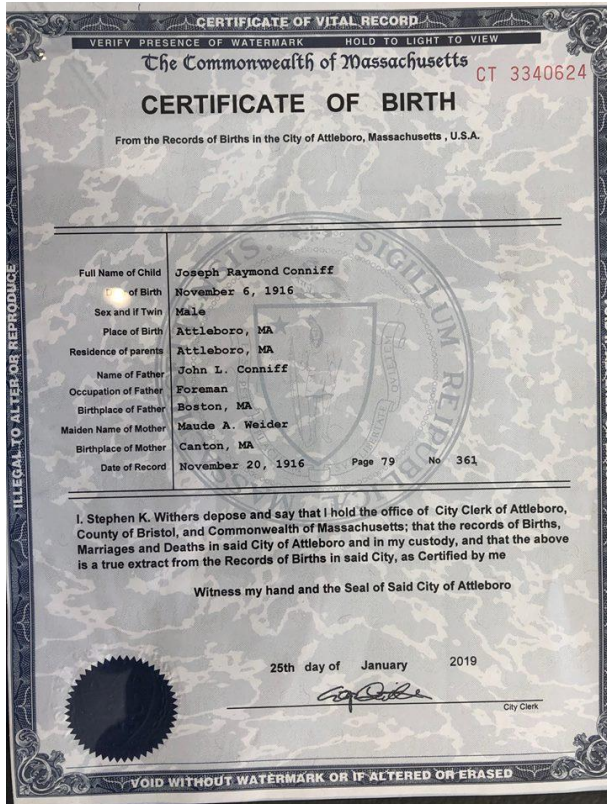


↓ Tamara Conniff gets emotional Saturday as the Attleboro High School Select Choir performs her father's song "Parting" — a song Ray Conniff wrote for his AHS graduation in 1934 — during the Attleboro Arts Museum's opening of an exhibit dedicated to Conniff's life. To the right of Tamara is her husband, Kevin Daproza. (Photo by MARK STOCKWELL)

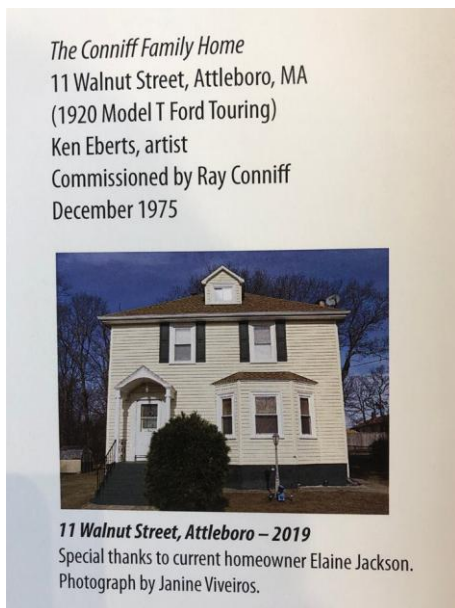


← The sheet music for Ray Conniff's song "Parting" and his AHS yearbook photo. (Photo by MARK STOCKWELL / THE SUN CHRONICLE)





↑ Ray's birth certificate / A photo of Ray in the 30s ↑



↑ The Conniff Family Home – on the right a painting with Ray, Vera and Tamara in an old car ↑



← A photo of the Bob Crosby Band (not "Bob Cats" as stated on the plaque) with Doris Day in front. Ray (with a moustache) is the second gentleman behind her.



Ray playing a solo in the Bunny Berigan band (1938) →



The opening of the Ray Conniff exhibit at the Attleboro Arts Museum Saturday featured music by the Attleboro High School jazz band, Conniff's alma mater, and the Select Chorus. The exhibit featured memorabilia from the late Grammy Award-winning musician. Jonathan Burns of Attleboro looks at the award-winning albums on display. The trombone in the case was played by Conniff in 1942. (Photo by MARK STOCKWELL / THE SUN CHRONICLE)

↓ Ray's Grammy for 'Somewhere My Love' and Grammy nominations for his albums 'Jean' and 'Honey'



Thanks to Doug Mitchell for providing most of these photographs. More soon.

On the next page: the article that appeared in THE SUN CHRONICLE before the exhibition.

Source: [http://www.thesunchronicle.com/news/local\\_news/ray-conniff-exhibition-pieces-arrive-in-attleboro/article\\_4f73b17c-167d-5ddc-81de-f4e1fd9bb455.html](http://www.thesunchronicle.com/news/local_news/ray-conniff-exhibition-pieces-arrive-in-attleboro/article_4f73b17c-167d-5ddc-81de-f4e1fd9bb455.html)

# Ray Conniff exhibition pieces arrive in Attleboro

By Rick Foster for The Sun Chronicle, Jan 30, 2019

For more than 60 years, Ray Conniff's career was a whirlwind filled with big bands, hit records and musical innovation that led to meetings with presidents, filmmakers and astronauts — along with the adoration of millions of fans.

Beginning Feb. 15, dozens of recordings, instruments and other mementos of the Attleboro-born bandleader's life will be on public display for the first time at the Attleboro Arts Museum, with the support of Conniff's family and the Ray Conniff Foundation.

A wooden crate containing at least 50 pieces of Conniff memorabilia — including his beloved King 2B silver trombone, a collection of his gold and platinum albums and awards along with historic photos and stage attire — arrived at the museum Tuesday from California.

Conniff died in 2002 at age 85.

"It's a remarkable collection," said museum president Mim Brooks Fawcett. "Altogether, there are about 350 pounds of items."

The upcoming Conniff exhibit, dubbed "A Backstage Tour," was arranged by Conniff's daughter Tamara with the help of the museum and Conniff family friend Tony Viveiros.

The public will have a chance to view the Conniff collection, including interactive recordings and videos, at the museum Feb. 15 through Feb. 22. Thereafter, all of the items will be donated to Attleboro High School, where they eventually become part of a permanent display.

The items constitute a trove of musical history and innovation — publicity photos of Conniff as a member of famous bands from Vaughn Monroe to Artie Shaw, letters and cards from notables including President Richard Nixon and astronaut Neil Armstrong, international trophies and awards, bejeweled stage wear and mementos of tours that ranged as far as Brazil, Germany and the former Soviet Union.

There's also a plaque memorializing Conniff's nomination for a Grammy Award, which he won for his recording of "Somewhere My Love," the theme for the film "Dr. Zhivago."

Two of the centerpieces of the collection are Conniff's prized 1942 trombone and a valve trombone that dates to 1914 — possibly a legacy of his bandleader father.

While known primarily for his 1960s blend of softer versions of popular music that appealed to mature audiences, Conniff was also a trendsetter and technical innovator who helped usher in a new generation of pop stars in the 1950s.

As an arranger and studio bandleader at Columbia Records, Conniff was the behind-the-scenes musical genius who recorded million-selling hits for the likes of Johnny Ray, Frankie Laine, Guy Mitchell, Don Cherry and Rosemary Clooney.

In 1957, Columbia executive Mitch Miller placed an unknown young singer from the West Coast under Conniff's wing. His name: Johnny Mathis. Together they ran off an incredible succession of hits that provided the soundtrack for many a romantic evening through the '50s and '60s.

"It's correct to say that Ray Conniff wasn't just a bandleader, he was a taste-maker," said Fawcett.

She noted that Conniff's recording of Marty Robbins' "A White Sportcoat and a Pink Carnation" stands as a symbol of 1950s youth culture and music that helped set an entirely new direction for popular music.

Beginning in the late '50s, Conniff began his own musical legend, recording highly popular albums featuring his orchestra and chorus that would eventually sell nearly 80 million copies. Almost all featured Conniff's innovative technique of using male and female voices as instruments as one would normally do with trumpets or trombones.

Conniff also recognized and improved on the development of stereo recording, which added previously unavailable concert-hall realism to his recordings.

All that and more will be wrapped up in “A Backstage Tour,” which will feature a formal reception from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb.16, with special performances by the Attleboro High School choral and instrumental music programs.

During the Conniff exhibit, the display will share space with “Animal Magnetism,” the museum’s Feb. 13-March 2 showing of animal-related art objects from its permanent collection as well as live animal ambassadors.

For those assisting the museum in preparing for the Conniff showing, opening that 350-pound crate was like opening a time capsule into the life of Attleboro’s musical favorite son.

Stephanie Torres, the Attleboro School Department’s K-12 music director, was called in to inspect and reassemble the Conniff instruments and marveled at the artist’s professional tools. Among them is his silver-bell King, a mouthpiece protected by an old sock and a jar of cold cream — likely for greasing the trombone slide.

“It’s great to be able to unpack something like that and see how it was used,” said Torres, who grew up listening to her father’s Ray Conniff albums.

Attleboro High School Principal Bill Runey said the gift of the Conniff collection is a great honor that has the potential to encourage future musicians and performing artists as well as the public.

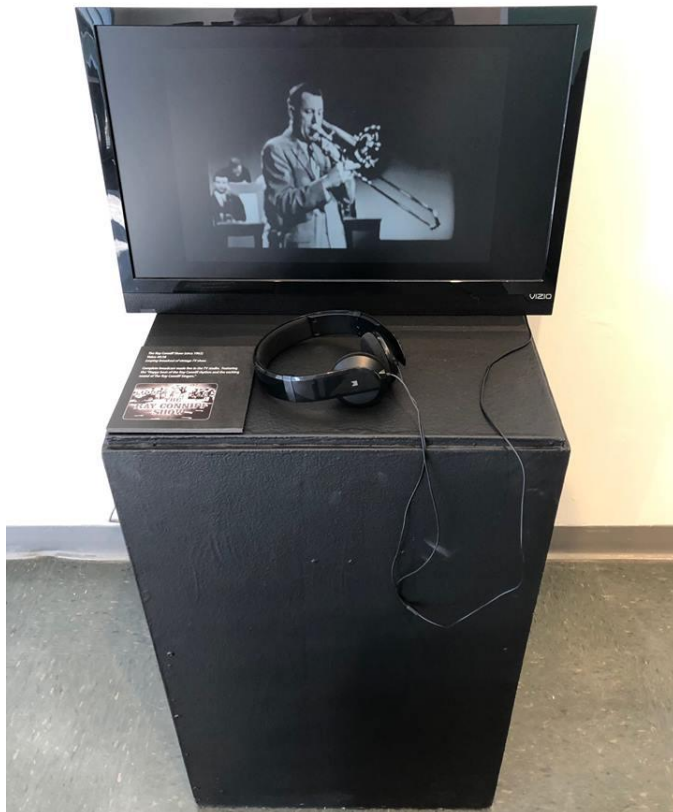
“At Attleboro High School we have a rich tradition in the performing arts, and this is a great opportunity for our kids,” he said.

“It’s important that students have an opportunity to be exposed to that.”

Viveiros said he’s grateful to the Conniff family, which provided the memorabilia as well as sponsorship of a number of musical performances at the museum during the upcoming year.

“I like the old Army slogan, ‘be all you can be,’” he said. “When you look at Ray Conniff’s career, it shows you can follow your dreams with a little hard work and eventually you get there. What better message to inspire students?”

The exhibition will be open 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Feb. 15-22 with a free reception 2-4 p.m. Feb. 16. Free parking is provided at the rear of the museum. For reservations call 508-222-2644 extension 10.



← Interactive viewing station at the exhibition