

Musical Tribute to Norm Mayell: guest artists

The CD was a live recording of the musical tribute to Norm Mayell performed at his memorial in November 2022. Judy and Tobin invited friends to rehearse four weeks before the event. These are the eleven songs chosen to represent some of Norm's musical history. Mike Witwer recorded the songs at the event.

Ecological Blues

(Norman Mayell)

Tobin: lead vocals, percussion, claps

Perry: slide guitar

William: guitar, harmonica

Nandi: guitar

Holding Me [at Arms's Length]

(Judy July)

Judy: lead vocals, keyboard, organ, claps

Tobin: drums, back up vocals, claps

Perry: guitar

Mike: bass

Rick, William: backup vocals

Hello, Hello

(Kraemer-MacNeil)

William: lead vocals, guitar

Nandi: piano

Tobin: drums, back up vocals, and claps

Perry: bass

Judy: back up vocals, claps

Rick: back up vocals

Be The One

(William Truckaway)

William: lead vocals, piano

Nandi: guitar

Tobin: drums, backup vocals and claps

Perry: bass

Judy: back up vocals, claps

Katie, Rick, Nina: back up vocals

Frantic Desolation

(Kraemer-MacNeil)

William: lead vocals, guitar

Nandi: guitar

Mike: guitar

Perry: bass

Tobin: drums, backup vocals

Judy: backup vocals, tambourine

Rick: keyboard, backup vocals

Throughout 2023, Tobin and Judy worked with Mike at his Richmond studio to add backup vocals, claps, percussion, and additional instrument tracks. Two songs were rerecorded as studio versions. Below is a list of the guests who performed on the tracks. We thank everyone who participated.

Lover's Roulette (studio version)

(Kevin Mooney, arr. Norman Mayell)

Tobin: lead vocals, drums, chimes

Judy: keyboard, back up vocals

Mike: guitar, bass, piano

Sunrise for my Eyes

(Norman Mayell)

Tobin: lead vocals, drums, chimes, field recordings of

Colombian jungles by Tobin, May 2023

Judy: keyboards, synth strings, backup vocals

Mike: bass

Jimmy Mack

(Holland-Dozier-Holland)

Judy: lead vocals, keyboard, backup vocals, claps

Tobin: drums, tambourine, backup vocals, claps

Perry: bass

Katie & Rick: back up vocals

Earthquake City

(Norman Mayell-Judy July)

Judy: lead vocals, keyboards, claps

Tobin: drums, backup vocals, claps

Perry: guitar

Mike: bass

Rick & William: backup vocals

Fazon (studio version)

(Kraemer-MacNeil-Mayell-Beard)

Tobin: lead vocals, drums and "space sound"

Mike: guitar, bass and backup vocals

Judy: midi saxophone, synth keys, backup vocals

Emrys: keyboard strings

Spirit in the Sky

(Norman Greenbaum)

Judy: lead vocals, organ, claps

Tobin: drums, jembe, bells, maracas, clave, claps, backup vocals

Mike: bass and guitar

Perry: guitar

Terry: guitar

Katie & Rick: backup vocals

Nina: backup vocals, claps

Emrys: claps

A short history about the guest artists

After Norm died in August 2022, Judy and I decided to put together a band to learn songs that Norm wrote, played on, or just loved. We asked our friends, who had a long history with Norm to join us to play a tribute show for friends, family and Norm's musical peers at his memorial in November 2022.

The guest artists:

Judy July

Tobin Mayell

William Truckaway Sievers

Nandi Devam

Mike Witwer

Rick Greer

Perry Dexter

Terry Haggerty

Katie Guthorn

Nina Haggerty

Emrys Mayell

In 1965, not long after my dad came to San Francisco, shoeless with his belongings in a brown paper bag, having flown in after some years at the University of Hawaii, where he first met **William "Truckaway" Sievers**. Soon after arriving, he met and joined the members of what would become the Sopwith Camel. **William Sievers** and **Nandi Devam** were both guitar and piano players in the Sopwith Camel. Erik Jacobsen was their producer. After the breakup of the Sopwith Camel, Norm went on to tour and record with Blue Cheer from 1968-1970. Norm wrote a few songs at that time that are featured on Blue Cheer albums, one of which is "Ecological Blues," the only recording he sang lead. Meanwhile in 1969, Erik Jacobsen produced Norman Greenbaum's album, *Spirit in the Sky*, with my dad playing drums. Erik attended the tribute; Greenbaum had planned to come and sing "Spirit in the Sky" as our closer. For health reasons, he had to cancel. Judy, Norm's wife, took the opportunity to sing lead on our version of the song.

In 1974, Norm answered an ad in the *Pacific Sun* for a drummer wanted to complete a band that Judy was in. They eventually became a couple. They played together in Kit 'n' Kaboodle, Bamboo, and the Halftones for many decades, writing songs, and playing many covers.

I met my best friend, **Mike Witwer**, in the 6th grade in 1983. He was playing guitar and would later become quite proficient on the bass and piano and build his own recording studio. Mike was also my main motivator to start playing drums, my first set being an old, knock off Ludwig set my dad would find and bequeath for Mike and I to start playing together in Mike's parents' basement. Norm and Mike often talked about music and shared ideas about recording.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, Norm and Judy ran a desktop service bureau/graphic design shop in Emeryville, called Generic Type. **Rick Greer** became their longest standing employee. Rick was also a guitar player and songwriter. He played a few gigs that our family had in the early 2000s. Also in Emeryville around that same time, Kathleen de Wilbur started Kathleen's Doyle Street Cafe. Norm and Judy frequented the cafe, where they met and befriended Kathleen and her husband, **Perry Dexter**, who sang and played guitar. Norm and Judy accompanied Perry at the debut of song-poems by Richard Rosen, for which Perry had written the music.

In 2019, I met my partner **Nina Haggerty**, daughter of local guitar legend, **Terry Haggerty**. Unbeknownst to us, Norm and Terry had already crossed paths in the music scene, having both played on the Ace of Cups' new CD as guest musicians. Even more serendipitously, the two of them were playing local gigs around the bay in a band with Reb Blake including the Art House in Berkeley that same year.

On March 30, 2019, Nina and I went to see our dads perform together. Terry's wife and singer, **Katie Guthorn** was also there. Looking back, I realize now that almost the entire group that would form the musical tribute band in 2022 were present that night.

Nina and my son, **Emrys Mayell**, would join us at Mike's studio in 2023 to add handclaps, keyboard, and backup vocals to our live recording of the musical tribute. We completed the album in December 2023 one month and one year after Norm's memorial.

—TOBIN MAYELL

Norm Mayell: Partial Discography

Michael Bloomfield

The Group, LP 1964

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81MxBUf0HKM>

Sopwith Camel

Hello Hello, LP and single 1966

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11bLTZPaS2U>

Blue Cheer

Blue Cheer, LP 1969

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBSHWYBIlcl>

Rita Abrams

Mill Valley, single and LP 1970

Norman Greenbaum

Spirit in the Sky, LP 1970

Norman Greenbaum

"Spirit in the Sky," single 1970

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi_3GtQN2IA

Blue Cheer

Original Human Being, LP 1970

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vCf1Hzd7XQ>

Blue Cheer

Oh! Pleasant Hope, LP 1971

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzcaD5WLIQw>

Sopwith Camel

Miraculous Hump Returns from the Moon, LP 1973

https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=lxyCnWYVJ1w&list=OLAK5uy_I_uGaxXnXisLSwRejvaLYp6A0xQrlw2Z8

Bamboo

"Sunrise for My Eyes," single 1980

"Earthquake City," single 1980

The Halftones, cassette (1983)

"No More Rock 'n' Roll" (Kraemer, arr. Norm Mayell), "Jimmy Mack" (Holland-Dozier-Holland),

"Halftone" (Norm Mayell), "Dancing in the Street" (Gaye-Stevenson-Hunter), "Silent Type" (Judy July)