

Georgia Sings!

Fall 1998 Issue

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Letters to the Editor and articles are welcomed and should be sent to:

John Ratledge

Shorter College Box 2030
315 Shorter Avenue
Rome, Georgia 30165
706-233-7286

PRESIDENTIAL MUSINGS

Dear Georgia Musicians,



We did it! The Georgia ACDA Summer Conference was a grand success, largely because of your participation and the untiring efforts of the steering committee,

members of the executive board and the R & S Chairs. Dale Warland was an inimitable presenter who gently led us through thoughtful demonstrations which encouraged all of us to want to “get back to work,” and begin to once again make more music. The more we share, the more we learn, and therefore, the more we can impart to our students, church choirs, and community singers. We certainly missed some of the familiar faces, but there were, indeed, a great bunch of new choral conductors and teachers in attendance! Send us your suggestions so we can make the next conference even better than the last.

The older I become, the more I am impressed by “atmosphere.” Spivey Hall, at Clayton College and State University, is so warm and inviting – one can hardly perform any better than in such an acoustically perfect hall. We are grateful to the Staff at Spivey Hall.

Most of you probably already know that one of this country’s famous choral conductors died in February of this year. Margaret Hillis was the founder and conductor of the Chicago Symphony Chorus. In the early days,

some of us would arrive at Symphony Chorus rehearsal early, and Miss Hillis would teach a conducting class. We learned so much about good stick technique and how to insist on the utmost musicality. I am reminded that you and I must lead our singers to not save their most musical and interpretive performance until the song is fully learned; rather, even when “sightreading” the piece, try to sing with the attention and sensitivity that the composer and listener would desire.

R&S Chair for Ethnic and Multicultural Prospectives, Irving Bunton, planned a special treat for the music community. On Sunday, October 4, 1998, Georgia ACDA presented “Spirituals Jubilee ’98.” The featured choirs were the five choral ensembles from the Atlanta University Center, and a wonderful guest choir, *Cantamos*. The colleges were: Morris Brown, Clark/Atlanta, International Theological Center, Morehouse, and Spelman. Along with the choirs singing two selections each, Dr. Uzee Brown of Morehouse and Dr. Marva Carter of Georgia State presented two short papers on performance practice and style. The concert was presented at Peachtree Christian Church at the corner of Peachtree and Spring. It was early in the semester, but the students sang so well! Seated in the audience was a very special guest, Mr. Robert Shaw!

It is not too early to start making plans to attend the National ACDA Convention in Chicago in February. Happy Fall to us all.

Norma Raybon
Georgia President

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR – *Dr. John Ratledge*

I saw the movie *Titanic* for the first time midsummer after returning from a vacation in Destin, Florida. What a movie – what a story of passion and compassion in the midst of adversity! My thoughts were immediately embraced by a wave of pensive melancholia which left me reflective and cloaked by a pervading presence of joy for all of the privileges that have been afforded me throughout my life. I am overcome knowing that to be given another day is God's special gift to each of us, and we have a responsibility to make something significant of every opportunity that is afforded us.

The ocean is a healing place for me, with the continuous pounding of the waves drawing me back to the time before any of us actually had being. It provides the ingredients for us simply "to be" – where all of the senses seem more alive. The millions of grains of sand remind me of the vastness of this world and my small, yet significant presence within it.

A French priest once said, "To love anyone is to hope in him always; from the moment at which we identify [pigeon-hole] him; and so reduce him to that, we cease to love him, at which we begin to judge him, to limit our confidence in him, and he ceases to be able to become better. We must dare to love in a world that truly does not know how to love."

As a new season of the year emerges and the leaves spawn panoramic splendor, I would encourage you to stop and ponder about what it is that you wish to accomplish in the remaining days of 1998, as well as what you want to accomplish in the new one to come. Not all of this process is "program-related." We often forget ourselves in an attempt to build our programs and establish reputations. Try to know yourself – who you really are, and what it should be for you to live this thing called life to its fullest. The value of our existence as a human being should not be defined by the success of our programs. Our pilgrimage is lifelong, and the investment made in our choir members and ourselves will "season for a lifetime." Set concrete goals for your spiritual, emotional, personal, educational or academic growth. Ask yourself, "What can I bring to each experience of the new year?" "How much of myself am I willing to give away in order to develop my total self to its greatest potential?" "How can I be a facilitator of dream realization, those of my students and my own." "How can I take care of *myself* in the process?" "When should I say, 'No.' "

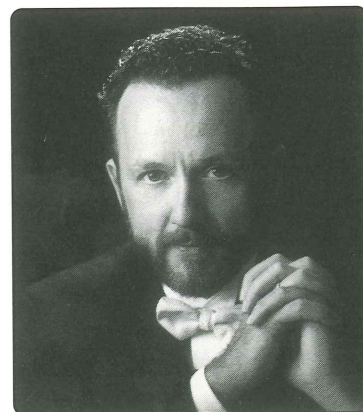
Rilke, in his *Letters to a Young Poet*, provides wisdom for each aspiring musician:

You are looking outward, and that above all you should not do now. Nobody can counsel and help you. Nobody. There is only one single way. Go into yourself. Search for the reason that bids you to write [teach/conduct music]; find out whether it is spreading out its roots in the deepest places of your heart; acknowledge to yourself whether you would have to die if it were denied you to write [conduct/teach]. This above all – ask yourself in the stillest hour of your night: Must I write [conduct/teach]? Delve into yourself for a deep answer. And if this should be in the affirmative, if you may meet this earnest question with a strong and simple, "I must," then build your life according to this necessity; your life, even into its most indifferent and slightest hour, must be a sign of this urge and give testimony to it.

Wow! What a profound challenge to all aspiring artists. Being a Baptist preacher's son, there were many moral/spiritual lessons taught to me which somehow have defined who I am. My dear, sweet Mother always admonished me, "Son, whatever you do, do it as unto the Lord [higher power]," and this has not only changed my perspective on how I approach everything in my life, but it has forged a pattern of living girded by the determination to be the best that I possibly can be in whatever I attempt. I challenge you to relentlessly pursue excellence through personal sacrifice, diligence and persistence based on a disciplined, daily work ethic born out of your love for the *process* as well as the *product*. Amidst the ever-emerging obstacles that true art faces as we approach the new millennia, seek a balanced, meaningful depth of commitment to your program – a commitment to performance excellence built on the hunger to make music at its most artistic level.

Unamuno said, "Those who believe that they believe in God, but without passion in the heart, without anguish of mind, without uncertainty, without doubt, and even at times without despair, believe only in the idea of God, and not in God Himself." Aim high. Work hard. But save some time for YOU!

John R



REPERTOIRE AND STANDARDS *for* Boys Choirs – Dr. Michael Braz

By Way of Introduction



First of all, let me say how pleased I am to be working with Georgia ACDA in this capacity. My professional work with treble choirs has included two boy choirs (Associate Director, Miami Boychoir and Directory, Boy Singers of Maine) and founding/cofounding two children's choirs (Tallahassee's Capital Children's Chorus and the Statesboro Youth Chorale). I mention this in way of introduction because it has shaped my philosophy *vis-a-vis* these two special types of treble organizations.

Children's choruses – whether school-, church-, or community-based – vastly outnumber boychoirs in the daily scope of musical performance activities, allowing a large number of young people the opportunity to explore vocal techniques and music literature. From the perspective of the boy singer, perhaps the ensemble's only limitation is occasional peer support and approval (a consistent problem for male singers in our society, and one that draws upon both the musical and "cheerleading" resources of a skilled and

sympathetic director). Barring special circumstances, the average children's choir may have a participation rate of 25% boys. While the musical experience received is unquestionably valuable on an individual basis, the numbers simply don't adequately address the future need for tenors and basses.

The boychoir tradition is rich and historic, servicing the vocal community in the production of current musicians and tomorrow's adult male singers. This may explain boychoirs' notable exemption from the requirements of Title IX during the first years of enforcement in the 1970's. With a number of exemplary ensembles in America and throughout the world, interest in boychoirs continues to develop, even on the Internet (for example, see *the Boychoir Symposium* at <www.treble.org>).

When directors begin to view children's choruses and boychoirs as partners in treble choral training, rather than competitors for a musical and geographical "turf," they realize and appreciate the commonality and mutual usefulness of much printed music, training methodologies (Finn: *The Art of the Conductor* comes to mind), and other resources, such as Jean Ashworth-Bartle's *Lifeline for Children's Chorus Directors*, Apfelstadt's *Canadian Music for Women's Voices*, and Welles' *Managing Young Choirs*, to name a few.

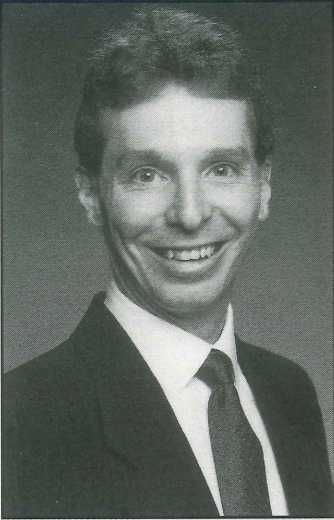
I am in the unusual position within ACDA, as one of its few members who is currently not conducting a choir of some type. At this time, my work within the profession is centered around composing and arranging for treble choirs, including works for Hinshaw and Plymouth and recent commissions for the Raleigh Boychoir, the Boy Singers of Main, and Fulton County Schools. My rewarding experiences in both creating these commissions and rehearsing them with their respective choirs have once more underscored the value of a well-run program – boychoir or children's chorus – to both its membership and the community at large. I welcome the opportunity for discourse and shared information, and can be reached at 912-681-5397 (school), 912-764-5401 (home) or at my E-Mail address: <mbraz@gsaix2.cc.gasou.edu>.

ACDA – An Arts Advocacy Resolution

Whereas the human spirit is elevated to a broader understanding of itself through study and performance in the aesthetic arts; and Whereas serious cutbacks in funding and support have steadily eroded arts institutions in our country; be it Resolved that all citizens of the United States actively voice their affirmative and collective support for necessary funding at the local, state, and national levels of education and government, to ensure the survival of arts programs for this and future generations.

February 1994

MUSIC EDUCATION – *Dr. Rod Caldwell*



DR. RODNEY CALDWELL is the Director of Choral Activities at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia.

Skill Development in the Choral Classroom

What is the true nature of the choral music classroom? Certainly, it includes some balance of rehearsal, performance, and skill development. Most of us recall our collegiate music experience as a combination of performance, studio, and academic coursework. While the content of these classes may cross the performance, studio, and academic boundaries, it is

is clear that the majority of skill development – sight-singing – is taught in a class designed for such a purpose and is not taught primarily in the choral rehearsal. Obviously, the typical public school setting does not afford the teaching of this skill as a separate class. Assuming that we do not abandon skill development entirely, how then do we truly teach in this setting?

First, we must recognize that skill development and performance are related activities. We can assume that any choral program that has one and not the other is missing a vital part of the educational process. Often, we teach sight-singing as though it were an end goal in and of itself. It is important to remember that the development of this skill derives its true significance from its ability to assist the student in raising the quality of their performance. To simply utilize skill development as a quantitative assessment of our programs, although convenient, is at best misguided.

~ How do we individually assess students in a class specifically designed to promote group work? ~

How do we teach and assess skill development? We must first realize that teaching and assessment are two different activities. While teaching may occur in a ground setting, assessment can not. Like any other individualized learning, the only accurate measure is through individual assessment. Herein lies the problem. How do we individually assess students in a class specifically designed to promote group work?

One of the most common approaches is to test intervallic identification. Students identify intervals played or sung by the teacher. While this is individual assessment, it is not assessment of sight-singing. Another approach is to have the choir (or section) sight-sing an example. While this is assessment of sight-singing, it is group assessment and does not measure individual performance.

~ ... development of sight-singing skills derives its true significance from its ability to assist the student in raising the quality of their performance. ~

The main stumbling block to individual assessment is the nature of the choral classroom. How do we individually assess students in a group setting? Here are just two approaches that may prove useful.

UTILIZE OTHER MUSIC TEACHERS

Other music teachers may be able to assist you in evaluating our students. While you are conducting rehearsal, individuals may be tested on their sight-singing by a colleague. Not only is this a good measurement technique, but it provides opportunity throughout your system. All teachers would know what systems of sight-singing are being employed and we could promote idea exchange and collegiality, and may even assist in the retention of students across grade levels.

HAVE STUDENT TAPE EXAMPLES

Students can go to a practice room or office to tape an example. The use of a parent or volunteer to monitor this process will eliminate cheating. The parent/volunteer need not have any musical skill, simply the ability to monitor time. Each student is given a pitch pipe, and the example. The parent/volunteer allows the student sixty seconds to tape the example.

These are simple ideas which will allow for individual assessment without requiring too much additional time on your part. They also allow you to tailor instruction to individual student needs, and to show individual evaluation as a part of the grading process for your class. This should lead to more qualified student musicians and raise the level of their performing and your choir's ability.

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REPERTOIRE AND STANDARDS – Male Choirs

Dr. Jack Broman



Greetings! My name is Jack Broman, and I am the Georgia Repertoire and Standards Chair for Male Choirs. I must say that I am **STILL** excited about this past summer's conference of the Georgia ACDA at Clayton College & State University, and it was wonderful seeing many of you in attendance. Norma Raybon and the Executive Board did a masterful job of putting together a very informative and interesting conference, and it was good to work with Dale Warland again, as I had the distinct pleasure of meeting him a number of years ago at the University of Iowa. All in all, the weekend symposium was terrific – many thanks to all who contributed to its success!

During the conference, I had the good fortune to present a session entitled "Choral Music by Georgia Composers," and I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to featured composers Michael Braz, Joe Chapman, Nancy Claiborne, John Ratledge, Michelle Roueche, and Brent Weaver. Michael Braz served as the accompanist for this session and others, and it was truly a pleasure working with him. It goes without saying that I had a wonderful time with this session, and I would like to propose that we continue to highlight the compositional talents of those in our state on an annual basis. In my estimation, we **NEED** to do this, and I certainly have no difficulty "blowing someone else's horn," if you catch my drift. With that in mind, would you please assist me in locating prospective Georgia composers who might be inter-

ested in having their music presented during next summer's conference? All music should be sent to me in care of the Fine Arts Department, North Georgia College and State University, Dahlonega, Georgia 30597. Thank you very much in advance for your help with this project.

Since I am serving the state in the capacity of Repertoire and Standards Chair for MALE CHOIRS, I would like to take this opportunity to recommend some men's music for your consideration:

SING ME TO HEAVEN by Daniel Gawthrop • TTTBBB, a cappella; published by Dunstan House DH9603. We read through the SATB version this past summer, but this arrangement tightens the harmony and in my opinion creates a much more stunning effect. You do need a top tenor that can reach a high b flat, however.

I BELIEVE by Lon Beery; • TTTBB, a cappella; published by Alliance Publications AMP0151. The text was apparently written by someone hiding from the Gestapo during WWII, with this monorhythmic setting serving to be a most beautiful and effective statement of faith.

WHO ARE THE BRAVE? by Joseph Martin; • TTBBB, piano; published by CPP/Belwin (SV9216). My Patriot Choir at North Georgia State simply loves to perform this selection. Upon meeting the composer, Joseph Martin, at this spring's convention of the Southern Division, I was informed that this piece has proven to be his most popular to date.

This should do it. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of further service to you and your students. Best wishes for a very pleasant and successful school year. Hope to see you next summer.

What's Going On?

Please accept this as a personal invitation to hear one of the world's outstanding vocal chamber quartets, **The Scholars of London**. This internationally renowned ensemble will be returning to Oglethorpe University January 21-22, 1999 for the second of its two-day residencies with our University Singers and University Chorale. You are cordially invited to attend their concert in Oglethorpe's Conant Center for the Performing Arts on Thursday, January 21 at 8:00 p.m. The concert is offered free to the public by the Arts & Ideas at Oglethorpe concert and lecture series. "Voices so pure, supple, flawless that they seemed to touch perfection." – *Le Monde*, Paris. I hope to see you. **Dr. W. Irwin Ray**, Director of Musical Activities, Oglethorpe University.

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—

The King's Singers

—

The Children's Choir
of Moscow

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The Chamber Choir
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The Convention ... you'll not want to miss it! The overall quality of the 29 auditioned choirs has never been better. Chosen by taped audition from some 300 entries, the choirs will showcase the talents of selected singers directed by outstanding conductors. The Women's Honor Chorus, a first for our national convention, will be co-directed by Morna Edmundson and Diane Loomer. The Boys' Honor Choir will feature 250 boys selected from some 500 auditionees and will be directed by Harvey Smith. The High School Mixed Voice Honor Choir will be directed by Jing-Ling-Tam. These 250 singers were selected from an incredible field of 1,700 candidates.

Following the tradition of the last several national conventions, coequal Gold and Platinum tracks will accommodate the more than 5,000 anticipated registrants. On Wednesday and Thursday evenings, the registrants will alternate hearing a performance of the Brahms *Requiem* performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, and the International Night featuring the Children's Choir of Moscow Musical Pedagogical College, The Boys' and Youths' Choir of the Ekaterinburg Municipality, The Chamber Choir of the Krasnoyarsk Pedagogical College and the Inner Mongolia Youth Chorus.

Finally, the convention will feature the King's Singers, the Ensemble Singers of the Plymouth Music Series of Minnesota directed by Philip Brunelle, and the Vancouver Chamber Choir directed by Jon Washburn. A myriad of interest sessions and roundtables are planned to make this the most rewarding convention to date. The Hyatt Regency Hotel will serve as the convention headquarters, but a number of other hotels, including the Palmer House Hilton and the Days Inn Lake Shore Drive, will provide housing at affordable rates. Preregistration packets will be mailed to all ACDA members in November. (Submitted by J. Perry White, ACDA Coordinator, State and Division Newsletters)

CHORAL MUSIC AT SHORTER COLLEGE 1998-1999

All Seating is Reserved: \$7.00 Adults / \$5.00 Students (unless otherwise noted)



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Friday, February 12;

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Saturday, March 13 (40 seats remaining)

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Sunday, April 11

SPIVEY HALL: *CHORALE AND CHORUS BRAHMS ALTO RHAPSODIE AND EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM* – \$15.00 / \$7.50

Sunday, April 18 (45 seats remaining)

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770-923-8202 (h)
770-921-8512 (w)
FAX 770-381-1739

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY

CHOIRS



Lyn Schenbeck
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Kennesaw 30144-6301
770-424-1570 (h)
404-471-626 (w)
FAX 770-919-8657
lschenbeck@agnesscott.edu
lynmusic@mindspring.com

COMMUNITY CHOIRS

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Atlanta 30341
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404-817-1508 (w)
hhadden@fdic.gov

ETHNIC & MINORITY CONCERNS



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2800 Autumn Lake Lane
Decatur 30334-3561
404-286-3962
ibunt@mindspring.com

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Alpharetta 30202
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Susan Beck
Tifton 31794-3801
912-386-6545 (o)
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MALE CHOIRS



John Broman
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Gainesville 30506
770-531-7962 (h)
706-864-1431 (w)
FAX: 706-864-1429
jbroman@nugget.ngc.peachnet.edu

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Augusta 30904-2200
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706-820-2095 (w)

MUSIC AND WORSHIP



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Macon 31204
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912-752-2751 (w)
912-742-6485 (church)
FAX: 912-742-2112
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NEWSLETTER



John Ratledge
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706-233-7286 (w)
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henrygrave@aol.com

SENIOR HIGH CHOIRS

Emily Floyd
604 Kirk Road #28
Decatur 30030
404-378-2318 (h)
770-528-638 (w)

WOMEN'S CHOIRS



Dawn McCord
1215 Chestatee Road
Gainesville 30501
770-535-81099 (h)
770-534-6189 (w)
dmccord@lib.brenau.edu

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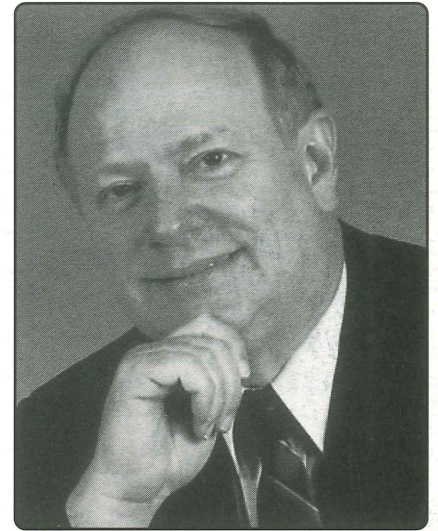


Rodney Caldwell
118B Winding Way
Statesboro 30461
912-764-5570 (h)
912-681-0616 (w)
FAX 912-681-0583
caldwell@gsvm2.cc.gasou.edu

Dr. Lee Bratton • 1947 - 1998

~ In Memoriam ~

Choral Directors of Georgia mourn the loss of Dr. Lee Bratton, an exemplary musician and choral technician. The very first Amahl in Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in New York City. Bratton's Georgia career began as Director of Music for Brenau University in 1985. He demanded the highest of standards from his students, and many of the wonderful directors in Georgia will attest to his dedication. His college choir was twice selected to perform at Savannah GMEA Conferences, and other choruses that thrived under his leadership included the Lanier Singers, McEver Road United Methodist Choir, and South Forsyth High School. A life member of ACDA, Dr. Bratton died on August 25, 1998, and he is survived by his wife, Wendy and children, Laura and Kevin. A scholarship fund has been established at McEver Road United Methodist (3606 McEver Road in Oakwood, GA 30566), to assist his college-aged children.



Dawn McCord

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