



Theodore C Mercer Jr.

December 27, 1946 - August 4, 2022

Theodore “Ted” C. Mercer, Jr., age 75, died unexpectedly in his sleep at his home in Chicago on August 4, 2022.

The son of Theodore C. Mercer, Sr., and Alice Moore Mercer, he was born in Chattanooga, TN on December 27, 1946. He graduated from Rhea Central High School and received a B.A. in history from Bryan College (both in Dayton, TN). After moving to Chicago in 1973, he earned an MBA at the University of Chicago and founded Cityscape Real Estate, where he was broker until his death.

While still in high school, Ted won the title of Tennessee Junior (under age 18) Chess Champion. He continued to play chess throughout his life, occasionally playing in tournaments across the country and abroad.

Ted was an insatiable reader, collecting thousands of books, and world traveler, visiting many countries in North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. His knowledge of world history and geography was encyclopedic.

Ted’s great passion was Sacred Harp singing, which he discovered 40 years ago at a gathering at the Old Town School of Folk Music. Over the years he attended thousands of singings in North America and Europe, serving as singer, organizer, promoter, teacher, and published composer. “I find it really

exhilarating,” he said of Sacred Harp music in a 2019 article. “The harmony is very refreshing. Generally not sweet, a little acid in there. There are a lot of songs in the minor key. It really just suits me.”

Ted is survived by two brothers, John Mercer of Asheville, NC and David Mercer (and wife Gwen) of Houghton, NY; two longtime housemates, Lee Beaty and Erick Alexeyev; and a host of Sacred Harp singers whose lives he touched. All who knew him will miss his passion, knowledge, kindness, and generosity.

Ted was a dog lover who rescued many dogs over the years. He leaves behind his beloved black lab Comet.

To celebrate Ted’s life, a memorial Sacred Harp singing will be held in Chicago on Saturday, October 15 at Kilbourn Park Fieldhouse, 3501 N. Kilbourn, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch will be served. Unlike the practice at most Sacred Harp events, attendees should not bring potluck food contributions.

Arrangements by Inclusive Funeral Care - 4880 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois, for Information 773-318-1305 or russ@inclusivefuneralcare.com. Donations in Ted’s memory may be made to Orphans of the Storm Animal Shelter, 2200 Riverwoods Road, Riverwoods (Deerfield), IL 60015, or to Chicago Sacred Harp Singers, 4868 N. Hermitage Avenue, Chicago, IL 60640.

Previous Events

Memorial Sacred Harp Singing

OCT **15**. 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Kilbourn Park Fieldhouse
3501 North Kilbourn Avenue
Chicago, IL 60641

Tribute Wall

JS

“*Ted was a very special person to me. We had many wonderful singing experiences together, spread over 30 years. Me the driver and he the navigator, travel agent, and mentor. His knowledge of all things Sacred Harp was encyclopedic and his ability to remember names of singers was astounding, but most of all I will miss his incredible kindness and dry humor. His loss to not just the Chicago area singers but throughout the mid west and beyond. My heartfelt condolences go out to his family and friends.*

Yours sincerely with deep sadness John Seaton.

John Seaton - August 13, 2022 at 12:19 PM



Ted Mercer was one of my first mentors in the Sacred Harp tradition when I lived in N. Illinois. He was the one who gave me the courage to stand in the middle of the square to lead a tune by myself. He will be missed. Daryl Mayberry Chesney

Daryl Chesney - August 13, 2022 at 05:13 PM

JA

I met Ted at Bryan College in Dayton TN. He challenged me to consider how my faith required me to address racial inequality. Ted was a gift in my life.

Jon Abercrombie - September 14, 2022 at 04:53 PM

BO

I was so saddened to hear of Ted's passing. He was a great inspiration for me and supported our Sacred Harp community from our very first convention in the late 90s.

Bradley G Oglesby - September 26, 2022 at 04:57 PM

DB

“ *I just can't believe he's gone. Ted was an amazing person. May his memory always be a blessing!-David L. Blatt*

David Blatt - August 11, 2022 at 05:03 PM