

Carol Harp, Violin



I have loved music for as long as I can remember. As a small child I played with melody bells at home, and on some of my relative's pianos whenever I had the chance. Had my parents owned a piano, I believe that I might have become a pianist rather than a violinist. As it turned out, in the fourth grade I was chosen to be part of a pilot program in the California public schools promoting orchestral instruments. I began group violin lessons on my grandfather's 3/4 violin (He had played the "fiddle" in the logging camps as a young man). It was the right size for me and actually not a bad little violin. Although I no longer play that violin, I still have it. I excelled in the group lessons and played in my first orchestra in the fifth grade. I didn't start private violin lessons until 7th grade in Denver, Colorado. Although I didn't appreciate it at the time, I had the great privilege of studying with August Molzer (1881-1967) who studied under Otokar Sevcik and Stefan Suchy at the Prague Conservatory in the Czech Republic. He was a kind old man who not only ran me through all of the

traditional etudes, Dont, Kayser, Rode, Sevcik and more, but also let me play some beginning solos such as the Dancla Airs and Variations and the Schirmer "37 Violin Piece You Like to Play". During my high school years I played in the South High School Orchestra, the Denver All City Orchestra, the Colorado All State Orchestra, and the Littleton Community Orchestra. I studied with August Molzer until he quit teaching altogether in 1965. Until I started college I studied with Samuel Chernyk, a member of the Denver Symphony Orchestra. At the University of Northern Colorado I studied with Donald Robinson who honed my sense of intonation as well as became my mentor. I played in the University of Northern Colorado Symphonic Orchestra, Dr. Garlik's String Quartet, and the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra. Even though I loved playing my violin, I decided early on that my true love was teaching music, not performing. Besides that, I wasn't sure that I was cut out to live my entire life in a practice room! I graduated from the University of Colorado with a double major in Music Education, (emphasis strings), and Elementary Education.

The following years were filled with marriage, moving with my husband through his seminary education and early churches, teaching elementary education and music education in the public and private schools, and most importantly, raising a family. During that time I began studying in summer Suzuki workshops at various universities around the country including Wisconsin, Iowa, New York, and Washington DC. I had the privilege of studying with renowned Suzuki teachers Kay Sloane, Ronda Cole, John Kendall and others. I became a certified teacher in the Suzuki method, directing violin studios in Buffalo, New York and in Naples, Florida. For nearly 30 years I taught weekly private and group lessons, and organized monthly concerts or recitals for a total of more than 300 students ages 3-18. My older students in Naples asked about playing

electric violin, so we all bought electric violins and played the traditional Suzuki literature plus fiddle music and more on them. What fun! I am pleased to say that today I am still in touch with some of my former students from Buffalo and Naples. A few of them have gone into music related professions, but more are doctors, lawyers, teachers, and business people. I am honored to have been part of their young lives. Although I was very busy teaching and raising a family during the 70's and 80's and early 90's, I did play part time in various community orchestras including the Antelope Valley Community Orchestra, the Lima Symphony Orchestra, the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestra and the Amherst Symphony Orchestra.

Today I am happily retired from teaching. My husband and I moved from Naples, FL to the Tampa Bay area in 2012. After settling in, I auditioned for the Tampa Bay Symphony in 2013. In addition to the orchestra, I enjoyed a short but fun time playing in an experimental rock string quartet. I also enjoy occasionally playing at church and for other events. My favorite activities non music include bicycling with my husband on the many cycling and walking trails this area offers, gardening, volunteering at church, and of course spending time with my grandchildren.