

ALUMNA GIVING BACK

Meet Sarah Freiberg Ellison, '76

By Dr. Harry Lane

Special to the Belmont Citizen-Herald

Recording artist, global performer, writer, teacher and native of Belmont, Sarah Freiberg Ellison is a tenured member of the venerable 200-year-old Handel and Haydn Society. Her music has taken her from Belmont to Europe to the West Coast of the U.S. and back home again.

After graduating from Belmont High in the bicentennial year, Sarah received a diploma in cello performance from the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria while finishing her AB in American civilization at Brown University. She then received a master's and a Doctorate of Musical Arts in cello performance from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Continuing to expand her knowledge of classical music and polish her skill, she earned an artist's certificate in chamber music from the San Francisco Conservatory in California.

Sarah stayed in the Bay Area and taught at universities in California while performing with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and the Streicher Fortepiano Trio. She also performed with the Portland Baroque and Seattle Baroque Orchestras. Sarah returned home to Belmont in 1997 and now teaches cello, strings and chamber music at the Powers Music School in Belmont. Her children have grown up in Belmont and also have attended Belmont public schools, with her son in the class of 2016.

Sarah also teaches baroque cello at Boston University while performing with the Handel and Haydn Society and many other groups. She has written numerous articles and reviews for STRINGS,



Sarah Freiberg Ellison, member of the Belmont High School Class of 1976. COURTESY PHOTO

the magazine for players of violin, viola, cello, bass or fiddle; and has recorded a number of CDs. Her CDs and schedule of performances can be found on her website: sarahfreiberg.com. **How did Belmont High School contribute to your success?**

I had a wonderful time at Belmont High School — particularly my senior year — I enjoyed close friendships with my classmates as well as memorable classes taught by Miss Austin in social studies, Mr. Howick in biology, Mrs. Williams in English and Mr. Quercio in French. I think the two most important things I took away from Belmont High School were how to organize my time efficiently and effectively, and how to write well. I worked hard in high school, and learned to do my assignments sooner rather than later, so that I could keep ahead of the workload and never become overwhelmed when deadlines loomed. I still work this way — and I credit my teachers with providing clear assignments and expecting honest effort. I remember having to write many papers in high school — some were very creative, others much

more straight forward, but all were carefully read by my teachers, and returned with thoughtful comments. Writing skills proved helpful when I went off to Brown, and also when I went to graduate school in music — where my high school skills were amended to pen program notes and to compare different composers' musical interpretations of the same written text. I wrote up my doctoral lecture recital for an article published in Strings magazine in 1993, and have gone on to become a corresponding editor at Strings, as well as to write dozens of articles and reviews there. Thank you Belmont High. **Why are you now giving back and supporting students at Belmont High through the Alumni and Friends of Belmont High School?**

Not only am I grateful for the advantages I received by attending Belmont High School, but also I have enjoyed seeing my children benefit from the Belmont school system, and I want to encourage students at BHS to work hard and reach for their dreams. When I returned to Belmont, I really wanted to find ways to give back to the town — and I

have been on the Belmont Cultural Council, as well as teaching and being on the Board of the Powers Music School, and a volunteer at the Benton Library. Joining the Board of AFBHS seemed like a perfect way to not only give back but also to reach out across the years to positively impact young lives of future alumni of Belmont High School. I love that classes from six different decades have come together to award scholarships for current graduating seniors, and I hope that we can encourage many more former BHS members to join us in celebrating achievement at Belmont High.

—Dr. Henry (Harry) Lane is a Professor of International Business and Strategy at the D'Amore-McKim School of Business at Northeastern University. He grew up in Belmont and is a graduate of Belmont High School (1959). Professor Lane is a Director and Investment Committee member of Alumni and Friends of Belmont High School. For more information about Alumni and Friends of Belmont High School please visit afbhs.org.