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*Front & Back Cover: Courtesy of  
William C. Clayton from a program  
given to him by a collector.*

# JBS-USA

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## From the Editor's Desk



Dear Friends,

As JBS-USA approaches its 3<sup>rd</sup> year of operation, I'd like to take this opportunity to report on several areas of interest relative to our Society. First, I'm pleased to tell you that our original band of 4 has grown to 170 members. This is certainly a tribute to the enduring legacy of Jussi Björling as well as to the excellent direction provided by our advisors and boards. Second, member renewals are averaging a remarkable 95%, and we thank you for this measure of your confidence and support. We're also appreciative that so many of you have freely shared your information, ideas, and opinions; and we hope that you will continue to do so.

Third, from a humble beginning in November 1998 (2 messages exchanged) we now have a lively, informative, and open discussion group of 85 people on Bjorling e-groups. From the historical to the current, from the sublime to the... well, not so sublime... the list provides the opportunity to share information, opinion, and trivia on Jussi as well as on opera in general. The list is not limited to the U.S., and participants have joined us from around the globe.

During the month of July, for example, 359 messages were exchanged, again illustrating the incredible level of interest in Jussi and in his art even 40 years after his death. And I'm happy to say that while discussions are heated at times, civility and respect prevail. The list is great fun, and if you are currently not participating, I hope that you will consider joining us.

Thanks to your generosity and support, our web site has been upgraded, we have \$1500 in our vocal scholarship fund (\$800 of which will be awarded this year), and \$600 allocated for advertising the Society (something that we have not done thus far). We are working to increase our membership so that we can expand our scholarship and educational programs and improve the print quality of the Journal. Needless to say, it is you, our members, who make all of this possible.

In this issue, we bring you a marvelous interview by Beau Kaplan with Mr. Albert White, who met Jussi in 1952. They became close friends, and the interview with Mr. White provides a fascinating look at his relationship with Jussi and Anna-Lisa. Also in this issue is a report by Dan Shea on JBS' first organized trip to Sweden, a review by Bill Clayton of the new "Rarities" CD, Jussi in the News, a report by Don Goldberg on the results of his Björling research at the Library of Congress, the seventh installment of *En Minnesbok* as translated by Gail Campaign, and much more.

Finally, I must inform you that this issue of the Journal will be the last issue that I will be editing. While it has been a great honor (and an enjoyable one) to serve in this capacity, increasing family and church responsibilities- as well as expanding JBS responsibilities in other areas- make it impossible for me to continue as editor-in-chief and maintain the high level of quality that you expect and deserve from the Journal. I hope that you will support me in this decision and will be patient with us as we transition this responsibility.

Regards,



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## **Bits And Pieces About Jussi: An Interview with Albert White By Dr. Louis (Beau) Kaplan, March 22, 2000**

BK: Today I am going to interview my old friend, Albert White, who introduced me to Jussi Björling's voice on 78 records in about 1947 when I was 17. Ten years later on March 3, 1957, he introduced me to Jussi himself backstage at Constitution Hall in Washington.

Albert, in a moment I will ask you how and when you met Jussi, but for now let me ask you about your contact with Jussi when he was in Washington for the concert at Constitution Hall.

AW: He and Anna-Lisa, and Bill Arneth and his wife were at my apartment the night before the concert. What I remember most distinctly is that I played a record for him and asked him if he could identify the singer. He smiled at the voice coming out of the record player and said "It's Erik Odde". He then said, astonishingly, that it was the first time he had ever heard the recordings; he hadn't even listened to playbacks. He remembered that he sight read the songs with no prior rehearsal, and that he was paid just 50 kronor for each song.