



Remembering Frances Blaisdell, First Lady of the Flute

National Flute Association convention
Thursday, August 13, 2009 • 4:30 pm
Cantor/Jolson Room, New York Marriott Marquis

Cécile Chaminade, *Concertino*

Frances Blaisdell, flute • Unidentified pianist
Frances Blaisdell, Flute (Golden Crest Clinician
Series, CR 1007, 1964)

Frances Blaisdell: A Life in Music
Nancy Toff

Video: First Lady of the Flute

Frances Blaisdell at the New York Flute Club,
CAMI Hall, New York, February 16, 1992

Film: *Musical Charmers*

Frances Blaisdell, flute • Phil Spitalny's All-Girls Band
(Paramount, 1936)

Julius Benedict, "La Capinera" ("The Wren")

Lily Pons, soprano • Frances Blaisdell, flute • Orchestra
conducted by André Kostalanetz (RCA Victor 1905A,
1939; CD reissue: Mastersound Profile DFCD1-111)

Remembrances by family, students, and friends

Alexandra Hawley
Patricia Harper
Patricia George
John Littlefield
Rob Newbold
Kyle Wiley Pickett, read by Rob Newbold
Alice Whitaker Davis, read by Mardee Reed-Ulmer
Tang Soon-Ping, read by Gerald Carey
Katy Burdick Wilson
Steven P. Finley
Laurie Benson
Nancy Toff

Claude Debussy, *Syrinx*

Frances Blaisdell, flute
Frances Blaisdell, Flute (Golden Crest Clinician
Series, CR 1007, 1964)



Thanks to Bob Campbell and Ron Hall for providing the Spitalny film; to Dot Lee and Pat Harper for planning assistance; to the Blaisdell-Williams family for photos and other information; and to countless friends, students, and colleagues who contributed their memories and photographs of Frances. Many more of these will be published in *The Flutist Quarterly* and the *The New York Flute Club Newsletter*. *Musical Charmers* can be viewed in its entirety at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYz3s4zGeps>, and this month the blog *Matinee at the Bijou* <<http://matineeatthebijou.blogspot.com>> features an article on Frances and the Spitalny All-Girls Band.

Laurie Benson, a flutist and flute teacher in Redwood City, knew Frances Blaisdell as a colleague in California. She is also on the staff of West Valley Music in Mountain View, where Frances was a customer.

Gerald Carey, professor emeritus of flute at Western Illinois University, received the NFA Distinguished Service Award in 2008. Along with Frances Blaisdell, he was a member of the NFA's cultural exchange delegation to China.

Alice Whitaker Davis was a member of the Charleston and Roanoke Symphonies and currently plays at Christ Episcopal Church, Los Altos, CA, and with Pamela Ravenelle's Magic Flutes Flute Choir.

Steven P. Finley, president of Boston-based FluteFX, offers repair and consulting services worldwide.

Patricia George studied with Frances Blaisdell at the National Music Camp in 1959 and 1960. Through her encouragement, she continued her studies with Joseph Mariano, William Kincaid, and Julius Baker.

Patricia Harper has been professor of flute at Connecticut College since 1975 and also teaches summer residency flute courses in Vermont and California. She studied flute with Frances Blaisdell in Red Bank, New Jersey during junior and senior high school.

Alexandra Hawley, the daughter of Frances Blaisdell, teaches flute at Stanford University and is founder and artistic director of the Avedis chamber music series in San Francisco.

John Herrick Littlefield teaches flute at the Spence School in New York City and the Dwight-Englewood School in New Jersey in addition to researching and performing overlooked but worthy flute repertoire. He studied with Frances Blaisdell at the Mannes College of Music and the Manhattan School of Music from 1968 to 1971.

Rob Newbold studied flute with Frances Blaisdell at Stanford from 1973 to 1974. He has played in various orchestras in Connecticut and currently runs a small business that provides training, software and consulting for project management.

Kyle Wiley Pickett is music director of the North State Symphony in northern California and of the Juneau (Alaska) Symphony. He studied with Frances Blaisdell at Stanford University from 1989 to 1993.

Mardee Reed-Ulmer studied with Frances Blaisdell from the fifth to twelfth grades in New Jersey, as did her sister. She is principal flutist of the Orchestra of St. Peter by the Sea and freelances and teaches privately in Tinton Falls, New Jersey.

Tang Soon-Ping is principal flutist of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra.

Nancy Toff is the author of four books on the flute, including *Monarch of the Flute: The Life of Georges Barrère*, which is dedicated to Frances Blaisdell.

Katy Burdick Wilson studied with Frances Blaisdell at Stanford University from 1977 to 1980. She is now a "devoted amateur," performing solo and chamber works at local music clubs, and an independent health care consultant.

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