

In Tribute: Eric Wimbles 1931-2017



Ken Svengalis, Robert Merrill and Eric Wimbles at the NYC Conference.

Eric passed away in August 2017 to join his beloved wife Shirley who pre-deceased him in 2014. Eric was an early member of the UK JB Appreciation Society, having been a lifelong Jussi fan since attending his London Albert Hall

concerts between 1952-8. I was grateful to Eric for taking on the arduous duties of membership secretary and newsletter editor following on from Karl Pike, in the mid 1990s. When the two English language societies became affiliated in 1999, Eric

worked with Dan Shea, Mickey Dove and others, sharing articles for the Journal and distributing them to UK members. In 1999 he travelled to the Washington DC conference, and gave a talk on his memories of Jussi. I joined him and Shirley at the NY conference in 2002, and he was thrilled to meet Robert Merrill and Licia Albanese, amongst others.

He was a keen amateur singer, and music lover and was active in his local community in Lincolnshire, where he had worked as welfare officer for a steel manufacturer. His health deteriorated in 2009, and he had heart surgery. He reluctantly handed over his secretarial duties to Robert Manderson in 2010.

The last time I saw him was a happy occasion at our centenary celebrations at the Swedish Church in London, in February 2011, when Raymond Björling gave a recital. Afterwards we had dinner at a Swedish restaurant, made memorable by Raymond singing a Swedish drinking song in tribute to his grandfather.

—Richard Copeman

2018 in Sweden!

Join JBS-USA and the Jussi Björling Society (Scandinavia) for a celebration of the 20th anniversary of our group. We will gather in Strömsbruk on September 1 where Stefan Olmårs has organized a terrific concert featuring baritone Tyler Duncan and Swedish soprano Malin Hartelius. Stefan tells us he is still working on supplying a tenor. After the concert there is a buffet dinner followed by a Jussi-request session. On September 2, we will visit David Björling's birthplace as well as other sites associated with him. We will include a visit to the Borlänge Museum, to be sure. Much more information will follow, as it is still too early to have performance schedules for the various Stockholm and provincial musical ensembles.