

# Louis Stout

Biography

## Biography

*Louis Stout was a highly-regarded orchestral player (he never lost an audition), a revered teacher with scores of successful students, and a renowned collector of brass instruments. He had inexhaustible energy and curiosity, learned solfège early, memorized all the horn excerpts, and was always willing to share his expertise and stories. His teachers were Elaine Kessler, Marvin Howe, Mason Jones, and Robert Schultz.*

*Louis was born in 1924 in Hallisport NY, a village of 75 people with a two-room schoolhouse. There he studied piano with a fine teacher, learned solfège, and developed a love for literature and the arts that led to his vast collection of books, music, recordings, and instruments. He learned to play the trumpet, trombone, violin, clarinet, and guitar in high school, taking up the horn as a high school sophomore.*

*By the age of ten, Louis was listening to the Chicago Symphony on the radio. He vowed that he would one day play in the orchestra, a vow that he was able to fulfill. During high school, a friend died and the friend's mother asked Louis to play for her son. Many times over the years, Louis would face difficult solo passages with a sense of perspective that made the passages less important than other elements of life.*

*Louis graduated from high school at age 15 and spent most of the following year playing horn solos with a pianist friend. Then he enrolled at Ithaca (NY) College, where his horn teacher made a major change in his embouchure, which he later said was the best thing for his career even though it was difficult at the time. It was also at college that his teacher insisted he learn the B-flat side of the horn, and he became primarily a player of the B-flat horn. During his junior year, Louis borrowed money to buy his first "professional" horn, a 45-year-old Schmidt that he later said was the best horn he ever owned, and played an audition for first horn in the New Orleans Symphony. He had won the audition and signed the contract when it was discovered that he was not a union member; however, the manager wanted Louis enough to arrange the necessary membership.*

*In New Orleans, Louis learned to fly an airplane and found his wife, flutist Glennis Metz. The orchestra season was only 20 weeks, so Louis toured with the North Carolina Symphony and played with the Virginia Symphony for additional income. After two years, he went to New York City and joined the orchestra at Radio City Music Hall. In 1950, when a new conductor took over and brought his own players, Louis went back to Ithaca College to finish his bachelor's degree. During his senior year, he taught*

*all the horn students plus other brass students and became a flute major (since he couldn't teach himself), playing his wife's flute.*

*Ithaca College wanted Louis to continue teaching, but he need more income to support his family and took a job with Kansas City. After four years, with a growing family, Louis was looking for an orchestra with a longer season. He auditioned for Chicago and got a contract as associate principal for a 36-week season and a salary of \$100 more per week. He asked to take lessons from Philip Farkas, the first horn and his idol. He was refused but felt that he got his lessons by sitting next to his "teacher" in the orchestra.*

*Louis played in Chicago for five years (1955-1960) under Reiner, then applied for a position at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. At the audition, he played from memory for two hours and was accepted in spite of not having a master's degree. He taught at Michigan for 28 years, and was known as a demanding teacher, with a thorough and tough regimen, combined with fatherly concern. Even after retirement, he taught privately.*

*During his Chicago and Michigan years, Louis acquired an amazing collection of instruments, with which he toured the US and Europe in a lecture/demonstration called "The Horn: from the Forest to the Concert Hall." The collection is one of the largest private collections in the world and is now in the Franz Streitweiser's Trumpet and Horn Museum at Schloss Kremsegg in Linz, Austria. Louis's interest in historical horns led to his pioneering use of natural, single B-flat, and descant horns for early music performance.*

*Louis served on the Fulbright committee, and he and Glennis taught in Taiwan for two years on a Fulbright grant after his retirement. Louis participated in many IHS symposiums, often surrounded by adoring students. He was given the Punto award in 1991 and was elected an Honorary Member in 2005.*

*A tribute to Louis appears in the October 1989 issue of *The Horn Call* and a remembrance in the February 2006 issue.*

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