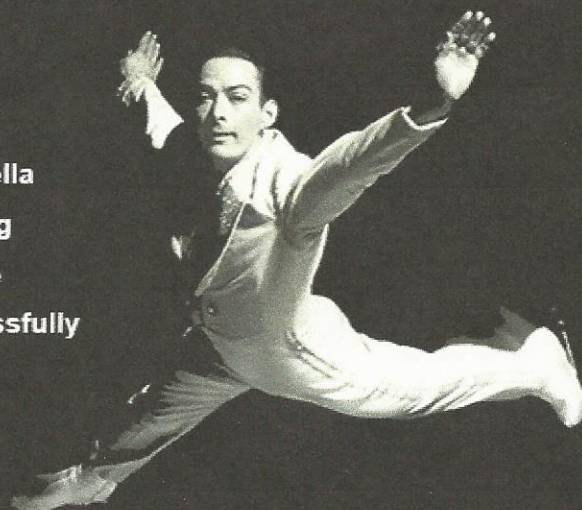


Doug was born in Topeka, Kansas on July 6, 1933.

When he was 8-years-old, he and his mother Mae moved to Seattle, WA. At the age of 9 he began skating at the Civic Auditorium. Although a member of the Seattle Skating Club, he never competed. His High School years were spent in Denver, CO at West High School. Friends say that he was always skating or singing. He was a member of the Acappella Choir and also sang in the school's famous "Singing Christmas Tree." He graduated in 1953. That fall he travelled with a friend to Dallas, TX where he successfully auditioned for the Ice Capades and joined the show in 1954.

DOUG AUSTIN 1933 - 2015



From simple beginnings as a ballet member, with hard work and a sheer love of skating, Doug became a headliner and moved from the International Company to the East Company in 1964 to fill Ronnie Robertson's "skates" -- a job he did with style and perfection. Memorable roles were Viva Italia, Cole Porter and Hallelujah.

When Metromedia took over the show, Doug returned to the International Show for one season in 1965. He skated a four minute number, "Solo flight" -- no one else on the ice, no props, just him. Fortunately Doug was in good shape and had stamina. It's easy to believe that some of those shows were the best four minutes of his life. He was doing what he loved to do.

Doug was also part of an FAA study on vestibular disorientation and was on the cover of the scientific journal Aerospace Medicine in 1965. He was also featured along with Ann Margreth Frei in a 28 minute FAA film about the tests conducted on figure skaters with regards to their ability to "spin and function". Dr. William Collins, who managed the study, remembered working with Doug and shared his memories at "Doug's Party" -- a memorial held recently by his skating family.

more

Doug gives the credit to Johnny Lettengarver for his success. Under the Olympian's tutelage he improved his skating and showmanship. Johnny taught him to give a 100% to each number he skated and helped him realize that teamwork and cooperation makes a number great and entertains the audience more. Whenever the opportunity to do something special arose in the International Company he never said no. That means he ended up skating as a lion, rabbit, elephant, hippo and the back end of a couple of dogs! These small spots lead to his star performances -- like his all time favorite role in Camelot.

In 1961 he teamed with Peter Voss in the production of Moiseyev on Ice and partnered with Canadian champion Louisa Orwell in numbers like Oklahoma. He also traveled to Moscow with the first group of Ice Capades skaters and had a chance to tour Russia. Doug, an amateur filmmaker, shot 8mm film of his fellow "red coats" touring Moscow and St. Petersburg. His edited films, along with a half hour documentary on his skating life, will soon be uploaded to Youtube. Just search: Doug Austin

After leaving the Ice Capades, Doug's love of classical music and singing found a new place of expression at the Pomona Baptist Church where he sang in the choir for many years. He also loved to attend organ concerts, flew his own plane, skied on both water and snow, could have won a million on "Name That Tune", and rarely got into a discussion on religion or politics. Doug began coaching and shared his heart and love skating with all of his students. He passed away in West Covina, CA on January 14, 2015 with friends at his side. He was until the end a gentleman, a friend and an exceptional mentor.