THE CHORAL EXPERIENCE
Ray Robinson, President

The idea of building an entire college around a choir and a choral program seems on first hearing to be a silly notion. Even more incredible is the thought that every graduate of that college would emerge a choral leader in some way, shape or form. Yet, the founders of this institution had just such a concept: that idealistic young people would be attracted to that school, become absorbed or immersed in its daily choral experience, and then go forth to invest their lives in the lives of non-professionals in a fulfilling career of choral leadership in churches, schools, and communities in this country and around the world. Is it possible today that a small, private college, with a limited number of graduates, is still able to survive by training students to work almost exclusively with amateurs? Well, this is what Westminster is all about.

Of all the forms of musical expression, choral singing is the most accessible to the amateur. Because extensive and serious musical study are not essential prerequisites for a satisfying choral experience, countless children, teenagers, and adults throughout the world find delight and fulfillment as regular participants in this form of human endeavor. It is the one art form that can provide for the non-professional a first-hand experience with transcendental beauty and musical self-fulfillment usually reserved for those who have devoted years of practice and study to their instrumental or vocal specialization. The key to this experience, however, is a competent and inspiring choral leader, who establishes the environment and creates “the choral experience.”

What is “the choral experience?” Stated simply, it might be defined as an interaction between a singer and a musical composition within a group setting under the guidance of an inspiring conductor. Stated another way, it is an unusual experience of communication between a composer and a singer, in which the singer is able, with the help of the conductor, to perceive the universe in a new perspective — through the eyes of the composer. This extraordinary act is accomplished through an empathic relationship between the singer and the conductor which allows both, at least for the moment, to participate with the composer in the recreation of the creative art. Termed a “peak experience” by the humanistic psychologist, Abraham Maslow, this moment is the actualization of a cosmic awareness of the place, history, and nature of man in what often appears to be a disorderly, chaotic existence.

Intimately bound up with the communicative aspect of the choral experience is its educational function. It is more than simply an ego trip for the conductor or a way to pass time for the singer. Choral singing should be a very special learning experience, one in which the singer not only learns about his relationship with the macrocosm but also becomes better acquainted with himself. Most importantly, this encounter with great art exhibits a primary characteristic of any great learning experience: It leaves the participant forever changed. As such, then, the choral experience is one of those deep emotional encounters whose existence is only discovered after the fact and whose results are the only real record of its occurrence.

It is only citing the obvious to state that the choral experience is also a psychological and sociological phenomenon. Recognizable physical changes manifest emotional events of any depth and choral singing is no exception: changes in pulse rate, respiration, adrenal flow, and similar symptoms are present, as well as a feeling — at the end of a good rehearsal — of satisfying physical exhaustion.

There is little question that the most important element in the satisfying choral experience is the well-trained, competent conductor. This is why the years spent at Westminster are so important for the aspiring choral musician. Choral music is unique: it is an activity unlike any other in the arts, or even in music itself for that matter. Therefore, as the leader of this communicative-educational experience, the choral conductor must be, first of all, a sound musician, well-schooled in the traditional disciplines of music, but also trained as a choral specialist in addition to a basic musical education. It is not enough to simply be a conductor. Many programs which train conductors overlook the conductor’s role as a facilitator — one who is able to create and control a special kind of learning environment and evoke an “empathic” response from the participants in the choral experience.

Webster defines empathy as “understandings so intimate that the feelings, thoughts (and motives) of one are readily comprehended by another.” This is indeed a graphic description of the relationship that exists when a singer (or instrumentalist for that matter) has a clear understanding of the intentions of the conductor under whom he or she is performing: in short, when gesture expresses a clear musical language. Empathy and the empathic relationship between the conductor and singers thus become necessary ingredients in the total approach of the conductor.

Consequently, there is more to choral leadership than musicianship training and sensitivity to style. The choral specialist must possess certain personal characteristics, such as neatness and the ability to develop a human relationship with a commitment to singers. There are two basic reasons for this: first, the choral conductor deals with people who are the instruments. And as singers grow under the care of the dedicated and competent choral conductor, they develop as total physical and musical personalities. Thus a true commitment to the music itself is impossible without and inseparable from a commitment to the singers, to their growth both individually and corporately. Secondly, the choral conductor deals almost exclusively with participants whose training and overall musical exposure are for the most part on a non-professional level. Without a clear understanding of the worth and inherent potential of the choral singer, the love, patience, and faith that are so necessary in dealing with the amateur are often missing ingredients in the choral rehearsal.

These are some of the reasons why this priority-oriented college is today experiencing unprecedented growth and stability. And as long as those who are charged with the responsibility of leading this institution strive to maintain these distinctives and continue to nurture the choral experience as a very special event in the life of the musical amateur in the churches, schools and communities of this country and around the world, it will continue to do so.

ON THE COVER: Allen Crowell ’59 conducts the Oratorio Choir (Photo by the Star Ledger). Addition: March NEWSLETTER cover photo taken by Dennis Duda ’78.
ALUMNI FUND CONTRIBUTIONS PASS THE HALFWAY MARK TOWARD GOAL OF $40,000!

A record-breaking $23,028.68 was received from 379 contributors in the first seven months of this year's Alumni Fund which began on July 1, bringing our goal of $40,000 within reach by June 30.

If you haven't already mailed your pledge or check to the Alumni Fund, please send it today while this message has your attention. Regardless of the specific dollar amount you give, your contribution will clearly make a difference!

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

Ever watchful to open new doors for Westminster's students and alumni, President Ray Robinson conducted a two-day choral workshop January 18-19 in Wiesbaden, West Germany. The workshop was held in the beautiful 18th century Villa Clemintine and was attended by 32 teachers from the Department of Defense Dependents Schools in north Germany (at their invitation). These schools are operated for the children of Americans overseas and are a new source of job opportunities for Westminster. On January 15th at St. Columba's Church, Pont Street, London, Dr. Robinson gave the keynote address to a group of 18 non-Episcopal Church musicians from greater London who spent the evening in dialogue with Westminster faculty and students - abroad for a church music seminar (see March, 1980, NEWSLETTER).

Dr. Robinson's address dealt with some of the creative tensions that exist between art and liturgy in the American mainline Protestant church. The Rev. Dr. Caryl Micklem, minister of St. Columba's, led a dialogue contrasting the role of music in the English and American free churches. Dr. Erik Routley and Dr. John '48 and Helen Kemp '41, Westminster faculty members, also participated in the evening's discussion. On March 20 and 21 Dr. Robinson conducted a two-day choral workshop at Warner Southern College, Lake Wales, FL. On April 11 and 12 he will participate in the United Methodist Music Convocation at Blakestone Assembly center in Virginia and on April 13th he will conduct the Bach B minor Mass for the musical amateurs - a long-standing group of singers and instrumentalists - in Princeton. Coming up in May he will be an adjudicator for the Buccaneer Music Festival in Corpus Cristi, TX and in July he will participate in a one-week workshop on music for chamber choirs.

William and Louise Cheadle were adjudicators for the American Music Scholarship Foundation, Northeastern U. S., in piano, at the end of March. Winners from this area will go to Cincinnati later in the spring for the national finals. On April 15 the Cheadles will present a two-hour workshop for the Association of Piano Teachers of Long Island in Massapequa, Long Island . . . Allen Crowell '59, who has kept up his solo singing while conducting, will be the soloist in two "Pops" concerts with the Baltimore Symphony - (all Jerome Kern evenings) in Baltimore and Columbus, OH on April 23rd and 26th; on April 27 he will sing the Canticle of the Martyrs with the York PA Symphony; on Good Friday he will be bass soloist in the Bach St. John Passion with the Amherst and Smith Colleges Choral organizations; on May 18th he sings Israel in Egypt with the Washington Cathedral Choral Society and will be in Bermuda for a week in May with his wife, Phyllis, for some choral adjudications at a festival. On campus he will conduct the alumni choir during alumni week and will conduct the vocal camp for High School Students July 6 to 19. He says: "I first came to Westminster Choir College as a vocal camper in 1951 and am completing another full cycle. I urge all alumni to send their highly-motivated kids to a great two weeks of music-making!"

. . . Frauke Haasemann taught a group vocal techniques workshop for the AGO in Westchester, NY, Charlotte, NC, Bethlehem, PA in January and February. She will give a workshop for the choir of the Gaithersburg (MD) Presbyterian Church in April and in June she will spend a week at Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC . . . Phyllis Lehrer played a concert with Samuel Dilworth at the home of Dr. Edward Blaustein, president of Rutgers University . . . George Markey has been invited to give a recital for the XIII International Organ Festival in Rome next September where he will play a three-manual Tamburini.

ALMA STEEDMAN

Alma Steedman, B.M. '39, M.M. '50, and on the piano faculty beginning in 1934 for about 25 years, died of a massive stroke in Jacksonville, FL on February 2. She was 80. Miss Steedman was a graduate of Hamilton College, Lexington, KY, had studied, taught, composed and run her own music academy in Louisville, KY and Chicago before coming to Westminster. Alums will remember her for her energy and effusive enthusiasm - not only for music - but for all of life. "Steady" was an individual with her own methods and ideas. After leaving Westminster she taught instrumental music privately and in the public schools. A dog-lover and breeder she founded the Alsteed Kennel, gathering blue ribbons at many shows for her champion pure-bred dachshunds.

A. MUNROE WADE

A. Munroe Wade, Chairman of Westminster Arts and Sciences Department, died on February 25 at Princeton Medical Center after a short illness. Mr. Wade joined the faculty in 1967 after a career in the business world and the theatre. Westminster alums will remember him particularly for his enthusiasm for Shakespeare and for his annual reading of Dickens' A Christmas Carol. At the time of his death Princeton was celebrating the 50th anniversary of McCarter Theatre. With the well-known theatrical producer, Joshua Logan in 1930, Mr. Wade wrote and appeared in The Golden Dog, the first Triangle Club show of Princeton University at McCarter. Thereafter he acted, produced, and directed numerous productions for off-Broadway, St. John Terrill's Music Circus, Princeton University Players, Bucks County Playhouse, Savoyards of Princeton. He taught and directed theatre at Miss Fines School, Rider College, Stuart Country Day School, Princeton Day School, and the Hun School before coming to Westminster. A memorial service will be held for him on March 28th in Princeton University Chapel. The Symphonic Choir will sing the 1st movement of the Brahms' Requiem among other selections.
Westminster Choir — on tour —

on the lighter side

Don’t know which we enjoyed more, the performance of the Westminster Choir in Memorial Hall last week or the party for the choir given afterwards by music publishers, Don Hinshaw and Cliff Poole. Maybe the party — which turned into a wild, wonderful second concert around the piano, jazzed up and delivered by choir members between visits to the dining room, where they consumed some 40 pounds of Jim Allen’s barbecue and great bowls of succotash.

Everyone was still in evening dress, the fellows in formal white tie attire and the girls in long V-necked gowns — all hungry as bears and eager to let their hair down in celebration of the final performance of a very successful tour. And let down their hair they did, in the most beautiful way, with pianist Daniel Beckwith — who, during the concert, could have posed for a portrait of a classical pianist — now wickedly humorous at the piano as soprano soloist Gail Blache did a take-off on “Summertime” that captivated her colleagues as well as other invited guests.

Then there was choir singer Daryl Cross, nudging Daniel off the piano stool for his turn as accompanist to mezzo-soprano soloist Jennifer Larmore, a beautiful young woman with big brown eyes and an unbelievably marvelous voice. But it was Daryl who intrigued me. Pocket-sized in stature, he’s not only a multi-talented musician but a natural-born comedian, an artist at innuendo via a subtle lift of an eyebrow, a faint smile, or a sultry glance. If a theatrical producer ever sees or hears this fellow, a shooting-star career is assured.

Then there was tenor soloist Blair Wilson, a delightfully modest fellow, who Charles Sebastian is convinced is headed for operatic stardom — a good endorsement when one recalls that Charles spent most of his life in foreign service, answering directly to ambassadors, he and his staff frequently concerned with protocol, dinners and entertainment-greats all over the world.

Others adding to the evening’s enjoyment included such soloists as mezzo-soprano Nancy Hauser, tenor Jeffrey W. Martin, soprano Nancy Tenore — and my favorite, tenor Greg Hostetler, whose solo in the midst of the choir’s rendition of Tchaikovsky’s “The Nightingale” drew spontaneous applause during the Memorial Hall concert. And creating a ripple of excitement among her colleagues when she did a solo number at the party was Roberta Davis, referred to by her colleagues as a very shy member of the choir. Everyone in the living room crowded to the door of the music room to see who was singing.

Having as much fun as the choir was conductor Joseph Flummerfelt. Listening to one wild musical take-off around the piano, he chuckled and shook his head in mock dismay. “If this wasn’t the last night of the tour, they would have been stopped long ago,” he said.

A former Westminster Choir member attending the concert was Lara Hoggard, that marvelous UNC Kenan Professor of Music who was once the power behind the throne of the Fred Waring Singers. His conducting of the Carolina Choir some years back was a joy to behold, too, and his continuing summer workshops for high school choral groups is long overdue for recognition at the highest levels. Other former Choir members in attendance were Melba Bartholomew of Durham, and Janet Thomas, Howard Tate and Charles Horton of Chapel Hill.

— Paquita Jurgensen, Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC
Review — at end of Westminster Choir tour

It is easy to build one's expectations for the likes of the Westminster Choir, a group of musicians with an impressive reputation. They have, after all, toured all over the world and performed to plaudits with notables such as Bernstein, Boulez, Mehta and Dorati.

It is a privilege to encounter such musical skill anywhere, and an especially rare privilege in the Lehigh Valley.

“A Romantic Evening with the Westminster Choir” was presented Sunday to a capacity crowd of 800 at First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem.

Under the direction of Joseph Flummerfelt, the choir performed a wide selection of Romantic works with superb control and sparkling clarity. Displaying the kind of skill that makes for international reputations, the singers traveled the varied styles of Mendelssohn, Verdi, Schumann and Fauré with the same ease they brought to the lighter sentimental and patriotic songs with which they ended the evening. . . . If, as music historian Schonberg holds, a critic should “convey his enthusiasm,” then the Westminster Choir in several respects has set this reviewer a tough task. It is difficult to adequately convey the kind of enthusiasm the performance deserved. From the sacred to the secular, from Schumann to Stephen Foster, the performance was stunning.

No small amount of credit is due Flummerfelt, who was perhaps deservedly characterized by Leonard Bernstein as “the greatest choral conductor in the world.” Even though one might shy from the Bernstein superlative — voiced following a choir performance in Amsterdam — it is easy, by almost any standard, to say Flummerfelt’s appearance in Bethlehem was flawless. And the choir responded in kind.

— Judith Wyatt, The Globe-Times, Bethlehem, PA

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CAMPUS CALENDAR FOR APRIL AND MAY

Key to location on campus:
WH: Williamson Hall; BC: Bristol Chapel; PH: Playhouse
TEC: Trinity Episcopal Church

Tues Apr 15 at 8
Wed Apr 16 at 8
Phil Conservatory Division Faculty Chamber Concert
ORATORIO CHOIR CONCERT with Colonial Symphony, Madison, NJ, Bach Magnificat
Westminster Choir Concert, Central Baptist Church, 457 Main Street, Hartford, CT, Joseph Flummerfelt, conductor
Sat Apr 19 at 8
Sun Apr 20 at 8:15
Mon Apr 21 at 8
Thurs Apr 24 at 8
Sun Apr 27 at 8
Fri May 11 at 2
Fri May 16 at 10:30 AM
Commencement — End of Spring Semester

CORRECTION:
Annual Business Meeting Luncheon should be Wed., May 14, on registration form in March NEWSLETTER.
Taipei YMCA Oratorio Choir to perform the Chidester '58; Jean (Thompson) Cronk '43 and his family in Fort Bragg, CA. The family is in the nursery business and includes granddaughters ages 16, 14, 8, and 1.

Cecil Lapo, with his wife, Bea, will be leading two trips to Europe this summer highlighted by the Oberammergau Passion Play. Alums who have already signed up include: Phyllis (Fraidenburgh) Anschick '49 and husband; Jim Chidester '57 and wife Norma (Read) Chidester '38; Jean (Thompson) Cronk '43 and Charlotte (Macleod) Windom '40.

Doris (Wharton) Skelton, with only the youngest of four sons at home, has entered the working world again as receptionist/secretary to the music department of the Hancock U.C.C. Church, Lexington, VA where she was organist for 24 years and in Garden Grove, CA. In California the Craigheads also accompanied King David (Honegger), conducted by wayward Swan.

Glint Heyer is organist/choir-master at Trinity Church (Episcopal) in Cranford, NJ.

Roland Crisci presented Elijah in Fagenreuth and an organ recital by faculty member, George Markey, at his church in Memphis, TN last fall.

Robert Rudesill is organist/choir director at St. Thomas More R.C. Church in Darien, CT and is in his 11th year of teaching at Brunswick School in Greenwich, CT. Bill Zimmerman, associate professor of music at Tunghai University, Taichung, Taiwan, will take his 40-member touring choir on an island-wide tour this month. In May his University Concert Choir (of three choirs combined with the Taipei YMCA Oratorio Choir to perform the Brahms' Requiem in three major cities. His wife, Ruth Ann, will be the soprano soloist.

For Arthur and Marian (Harris) Stokes '48 it is a banner year! 25th anniversary of their marriage, commencement and full-time ministry of music. “With God’s help,” they say, “we'll go 25 more!” Their music ministry at the 4th Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, MD... Mike Imperiale and his wife, Dorothy (Watson) Underwood are very busy in Seoul, Korea, teaching voice, sacred music literature, voice literature, French diction, oratorio workshop, and conducting the chorus as Assistant Professor of Church Music at Ewha Woman's University. Last April she gave a recital of songs by English composers and at Christmas she organized a Messiah “singing-in.”

Dan and Mary (Hanlin) Simpson '77 are co-ministers of music at Ascension Lutheran Church in Baltimore, MD... David Simpson '76 is a part-time consultant to the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia and is 12th year as a faculty member. Both Dave and Dan performed and lectured on keyboard instruction for the blind at the 1980 National Convention of the Music Teachers National Association in Washington in March... Donna Zerboth will begin training in the U.S. Air Force Officer School, San Antonio, TX in May. After her commission as a 2nd Lt. she will continue her training as a member of an Air Force aerospace team in Florida.

Anita (Say) Scherzer went to Cairo, Egypt, in March with the Ann Arbor Festival Choir. Daughter, Catherina, attended W.C.C. Vocal Camp and son, David, sang “Amahl” in December. Husband, Rockwell, and Martha (age two) are the family's hand-clappers.

Winifred (McGavran) Griffen is enjoying her practice as a family therapist (with her own office) in Rochester, NY.

Lewis Bruin writes from Raleigh NC that “spring and summer look very exciting” and “I'll be home in March.” He will perform Mendelssohn's Christus on Palm Sunday and Schubert's Mass in A on May 4. Other recitals are scheduled through May and a tour in July which will include Eureka, CA; seven concerts in Denmark, Germany, Sweden, and Norway, and Portland, ME.

Elijah in Panama City. Do they wear a "green belt" in this Korean martial art.

Harriet (Porter) Standring has given four recitals recently — at Alma College, University of Manitoba and two for NATS in Fargo, ND. In February she also participated in performances of Patience by G. & S.

Lisa Guida began in March as a vocal music teacher in Spotswood, NJ... Paula J. Mueller and Steven G.arris '75 are engaged and plan to be married Sept. ‘81...
**Annual Library Sale**

The 5th (almost) Annual Library Sale is approaching. We've done our spring cleaning and have an abundance of treasures to sell. The proceeds going to buy more books, music & records. A sampling of the horde:

- Books - music & non-music
- Music of all sorts, including golden oldies & some "rare birds"
- Choral music in quantity (some from the Tams-Wimark col.)

FROM THE ALUMNI DIRECTOR
Steven P. Sharp ’65

Alumni Week is just around the corner, and we look forward to your being with us on May 14, 15, and 16. The schedule of activities announced in the March NEWSLETTER offers something for everyone, including time to relax and visit with current students, faculty, and other alumni. Benny Toto has promised to have Quadrangle grass "manicured" as only he can do it. (He does it while riding a tractor/mower and whistling Adeste Fideles!)

On the heels of Alumni Week, the College prepared for the opening of its exciting eleven-week Summer Session program. As you well know, this program provides excellent opportunities for our alumni and other professional musicians to further musical studies in a culturally stimulating environment. Not only do I invite you to participate in these workshops, I encourage you to invite talented high school students to be part of the Summer Session's in-depth keyboard, vocal, and choral workshops. These learning experiences contribute significantly to students' personal and professional growth, whether or not they are considering full-time careers in music.

The ORGAN AND HARPSICORD WEEK (June 30-July 4) offers five days of concentrated study designed to meet the needs of each player—from beginning to advanced. Class sessions, led by three of Westminster's renowned Organ Department faculty—Joan Lippincott, Eugene Roan and Mark Brombaugh, emphasize a knowledge of the organ itself, technique, repertoire and how to practice. Individual attention is paid to each student's playing technique. Participants are encouraged to bring the Gleason Method of Organ Playing, Bach Orgelbuchlein, and other repertoire which will be fully explored in coaching sessions.

Mark Brombaugh will lecture about repertoire and special performance techniques for harpsichord, and coach students on the college's instruments.

Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned in an informal recital to be held on Thursday, July 3 at 8 PM in the Scheide Recital Hall. The college's 24 pipe organs will be available to each student.

Westminster's PIANO WEEK (July 28-August 1) is designed by William and Louise Cheadle exclusively for intermediate and advanced students of high school age. This workshop offers daily group lessons in solo literature, sight reading sessions, lecture-demonstrations, master classes and recitals presented by faculty and guests.

A heavy emphasis on piano ensemble playing will be offered with student participation in both duo-piano and one-piano, four-hand literature. For the more ambitious students, piano quartet en-
The $175 balance may be enclosed with this application or paid before or during registration on the Sunday before the workshop begins. All students must register in person on Sunday evening between 6 PM and 8 PM preceding the workshop. Students should be endorsed by their choral director, music teacher, principal or pastor, and be in good health. Students are required to live and eat on campus unless they commute from their parents' home in or near Princeton. (These workshops are open to a limited number of organ and piano teachers as auditors for two graduate credits.)

**VOCAL CAMP** is a popular offering for many students because of its emphasis on choral singing. The choir conductor for the camp is Allen Crowell, director of Westminster's Oratorio Choir. Allen comes to us after 20 years of singing with and directing the United States Army Chorus. His strong choral and conducting background will indeed make for an exciting summer camp. Bill Alexander, Westminster's Dean of Students, is director of the Camp program.

The focus of the Vocal Camp is singing in the Choral Ensemble. This group then divides into soprano, alto, tenor and bass voice classes to study vocal production and song interpretation. In addition, students may choose two of the following electives:

- **Music Reading** – theory, sight singing and rhythm skills
- **Conducting** – patterns, coordination, rhythm and mood
- **Music Literature** – a brief survey of music history and listening skills

In addition to instruction in music, students are involved in evening recitals and activities, sports and recreation programs. Dress is casual. Everyone lives in the residence halls, which are proctored for the student's welfare. All meals are eaten cafeteria-style in the College's Student Center. The total program is geared for high school students, yet structured similar to college life.

After two full weeks of Westminster's finest musical instruction, campers present a "Singing Festival" which consists of an informal Voice Class concert on Friday evening, July 18, and a formal Choral Ensemble concert on Saturday morning, July 19.

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**Sponsor's Name and Address:**

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I am registering as part of a quartet:

- Yes  
- No  (for Vocal Camp only)

Names of others in my quartet:

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________

Grade level as of September 1980:

- 10th Grade  
- 12th Grade  
- 11th Grade  
- College Freshman

**Name and Address of High School:**

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Return this form with:

1. $15 Registration Fee (non-refundable). Make check payable to: Westminster Choir College.
2. A letter of recommendation from your pastor, choir director, music teacher, principal or pastor.

**Mail to:** Summer Session

Westminster Choir College
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
(609) 924-7416