

From the President

By Janel E. Lundgren



First, the JBS-USA Board of Directors joins me in sending our best greetings to you all, with the hope that you all are safe and well.

In spite of the pandemic, members of JBS-USA have been loyal and generous in supporting our Society, through donations to the Conference, membership dues, and additional contributions. We have survived 2020, and are beginning the new year with the financial stability to continue our outreach programs and to pursue new projects — all because our members are active partners in our devotion to the Björling legacy. We thank you!

But the year has also brought the major loss of the Jussi Björling Museum, now permanently closed in Borlänge, Sweden. Efforts are still underway to delay the moving of the collection to library storage, and/or to find a new location for the Museum. By mid-December 2020, our members had sent in 62 signatures for the Museum Appeal, and more are still coming. If you wish to add your own signature, please inform us at matthewjmancini@mac.com.

Our lead article by Museum Founding Curator Harald Henrysson will bring you up to date on the status of the Museum as of

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mid-January 2021. Our website will also be frequently updated with the latest information. JBS-USA stands ready to partner with our sister societies in Sweden and the UK, in support of any happy solution.

This *Journal* contains good news as well. Our Board is excited to announce that we will be privately printing an English version of *Jussi Björling, en minnesbok*, as translated by Gail Campaign, and with additional material by Harald Henrysson. The volume should be available to members by early summer.

The new 6-CD set, “Jussi Björling — A Tribute,” has received rave reviews from three distinguished critics — Henry Fogel, Ken Meltzer, and Kristian Krogholm — reviews which are printed in this *Journal*. The CD set is now available for sale through our website or using the enclosed order form, at a member-discounted price.

The JBS Board is also working to make some virtual concerts more readily available to JBS members. You will receive specifics of these soon. And our Chicago Conference has been successfully re-scheduled for April of 2022. The specific dates will be available in March of this year.

We hope you enjoy these and other articles as you page through this *Journal*. We thank all those who participate in this publication, with special thanks for the significant contributions of board members Walter B. Rudolph, Dan Shea, and Ken Svengalis, and, of course, Harald Henrysson.

I conclude with an expression of appreciation. We all know Harald Henrysson as a friend, and as the ultimate resource on the life and art of Jussi Björling. In addition to co-founding two Jussi Björling Societies,

one in Sweden and one in the United States, Harald gave us all the major gift of a JB research center and repository in the JB Museum, which he created in Borlänge. Planned and developed in a very special way by Harald, the Museum has been a favorite destination of international music lovers, including distinguished British vocal specialist, author and broadcaster John Steane, who wrote in *Gramophone*, “Of all singer museums, Björling’s is best.”

Those of us who have had the privilege to visit the Museum over the years know that it has been a warm and welcoming place, occupying two floors of a large residence overlooking a park in the center of Borlänge, with generous displays, comfortable places to sit and read or listen, and easy access to paper and recording collections. Curator Harald (and after his 2009 retirement, the current curator Jan-Olof Damberg) was always at the ready to help you find what you sought. The same was true long distance, as each of them provided answers, documents and photos by email.

If the Museum speaks for anyone in addition to Jussi, it also speaks for the professional excellence and personal commitment of Harald Henrysson. Now that Museum is in great jeopardy. We, at JBS-USA, are committed to joining with Harald, his colleagues and members of the Jussi Björling Sällskapet, in their urgent work to re-open the Museum (whether in Borlänge or Stockholm), to preserve the collections, and with them the life work of this dedicated and supreme musicologist. Thank you Harald, for all you have done and continue to do. I know I speak for the entire membership when I say, you have our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude. ■

CALLEFRIEDNER



Founding Curator
Harald Henrysson at
the JB Museum