



## Elizabeth Ann Pergande Zuehlke

July 15, 1914 - March 28, 2014

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July 15, 1914 - March 28, 2014 A Life Devoted to Bringing Music to Others by Matt Ross Betty Zuehlke, who passed away on March 28 at age 99, introduced the recorder and Early Music to hundreds of people throughout Southern California. She was instrumental in founding Orange County Recorder Society OCRS, Riverside Recorder Society RRS, San Diego County Recorder Society SDCRS, and La Mer Consort, all of which continue to this day. She tirelessly taught recorder classes, often at little or no fee, wherever and whenever she could, to beginners and professionals alike, slowing down only in the final years of her life. Betty Zuehlke was an Early Music legend; she enriched the musical life of Southern California beyond measure. Born Elizabeth Ann Pergande in Warren, Ohio on July 15, 1914 to Bernice and Arthur Pergande, Betty began her music career with piano lessons at the age of 2 ½ years. She met her first musical love—the French horn—in elementary school in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and continued playing the French horn in the marching band at Cleveland Heights High School, graduating in 1932. Betty attended Case Western Reserve University and The Cleveland Institute of Music, majoring in voice, piano, and French horn. She graduated in 1936 with m B.A. in Music Education and Performance. Betty would have liked to continue in a career as a French horn player, but was advised not to because, as a woman, she could never land a position in an orchestra. Undaunted; she pursued singing and

teaching instead and, early in her music career, taught in private schools in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Rochester, New York. While in Rochester, Betty met her first husband, Arthur Zuehlke. They were married on August 23, 1941. Together they raised two children, Ann Nichols, now of Bellvue, Colorado, and Arthur Zuehlke, Jr., now of Vienna, Virginia. Betty and Arthur were founding members of the Rochester Oratorio Society in the 1940s, and Betty was involved in the Eastman School of Music and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. She taught both private piano and French horn lessons to children and adults. She was also active in Early Music groups in the Rochester area, playing recorders, harpsichord, and other Renaissance and Baroque instruments. In those days, Early Music was held in low esteem in many musical institutions. While in Rochester, Betty applied to study Early Music at the Eastman School. In response, she received a letter from the composer Howard Hanson, then dean of the Eastman School, telling her that Early Music was for "amateurs" and that Eastman was a "professional" music school, but that she might study at Eastman if she liked. Again undaunted, she pursued studies at the Eastman School. There, Betty found, tucked away in a closet, a harpsichord that had been used for a recital by the great Wanda Landowska. Unused of course, since Eastman was a "professional" music school, the harpsichord had been collecting dust for years. Betty got permission to restore the harpsichord and to play it—not for the Eastman School—but for performances by the Rochester Handel and Haydn Society. After living in Rochester and Brighton, New York for 23 years, Betty and Arthur moved to Riverside, California in 1959. In Riverside, Betty was active Southern in the Riverside Symphony Guild, the Riverside Junior Symphony, the Opera Guild, and continued to teach private piano, recorder, and French horn. She expanded her programs in Early Music, organizing many recorder groups, including RRS, of which she served as musical director for many years. A skilled bridge player, Betty enjoyed playing duplicate bridge with Arthur and friends. Betty taught recorder at the Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts ISOMATA, the summer program founded by Max and Bea Krone and

sponsored by the University of Southern California. It was at ISOMATA that many young people learned to play recorder. While at ISOMATA, Betty began her long friendships with recorder virtuoso and builder Carl Dolmetsch and harpsichord and organ virtuoso Joseph Saxby. Together, the three of them presented a recorder weekend every October at ISOMATA for many years. Betty enjoyed visiting the Dolmetsch recorder factory in Haslemere, England, and played Dolmetsch recorders throughout her career. Many may remember Betty's beautiful Dolmetsch recorders—with lipstick stains on the ivory mouthpieces. After Betty and Arthur moved to Hermosa Beach, California in the early 1970's, Betty drove to Riverside to continue teaching her recorder groups and piano students. Arthur passed away in December 1973. At about that time, Betty's friend Rosellen Gates, who lived in Fullerton, California, spoke with Betty about starting a recorder class in Orange County. In visiting Betty, Rosellen had become fascinated by the many period instruments, including recorders, in Betty's home. In early 1974, the Muckenthaler Cultural Center in Fullerton and the Adult Education Division of Fullerton College agreed to jointly sponsor a recorder class to be taught by Betty. Up to this time, recorder classes had never been offered in Orange County. The first class was held on March 25, 1974. Betty and Rosellen were concerned whether 15 people, the minimum required for the class to continue, would show up; they were surprised and delighted when they arrived to find 47 people in the class. OCRS was born out of that adult education class. A formation meeting was held on October 14, 1974, and OCRS was formally organized on November 18, 1974 with 38 members and Betty as Music Director. In that position, which she held for many years, Betty selected music for and conducted every monthly OCRS meeting and regularly gave workshops. A highlight of her service as OCRS Music Director was bringing her two friends—Carl Dolmetsch and Joseph Saxby—to Orange County for a workshop and recital in October 1975. During the summer of 1974, Betty and a fellow musician and friend from Riverside, Bobbie Estudillo, traveled to

London for three weeks of concerts and plays. On a whim, Betty decided to see if a British gentleman she had met in as music d Cambridge, Massachusetts in the late 1930's might be in London. When she "rang him up" he remembered her voice workshops and asked, "Is this Lise?" Thus began another by those of wonderful chapter in her life. In 1975, "Lise" and her second husband, Robert Robin S. Colquhoun, bought a 250-year-old stone cottage and barn in the South of France outside the town of Montaigne de Quercy. They named it "Pech de Monjoy" Place of My Joy and for the next 25 years, slowly but steadily renovated it. Betty spent her summers in France with Robin, continuing her music, meeting new friends and musicians from many countries, entertaining friends from the United States, and enjoying the lifestyle of rural France: sheep grazing on the hill behind the house, a bountiful garden and orchard, a black walnut tree, wildflowers, buying eggs and unplucked chickens from the farmers nearby, and shopping at the local markets. She bought a "Deux Chevaux" or "Two Horses" Citroen 2CV automobile really a tin can on wheels so she and Robin could travel the countryside and see the sights. During the school year, back in California, Betty maintained a busy schedule teaching recorder classes and leading recorder societies and Early Music groups in Riverside, San Diego, Orange County, and the South Bay area of Los Angeles County. Every Tuesday she drove from her home in Hermosa Beach to Riverside to lead her Baroque class. Welcoming to old friends and newcomers, she led music from 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., with lunch afterwards at a local restaurant, where Betty would regale all with an account of her latest concert experience. In the mid-1970's Betty founded and conducted the La Mer Early Music consort in the South Bay. She led that ensemble until she was in her late 80's. She incorporated madrigal singers Betty loved madrigals and had met Robin in a madrigal class, dancers, and a variety of unusual instruments. Betty made many life-long friends while teaching music and received many awards for her Early Music programs in the South Bay. Also during the 1970's, Betty taught courses in Music Appreciation for South Bay Adult Education, El Camino

College, and Dominguez College, taking her students to the wonderful array of music performances in the Los Angeles area. In addition to serving as OCRS music director, Betty served as music director for SDCRS and RRS, and regularly taught at workshops sponsored by those organizations and other groups. She was a regular at weekend workshops at Oak Glen, California sponsored by RRS and at weekend workshops at Malibu, California sponsored by SCRS, where she presented classes in Baroque performance. When funding for her Orange County Adult education class ran out after the passage of California's Proposition 13 in 1978, Betty organized classes on her own and held class wherever space could be found. Betty loved to take all of her recorder classes and groups to perform, in costume, at the Renaissance Pleasure Faire, local nursing homes, and other venues. She always encouraged her students to sing or to play other period instruments, such as krumphorns and gambas, to fully appreciate all aspects of Early Music. Whenever possible, she accompanied her students, ensembles, and classes on the piano or harpsichord or sang with them. Betty enjoyed teaching all levels, from beginners to professionals, all ages, from children to seniors, and all kinds of music, including contemporary recorder compositions. She encouraged her students to develop and pursue their musical talents, whether in performing, conducting, composing, or recorder building. For instance, Sally Price, with Betty's encouragement, has become a prolific composer and arranger of uniquely witty music for recorder. Another student, Brenda Bittner, went on to lead La Mer and conduct recorder society meetings. Betty encouraged Jeff Holt to pursue recorder builder, and his recorders have become highly desirable. Betty loved her students, and they loved her. Through these years, Betty maintained an impossible schedule—Early Music class at the beach, Baroque performance class in Riverside, music appreciation at the beach which included attending a weekly concert, off to San Diego to help out with its ARS chapter, taking a recorder class to the Renaissance fair, over to Orange County to conduct OCRS, up to Los Angeles to conduct SCRS, plus innumerable workshops, including all-day

events in Malibu, Riverside, and San Diego. Betty put many miles on her car zipping around Southern California to share her love of Early Music. Robin would join Betty from November through March each year in Hermosa Beach, until he passed away in February 1999. After Robin's passing, Betty continued teaching adult education recorder classes in Orange County, conducting meetings of SCRS, OCRS, and SDCRS, leading the La Mer Consort, teaching at workshops, and attending concerts. Having Betty conduct the December OCRS meeting, with Christmas music specially selected by her, became a fondly-remembered annual tradition. She conducted OCRS for the last time on December 9, 2005, at age 91. As a tribute to Betty, OCRS made her a lifetime honorary member, the only one permitted by its bylaws. In March 2006, SCRS and OCRS honored Betty—along with Lia Levin, Gloria Ramsey, and Shirley Robbins—at a day-long celebration. Various ensembles performed in their honor, and many people offered moving tributes to these four great ladies of Early Music. Betty retired in December 2006 at the age of 92 ½. It must be remembered, and cannot be overemphasized, that throughout the decades Betty drove long distances along the tortuous Southern California freeways to bring the recorder to so many people. She often charged little, if anything, sometimes barely enough to cover the cost of gas. She taught for love, not money. Though Betty was a professional musician, she was in this sense an "amateur" in the truest and finest meaning of the word. In January 2009, Betty moved to Colorado, where she lived in her own house in the mountains, next door to her daughter Ann, until the age of 98. Betty continued her passion for sharing music by playing harpsichord for her great-grandchildren and introducing them to the recorder. After a fire swept through and burned 88, 000 acres in June 2012, Betty moved to an assisted living facility in Fort Collins, Colorado, where she passed away on March 28, 2014. Betty is survived her 2 children: daughter Ann Nichols Paul of Bellvue, CO, son Arthur Zuehlke Jr. Michal of Vienna, VA; 4 grandchildren: Carol Nichols of Bellvue, CO, Nancy Eckhardt Chris of Durango, CO, Anneka

Zuehlke-King Craig of Greenville, SC, and Arthur Zuehlke III Abigail of Earlysville, VA; 4 great-grandchildren: Kaylyn Eckhardt, Landon Nichols, Arthur Zuehlke IV, and Cara Zuehlke. She is survived by her 2 sisters: Mary Arvo Haapa of Corona del Mar, and Bonnie Holby Frank of Asheville, NC, and many cousins, nieces, and nephews. She is also survived by Robin's children: Frances Peter Sanders whose children, Jess and Ingram are also musical, and Edward Gilke Colquhoun of London, Great Britain, and their children and grandchildren. She was predeceased by her parents, Bernice and Arthur Pergande; her first husband, Arthur Zuehlke Sr.; her second husband, Robin Colquhoun; and a great-grandson, Logan Nichols. Her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are continuing her musical legacy by singing, playing recorders, piano, French horn, trombone, saxophone, violin, viola, and clarinet. Her granddaughter, Anneka Zuehlke-King is a professional French Horn player and first chair in the Greenville, SC symphony orchestra. Betty was a long-time member of Mu Phi Epsilon, PEO, the American Recorder Society, The Early Music Society, Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, Planned Parenthood, and the Humane Society. Betty's family is planning a celebration of her life in Southern California, but no date has been set. The Los Angeles Recorder Orchestra will be dedicating its concerts on June 14 and 29, 2014 to Betty. Betty's musical legacy is lasting. Orange County, Riverside, and the San Diego Recorder Societies remain active chapters of the American Recorder Society. OCRS, which started with 38 members, has over 60 members and this year celebrates its 40th anniversary. La Mer Consort, now under the direction of Brenda Bittner, flourishes and recently performed for the 315th year at Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan Beach, CA. Perhaps the greatest legacy is the hundreds of people who, due to Betty's tireless efforts, learned to play the recorder and love Early Music. She touched the lives of innumerable people. Betty opened the door to Early Music for many, and thanks to her, that door remains wide open for many years to come.