



Newsletter

of the Jussi Björling Societies of the USA & UK

No. 34—July 2019
Peter C. Hammond, editor

Centenary of the Björling Boys Celebrated in New Book

By Sue Flaster

Björlings in America: The Singing Begins

A bilingual illustrated book by Harald Henrysson

Much of the story of David Björling in America, as well as his later misadventures with the Swedish Royal Opera, has been based on legend rather than actual history. In some cases, personal failings of a professional sort were replaced by failings of a more personal sort, with the goal of soothing wounded pride, it appears. Although David Björling seems to have been respected and admired as a singer, we have no recordings of his voice, and up to now, very few professional reviews of his singing.

The rapidly growing availability of digitized newspapers has allowed Harald Henrysson to seek and find a remarkable and startling amount of information which will be new to even the most enthusiastic followers of the Björling generational saga. David's own turn-of-the-century daring and the later cross-country tour with his boys are even more remarkable than we previously thought.

The traveling family

David's first, solo, trip to the US has come to us largely as folklore, including the notions that he was occupied both as a boxer and a gold miner. There have been almost no details about his period at the Metropolitan Opera School, nor about his other activities while in the States. Harald has been able to locate and provide many previously unknown details about David's own performance history in the US, both as a soloist and a choral singer.

In the same way, information about the period between David's two trips to the US has previously been sketched out only in vague recollections. We know that David did not join the Royal Opera, but not why: it will now be possible to draw some more probable conclusions than the dramatic gossip we've all read.

David's cross-country tour with his boys has received equally sketchy coverage over the years. Digitization has certainly helped the search, but Harald was also helped by being able to order microfilmed US newspaper during his time in Charleston SC, and we will now know about more than 150 concerts in 14 states.

CENTENARY OF THE BJÖRLING BOYS continued on page 2



Jussi Björling's Des Grieux in NEW CD Editions

By Kristian Krogholm

One of the two operas that Björling learned and performed on stage after he left the Stockholm Opera to join the Metropolitan was Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*. He seemed to have just the perfect vocal gears for this opera, encapsulating both lyric brilliance and dramatic intensity in that unique musical instrument for the role of the lovesick Des Grieux. He sang the role between 1949 and 1959 and there are four complete recordings of him as Des Grieux, including the 1954 studio take in Rome.

In April 2019, no less than two recordings have been issued simultaneously. It is almost as if one's cup runneth over. Immortal Performances has issued on IPCD1110-2 the 1959 Stockholm performance, while

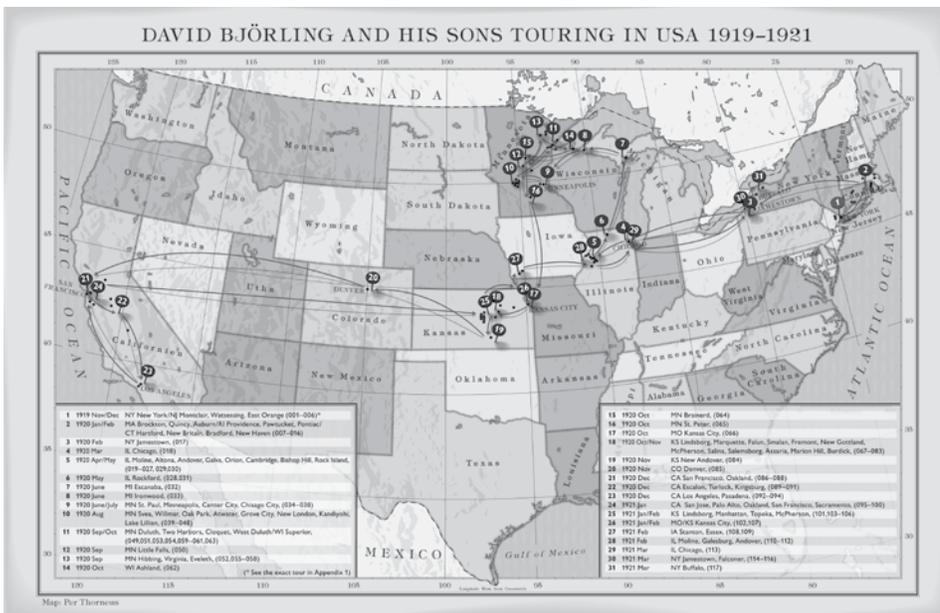
Pristine Audio has released on PACO158 the 1956 Met performance. Both, let me say, are in very gratifying sound.

For the 1959 performance, Immortal Performances (Richard Caniell) has had access to a supreme source made available by Stefan Johansson, who also contributes a very fine text. Stefan was actually there himself, and it's a satisfaction to have the description from someone who heard the singers in the flesh. Two separate recordings of that very performance were made, both in splendid sound. One was made by the Swedish Radio used for this release—of which Stefan Johansson had a copy—and another made privately. The former had been released before on Opera Depot

OD10190-2. Excerpts from the latter have been released on Caprice CAP22051. Jussi Björling's voice—I dare say—is captured extremely well on the Caprice CD. The miking is more distant than on the SR version, and the pure perfection and rich spectrum of overtones in Björling's voice stand out. "Donna non vidi mai" in particular is so heartbreakingly beautiful it almost hurts to listen to it. Still, the SR version used for IPCD1110-2 is not to be discounted.

You might hear a difference in the first act, where I think Björling's top notes sound more clear and free on Caprice. Then there is the matter of "Donna non vidi mai," where a technical mishap on the original Swedish Radio tapes distorted some of the singing; this was replaced entirely by the 1954 studio recording of the aria for the earlier Opera Depot release OD10190-2, whereas for the new Immortal Performances (IP) release Mr. Caniell explains in his notes how he has inserted a small portion from the 1956

CENTENARY OF THE BJÖRLING BOYS continued from page 1



A centenary book

Last summer, Harald was in the JB Museum in Borlänge where he saw an attractive, bilingual illustrated history of the town. The book prompted interest in the publisher,

Förlag AB Björnen of Borlänge, and its owner Björn Ericson. It occurred to Harald that 2019 is the 100th anniversary of the Björling family's adventures in the United States, and one of the last important anniversaries in the Björling saga. Harald and

Björn met and both immediately agreed that a book about these amazing performers would be a fitting monument to this anniversary. AB Björnen has produced a series of illustrated books so Björn didn't feel any special challenge in working with Harald to produce such a Björling book.

The text is nearly complete, and Harald is now hard at work finding the highest-quality copies of illustrations for the book. The current plan is to have finished books by the start of September, to have this extraordinary work available well before the holiday season. ■

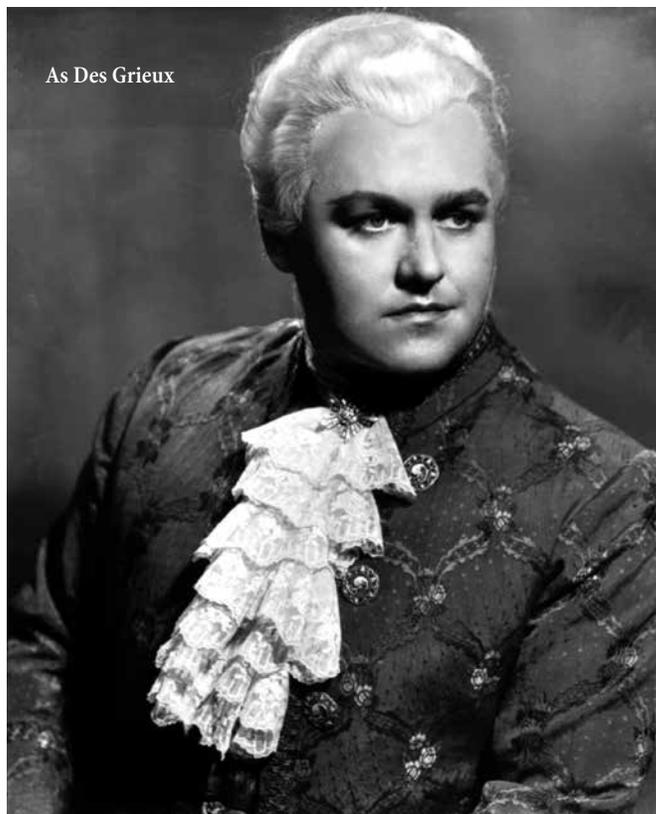
Order your copies from the JBS order form (included) or from the JBS web site. *Björlings in America: The Singing Begins David 1899-1908* *David, Olle, Jussi, Gösta 1919-1921* Förlags AB Björnen \$20.00

“Donna non vidi mai” to replace the few seconds where that distortion occurred. But in the last act, and especially in “No! Pazzo son!,” I prefer this new Immortal Performances version. Björling sings his best “Pazzo son!” on record here. It soars and rings. And still his voice has such a dramatic intensity and abandon that there is nothing else to be desired. Listen to the sound of “O immensa delizia mia” and try to name one tenor in the whole universe who can equal that glowing intensity. And the wonder of it all: he does it without yelling or shouting or howling. He sings with more fire than any two Italians put together! Also this new version highlights the contribution from the other singers, Schymberg and Hasslo in particular. It is a great performance, and the fact that Björling sings in Italian and the others in Swedish never for a moment distracts you from the ongoing drama.

The CD from Immortal Performances also has some nice bonuses: the 1959 London Palladium concert (released here for the first time), and two excerpts from the 1949 Hollywood Bowl concert in fine sound, including a “Nessun dorma” with a high B sustained for 11 seconds (the rest of this performance, including a superb “Che gelida manina” and beautifully sung duets with his wife Anna-Lisa, is archived at the Björling museum in equally good sound). Also worth mentioning is the Pillerdosan concert from 1954, given here more or less as it sounds on the original tapes. Very much recommended.

Moving on to the 1956 Met performance (PACO158), Pristine Audio (Andrew Rose) must have had access to first-hand tapes, because the sound is so crystal clear it could have been recorded yesterday. Björling sang this performance between other engagements in New York that season, including a TV show with Tebaldi, a recording of *La bohème* with Beecham and de los Angeles, and a *Tosca* at the Met with

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who also conducts this *Manon Lescaut* (a private recording of the *Tosca* performance was never released on CD but can be heard at the Björling museum). Pristine is famous worldwide for their restorations of orchestral recordings of yore, obtaining breathtaking results in upgrading the sound so that they sound as if they had been recorded 20-30 years later. If you adore Beethoven as I do, I recommend their restorations, for instance the



PASC488 where Furtwängler’s conducting of the wartime recording of the “Eroica” Symphony is absolutely magically restored with depth, clarity and dynamic power. Everything sounds mind-blowingly brilliant. Whether Pristine has been equally successful in restoring material with Jussi Björling is less certain. There is a tendency, also experienced in their releases of *Il trovatore* PACO134, *Rigoletto* PACO143, and the 1957 Sibelius Memorial PASC528, for Pristine’s restorations to invariably strengthen the middle and lower parts of the voice and not so much the top, which was indeed the most sensational part of the voice.

Björling’s expansive resources were in a class of their own. An English critic wrote in 1960 after his *Bohème* at Covent Garden that his top notes simply start off where other tenors’ top notes end. I treasure also the other releases of this 1956 performance at the Met: WHRA-6020 (Ward Marston’s restoration) and WLCD0267. In Marston’s restoration the voices are somewhat more distant. In the latter from Walhall the voices are—as in this new release from Pristine

—very close to the ear—and the Walhall also has bonus excerpts from the last act of the 1949 performance at the Met, which I strongly recommend. In great sound, and Jussi in absolute supreme voice, attacking the high notes with unrivaled ease.

Both new editions, the 1959 Stockholm performance on IP and the 1956 Met one on Pristine, are well worth having. Personally I prefer the 1959 Stockholm performance for the freedom of the top notes, the lyric sweetness of the voice, and the sound in general. I tend to prefer to hear Björling’s voice at some distance from the microphone. That usually, in my opinion, brings out the singular beauty and the shimmer and radiance of that instrument. The Pristine edition offers the legendary 1956 Met performance of a superb Albanese and Björling and has undoubtedly a sound which may seem more modern and to the liking of many, but I find the very close miking and

the emphasis on the power of the middle register to take something away in the purely auditive pleasure of listening. That is a personal view that can certainly be subject to debate. Any Björling fan should own and treasure both editions. ■

Kristian Krogholm is the Recordings Editor for JBS-USA

Editor’s note: The Immortal Performances Recording is available for purchase using the enclosed order form or on our website.

Our longtime member Phyllis liked to speak of being introduced to classical music and live concerts by her husband Harold “Hal” Josell, who deeply loved the singing of Jussi Björling. They accumulated a collection of LPs together while bringing up their kids, working and enjoying friends, in New Jersey.

audience chuckled, and Jussi conferred with his accompanist Fred Schauwecker, who shuffled his music and then commenced to play the introduction to Hal’s aria!

Luckily, this fine concert was recorded by RCA, but then somehow the tapes were ignored in the RCA vaults for some 34 years, and finally released on CD in 1992. (*For the*

move to southern California, where she would be near daughter Sari and her family. In the meantime our JB Society was being organized, and by 2002 Phyllis had learned of a JB Society conference to take place in New York City that October.

With many friends and family still living near NYC, she decided to attend that 4-day event—it would allow her to hear and possibly meet Jussi’s sons Anders and Lars, and other family members and speakers: the founder of the JB Museum in Sweden Harald Henrysson; radio host George Jellinek of “The Vocal Scene”; the co-author of Jussi’s biography, Andrew Farkas; at least four Met stars who had sung with Jussi; and many others, from RCA records, *Opera News*, and the Met Archives. This was not to be missed!

And indeed Phyllis definitely enjoyed herself at that NY conference. As she entered the hotel ballroom, board member Wally Rudolph greeted her and soon learned her stories about Jussi B. at the 1958 Carnegie Hall concert. (Subsequently, Wally produced a 90-minute radio program built around that concert, with remarks provided by Phyllis and Lars Björling.)

After the conference, we asked members for their reactions and here are Phyllis’s: “The conference was my first. It exceeded all my expectations. Meeting so many people I have come to know via email was a wonderful experience—as was being with so many warm and interesting people who share this love for Jussi and his singing. An emotional plus for me was meeting the Björling family—and high-fiving with little Charlie, and of course hearing Lars sing. Regina Resnik was incredible at the Gala, following the wonderful panel in the afternoon with Resnik, Amara, Merrill and Albanese responding to George Jellinek’s questions relating to their career experiences with JB. I am still ‘high’ from this conference!” (*JBS Journal #14, Spring/Fall 2003, p. 22*)

Needless to say, Phyllis attended other Jussi-conferences as well, with a 2005 weekend at Los Angeles Opera and the 2011 Björling Centennial event at Gustavus Adolphus College being other highpoints.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SARI GERARTY

Remembering Phyllis Josell

By Dan Shea

Early on in their life together, Phyllis and Hal got tickets to go to Björling’s March 2, 1958, Carnegie Hall concert. This would be their first time at one of the tenor’s live recitals, and the experience made a big impression on them both.

The recital was highly praised by reviewers, who noted the great enthusiasm of the big audience (see *Anna-Lisa Björling, Andrew Farkas: Jussi, Amadeus Press, 1996, p. 303*). Towards the end of the concert, after an especially fine performance of Grieg’s “A dream,” Jussi clearly was preparing to deliver an encore; to Phyllis’s surprise, Hal loudly shouted his request: “Nessun dorma!” The

full story on that errant CD, see Don Goldberg’s article in JBS Journal #13, Fall 2001.)

Sadly, Hal had died in 1977, but during the early 1990s Phyllis had picked up several CDs and brought them home. For a while those CDs went unplayed, but she was alone at home one day during a major snowstorm and looked for the CDs to play. While enjoying Jussi’s singing on one of them, she was shocked to hear Hal’s voice shouting for “Nessun dorma,” and memories from that 1958 night came flooding back. She realized that Jussi’s singing had become, even more now, a connection to Hal.

In the late 1990s Phyllis decided to

She and I attended a very fine performance of *Tristan und Isolde* at the LA Opera in 2007, and spoke afterwards with the Marke, Icelandic bass Kristinn Sigmundsson.

During these years Phyllis was teaching classes on opera at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo CA, and she may have brought more new members to the JB Society than any other individual. One testimonial comes from current JBS member David Lewis, whose mother was in Phyllis's opera study group back in New Jersey during the 1980s. Since he appreciated JB's singing too, he met Phyllis and they began trading tapes —here is his recent comment to the Björling Yahooogroup:

“Phyllis Josell was a dear, dear woman. I got to know her because, coincidentally, she was a good friend of my late mother's in New Jersey. Of course, we got together over our passion for Björling. She was kind enough to make a substantial collection of cassette tape copies of rare Björling performances, like the 1937 Björling-Jeritza duet in *Cavalleria rusticana*, which I still have. ... She was a sweet woman, kind, cheerful and enthusiastic, when it came to life in general and especially when it came to Jussi.”

By 2014, Phyllis had developed dementia, which had progressed enough so that she had to move to memory care housing in Mission Viejo. I was living nearby in Carlsbad that February and arranged to take her to dinner in Costa Mesa and then we attended a pretty good performance of *La traviata* at Segerstrom Hall. We didn't meet again unfortunately; her memory got worse and she needed constant care. This very independent woman no longer could make the basic choices that had made life such a pleasure for so many years.

We lost Phyllis in January 2019. In a final generous act, her daughter Sari shipped Phyl's Jussi-related CD collection to Janel Lundgren to add to the Society's historical and promotional resources. We will continue to remember Phyllis for her many best days, with gratitude for this gift and for the enthusiasm and fun she brought to us! ■

Interpreting Björling's Grave as a Symbol of Swedish Patriotism

By Marc Nicholson

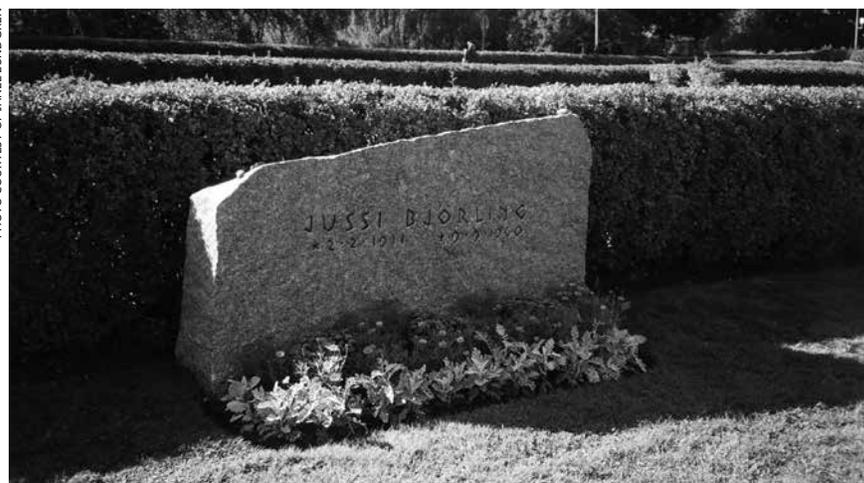
In August 2017 I undertook a guided tour of the Baltic States, but thereafter I spent a week on my own in Sweden for the primary purpose of visiting the Jussi Björling Museum in Borlänge and placing flowers on Björling's grave. I owe him a great deal, because he introduced me to opera as a 12-year-old boy in 1962 through his recording with Victoria de Los Angeles of *Madama Butterfly*, and still more because his beautiful and plaintive voice has accompanied and moved me over my ensuing 57 years. Björling is NOT entertainment. He is existential to us. So I had to travel to Sweden and express gratitude by standing in front of and placing flowers at his burial site.

That grave in the understated Swedish way is a symbol and paean to the Swedish patriotism which infused Björling's life. The stone is roughly cut and uneven, like the glacial rocks which populate Swedish fields and helped propel major Swedish emigration to the US, including my own grandparents, during 1880-1910. The lettering on the gravestone of Jussi's name and the dates of his birth and death is in the Roman alphabet, but it is oddly angular in a way clearly intended to evoke ancient Nordic rune script. And that lettering is painted with the same rusty red color used on most Swedish rural homes and barns. That paint contains copper, which was abundant in Sweden and which earned the country great riches for several centuries. A friend of mine who is a retired professor at the University at Uppsala told me that this copper-based paint was favored by Swedes because its chemical composition helps to preserve the wood of which most older Swedish houses and barns are constructed. Finally, the permanently planted flowers in front of Björling's grave are blue/purple and yellow in color—the closest one can come to the blue and yellow colors of the Swedish national flag. It is all a well-designed tribute to Swedish heritage.

Jussi was a patriot in life and his gravesite reflects that fidelity, as does his career. The Björling Museum in Borlänge offers cumulative totals of his performances, and the majority took place in Sweden, not internationally. Even given his earlier days laboring for the Stockholm Opera, that figure amazed me. Björling became an international star, but he never forgot his roots. Just another reason to admire the man. ■

Marc Nicholson is a retired US diplomat (Foreign Service Officer) living in Washington, DC.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JANEL LUNDGREN





Jussi Björling in Finland

By Göran Forsling

Concert 18 January 1955 in B-Mässhallen Helsinki

Jussi was proud of being of Finnish descent and he visited Finland on numerous occasions. During the war he sang at charity concerts several times and in 1951 he was happy to meet Sibelius at his home in Ainola, outside Helsinki. After all the long tours for many years, not least across the North American continent, he was at times rather tired of travelling, but to Finland he always travelled with pleasure, as he told a Finnish journalist. In January 1955 he had an opportunity to return to “the land of the thousand lakes,” but before that he was booked for a *Tosca* performance at the Stockholm Opera on 14 January.

The reviewers were moderately delighted with the choice of repertoire. *Stockholms-Tidningen's* Lennart Swahn resorted to strong measures: “Jussi Björling sang his Cavaradossi on Friday night for the umpteenth time, which the opera manager would not like to remember. It is by all means utterly attractive to hear Jussi in the same role over and over again and find that he is as he usually is and thus there is no need to review him, but it is much more unattractive that the assumption is reasonable that the opera management definitely has decided to limit Björling’s narrow

Stockholm repertoire to two or three tenor ‘Golden Eggs.’ You’ve heard it before! Of course, but maybe the drops in time will hollow the stone at Gustaf Adolf Square and give us Jussi in an edition that we don’t know upside-down.” After this volley Swahn rounded off his article laconically: “Birgit Nilsson supported both Jussi and Sigurd Björling in her soon world-famous manner. A good performance accordingly.”

Similar strains were heard from several of his colleagues. “The Royal Opera are seemingly gaining strength for a series of great achievements to judge from the fairly one-sided diet they have offered lately. No one, I suppose, wants to deny the management the pleasure of basking in the *Carmen* success—the perpetual reprising of an old *Tosca* production, on the other hand, doesn’t seem very justified. That opera isn’t even in the taste of the public—it is too shabby,” was the verdict from one of them. But with that his lament was over and he eulogized the vocal splendour that poured out from the stage. And the others agreed.

One or two days before the performance Jussi must have read in *Aftonbladet* about the paper’s competition for “This year’s Swede.” Heading the list of the 10

eligible candidates was Jussi. Among the others were Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Herbert Olivecrona, professor and brain surgeon, credited with founding the field of Swedish neurosurgery and pioneering developments in modern neurosurgery. On 10 January Jussi was introduced to the readers in a long article written by his son Anders, having recently passed his high school graduation.

On the flight to Helsinki on 17 January it is possible that Jussi was reading the latest issue of the *Nutid* magazine, where he was cover-boy and also was portrayed in a big, lavishly illustrated article of more than four pages.

In the Finnish capital he gave a concert on 18 January and the reviewer of *Hufvudstadsbladet* (Swedish-language newspaper) waxed lyrical: “Jussi Björling’s concert before a sold-out B-exhibition hall turned out to be a resounding success. The audience paid tribute to the singer with thundering ovations, which resulted in numerous encores, both in the middle of and after the programme. Among these can be mentioned the two Sibelius songs ‘Säv, säv, susa’ and ‘Demanten på marssnön’ and of course Sjöberg’s ‘Tonerna,’ which was a request. The programme contained opera arias, songs by Schubert and Richard Strauss, a Nordic section represented by Grieg, Svedbom and Nordquist and a couple of popular pieces by the Italian composer Tosti.

Abundantly one could admire the legato singing, which in even and serene arcs flowed in a wide stream of golden harmony. And this broad, beautiful legato was emphasized by the often drawn out tempos. The soft, warmly shimmering voice sounded and equalized throughout the register. With refinement and impeccable enunciation he presented his programme-balanced and without sentimental exaggerations. In Gustaf Nordquist’s ‘Till havs’ there was dramatic nerve and power that was strongly overwhelming. He was assisted at the concert grand by the confident and flexible Harry Ebert.”

Bengt Janzon from *Dagens Nyheter* took part in the trip and joined Jussi and

Anna-Lisa on their journey to Tammerfors on 20 January: “On Thursday Jussi gave a concert in Tampere (Tammerfors). A shaking, none too comfortable train—where the lunch symbolically was an ‘opera sandwich’—brought the tenor and company in a northwestern direction in three hours up to Tammerfors, the town where Jussi’s Finnish grandmother met and married his Swedish grandfather. Jussi sang in the theatre of the town and donated the proceeds—10 000 SEK—to the war crippled.” In the local paper one could read that the theatre only takes 600 listeners and added: “That interest was great for Jussi’s visit can be concluded from the fact that thrice as many queued for tickets.”

On 23 January Jussi was back in Helsinki and sang at the Finnish Opera. On the programme was—*Tosca!* But the reviewers were all sunshine. The performance was conducted by Jussi Jalas—son-in-law of Sibelius—chief conductor of the opera, and he was highly commended. The reporter of *Hufvudstaadsbladet* wrote about Jussi: “From the warm applause at his first entrance to a good half-dozen curtain calls after the final chord the audience were in a state of expectant excitement. And there were reasons for that. The first act didn’t give full proof of more than that the singer has an ideal voice with all that schmelz one can demand in a grateful role, but in the second act the stage was all aglow. Such intensity of expression, such intoxicating flush of victory in the freedom song one has almost forgotten that it can exist, and for natural reasons it can rarely be heard on the concert platform; but in the last act’s farewell aria and the song to Tosca’s soft hands (“O dolci mani”) the singer presented his warmth and his softest tones. It was, in other words, an all-embracing exposition of his eminent capacity the singer generously offered. – One could criticize Puccini for not anticipating a Jussi Björling and writing a longer tenor role” The reviewer also praises Elli Pihlaja in the title role and Lauri Lahtinen as Scarpia—both evidently inspired to great achievements by Jussi’s presence. “We have to be grateful to Jussi Björling for this visit,” he finished his review, “and that he by no

means regards this little stage as something inessential: he delivered to the full and shared the ovations generously with his moved and curtseying prima donna.” This was also something the reporter from *Stockholms-Tidningen* had observed: “[Jussi Björling’s] popularity was further increased when he chivalrously shared the profusion of applause with Elli Pihlaja, who in spite of commendable attempts to escape was resolutely captured by Jussi.”

With that, the Finnish adventure was over this time, but Jussi was already booked for a couple of performances at the Finnish Opera in March the same year. Back in Stockholm there was a new challenge at the Royal Opera, Verdi’s *Aida* on 27 January, and this time Lennart Swahn had changed his tune. Listen:

“The Royal Opera took out the Crown Jewels on Thursday night. *Aida* was furnished with four Royal Court Singers, besides the fact that the opera itself has two kings and two princesses. It was in other words a vocal feast with few equivalences lately and which may be written on the few golden pages the present opera management seems to get in the annals.

In the Court Singer Quartet was Jussi, a visiting glorious Radamès but slightly baker-like as the bold commander of the Egyptian armies. His natty rotundity takes away the illusion a great deal—no doctor can help that—but instead we have one of the freshest and most alluring voices to admire. The vocal perfectionist Jussi is one of the wonders of today, and when he is matched with the loyal Birgit Nilsson one is not far from the seventh Heaven of Song. Is

there any vocal stage in this world that can display a better *Aida* constellation than this pair? Leon Björker’s Pharaoh is mighty as—yes, exactly as Pharaoh himself and Sigurd Björling has everything one can ask for from Amonasro: wily, just dramatic enough and big-voiced. He catches interest as soon as he comes in and glares angrily at the crowd in the triumphal act—It isn’t easy to be a world tenor when one has a world soprano by one’s side, but Jussi is as we know a cordially generous character. Sometimes he tore himself away at the curtain calls and implored *Aida* to take a bow alone when the cheers poured abundantly across the footlights this evening. They certainly deserved it, for this was an event of the ne-plus-ultra type.”

After all these ovations it probably must have felt like a non-event to go to the opening ceremony for the annual congress of The Swedish Society for the Promotion of Ski Sport and Outdoor Life in Sundsvall. It was cold as sin in Central Square when Jussi sang at the opening ceremony. On the other hand it was most likely more pleasant in the Town Hall in the evening, where Jussi and Anna-Lisa, with Harry Ebert at the piano, sang in connection with the festival banquet. And as a further consolation they had the privilege be the first to spend the night in the newly renovated deluxe suite at legendary Hotel Knaust! ■

This article first appeared under the title “Jussi of the Month January 2019” as part of a monthly feature on the web site of the Swedish Jussi Björling Society at www.jussibjorlingsallskapet.com/id/1860.html

Congratulations!

We are thrilled to report that Bengt Krantz, chairman of the Jussi Björling Sällskapet and director of the Malmö Opera, has received the 2019 Litteris et Artibus (Letters and Arts) award.

Litteris et Artibus is a Swedish royal medal established in 1853 by Charles XV of Sweden, who was then crown prince. It is awarded to people who have made important contributions to culture, especially music, dramatic art and literature.

Receiving this medal from HM the King, Bengt joins a list of the most distinguished Swedish artists, including Jussi Björling (who received the medal in 1945).

JUSSI BJÖRLING SOCIETY

21 Josiah Norton Road
Cape Neddick, Maine 03902 USA



First Class
US Postage
PAID
Permit 49
Provo, UT

Membership note:

PLEASE CHECK the address label which shows the last membership year paid above your name.

Join JBS in Washington D.C. this November!



The Board of Directors of the Jussi Björling Society - USA will be having a board meeting in Washington D.C. the weekend of November 15 and 16, 2019. On FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 15, we plan to attend the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center, a concert performance of Act II of *Tristan und Isolde*, featuring Stephen Gould and Christine Goerke, conducted by Gianandrea Noseda. We will be gathering together for dinner at a convenient restaurant around 5:30 pm; the concert begins at 8 pm.

We hope any of you who live or will be visiting in the DC area on that date will join us for dinner and the concert!

Ticket prices for the concert (orchestra seats) are ranging from \$80 to \$85. We will be pursuing a group rate, which may offer us a 10% discount, or maybe better, depending on how many of us sign up. (We will all be paying our own way for dinner.)

Please sign up now using the enclosed order form, or by means of the Contact button on our website: www.jussibjorlingsociety.org.

You will be informed later this summer about the exact cost of the concert ticket, and can then send your payment, made out to JBS-USA, directly to the Jussi Björling Society, in care of our treasurer, Stephen Fischman, at 26582 Dolorosa, Mission Viejo, CA 92691. Or you may use your credit card to pay online through our website, www.jussibjorlingsociety.org.

JBS-USA will pay for all the tickets and will have them for you that evening.

Join us for this wonderful musical occasion and get-together!