



## Mrs. Melinda Ruff

February 24, 1943 - December 16, 2020

Melinda Harley Ruff, 77, of Columbia, died Wednesday, December 16, 2020. She was raised in Laurens by her parents, the late William Hummel Harley and Caroline Monteith Harley, and was the granddaughter of the late Joseph Emile Harley who served as Governor of South Carolina.

Melinda graduated from Laurens High School and the University of South Carolina, earning both a bachelor's and master's degree. She married who she said was the cutest boy she had ever met, J. Delleney "Laney" Ruff, Jr., and they enjoyed 54 years together. Melinda raised two boys, Harley and Andy, while running two businesses, The Golf Bag and Concepts, with her friends. She spent most of her career in the commercial insurance industry, earning the Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter designation.

Melinda loved great music and was an active member of the Shandon United Methodist Church choir for 56 years, having joined as an undergraduate at USC. She and Laney were among the greatest of Gamecock fans and made tailgating an art form. One of her life's highlights was being in Omaha for two baseball national championships. During her retirement years, Melinda enjoyed volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House in Columbia. She and Laney loved to travel, and they took a large number of trips and cruises to Europe, Scandinavia, Egypt, Turkey, Morocco, and South America. After the sudden loss of her husband, she moved to Still Hopes retirement community where she enthusiastically engaged in several activities and made many friends.

Melinda was a wonderful person who spent her life loving, and being loved by, her family and friends; and always doing for others ahead of herself. Her generous spirit was a great example to her children and grandchildren and she will be greatly missed.

Melinda was predeceased by her parents and husband. She is survived by her sons Harley (Carol) of Beaufort and Andy of Columbia; grandchildren Clayton, Graham, and Mary Virginia, all of Beaufort; her brother Colin (Anita) Harley of Kiawah Island; her sisters-in-law Sally (Jim) Wiseman and Mary (George) Ross, both of Columbia; as well as

many nieces and nephews whom she adored.

A celebration of Melinda's life will be held at a later date. Memories and condolences may be shared, and a recording of the interment ceremony may be viewed, at [ShivesFuneralHome.com](http://ShivesFuneralHome.com).

Memorials may be made to Ronald McDonald House Charities Columbia SC, 2901 Colonial Drive, Columbia, SC 29203, <https://www.rmhcofcolumbia.org/> or to Shandon United Methodist Church Music Fund, 3407 Devine St., Columbia, SC 29205, <http://www.shandon-umc.org/>, Memorial/Honor Fund; memo Ruff Music Fund.

# Comments

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“ An external video has been added.



**Shives Funeral Home** - December 17, 2020 at 06:47 PM

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“ We met Laney and Melinda tailgating at Carolina football games and then later at baseball games. Those were some good times and we have very fond memories of them. Rest In Peace sweet lady, you are back in Laney's arms now.....

**Charles & Sheila** - December 21, 2020 at 12:50 PM

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“ We were young mothers in our neighborhood and share information about raising our children who played in play group taking turns keeping the children, and had fancy bridge parties once a month: Rita, Alice, Adaline, Melinda, Everlyn, me and Margaret who was a little older - what fun we had. Those were the days!

**Anna Taylor Blythe** - December 20, 2020 at 08:40 PM

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“ Melinda has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. She and Laney were business partners, neighbors and precious friends to my family - lots of happy hours spent together on Sims Avenue. She was always a constant in my visits home to Columbia and I will miss her so. Harley and Andy, I am very sorry and am keeping you in my thoughts and prayers and sending hugs and much love. Whitney Steele Marshall

**Whitney Marshall** - December 20, 2020 at 11:04 AM

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“ I am going to miss my friend and choir partner. Our families have known each other for many years and my husband and Laney grew up together until it was time for college. Melinda was a wonderful friend to us. Love to her family.  
Linda Foy

**linda Foy** - December 19, 2020 at 04:37 PM

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“ We met Melinda through Carolina baseball. I will never forget the nights after the cold baseball games when she and I sat in the car while Laney and Richard had one more drink. What a beautiful lady and what a great couple who will be sorely missed.  
MRy Parker

**Mary Parker** - December 18, 2020 at 07:28 PM

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“ Mary and I met Laney and Melinda through Carolina baseball and cherished our relationship. I introduced Melinda to her favorite warm weather drink of orange vodka, soda, and a slice of navel orange. She loved the orange slice so much she would eat it half way through her drink. Easily solved problem. I put 2 slices in so she could enjoy 1 half way through her drink and another at the end. Melinda said: “You have changed my life”. I enjoyed looking out for her after Laney passed away

**Richard Parket** - December 18, 2020 at 10:20 AM