

Larry Ferrari WA2MKI *1932-1997* Born Lazarus Louis Ferrari, we knew him as Larry. A Boston native, born in 1932 became interested playing organ while attending elementary school. A nun at his parish suggested he “Americanize” his name and ever since he was, Larry!. He made his first public appearance when he was eleven years of age at a church in Boston, he became the church’s organist and held that position for several years) then performed for over 50 years. He was the National Concert Artist for the Lowrey Organ Company. Undoubtedly, he was one of the finest organists in the United States.



Previously to playing the organ, Larry took lessons on the piano, but switched to the more complicated organ keyboard shortly before his 11th birthday. He helped his parents pay for his tuition at prep school for his first couple of years by performing at a local roller skate rink. After graduation, continued his performances at the rink, along with other professional work and joined his father, a chef in the restaurant business.

In 1952 Larry joined the Army and was assigned to special services at Fort Dix, NJ. Once he finished his basic training, he was assigned to the Base, part of his duties were performing for the patients at base hospital. Larry loved his craft and it showed. He auditioned and was signed to play a four week engagement for the Army on television in Philadelphia (WFIL-TV) This was a big hit and was invited back for a weekly series. For 43 years, The Larry Ferrari Show could be seen every Sunday in the Philadelphia area. It was the second longest running show on the station. Not bad for a guy who was told organ music would never go on TV.

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Larry passed away in 1997 from cancer he was 65 and lived in Cinnaminson, N.J. It was said most people think of Larry as being identified with an older audience, but he was remembered being with the children at the employees’ Christmas parties. All the kids would crowd around the organ, sit on the bench with Larry and he’d let them bang the keys. At the end of each of Ferrari’s Shows, he would play a religious selection.

In 2000 Ferrari was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Broadcast Pioneers of Philadelphia. From 1985 until his death, Larry was organist at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Camden N.J.