

Gamba NEWS

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Corliss Myers remembered

Her fellow members offer their tributes

Members of the Pacifica Chapter will be saddened to learn of the passing of Corliss Myers in Carmel, Calif. on October 28, 1998. Corliss and her husband, Herb Myers, were very active and enthusiastic participants in Pacifica playing sessions and in various Viola da Gamba Society workshops during the past 15 years: Corliss on treble and sometimes tenor viol, and Herb on bass viol. Corliss and Herb were also on occasion hosts to a Pacifica playing session at their home in Carmel. Health problems forced both Corliss and Herb to retire from viol playing about a year ago.

Corliss, who was born in Nebraska on January 20, 1913, had degrees from Chapman College and USC and was an elementary school teacher for 28 years. An accomplished musician on many fronts, she was an active member of the choir of the Church of the Wayfarer in Carmel, and was also a local piano teacher. Corliss and Herb were regular members of a recorder ensemble in Carmel.

Interest in the viol came to the Myers' through playing the recorder, and through the well-known early-music performances of their son, Herbert W. Myers. Corliss and Herb each acquired viols and began to play at the same time, and always participated together in various viol activities.



Corliss Myers, 1913-1998

Corliss will be remembered for her charming personality and generous nature, and for her enthusiastic devotion to early music. Her husband Herb continues to reside at 26000 Via Portola, Carmel, CA 93923.

— *Hazelle Miloradovitch*

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We were saddened to hear of Corliss' passing. When we were beginners on our viols, both Corliss and Herb were very kind and gentle with us, allowing all the mistakes and being very patient. At workshops, they always welcomed us to their sessions and we gratefully accepted. As we became more familiar with our instruments, we migrated to other groups, but always kept a warm feeling for both. I can't think about one without thinking about the other. They were two peas in a pod. Corliss always had a story to tell, be it about her teaching, her garden or her latest health report. She let us into her sprightly being and we are better for knowing her.

—Billie Hamilton and Dorothy Orolin

At Marin Headlands workshops, where the weather was cold and foggy, we slept in bunk beds, skunks roamed around at night and everyone dressed in sweatshirts, sneakers and long underwear, Corliss would appear in a Liberty silk dress and little heels. The shortness of the heel was her only concession to the Early Musician's Dress Code. She didn't accept the Early Musician's Manners Code, either. If a person made a snide remark or spoke out of turn, Corliss the retired school teacher would rise up and correct the perpetrator. She required fairness from all in the room. She was also generous with praise. Long live her memory.

—Lyle York

Many of us must share similar memories of Corliss. Her smile and her gentleness. Her total, loving generosity, and her modesty about her impressive accomplishments. Her unfailing support for all our viol endeavors. Her oneness with Herb, and their pride in their son and grandson. Her perky red curls, her marvelously crafted clothes – and her shoes, ah yes, her shoes! For years our workshops have been graced by the Corliss & Herb team. Upon arrival, they always needed many trips from car to room. First the viols and music. Next those necessities for creating the perfect, cozy home away from home – blankets and bedspreads, pillows and floor lamps. And last, but never least, that memorable feminine wardrobe!

My favorite Corliss story dates from our first LA Conclave at Loyola/Marymount. For our afternoon off, I'd offered a car trip to the Southwest Museum, where I was a docent. My brand-new station wagon was full: Corliss, Glenna Houle, and Frances Dwight in the back, Herb in front.

Tour completed, we found ourselves ripe for peak rush hour traffic. Creeping from on-ramp to freeway, I signalled for what seemed minutes – even waving my hand out the window. I finally cautiously maneuvered into an available space. I'm convinced – and so was the LAPD – that the enormous Ralphs supermarket truck, whose driver faced the setting sun, never saw me.

Suddenly Corliss' gentle, polite yet insistent voice squeaked from the back seat. "Carol, excuse me Carol, I'm sorry, but I think a *truck* is going to hit us!" Nudge! Bump! Shove! As bumpers locked, Herb unfastened his seat belt and flung open his door, ready to charge into battle. No gentlewoman I, screaming at him to stay put! But it was Corliss' quiet admonition, "Herb, I *really* don't think you should get out right now," that got him to close his door. Always the lady – never wanting to make a fuss – but absolutely convinced about the right path, that was Corliss.

Somewhere in heaven, there is now a brilliantly dressed new angel – with perfectly matching shoes. And if you listen carefully, you just might hear her say, "Excuse me, God, but I think you might consider –"

—Carol Herman

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Feb.–Da
Mar. 13
April–Fre
May 8
June 12

* With De
† With John
at Stanfor

Directory of Local Viol Teachers

San Francisco

Pearce, Farley 415-750-1536

South Bay

Blackman, Martha 650-493-0243

Dornenburg, John 510-530-3202

Miloradovitch, Hazelle* ... 650-854-3818

**VdGS/Pacifica Members*

Santa Cruz

Lombardi, Luciana* 408-476-1131

East Bay

Kammen, Shira 510-524-7952

Brodo, Amy* 510-482-3470

Dornenburg, John 510-530-3202

Morris, David 510-658-3382

Tetenbaum, Lynn* 510-271-8041

Jeffrey, Julie* 510-237-8579

Advertisements, Concert Listings, and Contributions

Ads may be placed in Gamba News on the following reasonable terms: \$5 per ad, to be printed either as plain text, or as a graphic no larger than a standard business card. All graphics must be sent ready to print as GIF, JPEG or Mac-compatible EPS files. Checks should be made out to VdGS/Pacifica. Ads advertising viols for rent, placed by individuals, are free. Member contributions are also welcome.

Please send us your concert listings. Any concert featuring any viol, no matter how small or how submerged the viol may be, is eligible.

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Schedule Meetings

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David Morris
Dornenburg

The news of Corliss Myers' passing was a great shock to me. Every April I looked forward to seeing her and husband Herb Sr. at the Annual North-South Viol Meet in Fresno. Both were "regulars," year after year, perhaps going back to the first such event in 1974. Corliss had a musical education and a lot of teaching experience that

came in handy during the periods when consorts were on their own between visits by a coach. As a person she was an example of an all-round educated lady who clung to the social graces of an era which is fading from our view. She will be missed by the North-South viol players!

— Walter Unterberg

Next meeting on Jan. 9

Our January 9 meeting will be held at Zion Lutheran Church, 5201 Park Blvd., Oakland, at 9:30 AM. The church is just downhill from Highway 13. (The sketch map has been mocked by a graphic designer of your editor's acquaintance and has temporarily withdrawn itself from view.) Please bring a music stand; coffee, music and consort groupings (by request) are available, the latter based on the information you send on your reply postcards. Our consort coach will again be David Morris.

The onerous responsibilities which the difficult and demanding job of music coordinator entails are at present being ably executed by the diplomatic John Mark. Please show your consideration for John's efforts by filling in your reply postcards completely and by mailing them back in a timely manner.

Alison Crum and Roy Marks: Duets for viols, perhaps with organ. Pancakes will be served (Shrove Tuesday). Feb. 16, 7:30 PM; admission free (donation for pancakes). MusicSources, 1000 The Alameda, Berkeley. Alison will be available during the afternoon for private lessons/coaching; reservations required, for which please contact Peter Ballinger ((510)-526-0722, <PRBPrdns@aol.com>).

"Funny coincidence that you should ask for info," writes Alison Crum, "just after I spent a rather sleepless night which included thinking about catchy titles for concerts with pancakes. I never would have thought about pancakes except that St Alban's church in Albany said we couldn't do a concert there on the 16th of February because they are having a pancake supper that night – and then I thought it would be fun to have a pancake concert.

"Most of the composers we will play seem to have sh, sch, ch connections which might go with 'Shrove Tuesday.' We will definitely play quite a large chunk of Schenk and some Marais, including a piece called 'Charivari,' which means a tumult or noise! If the small

organ is available (Peter B. mentioned there is a nice one there) we would also play Schop and probably Selma y Salaverde - Susanna.

Maybe also some Simpson. So it might be possible to call it something along the lines of 'A Shrove Tuesday "Charivari"

of Schenk, Schop, Selma and Simpson' ... or something similar.

"Regarding the lessons and coaching – in fact I'll be available to teach all day. The following day we are planning to go to Monterey to do some coaching for Penny Hanna and others near there."

"Instrumental Music of the Early German Baroque: The Suites of Posch, Peuerl and Scheidt," a Mid-Peninsula Recorder Orchestra Workshop directed by Vernon Reed, emeritus professor at San Jose State University and former director of its collegium musicum. Players of recorders and early strings are invited to attend. Jan. 30, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, 505 East Charleston Road, Palo Alto. Discounted fee of \$27.00 for MPRO and SFEMS members for registration before Jan. 23. For more information contact Miriam Wehrend, (650) 856-7986.

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