It Happened Twenty-Five Years Ago . . . .
by Marvin Keenze '59

We left by Greyhound bus on October 1, 1956, for the first leg of our round-the-world tour — the longest by any Westminster Choir. We would be gone for six months, sponsored by the U.S. government and the American National Theatre and Academy, traveling first across the United States with concerts in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Nebraska, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, California, and on to the Far East. Previous to this trip the choir had rehearsed in the Princeton area during August and September.

In San Francisco we boarded a plane for Tokyo via Hawaii and Wake Island.

We were in Japan and Korea for a month and in the following months sang in Okinawa, Taiwan, The Philippines, Hong Kong, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaya, Ceylon, India, East and West Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Greece and Yugoslavia.

We sang concerts in schools, embassies, palaces and factories as well as in concert halls — under all types of conditions. In retrospect one tends to remember the funny things that happened, but there were many serious, beautiful and unusual moments, too. In six months of traveling there are bound to be a lot of experiences such as the outdoor concert in Okinawa where Dr. Williamson led thousands of school children in the singing of Old Black Joe . . . . The Japanese hotel in the mountains with the luxurious baths and meals . . . . The Christmas Eve outdoor concert in Saigon . . . .

Dr. Williamson, founder and conductor of The Westminster Choir, in Ceylon with (L to R) Marvin Burke, a choir member, several Ceylonese, and Howard Green (with his back to the camera), a former Board member of the college who also went on the tour.
President's Message: A Real Success Story

One of the real success stories at Westminster these days is the piano department. Existing for many years as a kind of step-child of the organ department, piano emerged in the late-1960s as an autonomous division of the College. Today its enrollment is nearing that of the organ department and the quality of the students in this area is excellent.

If any doubt of the viability of piano study at Westminster exists, the events of the past month should be decisive. Within a period of twenty-eight days (March 28-April 24) three members of the department's faculty played New York recitals and the results were very impressive.

Anna Maria Trenchi de Bottazzi's annual Carnegie Hall recital was given on March 28 before a large audience and included among others Three Contours (Etude, Elegy for Left Hand, Toccata) by fellow faculty member Harold Zabrack, a fine composer as well as an outstanding pianist and teacher. These difficult pieces were played superbly by Mrs. Bottazzi as was the rest of the program which included two Sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti (F minor, K. 466; G major, K 146), the Sonata in F minor, op. 57 ("Appassionata") by Beethoven, the Ballade in F minor, op. 52 by Chopin, Reflets dans l'eau by Debussy, and the Sonata (1952) by Alberto Ginastera. As a special note of interest Mrs. Bottazzi has just completed a recording of the complete works for piano of Ginastera, her countryman and former teacher.

The Merkin Concert Hall of the Abraham Goodman House was the scene of the recital on April 4 by Phyllis Alpert Lehrer, the head of the department. Building her program around the theme "Toccatas and Fantasies," she also included some recently composed works. In fact, one New York premiere was included, the Phantasie Variations, op. 12, by Dianne Goolkasian-Rahbee, a work which was written in 1980. Opening the second half of the program was the Fantasy for Piano (1966) by Jerome Jolles. Interestingly enough, both works were composed for Mrs. Lehrer.

The two large works on the program were the Fantasy in F minor, op. 49, by Chopin and the Phantasie in C major, op. 17, by Robert Schumann. The Toccata in D major, BWV 912, by J.S. Bach and the Peter Mennin Toccata from "Five Pieces for Piano" (1949) rounded out the program, which received a fine review in The New York Times.

Still to come later this month is the Carnegie Hall recital of Harold Zabrack. Scheduled for April 24, this performance will feature Zabrack as both pianist and composer as he will present a recital under the title "Zabrack Plays Zabrack."

When the many performances of William and Louise Cheadle and the new masters degree program in Piano Pedagogy are added, it is not difficult to understand why there is a lot of excitement about the piano department these days.

CORRECTION:
In the last Newsletter it was stated incorrectly that the last tour of the West Coast by the Westminster Choir took place in 1948. In fact, the Choir made a rather extensive tour of the Western states in 1966 under the direction of George Lynn.

... The surprise vacation in Singapore when our concerts in Indonesia were canceled ... The enthusiastic and friendly audiences in Manila ... The truck-ride to the tea plantation in Ceylon ... The Taj-Mahal in the brilliant sunshine ... The train ride from Athens to Zagreb ... And did the goats really eat Dr. Williamson's score of the Mozart Vesper in Cambodia?

... During Alumni Week we will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of this unique tour. A gratifying number of alums will return to the campus for the event. (Would that everyone could be there!) On Sunday, May 9th from 1 to 5 PM, the choir will gather to reminisce and see The Westminster Choir in Japan, a film of the tour taken by government services ... and we will sing some repertoire from the tour.
WESTMINSTER CHOIR COLLEGE ALUMNI RECEIVE RECOGNITION FOR GIVING

The following letter has been received in the Alumni Office from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. We print it here as our way of saying “Thank You” to our loyal alumni.

March 12, 1982

Walter Eichenberger
Vice President for Development
Westminster Choir College
Princeton, NJ 08540

Dear Mr. Eichenberger:

CONGRATULATIONS! It is my great pleasure to inform you that the alumni annual giving program at Westminster Choir College has been selected as a finalist in both the Sustained Performance and Improvement Categories in the 1982 U.S. Steel Alumni Giving Incentive Awards Program. This program, now in its 23rd year, recognizes those institutions and their alumni that have made a significant and successful commitment to encourage private voluntary support to education.

Preliminary screening for the awards was based on the data you submitted in the 1980-81 “Survey of Voluntary Support of Education” last year. Finalists in the Improvement Category must have shown at least a 10% increase in the number of alumni donors to the annual fund and at least a 25% increase in the overall dollar amount given to the annual fund between 1979-80 and 1980-81. Finalists in the Sustained Performance Category must have shown no year-to-year decline in both the number of alumni donors to the annual fund, and the dollar value of gifts to the annual fund.

To be considered in the second and final round of judging, we need additional information about your annual alumni giving program. I have enclosed an instruction sheet describing the information required, which I ask you to read carefully.

On behalf of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, I would like to extend my congratulations to you for your efforts in developing alumni support, and to your alumni for their willingness to provide the resources to maintain a quality educational program.

Sincerely,

Lilli M. L. Milder
Associate Vice President
Resource Development

Your gift for the current school year, before June 30, 1982, will help us receive a letter like this from C.A.S.E. next year. Besides, we need your dollars to help meet our budget.
The rehearsal room is in a smaller, even older building and is bare except for a set of risers, an undistinguished upright piano accompanied by a high conductor's stool, and a desk in the corner. The choir members filed in the room, taking their places on the risers as they do every school day during third period. One student was reminded that it was difficult to sing with chewing gum-in-mouth. Quietly several others were advised that it was easier to sing with one's own music. (Gum was eliminated in the wastebasket and music was procured from a wall cabinet.)

The rehearsal started with a humming warm-up. "Don't push," from the director (said quietly). All eyes were riveted on him despite a visitor taking pictures in the room. A more mature sound came forth from the choir than is expected from high school freshmen through senior — and on this day some of the best seniors were taking a special test during the rehearsal period. Some scales and "lazy yells" were sung followed by the Vivaldi Kyrie. The whole group stood for the entire 50 minutes. There was no wiggling, shuffling or extraneous noises from the risers and the director, obviously in complete control, never raised his voice above a conversational tone.

This scene was observed in the Dunellen (NJ) High School; the director, Jim Heard MM '64, who received the Master Teacher Award from the New Jersey Music Educators Association in November — the third annual recipient of the award. He exceeded the qualifications set forth by the organization in its project of discovering, recognizing and honoring quality music educators. He recently received the Mayor's Citation of Merit from Dunellen Mayor, Lawrence Anzovino; the Dunellen-Green Brook Rotary Club honored him with its first Recognition for Service Award, also. On March 25th he was honored with a New Jersey Governor's Award in Art Education in a ceremony at the N.J. State Museum.

How does he do it? What makes him tick? Jim has sent "about a dozen" students to Westminster Choir College. Two, Brian Doherty and Michele Sheehan, are sophomores now. He sends a group to vocal camp every year, some on scholarship. He takes student teachers under his wing. Are students more talented in Dunellen? Is there a large bank of students to draw from? Are students financially affluent so as to afford private music lessons, making them more musically proficient for his choirs?

Dunellen is, according to Jim, primarily a blue-collar town of about 8,000 with a large percentage of hard-workers of Polish and Italian descent. The recession has recently hit the town hard, but music is about the last educational experience the voters want to cut. Parents, administration and the town are behind him 100%. He has been in charge of vocal music in Dunellen since receiving his Westminster Masters in conducting in 1964. He intended to stay only one year and almost quit during that first year because the level of ability of the students was so poor. He fully intended to continue vocal study with Janice Harsanyi '51 and head for a performance career in New York, but he got hooked on teaching and stayed in Dunellen.
At first no one cared. Now the administration schedules academics around the High School Choir period! Choir comes first and its daily rehearsals are in prime time — third period — late enough to be awake but not too late to be tired or bored. He began by seeing a group once a week and then organized a choir which met in the evenings because no school time was allotted to choir. By his third year this ensemble was singing the Vivaldi Gloria and loving it and his program was off and running. Previous directors could barely get a group to sing show tunes in unison. Concerts now draw a packed house.

Dunellen High School is in several older buildings, not fancy, but very clean — as if someone cared; it is small — less than 500 students, 7th through 12th grade. It was larger at one time, but a more affluent and growing borough built its own high school and took many of his singers. Dunellen has no place to grow; it is all built-up. When Jim's pool of students for a successful program was almost cut in half, he still produced top quality choirs. This year, out of 70 freshmen, 23 elect to be in the choir. He also directs a 7th and 8th grade group, a madrigal group and a chamber choir. He loves teaching "general music" and works with students who for the most part have no other source of musical education. It is the rare one who can afford private piano or instrumental lessons. Jim has a few in a vocal class.

Comments by townspeople as a recommendation for his "master teacher award" included the following: "This man has made a tremendous contribution to our community at large. The positive impact of his character and wholesome lifestyle upon the youth of our community for 18 years is inestimable. All five of our sons who graduated from Dunellen High School were privileged to be a part of the choirs and madrigal singers directed by Mr. Heard." "..."His outstanding musical abilities, finely complemented by his excellent teaching ability, generates an enthusiasm and rapport in his classes that is exemplary. His sense of professional dedication is characterized by a strong, personal commitment to develop both musical ability as well as character in his students." "..."Four of our children have graduated from Dunellen High School, and one will hopefully be fortunate enough to have the 'Mr. Heard Experience' for three more years. No teacher challenged them or cared for them more than he. When they come home, the first person they wish to see outside of the house is Jim Heard."

How does he do it? "I am very much a unit with the students," he says. "Other teachers told me I would have trouble with my 'relaxed' approach. But I simply have never had any disciplinary problems right from the beginning. I have to know what I am going to do and what the outcome is to be. I respect the students and make them feel good about themselves. Choir here is rated on a par with the football team — maybe even higher if there is a choice. I have tremendous cooperation from parents and administration with a super vice-principal, particularly." Choir in this town is status.

His programs for the last several years have included works for double chorus, madrigals Buxtehude, Bach, Malcolm Williamson, Kodaly, Berlioz, Britten's Saint Nicholas, Mozart, Charles Ives... a cappella works and some for which Joe Kovacs '63 has organized a professional orchestra. For projects like singing with a professional orchestra the students themselves raise the money to pay the musicians. As in many high schools today, there is no orchestra in Dunellen. The High School Choir is the only high school group to have appeared on five occasions at New Jersey's Garden State Arts Center, winning awards for its performances.

Jim lived in Princeton for ten years after getting his masters (his undergraduate degree comes from the University of Nebraska — he and Dick Cavett come from that state!), but he now lives in Skillman on "Agridor Farm." Here he has an apartment and has the run of the large house when its owners are away. "Agridor" used to be famous for its Black Angus cattle but is now equally famous for Jim's champion Borzoi (Russian wolfhounds), the "aristocrat" of all breeds of dogs. At present he has five champions including a Westminster (Kennel Club) winner, multi-specialty winners and the top obedience Borzoi in the nation.

The dogs occupy much of Jim's weekend time plus hours a day added to his full-time school responsibilities. He says, "The dogs are tall, slender, courageous hounds who were used for hundreds of years by wealthy Russians for the hunting of wolves. Although the American Borzoi, first imported in 1890, could accomplish the same task, he is more likely to be used as a prestigious model for advertising — as in the familiar Wolfschmidt Vodka ad. These dogs move fast and keeping them in shape calls for constant attention." He is up at 5:30 every morning for the dogs' run and exercises four at once by bicycle. He says, "they usually exercise by leaping and cantering and that's great fun, but it isn't conditioned, disciplined exercise. Just like a singer, the Borzois requires daily disciplined training and plenty of rest and good food."

Is there a relationship in Jim's life between teaching choirs and training dogs? Perhaps. They both need intelligence, ability, consistency, direction, love and appreciation, and hard work. And Jim Heard, our "Westminster Winner" gives both just that!
The President’s Council

The President’s Council plan was adopted, during meetings at Commencement time last year, by the Alumni Council and by the College Board of Trustees. Since it was introduced early in the current school year, 126 people have enrolled as members of The President’s Council — 65 Alumni, 60 Friends and 1 Church.

Because this is a new concept in giving to support Westminster Choir College, some have understood that membership in The President’s Council constitutes a pledge. Not so. Membership is just that. If you join a country club or a tennis club or a health club, you are a member as long as you keep up your annual dues.

Membership in Westminster Choir College’s President’s Council plan offers many advantages, especially to those who enroll in the higher membership categories. (See chart.)

The President’s Council was established to:

- Define a select group of alumni and friends whose assistance and counsel can be sought concerning the future of Westminster Choir College.
- Stimulate the active interest and participation of alumni and friends in serving the College.
- Provide an exemplary pattern of substantial annual giving.
- Provide an organization through which Westminster and its Alumni Association can make known their gratitude to those who share in the task of carrying forward the College’s distinguished programs of education and service.

If you would like to have more information about The President’s Council, write to Westminster Choir College’s Development Office or Alumni Office:

Westminster Choir College
Hamilton Ave. & Walnut Lane
Princeton, NJ 08540

**SPECIAL MEMBER**
An unrestricted gift of $10,000 or more each year.

**SPONSOR MEMBER**
An unrestricted gift of $5,000-$9,999 each year.

**SUBSCRIBER MEMBER**
An unrestricted gift of $1,000-$4,999 each year.

**SUPPORTER MEMBER**
An unrestricted gift of $500-$999 each year.

**SUSTAINER MEMBER**
An unrestricted gift of $100-$499 each year.

**ANNIVERSARY MEMBER**
An unrestricted gift of $1 or more each year for each year of Westminster’s existence —

- 1981-82, 55 years — ($55)
- 1982-83, 56 years — ($56)
- etc.

**BENEFITS TO PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL MEMBERS**

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COMMENCEMENT IS COMING!

Zubin Mehta will be speaking at Commencement followed by an Alumni Funfgeld '76. A special presentation of vocal music composed by Westminster Choir will be performed on campus as will our new Alumni Choir, conducted by Greg Funfgeld '76. A special presentation of vocal music composed by Westminster personalities will be given by Georgianne Gensemer '80. The program will include both single compositions and song cycles by present students and Westminster alumni. Reunions are always fun.

Come! Here are a couple of schedule adjustments for Saturday, May 8:

9:30 AM — Handbell Concert
Martha Fletcher '43, conductor
10:45 — Alumni Choir Rehearsal
12:15 PM — Alumni Association Business Luncheon
4:00 — Alumni Choir Concert
Greg Funfgeld '76, conductor
9:00- Westminster Composers' Recital
Georgianne Gensemer '80 soprano

One more reminder — please send in your Alumni Council ballots. Every vote makes the election process more valid.

We look forward to seeing you in May.

COMMENCEMENT IS COMING!
The climax of Alumni Week will be Commencement followed by an Alumni Luncheon at the Nassau Inn — as previously reported. Zubin Mehta, music director of the New York Philharmonic, will be the Commencement speaker. Alumni are urged to get their reserved section tickets from the Alumni Office by calling (609) 921-3200 by April 30.

Mehta, one of the most outstanding personalities in today's orchestral conducting field, should bring a special message to graduates and friends of the college. May 10 is the date!

Traditions for Commencement were begun long ago and have been added to through the years. This year the Commencement Committee decided that the ceremony should begin with the Pre-Service Music. Many graduates and guests come a long way to hear this music and it is very distracting to have a constant clunking up and down the chapel aisles. Thus Commencement will begin at 9:45 with a brass fanfare by the Philadelphia Soloists. Please note!

A recaptitulation of past Commencements revealed that the ceremony was held in the First Presbyterian Church until 1935 when it was moved to our own chapel. The University Chapel was used for the first time for this occasion in 1950; the Anthem of Dedication by Warren Martin '36 was first sung in 1951 (and every year since then), but his Processional was not used until 1959. Up until that time a "silent processional" prevailed to a variety of music.

In 1962 the Commencement was also the Inauguration of the late Lee Hastings Bristol, Jr. as Westminster's third president. Roy Harris was the speaker in 1964, Leonard Bernstein received the Doctor of Humanities in 1966 when Howard Hanson spoke. Dorothy (Maynor) Rooks '35 gave the address in 1968. George Lynn '38 in 1971. For the last ten years, lest we forget, the speakers have been as follows: Lee Hastings Bristol, Jr. '72; Elaine (Isaacsone) Brown '34, '73; Betty Ford, '74; Robert Shaw, '75; Bob Hope, '76; Howard Swan, '77; Wilfred Bain, '31, '78; Daniel Pinkham, '79; Sir David Willcocks, '80; Sherrill Milnes, '81.

CLASS OF '72 LOST ALUMNI

We'd like to find these people to tell them about our class reunion. If you know where they are, please contact Patsy-Jo Ingalls, 444 E. 82d Street, New York, NY 10028 (212) 988-4851 or Nancy Protzman, 10 Barrington Rd., Bronxville, NY 10708 (212) 337-7434.

Dan Adams, Mary Jean Adams, David Broadhead, Cheryl Kressler Broadhead, Peter Carole, Richard Dowling, Susan Hayman Williams, Doug Johnson, Sheila Long, Mary Maynard, Ruth Madison, Mike McCracken, Jill Palmer, Chris Schrero, Jay Risser, James Robinson, Lynn Dion, Carolyn Tulak, Teri Vincent, Gary Fletcher and Moose Washington

A NEW HARPSCICHORD

The new harpsichord, purchased with a fund in honor of Mary Krimmel, a longtime member of the organ faculty, has arrived and, in fact, has been in use for several months. The instrument, built by Anderson Dupree from Milan, Ohio, was started before our contract was finalized, but was finished for the college specifically. It is a single keyboard instrument in Flemish style, capable of transposition from A-415 to A-440 with two eight-foot registers.

It is being used even more than expected and is moved out of Mark Brombaugh's office, where it is normally kept, to the chapel for concerts and recitals two out of three weekends. It has been used for chapel services, senior recitals, solo conducting and voice recitals and will be heard Alumni Week when Eugene Roan '56 and Mark Brombaugh will play organ and harpsichord together.
Dorothy Ann (Denninger) Davis conducted a youth choir festival under the auspices of the Choristers Guild in Houston, TX. The festival proved to be very exciting — with much credit going to the best behaved young people in the world at 85 degree weather for 2 days! ... Patricia (Porter) Forysth has spent the year doing something completely different — acting in musical comedy. She also sings in the AL Symphony Choral Society which is now preparing Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms and Mozart's Requiem for a May performance with the New Orleans Symphony, conducted by Philippe Entremont.

James and Hattie (Plante) Copland '47 report that the Westminster family of Coplands is employed at the same church. James is the pastor of the 1300 member congregation; Hattie directs the youth choir and teaches piano, organ and Robert '72 directs 2 handbell choirs and tenues and maintains the pipe organ. ... John A. Davis, Organist-Choirmaster of the Cadet Chapel at the US Military Academy in West Point, opened an organ recital series at Memorial Dr. Pres. Ch., Houston, in Feb. ... Patricia (Witterell) Matchette directed Mozart's Missa Brevis in D (May 5 at Thomas Episcopal Terrace Park, OH. Soloists were WCC grads: Cynthia (Matchette) Hyson '78, Helen Schneiderman '77, and Suzanne Dozier '77. Elaine (Peterson) McWatt was the organist.

Ray Evans recently presented the Mozart Requiem with the Chapelwood United Meth. Ch. Choir of Houston, TX and orchestral accompaniment. ... Louise Pickard and her husband Raleigh plan to leave India and return to the US in April 1984. She urges friends to visit them in India before 1984.

James Berry is presently on a trip to the Holy Land. ... Marjorie (Hawkins) Hammond continues to be very active musically as a substitute organist. Her oldest son Timothy was ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Ch. in Dec. 1980.

Gordon and Helen (Reckenzau) Betenbaugh's '64 College of the Arts for Passion Week was performed by 15 Lincoln area choirs on March 7 with Helen conducting. Bill and Marjory (Thomas) Fuller's '50 choir participated. Helen is teaching church music at NE Wesleyan U. in Neb. Her Bethel church choir recently performed the Mozart Requiem, in which Christine Erma '86 participated. ... John T. Gabbert, organist of the Century Christian Ch. of Owensboro, KY, has been joined in the music ministry there by Dr. and Mrs. Robert Melver.

Herbert Hoffman represented WCC at the retirement of the president of Abilene Christian University in Feb. ... G. Stanley Powell conducted the Schubert Mass No. 6 in E-flat in a performance with the Abington Oratorio Choir and Orchestra at the Annual Memorial Concert of Abington Pres., Ch., Abington, PA.

Bob Faussett is the manager of the newest store of the Keyboardiano and Organ Company in Vineyard, NJ. His choir at Holy Trinity Episcopal, Ch., Collingswood, NJ will perform John Stainer's Crucifixion in April.

Debra Lamb is pursuing a singing and acting career in Florida, where she just finished a run of Fiddler on the Roof at the Burt Reynolds' Dinner Theatre. In the spring she'll be playing "Mabel" in The Pirates of Penzance and also teaching voice lessons. She'd love to hear from classmates. ... Norman Sulpine serves as organist/choir director of the Riverside United Meth. Ch. in Houston, secretary of the Houston Chapter of the AGO, and as pianist for 3 ballot schools. In Nov. he accompanies the Moonmouth Civic Chorus from Red Bank, NJ, in a performance of Puccini's Messa di Gloria at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC.

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Richard Hynson directed the Cincinnati Choral Society in "Cathedral Music Through the Ages" at Christ Ch., Cincinnati, OH. Cynthia (Matchette) Hyson '78 was one of the soloists. ... Sharon Simmons is now the Organist/Choir Director at the Trinity Ave. Pres. Ch., Durham, NC.

Barbara Hulac is the organist of the Montview Boulevard Pres. Ch., Denver, CO. She also teaches an exercise class at the Shrine. ... Scott Trelawser gave a recital in Feb. at the Cadet Chapel, US Military Academy at West Point, where John A. Davis '47 is Organist and Choirmaster.

Barbara (Calvert) Townley has been appointed to the Music Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of NJ. She continues to serve as Organist; Choir Director of St. Andrew's Episcopal, Ch., Lambertville, NJ and Zion Luth. Ch., Oldwick, NJ.

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