



Colleen Marie Mathews

August 29, 1922 - April 8, 2013

1922--2013

Colleen Mathews was born in September 1922 in Portland, Oregon, the daughter of Sylvester and Melba (Steward) Neideigh. She died peacefully in her sleep in Santa Barbara early on the morning of Monday, April 8, age 90. She is survived by daughter Linda (son-in-law, Alec Wilczynski) and grandson Matthew Wilczynski. Colleen's husband Glenn Mathews preceded her in death, in November 2004.

Colleen was proud of the fact that on her mother's side, she was a daughter of founding families of Oregon who variously sailed around the Horn, crossed the Isthmus of Panama and came cross-country in covered wagons, settling the towns of Coos Bay, Yamhill and Myrtle Point. She married Glenn Mathews of Vancouver, Washington in 1943. Glenn's ancestors had also been a part of the same westward-bound emigrant group, which called themselves the "Baltimore Colony."

Colleen trained for 12 years as a classical pianist and a tap, ballet and adagio dancer. And even though her father's grocery suffered during the Depression, when many customers paid by barter, he made sure there was enough money for Colleen's music studies. As a young adult, she appeared onstage many times around Portland and was the organist for Patton Central Methodist Church, but the intervention of the war put an end to her professional performance aspirations. However, her friends and family benefited from her talents as we enjoyed evening performances with Glenn's baritone backed by Colleen's superb instrumentals. She also enjoyed several years as the Assistant Troop Leader of S.B. Girl Scout Troop 33, proudly teaching the Golf and Music badges. She was also an avid skier at Mt. Hood in Oregon, and a life-long golfer, sometimes with a single-digit handicap, playing out of the Royal Oaks in Portland and later the Montecito Country Club in Santa Barbara.

After working as executive secretary at an architectural firm, at the Portland shipyards and volunteering during World War II as an ambulance driver for the military, Colleen settled into domestic life with Glenn, giving birth to Linda in 1950. The family moved to Santa Barbara in 1957, where Glenn bought Haagen Printing. Colleen then pitched in as office worker and receptionist as Glenn built up the business over the next 40 years. She also

provided an occasional strong left hand for Haagen's bowling team and rooted loudly for their softball and horseshoe teams as well. After Linda joined the Foreign Service, Colleen happily traveled with Glenn to visit their daughter in far-flung postings: Canada, Germany, and Japan. In her later years, Colleen could often be seen hiking from their Fairview area home to Goleta beach and back; she relished chatting with the locals on the pier and watching the sunset, enjoying an Irish coffee with Glenn before hiking the return two miles. During one of those hikes she slipped and fell, suffering a head injury which brought on dementia. This required her move into Villa Bella, where she lived her final 7 years, enjoying most the visits of live musicians-- notably Papa Heinz and Frederick--and where she could still win a putt-putt golf contest against any and all challengers. Her famous wit never left her, as she smiled and flirted with visitors and staff in S.B. Convalescent Hospital right through her final illness.

There will be a viewing with the family at Welch-Ryce-Haider Funeral Home, 15 E. Sola St. this Friday, Apr.19th from 1:00-5:00 p.m. The family would appreciate you remembering her by your donations to: the Glenn and Colleen Mathews Scholarship at Anacapa School, 814 Santa Barbara St.; or to the Santa Barbara Foundation.

Cemetery

Riverview Abbey Mausoleum
319 S.W. Taylors Ferry Rd.
Portland, OR, 97219

Events

APR 19 Visitation 01:00PM - 05:00PM

Welch-Ryce-Haider - Downtown
15 E. Sola St., Santa Barbara, CA, US, 93101