

**An Oral History of the Michigan-Youth For Understanding Chorales  
1958-1973**

**The Archives of Michigan  
Interview With Robert Pratt**

**by Helen V. Taylor, Archivist  
transcribed by Day (Zanardelli) Best, 1969 Chorale  
2008**

**This book is dedicated to Robert Pratt  
in memory of Rachel Andresen  
and is a gift from the members of  
The Michigan-Youth For Understanding Alumni Chorale**

**Today is June 26th (2008) and it's about 2:10 in the afternoon and I am talking with Robert Pratt (or Bob) about his experiences directing the Michigan Chorale.**

Better known as the Youth For Understanding Chorale (**Youth For Understanding**), and I'll tell you why. The university got upset using The Michigan Chorale (the University of Michigan) and so we changed it to the name of the program, which I think is unwieldy, but I guess it's more legal. Tell me again, whom do you work for?

**This is for the Archives of Michigan, and so we try to build our collection about the activities of private groups. We've always documented the activities of state government but now we're more interested in documenting what the people of Michigan are doing as well.**

OK. I think we're getting something done with the Library of Congress, too. One of our members was working on it. I don't know where it is, what stage now. Well, number one...(number one:)

### **1. How did you come to conduct the Michigan Chorale?**

I was a choral teacher at Pioneer High School here in Ann Arbor and the original conductor Lester McCoy in 1964 was ready to take the chorale to South America. Unfortunately, he had a heart attack, and I was asked to take it over in March of '64, which didn't give me a whole lot of time to rehearse and do things a little differently. I was recommended by the high school principal who was on the board of Youth For Understanding. And the director of Youth For Understanding, the mother of us all, Rachel Andresen knew me because I had done a couple of things with her---baccalaureate degree and so forth, and so that's how I got in. They didn't want the former director to go to South America because he was going to be up in the mountains some---with a heart problem.

Oh, I didn't know what was going to happen the next year and I sort of waited and waited and waited. And the president of YFU at that time was a friend of mine, it was Ralph Piper, he was a pastor at Zion Lutheran and I had been his choir director. He had had a back operation and I finally went down to the hospital to see him and he was getting a little better, so I popped the question. And sure enough, I was hired on---for the next nine years! And that's the way I got going.

It's my PhD. Because, like many people here in Ann Arbor, you get on the PhD program and I had registered for that summer and, of course, I cancelled it and never went back. But I learned so much and met so many people and went to so many places and (ah!) had so many adventures it was worth about 10 PhDs!

### **2. What was the idea behind the concert tours?**

Well, it was one: showing people in other countries the level of musical education in the United States. That was the principle thing. And it was also: organizing the exchange program in other countries. Because we were, of course, a presence in other countries and that helped get the program going, especially in South America. It started in Germany...I don't know if you know all this...with a cow. (**With a cow?**) With a cow. What happened was the Ferndale Rotary Club took a German student, this is right after WWII - - - rumor has it he was a member of the Hitler Youth, but that may be Apocryphal. Anyhow they sent a cow back to the ruined herds of Germany. And soon this program, basically in Germany for a while, outgrew the Rotary Club and so they passed it over here to the Washtenaw County Council of Churches of which Rachel Andresen was the director. Soon it became too much for the Washtenaw County Council of Churches and it became Youth For Understanding. So, Rachel Andresen was the moving force --- And the idea behind it was, as I said, to show our level of musical education. And there was not much musical education in the schools in Germany, yes some, but it is not like we have in choruses, bands and orchestras.

And so those were really the two reasons, I think. Concomitant reasons were to show Americans what other countries are like. We don't know anything about the world basically. Now I think we do (**right, right**), but we're talking about 40-50 years ago. Anyhow that did give these students an opportunity, and I just got an email passed on to me from a student who couldn't come for the reunion and he was apologizing because he said that it changed his life. And this is a common theme among choralers.

### 3. Would you say that the chorus achieved its' goals?

I would say greatly so! And I think perhaps more, as I mentioned, in South America. There was a person down there by the name of Eric Simone in Uruguay. He was a conductor, a conductor---although he had graduated from medical school as a *psychiatrist*---but he conducted orchestras and so forth. And he took the first chorale, and he took it *all over* little old Uruguay 'till we were exhausted. So we'd achieved, I think, good success in taking music to the hinterlands, so to speak, in this country and some others.

Now, Germany, of course, goes back a million years --- as the seat of the greatest composers that ever lived (and Austria) so we didn't have to teach *them* so much. But they don't have (youth chorales), except professionally I guess, or adult choruses then. I haven't been back there for a while, so if someone says "Where'd he get that idea?" *ah, forget it. (Laughing, OK)*

Alright, so I think they achieved their goals. Everyone seemed to enjoy us, too. We had good reviews in newspapers. And the students, 99% were just thrilled by their experience, and still are! Some of them go and visit their exchange student families, because we stayed with families. And this (reunion) somebody else just said three of them were down visiting their family in Brazil, and so on and so on. And you know we only stayed with a family, perhaps at the most, a week or just a few days. But some of them made bonds (I'll be coming back to that) which are *still* very strong. (**That's nice**) So I think we achieved those types of goals.

### 4. What countries did you travel to?

I sort of used my fingers and said 9 in Europe. (**Wow!**) Including: Finland, Denmark, Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Yugoslavia & Russia. Was that nine? (**I wasn't counting...**) Oh, ha-ha! I was hoping you would be counting...ah, oh well, IRELAND AND ENGLAND <making 11>! And 9 in South America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Colombia, <Uruguay>, Venezuela <Ecuador>. And we did several countries in Central America. I wasn't on the tour then, because I had a sabbatical from my school, which was unusual for a high school. But at that time, when the university coughed, the high school said *gesundheit*, at least here in Ann Arbor, (**laughing---right**) so they had sabbaticals for teachers and they had them per annum. And they didn't want to give me mine, we had to go to court, we—I guess my union at that time. But I did get it and so I took off from the tour in Colombia, I think it was, and my assistant took over. And he was to go on the next tour while I was in Brazil, that's where I went. Why Brazil? Well I knew people down there. I'd been there a lot. I taught a course or a seminar there for a week in Brasilia at the behest of YFU and the State Department. And so I knew people there and I knew people in other places in Brazil. At that time our schools had a movement on for multicultural things, which meant African-Americans. They didn't know anybody in Africa. (**So, at that time...when was this?**) Well it was in '73. And so, I knew Brazil had the strongest African Culture of any country in the Western Hemisphere and it proved to be right. We'll maybe talk about that later, I don't know---that's not chorale. So anyhow my assistant took over through Central America, which was about our last week or so. So that I've traveled through quite a few countries... we were supposed to go to Japan and the Philippines in one year, I think it was 1970, and the Japanese committee didn't feel that they were ready to take on our group, number one; and the Philippines had a typhoon, so that they were not in good shape either. So we never went there, I'm sorry to say.

## 5. How different was traveling on the different continents?

Well, I mentioned that Europe is much more sophisticated and wary of musical things---high-class stuff. And South America was not so...although I had some good experiences down there, which I'll get to later. So that would be the main difference. We were building exchange program things and displaying our stuff to the South Americans. We were doing the same thing in Europe, but it was a little more established and so forth at the time I was conducting.

## 6. Do you have favorite South American and European stories?

Oh, Helen, I could go on forever! But I do have some favorite ones. Let's see if this is the time...South American and European stories...well, let's start with this. We're going to do some of this music on the concert. When I was in Germany one year, 1972, we had at that time a string ensemble that went with us and so I was looking for string orchestra music with chorus. And I found a composition - a *Missa Brevis* by Alan Hovhanness. And that was one of our repertoire pieces. And I was in Tübingen, which is our sister city, and I was at a reception---you know they would have parties for us and everything, and a call came for me and it was Mr. Hovhanness' wife. They were summering in Switzerland <from America> and she wanted to know when I was going to do the mass. And I said "in Berchtesgaden, Germany in 2-3 days". Well, by gosh if they didn't show up and sat in these rough pews of the ancient church, and I gave, I found out, the world premier of this work! It was an early work that Alan had written. **(that's wonderful!)**

And the publishers tipped the Hovhannesses off on this. And so, what an experience!! He went with us in our bus to a reception and he invited us to breakfast with him, Mary and me, the next morning. And I exchanged letters and music with him. He's passed on now. He was a wonderful man, very quiet, tall, thin, and so forth.

So...ah, speaking of Tübingen (I'll cross these off, **(laughing, OK)** so I won't bore you.) We <Ann Arbor> have this sister city relationship so it was natural that we would go there. And we had lady, a German native---who was a teacher here--- who was a colleague of mine and, I don't know, but she must've been SOMEBODY because she had a lot of experiences with top-drawer people. Anyhow I think that she facilitated this <sister city relationship>. So, we went to Tübingen. And it's is a wonderful old Medieval city, of course its got the new part. And we gave a concert in their *stiftskirche*, which is their college church, I guess. And we gave a concert in, I don't know what they call it... The Great Hall...it used to be where the knights rode around on their horses. And Mary and I got a boat and rode up and down the Neckar River and we had a wonderful time!

Our hosts were Helmut and Hildegard Caldget. Helmut's name Caldget comes from an old Huguenot family who left France in early times because of religious persecution. Well, anyhow, they were great hosts. He was the conductor of the University of Tübingen Chamber Orchestra. Now, when you talk about that, these weren't students so much, they were older. In fact, people go to university over there 'til they're 80 years old, or something---I don't know. **(laughing)** And they were very, very professional and the German government subsidized them and sent them all over the world. He was always going to exotic places---Africa, again, the Orient. Well, to make a long story short, we had wonderful times there. And we met them and played with them, sang with them on 3 continents. **(really?)** Obviously Germany, Europe.**(yeah)** Well by chance we were in Uruguay on one of our tours and they were in South America coming to Uruguay. So this impresario, Eric Simone set up a concert for us and we did a Mozart mass with the Tübingen Orchestra.

And then, and this is one of the high points of my experience, the '66 chorale---which was one of the smallest, and don't tell anybody, one of the best---was asked to come to Interlochen for the International Society of Music Educators, which is kind of a big deal, you know, 'cause they're all over the world. And a friend of mine, a former choral conductor that I knew quite well, was then working for Interlochen part-time and then full time. And he called me and said that I should apply for his job at Ann Arbor Pioneer High. He let me know that they were expecting Zoltàn Kodàly the Hungarian composer of so many beautiful things. And so we programmed a composition by Kodàly---we didn't know if this would all work out. But, sure enough, after our tour we went to Interlochen and Kodàly was there and we gave a concert. And he was at it and we sang his piece, and he seemed to like it because he came up from the audience and he shook my hand. And afterwards he asked me for some of my spirituals---we sang a few of those, we always did. And he, of course, had...ah---*folklore*---he was into Hungarian folklore, he and Béla Bartòk who was, I guess, a colleague of his. So that was a GREAT experience! And I've got that on tape. Somebody taped it. That was 1966.

In 1965, my first real chorale, we went to Europe, and usually went to Berlin and this time we did, too. And, of course, the country was divided. **(I was going to ask)** Yeah, and we got a tour of the Eastern Zone. We went through Checkpoint Charlie, a famous place. And we were on a bus and they wouldn't let us out until we got to the Soviet Memorial Park. But, <I> looked at the streets and it was kind of crumbling from the war **(right)** and they kept saying "*This is under construction, that is under construction, blah, blah, blah*". (Laughing) Well, we went back a few years later and everything was STILL under construction! Anyhow, we went out to this park, a very lovely park. And there was a statue of a person kneeling. I think he had a rifle or a sword. And my "smarty" staff member Steve Young asked our guide if he was praying and, of course, Communists don't pray. So, anyhow we had a wonderful tour there. **(laughing)** Ah, that was not the *first* time that I was there. I had a tour of the wall...the west side, obviously, and it was done by an army officer, a colleague, a friend of my brother-in-law. Our main concert was in the *Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche*, The Keiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. Kaiser Wilhelm. **(right)** It was a beautiful church, round with blue glass---glass blocks, and it was *very blue* inside. Well, we gave a very fine concert!

I must, while I think of this, say that we had 2 wonderful ladies in the chorale who were organists. One is still here, and is the associate organist at our <Ann Arbor> First Presbyterian Church, and has accompanied one of our reunions and was a student of mine from the school <Pioneer High>. And the other has a doctorate from the University <of Michigan> in organ, and she has been at the Flint School of Music, or something like that. And she was accompanist for a group that I conducted, The Plymouth Oratorio Society. She was the accompanist for a year. And so, we put those 2 girls to work when we had an organ, and one played a modern number and the other played Brahms. Well, the thing that I'm getting at...Joy Schroeder is the one with the doctorate from Michigan, and she had some kind of older parents who weren't really encouraged to see her go on this tour. **(hmm)** But once she got in the group, there were so many fabulous musicians, ah, that she became enamored with studying music, and well, she's still working hard at it. OK, the culmination is that she went back about 30 years later in '95 and gave a recital in the *Kaiser Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche*.. Well, anyway, next to that is the bombed out, original church. It's a great big tower...and that's about all. OK, that was an experience because the allies had bombed that church. We, of course, saw a number of other bombed out places.

So, another part of the tour was in England. We were stationed in the Midlands, which is not an exciting part of England, like the...whatever...and a dear, dear couple were our hosts there. But anyhow, the committee in Burton-Upon-Trent---Burton-Upon-Trent is a beer city. They've been making beer for AGES! In fact, there's a castle there, not a very remarkable one, and Mary Queen of Scots was held there. **(hmm)** And she would smuggle out notes to her compatriots in beer barrels.

I went to a Rotary meeting there and I came back to visit this couple, they've both passed away. And 20 years after I'd been there at the Rotary Club, I went again and they still had our flag. Rotary Clubs get flags and it's a big deal. Well, anyhow they arranged for us to give a concert at the Coventry Cathedral. The crux of this is that the Coventry Cathedral was bombed to smithereens by the Germans (**right**) and it's still a consecrated church. And they have 2 nails and 2 pieces of wood from the ruins that are altarpieces. Now, the story goes, and I don't know a lot about this, that the British government---Churchill---knew that they were going to bomb Coventry but they didn't tell people because it would give away something about their intelligence.

Anyhow, we gave the concert...ah, I've got a poster about it there in my bedroom on the back of the door. And it was in the afternoon and I had gone over there twice to consult because it was televised. So here we are---I've got a picture that I can show you, too---that's even better...ah, here we are giving our concert in Coventry's NEW cathedral with this huge painting, or cloth I think it is of Jesus. (**right**) VERY Controversial. Have you been there? (**no, I've been outside it, but not inside**) Uh-huh, well it's very controversial what you'll see in the picture. So we gave our concert. It was broadcast later on TV, delayed. And some people saw it (that we knew in England). Well anyhow, here we had given concerts in the 2 churches. One bombed by the allies, one bombed by the Nazis. (**hmm, yes**) We had a wonderful time there, ah!

In 1967, another European tour, we were invited to take part in the *Europa Cantat, Singers of Europe*, or something like that. It's held every 4 years and we were the first American group to be invited because they were mostly adult choruses from all over Europe and one from Canada and then there was the University of Illinois was also invited. Well we went ahead, Mary and I went ahead to sort of see what the set up was. We didn't know much about what was going on there and we found that we were housed about a mile away from the center and the concerts and everything. There was a man in the house who was retarded, or something, so we were being driven by a nurse. And she said "*This is not going to work too well. You have to be downtown.*" Namur <Belgium> is an old city remarkable for its action in WWI and II. In fact General Omar Bradley in WWII stayed at the hill. They call it the Citadel. So, our nurse---whose name I forget, said "I know a doctor and he's a musician, too, he plays piano." And she talked to him and we stayed at his place---BIG place up on the Citadel. They had a railway car that ran up and down. And so, he was just wonderful to us. The last day he could not come (have us come) to dinner---I don't know why. He was a very famous obstetrician and he taught at the university. So he had us for lunch and he opened a bottle of wine. He's also a *connoisseur*. He has one of these medals, you know, that (**oh, yeah**) the *Sommeliers* wear. He's one of the 2 in Belgium, or something like that. Dr. Delfor. So, he opens this wine from his cellar and it's from 1926, which is my birth year. I don't know if he knew that or not. W-O-W, I mean, he must've had a lot of it down there, because I don't think that he'd want to give it away. Also, Caldget in Tübingen has a thousand-bottle wine cellar. And the reason is that he is kind of *Impresario* for the university. In other words, he brings the professional musicians and sets up a concert series and entertains. I won't go into the rest of it. So, here we are in Namur, staying at Dr. Delfor's house and we gave a concert and we were given number of venue---we were given the cathedral! And of course the acoustics were marvelous and we had a big audience, and we did a good job!

And (I'll get to him in a second\*) then we were part of an *atelier* which was a group of 3 or maybe 4 of the choruses at the Cantat. There was one Czech one, I think the Canadian one was there, the other one I can't remember, and us! And they were all adults. (**right**) I don't think that they were professionals, but they were *there*. Well, we had to do a work by, (and I/we had a choice of 3 or 4 *ateliers*) by none other than Zoltàn Kodály, who, in the mean time, from one year to the next had passed away. So, ah! His wife was there. A very young, beautiful wife---and she greeted us, she remembered us, and everything.

So we took part in a concert of this *atelier*---every night of the thing they had a different *atelier*, there must've been 4 or 5. And it was interesting, in the rehearsals---they were led by a Hungarian conductor---in the rehearsals, our students knew the work much better than these other choruses. And we didn't work on it in the States! We worked on it there. It was Kodály's *Psalms Hungaricus* and they had the Budapest Symphony Orchestra there and professional soloist from Hungary. So anyhow, it was a wonderful experience and we were just thrilled. So, we had this best concert venue and we had this *atelier* concert.

\*And I got a letter after I was home, maybe in September, from one of the board members of the Europa Cantata---he was a German conductor, if I remember, but if not---we had gotten to know each other. And he said that the Hungarian conductor whom we had for our *atelier* got in trouble with the Communist government over the concert that his group gave---his private group, his own group. **(yeah?)** And: "Could you write a letter telling good things about him?" And I did. One of the problems was, his venue was a small concert hall. I think they had ah...I don't know where it was...and it was very heavily draped...the acoustics were ATROCIOUS! So that was one thing I wrote about. I said how good a conductor he was for our *atelier*. And finally, he was accused of too much sacred music. **(oh, no!)** Here we go again! **(yeah)** And I said well, you know the basis of most choral music is sacred. I said of course he HAD to do some of it. Well, anyhow I never heard a thing about that. But anyhow, that was Namur, Kodály, and we were better than *other groups*, and, uh...am boring you? **(not at ALL)**

OK, these are not so long...Yugoslavia, was not our best tour because they are a pretty backwards country, especially in the '70s.**(what year was this?)** 1972, I think the year we did the Hovhanness. The kids had a great experience. They sent them to a work camp to work with Yugoslavian kids on some river project. And then one concert we gave was in an ancient medieval mercury mine that was still in operation. **(wow)** It was a l-o-n-g concert hall. And I'm sure that these people were rather unsophisticated with music, and we were doing a work by Charles Ives with little bells and dissonance and so forth. Well, they LOVED the *whole thing*. They just CLAPPED and stood up, and we just had a wonderful time. We didn't get any mercury to take back with us. **(laughing, I hope not!)**

Then once, in Chile, ah---we were going down to the city of Valdivia. And it's populated with German immigrants, so they call it Faldivia. Well, anyhow, we were supposed to do a concert with the orchestra down there. I had no idea what/how good that orchestra was. And we were doing a Bach cantata, in German, which would be OK for *them*. And so, we went down and, ah, they turned out to be pretty good! I'm sure they were on their mettle. And they had a cellist who was a Peace Corps member and was a graduate of my, my school, **(oh, yeah---laughing)** the Oberlin Conservatory (laughing). So, that was kind of neat. Well, anyhow, we took the train back, or *I* took the train back. I guess I got deathly sick **(oh!)** and was put off in Antofagasta for about 4 days, with an American family fortunately, before I came back home---to Santiago, that is. **(Did the kids go ahead of you?)** Yeah, they went ahead and I don't remember how they...ah. well, let's see...were stuck (laughing).

### **7. How many kids did you have on each trip?**

About 70. When it started out in '58 they had a hundred **(wow!)** which is pretty un-wieldy and tough on a committee in a foreign country **(yeah)** to house all of those people. So I cut it back to about 70 and maybe 65, you know around that, always.

### **8. Where were the young people from?**

All over Michigan. The first or second chorale had a young lady from Traverse City. And of course, we had to come to Ann Arbor on Saturdays to rehearse. Her father had an airplane and flew her down! (laughing) **(laughing, wow!)** So, I had them from as far west as Lake Michigan, as far north as---oh, Saginaw <Sandusky, MI> --I didn't have anybody from Traverse City...Mt. Pleasant, Grand Rapids, <East Lansing where many came from> and all over southeast Michigan obviously, and a lot from Ann Arbor.

Then finally, we got hooked up with Ohio and in the last few years I got a number of really fine musicians from the Toledo area. **(OK)** And our string ensemble, which finally got started about the last 3 years I guess, was directed by a dear friend, who passed away unfortunately...Stark. And he was a professor at Kent State University so he recruited his string ensemble which was about a dozen people from down there. And the second conductor was from here so he recruited them from here. Uhm, we're going to have a little string quartet with the Hovhaness <for this 2008 reunion concert> which I mentioned was for string orchestra, and one of them was in the original at least. I don't know who the other 3 are (laughing). So, anyhow, that's where they came from. What kind of kids were they? They were *wonderful* kids---99.99%---*lovely* people. They were *highly* recommended by their school choral director and counselor, and usually a pastor or minister <pastor, priest or rabbi>. The pastors and counselors wrote terrible letters. **(they wrote terrible letters?)** Yeah, they just were...I don't know. They just didn't make sense sometimes. (laughing) I think they just ripped it off. **(laughing)** Well, anyhow, ah, **HARD WORKERS!** I gave them a very rigorous ear and sight-reading test. **(oh, really?)** As well as their records, they had to come here and be tested by me. I started that in October and I did a lot of telephoning to conductors to remind them that: "we need you". And then we began rehearsals just before Thanksgiving. I think that we had one, this was an organizational, and then after Thanksgiving we rehearsed until Christmas. And then after Christmas we rehearsed until June when we had 3 days of what we called "Intensive Rehearsals" and our out-of-towners stayed with our local people. They worked **VERY HARD**. They had to memorize *everything*. They had to sometimes work under very difficult conditions due to acoustics and set-ups. I remember my first tour I didn't memorize *my* music, 'cause I got on board in March---it was laziness, too. You see, music stands in South America were *so weird and different*, they must've been 200 years old---some were like this <demonstrating> and some were like this---and finally I went to my hotel and memorized my music, it was *that* close. **(laughing)** But these kids had to put up with things like that.

Some of them had absolutely tremendous <host> families---I told you that a number of them still keep in touch---and some of them did not. Some of them lived out and had to be transported to the concerts. I had a short rehearsal before each concert, **(right)** and some of them got in trouble until we realized that they were not able to get here because they depended on the family, or "Uncle Joe" or something, "José" I mean. **(laughing)** Anyhow, that was one of the problems. So they had to put up with quite a lot of that in---especially in South America, and also in Europe, but maybe only 10 or 15% of the choralers had those problems.

So, that loyalty, and the hard work and the connections that they still have today---they have 3 numbers that all of the chorales have sung and we had 3 pre-rehearsals here, **(right)** and at the end of each one (laughing) I thought they were *tired* because they're all adults and have jobs, a lot of them---they started singing one of the numbers, and it was *just wonderful*. And they love to sing. Most of them are singers in church choir, if nothing else.**(right)** OK, so they were loyal and tough.

I don't know where that question is...but we were out 7 weeks with one suitcase **(right, 7 weeks!)** and I did carry a briefcase and I carried an extra blue suit because I perspired (laugh). The man who sold us the suits for the boys became a dear friend. He had a very nice men's store here in town. It's gone now. And he'd always, after I bought (or got free) my couple of blue suits, he would *give* me a sports coat and slacks and I would wear those to occasions *other* than chorale concerts.

## 9. Do any of the individual choristers stand out in your memory?

Well, we'll start with my son Donald.**(oh, well!)** He's very active. He went as a counselor with his wife Kathy (she wasn't a choraler) and did a marvelous job of...ah, he took care of arrangements like when we meet, traveling and so on. She took care of the counseling (any of the girls that started crying in that part of the day). So, I'll start with them! Don is *very active* in the alumni.

He's been on the board for all of our concerts. He's a very "gung-ho" singer. He's a math teacher, he just retired from Huron High. And he sings in his church choir, a small one, he cantors there. He is a business manager of Plymouth Oratorio Society, which I was the founding conductor. **(mmh)** Oh, what else does he do? But he loves to sing and he's a *good* singer---he's going to do a little solo---I think it's time for a little nepotism here on the last concert. **(why not?)**

Ah! Cindy Richards. Her father was the choral conductor at Battle Creek High School. She came in (really) after the auditions were over, like a day or two later, and on the spot I took her. Wonderful soprano. Rather sad life. Her father, whom she liked so very much, was killed in an automobile accident crossing the street after he retired. Her first husband died of cancer, I believe. She's married again. She's in New York and her job is to provide singers to the various choruses. There are not any full time professional choruses in New York City as far as I know. **(really?)** Yeah. They're all talented amateurs, or people who have music jobs, and they will call up Cindy, and she will...(she's also the associate conductor of an ensemble, a very well known one. I think they're going to Europe). So Cindy came to the last reunion and she said "I still use your warm up exercises." And they're not *mine*. I got them from *others*.

Another one is Candy Goetz. Candy is situated now in, ah, New York area. I think she teaches at the choir school in Princeton, teaches voice. She was with the New York City Opera and she sang the lead in various operas. Twice here she sang lead in LaTraviata. She went to U of M and after one of her concerts we had a visit with her voice teacher (whom I know) and Candy. She came out of school to see me. And so, she has been a *real pleasure*. She was just a *trooper* on the tour---she called me "coach" all the time (laughing). Beautiful high soprano voice. **(m-m-m)** I wanted to give her something to sing in the last reunion and all I had was a part in a spiritual, which was written, really, for an alto. **(um-hum)** So she said "Oh, I'll work with it." She's that kind of person. Well, at rehearsal, *SHE SANG A HIGH GOSPEL RIFF ON THIS. OH! IT WAS JUST AMAZING!!* So, that was Candy. **(wow!)**

Another one, who is coming here to this reunion from South Africa is David Patrick. David was a student of mine at school. David went on 2 chorales, then I took him as a counselor (junior counselor). Marvelous bass! Well, he and his wife Marjy are musical missionaries in South Africa, I'm not sure in what city. His parents still live here, and his daughter is going to have a baby and she lives here. So, he's going to be here and I've given him a solo. **(wow)** Dave Patrick is a rare guy that has gone on to something quite marvelous. Wonderful voice! **(wow!)** Ok, that's Dave.

Carl Grapentine, better known as "Grape" (laughing) has a brother here who sings all over. Maybe you've run across Chris Grapentine <who was a '69 chorale> he sings oratorios in churches and what not. Anyhow, Carl was in the '65 chorale to Europe and he was quite a wit and personality *there*. Just, you know, an 18 year old---or 17, he used to have "Uncle Jimmy's Story Hour" that he told kids. I don't know. Anyhow, we had a bus stop in...somewhere in Germany. What Steve Young, our counselor in many cases, called the "Pinkle Pausa"...they all had to go to the bathroom. **(oh, I got 'ya!)** I don't know if that's good German or not...(laughing) **(laughing)**. Anyhow it was out in no place, it was kind of a roadhouse. We had a while to relax and walk around. Here was Carl sitting on a rock with a bunch of German kids sitting or standing around him and he's telling a version of "Uncle Jimmy's Story Hour" in *English*, of course... (laughing). Now, Carl came back. He's an FM radio announcer in Chicago. It's a big, important station and he'll appear on national FM hosting a show now and then. He's a wonderful speaker, and so we had him speak two reunions ago (not the last one) <it was 2006>. And, ah, he said "We're here, we're having a *wonderful* time. We *hope* you enjoy the concert. But if you don't, WE DON'T CARE!" **(yeah)** And of course that got a laugh! <laughing> He then had a heart attack after he got home. **(oh, my!)** But, he's not *bad* **(he's ok?)** he's OK. He is just an amazing wit and speaker.

Another one from the '66 chorale, Jim Anderson, whom I just got an email from saying that he can't come, is an opera star in Germany, in Europe. He came to one reunion and I gave him a tenor solo. And he said now, that he's doing something in Vermont, directing---probably a musical show. He sang opera all over Europe. And, I don't know how we got on this subject, but he said, "I stabbed Carmen about a hundred times." **(laughing)** Doing *that* opera. Again, a wonderful guy---happy as a clam!

Another one, who hasn't come to reunion but has made an interesting career is Peter Marinos <'68 & '69 chorales>. Peter is a Broadway star **(hmm)**. We first saw him in Evita and he was the czarist, I don't know if you're familiar with it, on Broadway and we had dinner with him. And then, I think Mary went to the show again she used to have a travel program---she took some people. Then we saw him in Chicago in Evita, and he/we didn't have time, so we just went out briefly. Then unbeknownst to us, now, first he appeared in Detroit in...ah, the Greek...ah, Zorba! And so we met Anthony Quinn, who was Zorba the Greek **(OK)**---who is really an *Irishman*. **(mhm, laughing)** So then, ah, went to New York, which we used to do every couple of years and we thought we'd go to see A Secret Garden, and we're waiting for the curtain, and there's Peter in the program! So we got, just, to say "Hello". I don't know what he's doing now <he's been in The Producers on Broadway for several years> he hasn't come, but he's been a very interesting person.

Now, speaking of families, when we went to *Buenos Aires* we were housed in hotels usually because we didn't want to have to work with families and so forth. I had needed my rest. In addition to the concerts, I had to attend receptions and make talks, speeches and so forth. Anyhow, we met a family named Munk. And Margaret, the mother is a refugee from Nazi Germany via England, so she speaks English perfectly. They have three sons and their son Thomas became our friend. Thomas was the same age as my sons at that time---well, my sons are two years apart and Thomas was in the middle. So he came here as an exchange student. And he saw his first HUGE snowfall. **(yes?)** And he was in my Humanities class at school and he *only flunked every test* (laughing) **(laughing)**. He was the most wonderful, loving guy and his mother came here a couple of times and stayed with us. She's a world traveler and she's 90 and she's ready to go, as usual. And so, Thomas has been our son. He calls us on our birthdays, he calls us at, I think, Christmas---they're Jewish, they're not big practicing Jews. And he is what we would call a CPA, a very busy guy he makes a lot of money. He's married to his second wife, his first was an Argentine, we didn't...we met her a couple of times...Alicia. We thought she was kind of so-so. And now he is married to a very beautiful Argentine, *Irene* (Ē-re-hnĕh), Irene---and we hope they'll come here. He has two children from his first marriage they...ah, one of them works in England, and I forget what Diego does, and then they have a child from the second marriage who's about 8. And I hope they'll come here, his wife doesn't speak much English, although. Alright now, that's my roster of Great People I Have Known. Ahhmm...**(laughter---we're on number 11, if you want to keep it that way...)** Are there choristers that stand out in your memory? YES!! <laughter> **(laughing---well, that's what we just were talking about...right?)**

#### **10. What was the age range for the choristers?**

Seventeen or eighteen. Sometimes a 16 year old sneaked in there. My daughter Carolyn is a very talented soprano. She graduated from Oberlin Conservatory and she is a singer in the Twin Cities and other places, here and Illinois. And so, in school---in high school---she was very good, so we let her slip in as a mascot. **(ah, ha-ha!)** And, of course, we didn't let her sing. But the last concert we gave, here we are walking in.. and here walks Carolyn in--in a chorale suit she had borrowed from one of the girls! I don't know which one. Ah, and she sang the last concert. She knew the music, she was very good at that. And then she went on the next two tours as a legitimate, so she was a Sophomore instead of a Junior/Senior. Most of them were Seniors, with a sprinkling of Juniors. And if they came as a Junior I'd often let them, *I'd want them back. want them back.*

**(did you have any college students?)** Well, uh, this David Patrick was, I don't know if he...yes, when he was kind of a Junior Counselor. He was on to college when I asked him to come back and to "beef up this section", or that section, or something like that, though usually I wouldn't need it. The last chorale, I took every last bass that walked in to try out. Ah, things were happening then. The money wasn't so good. The airlines were having trouble. Ah, school choirs were going overseas. *Church choirs* were going overseas! So it didn't have the *cachét* that... **(right)** that it used to. They were good, so, ah...that's the way it goes. So there were 17, 18...sometimes a little bit younger, sometimes a little bit older. Now some are in their SEVENTIES! <laughter> The youngest ones... <figuring out loud>...close to...50! **(right)** So, they asked this reunion that I didn't program too many difficult things. There's one. And I don't program it quite as long, because they can't stand on risers that long. **(right, right!)** OK, What kind of kids were they? The Best!

## 12. How were the trips paid for?

Individually, basically. Ah, Rachel Andresen would give scholarships to this David Patrick... the boy from (the man!) South Africa...I'm pretty sure he got some scholarship money when he was a regular choraler and certainly when he went as a counselor 'cause his family doesn't have...I forget what his father does, not a lot of money in the family. One year we connected with a high school in Detroit...now, which one was it? A friend of mine was a conductor there...D'Neal...what was his last name? Anyhow I sang with him in a group years ago and he became superintendent of the school of music and so forth. He sent 4 or 5 of his students...African Americans...(mmhmm) one woman, *what a voice!* One, well, they were all pretty good, There was one that was a little *shaky*. We were in *Brazilia* on our way t...after that, to *Rio*. And, I don't know how we missed him, but he didn't come back to *Rio!* **(oh!)** And as it turned out, they didn't have any prejudice toward blacks in Brazil (mostly a prejudice about income lines. If you're a poor ditch digger, they may not have any respect). But, so anyhow we called (the counselors called) the family in *Brazilia* and he got such *wonderful*...he just *fell in love* with his family, and he didn't want to leave them! I don't know how he escaped us when we came back. I don't remember *how* we came back. So anyhow, *he* came back. And you know, he probably didn't have a *good life* in Detroit, maybe. He was not, maybe, the brightest kid but he was a *good kid* and he sang very well. And we forgave him. We talked to him. I was brought in by that time, and said, "Well (you know), we're just happy that you're back and that you had such a good experience, but we can't let you be." <laughing> So anyhow, *that happened there*. Ah, doody, doo... <thinking> So, they got *some* scholarship money.

A number of the kids over the years gave a concert to raise money, or they put on a show, or they had a drive or something. And of course, a lot of them from Bloomfield Hills, or Birmingham...(they could pay for it) they could pay it, yeah. And so that worked out. Here. I know one girl, her father was a very famous man, he was chief economic advisor to Richard Nixon, which is not *too* much. **(wow!)** He still lives in a rest home and his daughter has come to the...<reunion>. Ah, concerts, money-raising, scholarships, **(parent's money)**.

## 13. How was the program paid for?

How was the *program* paid for? **(yeah)** They made money on exchange students, and our students, too to pay for their expenses and flying. And then when they got to the country they had home stays. Don, my son went to Holland in the summer for 6 weeks, I think, and he had a *wonderful experience*. He was a member of the *Royal Family* he stayed with, and I happened to be in West Germany and had a day off and we rented a car and drove over and met them. They were all 6 feet and some tall! Don was 6' then. Even the mother, but the 2 brothers and the father! And I guess he was very close to the Queen! But they live *very* modestly in a BIG stone house, not *huge*...but anyhow they took Don on a camping trip to Paris and Switzerland and he just had a ball! **(wow!)**

The program got some money for publicity from the State Department (**oh**). I'm vague on that because I wasn't brought in on the finance. Plus the fees, and of course, they raised money from different organizations, too, ah, like everybody else does. (**right**) So, that's the way basically. Rachel Andresen (and this is coming up in another...) said, "We don't make money with the chorale, but it's *worth* it. We use it as publicity. We use some of this money we get for public purposes to send the chorale".

#### 14. What was the travel like?

Well, it could be very strenuous! When we went on this bus trip around Uruguay, the kids were pooped! The '66 chorale had a (I think that was '66) had a tour up and down Chile, they had a tour in Argentina, and they had some work in Rio in Brazil. They were *dog-tired*. We never had (my son points this out. He was in '66.), a true retinue of students. They *always* had some ones who were sick. And ah...we had ah...a, sort of a gimmick that we did...well, anyhow, I *always had to count them*. <laughter> (**laughter**) We always had enough to give the concert. So that was a tough tour. Finally, one of the last things we did, we gave a concert in the *Teatre Municipal* in *Rio*. Big, old fashioned opera house! Wonderful. And the kids, after this strenuous trip around South America, had almost 2 weeks to do nothing in *Rio* (**really!?**) Sometimes we had trouble getting people to go to South America. They don't know about it. Ah, one of the tenors--- he had an absolutely gorgeous tenor voice that went on to "concertize" in Europe, one time said: "Don't knock *Rio!*" <laughter> ...And..., he passed away. Anyhow, they had this l-o-n-g stretch of doing nothing, and I thought, you know they're going to be pretty *dull*, although, they'd sung the program maybe 25 times by now. So I got up on the podium and they were on the risers and I start to warm them up and they ALMOST BLEW ME OFF! They were just so anxious to sing again! (**laughing**) As I said, after these local rehearsals recently, they just wanted to continue to sing! Ah, so, that was travel that was difficult.

Sometimes we had travel which was very *good*. The busses in South America were not so good. The trains were worse! I don't think we did much train <travel>. Ah, some of the busses in...ah, when we went to Yugoslavia, we got busses in Uruguay. No, I'm sorry! Wrong continent! In ah, Germany, I guess. In Munich (*München*) and they were top-notch Mercedes busses and the drivers were excellent! Yugoslavia is very hilly, and we were coming back from a concert...there are very *bad drivers*... you see these crosses up and down (**oh, man!**) the highways, and all of a sudden ---I sat in the front if were any questions from the driver---You see this in the mirror...I could see in the mirror, this car coming around us on this bend...no guard rail! Like the road was about that way <demonstrating width> Well, it bam-Bam-BAM on the side of our bus! (**huh, WOW!**) I have never been so scared in all my life!! (**I can imagine!**) So, although we had good busses and excellent drivers... So, travel in Germany was *usually* quite nice.

We took a boat ride from, was it *Copenhagen*? No, *Helsinki to Copenhagen on a very nice boat* <The Finlandia>. So that was a nice one...oh, ah, nothing else pops into my mind. But we went with the Tübingen Orchestra, more or less, on a sight-seeing. We went down to *Switzerland*, saw the *Rhinepfalz* where the *Rhine* starts...little bubbly thing. <laughter>. And went into *Switzerland and Austria*, and so forth, without concertizing much. So, some of it was *glorious*. We always flew down. Ah, we had good flights. And the flights back...ah, this...um, um...I'll say it...counselor was a pilot also. And we flew these early jets. They were *French* jets. And when you landed, they put up little scalloped pieces of metal in the wings. And the waiter...what do I want to say---uh-oh, stewardess (you don't call 'em that any more) (**oh, you can call 'em that**) <laughing> warned us that it would make a noise. And it made a GREAT BIG SCREAM LIKE BANSHEES!! (**yeah**) And one time when we were coming in---some of the airports were very difficult, like *Rio*---and this fellow Steve <Young> said "I was scared stiff when we were coming down!" 'cause they had to go *around* a mountain, or something. (**laughter**). So, anyhow it was comfortable...but...oh, I know! We were in Uruguay. Ready to go to Paraguay (our one-and-only trip to Paraguay) And we had an Uruguayan airline Pluna Airplane ready to take us (**hmmm**).

We had, in our chorale that year, ah, a girl from *The Netherlands*. She has come back for every reunion—I don't *know* if she coming for this one <she did> ---she's a music teacher over there...tall...anyhow, (**hmm**) she was *born* in *Uruguay*. She was here. I think her father's a diplomat or something like that. And so, she was born in *Uruguay*. Well, she said, "It's too bad we're not concertizing there. It would be kind of special, had I a chance to see my country." Well anyhow, we all got on the Pluma plane and, by gosh, if it didn't stop in another port of Uruguay! And we, weren't ready to get out there, we were traveling to Paraguay. Oh, no. I *beg your pardon*. It started in *Rio*. (**OK**) And then, we went to Montevideo and instead of flying on to Paraguay, we stopped! And I thought (oh, you know) well maybe it's something... so, the guy comes on the plane and he wants TAX MONEY from all of us (**oh, man!**) So, ah. I...I argued with him and I said "Come on! We're in transit. We're in transit." And finally, I talked him out of it. But we did get Nicole <Nicolette Schaap '71 chorale> to get off the plane and go and kiss the ground, or whatever she did! So, ah, they succumbed, the customs guys.

And we had that same kind of problem flying from *Buenos Aires* to *Santiago*. They made us put down in a town just at the *Argentine* end, edge of the *Andes*. Ah, and they made us unload our baggage. And my brother-in-law was a staff member then, and was an army reservist, and he was going to try to pull something<laughing> didn't do any good! But we got back on the plane. But there was a certain animosity there between *Chile* and *Argentina*. Then between *Venezuela* and *Colombia* we had to land at an air force base, not the regular airport (**right, right**) in *Colombia*, at *Bogotá* because there was animosity between those two. So, the *travel* was OK, but *that* problem...(laughing. **right**.) So what was the travel like? <laughing> Well, it could be bad (**adventurous!**). But it could be WONDERFUL (**yeah**). OK, is that enough? (**oh, sure!**)

#### 15. What is one of your favorite stories from your time with the chorale?

Did I do that? (**oh, you've been telling stories, but if you come up with another one, that's fine**) It was singing in the *Helsinki Cathedral*. (**ooh!**) A most marvelous place! As you come in to the bay you can see it on a hill, a big white stone. And we've given more than one concert there. And of course, we're there in the summer and all the good *Fins* move out to their, um, summer-place with the ah, sauna and everything else by the lake. And we stayed with a man there, a wonderful guy. So anyhow we give this concert and we have 2 folksongs in Finnish. As I say we *used the language*. And it was packed! (**laugh**) And when we sang these, it was--- oh, I couldn't see any of this---the old ladies started crying, and everything. But, who knows that we would get an *audience like that* in the summertime in Helsinki. So, I had a sauna and jumped into the , ah... bay. (**yeah?**) Cold water, and so forth. (**get your heart pumping! laughing**) Oh yeah! (**get your voice...**)

Well, I mentioned Teatro Municipal, the big, old fashioned opera house. But we also went to Coscadura every time. Coscadura was a...a blue collar on the outskirts of *Rio*. (**okay**) And we had a relationship. They always had a banner, for us. And we went there maybe 2 or 3 times. And, we gave a lot of concerts in schools. Ah, in Montevideo, Eric Simone sent us to the *German* school, which was a private school. The public schools in *South America* are <groans> (**yeah**), so *anybody who's anybody* sends their children to the private schools. And, uh, when I went to my sabbatical I went to a conference in Sao Paolo, where I was living near. And I was offered a job in the *American School* in *Rio* (**laughing**) but I turned it down! <laughing> So, anyhow we had a lot of school concerts and one was at a night school in Montevideo. It was at night <laugh> 'cause that's when the *students* were there. And there was a big spiral, or big staircase. And it had various floors, maybe 3 or 4 levels. And the students who were older taking, probably, courses to upgrade their skills. And you could see them up there looking over...communist Orientals...It was a short concert, you know, few, good, happy stuff. And the *American* ambassador was there with us, and, at this school...that was kind of interesting...and he praised us, wrote a letter, I think to...back home here (**hmm!**).

And ah, m-m-m-m-h! <hums up a musical scale> I talked about schools and cathedrals--- Helsinki, Coventry---when we were in Tübingen we always concert out at a *Bebenhausen*, it's a cloister. And uh, medieval, and it was outdoors. and we did...I always put in a section of show tunes. And we sang a *Porgy and Bess* medley. And the critic for the Tübingen paper had a headline: Gershwin in the Cloister! <laughter> **(oh! right!)** I've got a copy of that someplace. So, *Bebenhausen* was a regular one when we were in Tübingen. And, uh, we... were on TV, as I mentioned, in Coventry Cathedral **(right)**. Ah, we were on TV quite a bit in, uh *Rio*, maybe twice every tour. And then in Montevideo, I remember we were *so* tired again. This guy worked us in Montevideo. It was *after* our concert <laughing> and we went to a TV studio to record! And the kids were, you know, putting each other, grabbing each other's backs, and <demonstrates> UGHH! I don't know how we DID that! And so, and then in England we took buses down to London (we were there, just during the day and saw very little) and we gave, made a tape for the BBC. So, we did a lot of television work especially in South America and a little bit in England. I don't remember doing so much in Europe <the '69 chorale was taped and broadcast over Helsinki radio>.

So that was some of the places I remember. What is one of your favorite stories? *I think I did that!* **(yeah, yeah, if you want to do this, it's "How long were the tours?"**)

#### 16. How long were the tours?

Seven weeks, which is a little *too* much. **(yeah, that is very long)** Yeah, we got back *pretty frayed!* **(laughing)** But then we'd give our Homecoming at Hill <auditorium> and that would be early in September, I think, or maybe late in August, I don't know. And they were back in shape! <laughing>

#### 17. What kind of venues did the chorus perform in?

OK <already covered>.

#### 18. Why did the chorus disband?

And why did the chorale disband? That's not a good ending question! **(well...)** Well, it's kind of a long story. And as usual it revolves around money. **(right)** And the core of her smartness, acumen, organization and so forth, was kicked *upstairs*. And we got a new, young director Phil Yasinski, and he was a go-getter. I understand that he got kicked out of YFU when he became, uh, a umm, someone who sets up concerts...he was the general manager of some orchestra. Well, after I got back from, I don't know...was my sabbatical?... yeah, must've been. By the way, I had dropped off in *Colombia* and went down to *Brazil* and Mary had *followed* me on a YFU plane that was gonna bring our kids back (or *their* kids). And they were to give the homecoming concert and, here, I'm in *Brazil*. And I said, "Well, my assistant going to do it." and he's a *fine* conductor. Well, darn, if the chorale (choralers) didn't take up a fund, and they brought us back. **(WOW!)** And I guess, *sent* us back. I don't *think* we had any more YFU planes. **(laughs)** And so, I did do the last one...I walked up on stage when they were all there and went, "Duh-h-!" But they didn't know me as well as the other ones because I was with them about two-thirds of the way.

Let's see here...so anyhow...the next thing (and this is somewhat confidential and somewhat an opinion)...Ah, Rachel Andresen was *very wary* of people preying upon her, I think for tours. For free rides. **(right)** She had a lot of people she trusted, ah well, a *few* people she trusted. Like her old school teacher, and so forth. And they didn't work out so well as concerts...you sent 'em along on a chorale tour <laugh>. But she had two sons. One was very active and became more active in the program. His son played in the band at Pioneer <High School> and he was all "gung-ho" for bands. So he got Rachel to set up a band to go to Chile, South America.

Well, you know, you lose, or in a *band* you need: one very good trumpeter; one percussionist; one clarinet; and maybe an oboe. And maybe you've got to *pay for that*. **(yeah)** You can't... you don't have that in a chorus. You've got, maybe 15 altos, sopranos, tenors, basses. And, you have these specialties...I'm *pretty sure* the band cost a big bunch. And the conductor down there, was sort of an ego...got in trouble in *Chile* anyhow. So, anyhow the band went and cost 'em! So, anyhow, here comes Yasinski and says "We just *can't* afford the chorale anymore!" And, I had no ah, recourse to THAT. I had no money to... **(well, this was like 1973. or?)** Yeah, yeah, 1973 when I came back. And ah, there were movements by the choralers to start it up again. Their children were getting to the age, some of them, where they would've benefited from it. As a matter of fact, Don and I went to Washington. Oh, the program moved to Washington <D.C.> **(oh!)** There was a big, heavy set, self-important guy. He was only about 25, but he had a *Hamburg* and he knew people in the *White House*. He had a Nixon Christmas card. He thought well...I'm trying to search for the word...climber. **(OK)** Anyhow I think he was pretty instrumental in getting them to go to Washington. That was *another* thing that was going to cost! They bought an *old*, historical place. They built a new place on it kind of a dorm for incoming and out coming *people*. So, that was the ball of wax. No money. "No" when we went to Washington to meet with them. No money about resurrecting the chorale. So, they gave me a medal! **(oh? laughing)** San São, a chairman in *Rio* (quite a wonderful guy---grew up in the Amazon area---he got a scholarship to engineering school here in the States and went back and organized the engineering. Had a lot of money. He painted the one, two from the end, the long one two from the end <gesturing toward paintings>. And I've got several other paintings around of his<gesturing>. And I just got an email from one of the '66 choraler that had pictured of him, and he would bring his artwork in. He'd *give* you a piece of art! Anyhow...I forget my train of thought...but ah,**(medal. medal. you got a medal)** Yeah, I got this medal...I don't know where it is...and he gave it to me at this last concert. So, anyhow. Ah, money. I don't think this Phil Yasinski was *into* the musical thing in philosophy. Rachel was a *pianist* (*I never heard her play*). You know, he may have like to hear, oh, Beethoven...or not, but I don't think, from the stand-point of organization, he thought we were necessary. But maybe we did our job. As I said, it was difficult. **(well, it was a whole... all through the Cold War, basically.)** Yes. I forgot...I never *thought* about the Cold War. And really, when we were on tour, I had an interview with had a couple of "Karl Marxers" who were Communist. They asked why I did so much religious work--- here again, that raises its head. **(yeah)** And that was in '64, the first... this is in Chile, and I had programmed parts of the Fauré Requiem and it was in honor of John F. Kennedy. So I told them that, and of course, that just shut them up right away!

So, what was another experience? Well.. let's see...Oh, yeah. Another thing in Uruguay, I forget what year <"70>...they had a terrorist group called the "*Tupamaros*" and the day of our concert, we had a wonderful concert hall, we had there a kidnapping of one of the American consulate officials (or embassy) I don't know which. And he was on the committee, I think, for the chorales. So, all the choralers came to the concert hall, with their family, one-by-one. They didn't all, "Just come on and get out of the car and go". And there was an armored car, and guards, and so forth. And, I had to go to the bathroom, I had an escort. **(oh, my!)** So they were afraid that would've been a real *concern if they did that!* So, then we were in *Buenos Aires* and were giving a concert in their school of art, HUGE room with big, old fashioned paintings and everything, and I was in the middle of something, and I could hear BOOM-BOOM-BOOM. So, I sort of wavered...and then BOOM-BOOM-BOOM. Well finally, one of the committee said, "They're trying to break in and raise a stink!". I don't think they were going to *hurt* us. And, they quickly took us out to another room away from there. I don't think we finished the concert. **(WOW)** So that was that. So, we had some of those run-ins. The "*Tupamaros*", they were students in Buenos Aires. Oh, students didn't like us. We were giving a concert in Chile in a big, I think, a stadium and there was one: "Yankee go home!"**(oh, that's not good, they didn't like you because you were Americans?)** Yes! **(aw-w-w)**

That was common. **(yeah)** I never was so *really* aware on tour, of the Vietnam War. I was certainly aware of it here at home, because my son Don got out, by the skin of his teeth, from being drafted. And so, I was aware of that! But, down there, I guess we were trying to deal with anti-American feelings in general and I think we did pretty well at that. They did say...the *Rio* newspaper came out, I had an interview, and they had a headline (with a picture of me, by the way) it was "Pacifist". **(pacifist?)** Pacifist. Well, I talked to the, I don't know if it was the embassy, ambassador, or certainly a consul member. And he was aware of it and said, "Don't worry about it." And nothing happened. But they tried to "catch" me and that, on ideas about the Vietnam War. Well, there's one other thing, Helen, **(OK)** that I'm going to mention, and then...**(please do!)** We went to Russia twice. One time we went to a Young Pioneers Camp. It was out a ways. And it had a row of youngsters, red bandanas and I don't know what else. And, it was raining, <laughing> and they greeted us, and I think they brought us all flowers, another group of campers. And we had lunch there and there was a GREAT BIG statue, just the head, of Lenin---a bust. But it was a wonderful experience. And I don't know, I don't remember much about *talking* with people, but we had a host, and got back on the bus (I don't think we had a concert but we sang some things). But, in Leningrad, the first time we were there, we stayed in a hotel and they looked at our luggage, at least part of it. And it was the *old* hotel. The second hotel was much nicer...the Finns had done a lot of work on it. There were glass doors across the front. <laughs> No, you could only go in one of these side things, that was the only one they'd let you go in. So anyhow, we gave a concert in beautiful hall, I don't know, I think it was a Czar's palace, or something like that. And it was the day after we, the Americans, landed on the Moon. **(oh, WOW!)** I call my oldest granddaughter my Moonchild because she was born then. So anyhow we had a translator (and they were school kids, they were brought in) and they said, "We want to congratulate the Americans for their landing on the Moon." So I thought that was *pretty good*, you know, *Cold War*. **(yeah, the space race, yeah!)** Yeah, he was *very* cordial. He was *very* complimentary about it. AH-H-H-H. **(are you...are you worn out?)** Well, I don't know if *you're* exhausted, but I am! Oh this, is wonderful. I could probably go on and on and on and on and on, but I'm sure you...**(no, this is GREAT)** have to get back to work, or probably not... but back home. **(well, I think this has been a very good interview and it...parts of it may end up on the web, you know)** Well, that'd be nice. I was going to say, "how do I see the results of all of this?" **(well, like I say, we might... we'll probably will download this on the computer and it might end up on the web)** Sure. **(it will be accessed through our website, the Archives of Michigan website. So OK, I think I'm going to pause this for now and I'll see you at the reunion, I'm sure!)** We didn't burn it up eh? **(laughing...hit the pause here is all I want to do...)**