

Editorial Aria

Welcome to Issue #14 of our *JBS Journal*, spectacularly delayed by your double-cast Editor-President! Our young organization has managed to make a lot of things happen since summer 2002, but at the expense of timely production of this *Journal*.

As you can see by the size of this issue, there's no lack of activity to report about—past and future. But we recognize that it's also essential to you, and our Society as well, that you hear from us in a regular way about all this activity. Your JBS Board will be considering this question as a matter of high priority. We'll get some inspiration from our Scandinavian JBS counterpart, the JB Sällskapet, which recently has had to revamp its main publication and now has a fine model for us to consider. And you can read right here in this column, below, our plans for the Spring 2004 issue of this *Journal*.

We have no lack of material for this *Journal*, since we have a growing backlog of material provided by many of you. This special double issue will help us catch up—with a range of articles we hope you'll enjoy.

You already have received reports about our very successful New York City conference, in Newsletters 5 and 6, and we bring you more in this issue.

In April we traveled to Washington DC to hear Bertil Bengtsson host "An evening with Jussi Björling" as presented by the Vocal Arts Society there. And in June, JBS offered an excursion to Glyndebourne's Opera Festival—we

have a report on that and other activities as well, in this issue—as you'll see from a glance at our Contents page.

You can learn more about our **October 2002 Conference** in several articles here: One of these reproduces the actual **program** of events for October 24-27, together with some explanations of the events and individuals involved. A highpoint of the conference occurred on its first day, when BMG Classics executive Daniel Guss announced a release of **new Jussi-material** from RCA's archives, as part of their "reDiscovered" series. Mr. Guss has relied on Don Goldberg and Harald Henrysson for information and photographs for the new CD, which was released on September 9, and you can read their article about this CD in this issue.

One feature of past conferences has been our members' **post-conference evaluations**. You may recall Bill Clayton's fine survey of our June 2001 conference in Minnesota, in Issue #13 of this *Journal*. We have a similar article in this issue, written by Kendall Svengalis and based on a survey organized last fall by Valerie Wolf with help from Bill. We can hope to improve our planning for future conferences, thanks to responses to this survey.

In fact, some of the responses to this survey ask us to address important questions about our future work: **How can JBS help turn on younger audiences to vocal music** (and, of course, Jussi's singing in particular)? Stefan Olmås not only presses such questions but also provides some good answers. We need to continue this discussion!

One idea suggested by Stefan involves presenting more concerts based on Jussi's recordings, like the

"Evenings with Jussi Björling" organized by Bertil Bengtsson and Hans Thunström in Sweden, England, Minnesota, and—as mentioned above—Washington DC. Another idea was tried by Juilliard faculty member John Muller in his **short course on Björling** this fall, and we have a preliminary report in this issue.

Still another way to reach large audiences with Jussi's magnetic voice is via radio. Since Jussi's recordings are still favorites, they continue to show up on broadcasts and we like to track and report about especially interesting radio-events. In this issue we describe Britain's BBC3's **week-long tribute** to our tenor last summer, in Rob Cowan's program "CD Masters." We also bring news about a pair of new programs available on some American **Public Radio** stations via Utah's KBYU-FM (one of which you can hear right now, if you can receive webcasting via a home computer).



How do we follow up our New York Conference of 2002? We do want to bring a conference to California sometime, and there are good ideas for other places too, like Chicago or Madison. Most interestingly, Harald Henrysson has pointed out that the Jussi Björling Museum in Borlänge will celebrate its 10th anniversary in the Fall of 2004, and he invites members of any of the three Jussi Björling Societies (USA, UK, Scandinavia) to meet in Borlänge in September 2004, to help celebrate this anniversary. **Our current plans involve meetings in Stockholm and Borlänge during September 9-13**, see our article elsewhere in this issue.

And you can expect to hear more definite information about this planned international conference as plans crystallize. Watch for further announcements from us in the next few months.

Other highlights of this issue:

- Alfred Gardner's article "Breaking hearts in Hungary," based on newspaper articles and reviews from Jussi's performances in Budapest during 1937 (in *Aida* and a concert). We previewed this article for you in our Newsletter for Summer 2002, and now you have the whole piece.
- Two more chapters from Bertil Hagman's *Minnesbok* (*Memory-book*) in Gail Campain's translations: One is by Joen Lagerberg, who was Sweden's Ambassador in Prague at the same time that Jussi was "breaking hearts" in Hungary, and he speaks of the "Björling fever" then rampant among the sophisticated Czech public. We recommend that you read this chapter along with Alfred's article and Chapter 6 of *Jussi*, which deals with the same time-period, as the young tenor first tries his wings outside of Scandinavia.
- Sue Flaster's description of the Jussi-treasures recovered from the USA Library of Congress by Don Goldberg and Harald Henrysson.
- We're greatly honored that Birgit Nilsson, Licia Albanese, Robert Merrill, Plácido Domingo and Neil Shicoff all have agreed to serve as Honorary Advisors to JBS-USA, and we give a brief report on these superb artists in this issue.

In addition to our featured articles we have our regular columns, with "Jussi in the News" now joined by a new "Web Notes—A Guide to Jussi on the Internet" contributed by Madeleine Drake. Hal Sokolsky has moved to Florida, and his much-appreciated work for our recordings column, "The Recorded Legacy," has been taken over by Kristian Krogholm of Norway. And you'll enjoy Harald Henrysson's report from the Borlänge JB Museum.

One especially neat item in this issue's "Web Notes" quotes Andrew Farkas about his work on the book *Jussi*, as well as his intention to write less and to relax more. That statement reminds us to observe that he recently retired, this past June, as Director of Libraries at the University of North Florida, and now is in a perfect position to work less and enjoy more. He has our congratulations, and we can be confident that he'll continue to keep a hand in the opera world, as Consulting Editor for *The Opera Quarterly* and in many other ways. We are pleased that he will continue to serve on our JBS-USA Advisory Board.



Looking ahead, our next *Journal Issue #15* is slated for Spring 2004 and will feature articles, long and short, on two favorite operas from Jussi's repertory: *Pagliacci* and *Cavalleria Rusticana*. We'll publish Stephen Hastings' brilliant analysis of the 1954 Swedish Radio broadcast, now available from Bluebell in a new transcription, as well as a survey by Harald Henrysson of reviews of Jussi's performances of Canio in Sweden. We'll also present an updated version of David McKee's influential

1993 article on *Pagliacci* recordings in *The Opera Quarterly*. Consider this paragraph a call for YOUR remarks about these operas, it could be a detailed study of the music, or just a short comment on your personal reaction to Jussi in these operas—that you could offer, to be combined with similar comments by other members.

In the meantime, our Newsletters will bring you more news about our 2004 Conference and other Jussi-related events around the world—watch for updates on these in our next mailings!

—Dan

New retiree Andrew Farkas, at work for the JBS Conference (New York, October 2002)

