

# Bob Helmacy

## NJ & PA

- 1939 Bob Helmacy is born in Sparta, NJ on December 17th
- 1950s Bob learns to use a lathe in his father's workshop
- c1961 Bob starts making his own trumpet mouthpieces
- c1965 Bob starts making mouthpieces professionally and buys 300 blanks from Miller Automatics in Brooklyn, the supplier for Bach & many others. He later buys 100 more.
- 1965 Bob is studying trumpet under William Vacchiano at Julliard and uses one of Vacchiano's original George Bukur mouthpieces in order to reproduce one for him. The Bukur backbore becomes the standard for all of Helmacy's future mouthpieces due to its beautiful sound and easier playing ability versus a Bach.
- 1969 Bob completes his masters in Boston with a thesis entitled, "An Experimental Study Concerning the Relationship Between the Trumpet Mouthpiece & Individual Embouchure". He is playing in the BU orchestra with trumpeter Louis Ranger and they share the outstanding performance award that year.
- 1971 now principal trumpet for the South Orange Symphony in NJ
- 1973 a dangerous hernia forces Bob to end trumpet playing and switch to conducting the South Orange Symphony and continuing studies on violin; he also returns to a 37 year teaching career in the Caldwell – West Caldwell, NJ schools and a 25 year stint as conductor of the Eastern Summer Music Festival in Greensboro, NC
- 2010 Bob retires then becomes the founding conductor of the Northern Tier Symphony Orchestra in Nicholson, PA
- 2012 Bob is able to begin playing the trumpet again
- 2020 Bob retires from conducting to work on his farm in Susquehanna Co., PA

Based on an interview with Bob in March, 2020

The mouthpiece at right is marked "ZS" for the original buyer Zachary Schneck, "26" for the cup, "25" for the hole drill size, and "4/1" for the back bore.

