

IRVING FORBES HONORED ON FOUNDER'S DAY



A little before 6:30 p.m. on May 19, the audience that had quietly assembled in Phillips Church spontaneously rose to greet Irving Forbes and his wife Margery with applause. This was Forbes' second standing ovation of the day, the first having come that morning at Assembly, when he received the 2006 Founder's Day Award for exceptional service to the Academy. Presenting him with the award, General Alumni/ae Association President Jenny Young du Pont '78 had cited Forbes' "legendary zeal for bringing music to everyone...with a winning style, boundless energy and an infectious love of your craft in all its variations."

Forbes joined the Exeter faculty in 1960 and taught full time for 27 years, retiring in 1987 as chairman of the music department (a position he had held since 1971) and Wheaton J. Lane '21 Bicentennial Professor in the Humanities (1981). During his tenure as department chair, the music program grew to involve over 500 students, while the number of students taking private lessons more than doubled and the music faculty more than tripled; opportunities for students and faculty to perform expanded to include about 50 concerts per year; and the music

DAN COURTER

ACADEMY ARCHIVES

(Above) On May 19, Irving Forbes, emeritus chair of the music department, was honored with the Founder's Day Award and a tribute concert in Phillips Church that concluded with Forbes (above) conducting a sing-along.

(Center) Concert participants included (front row, from left) Carol Block Hall, Charles Kaufmann '73, A. Irving Forbes, Robert Squires, Eric Sinclair; (back row) Charles Forbes '54, Keith Polk, Cynthia Forbes, Margaret Blickle, Mimi Bravar, Stephanie Curcio, Angelynn Koromilas Hinson '80, Lodowick Crofoot, Gail Volk, Barbara Flocco, Paul Sullivan '73, Julie Scolnik '74, Robert Thompson '72. Not pictured: Jean Alvord.

(Right) At the time of Forbes' retirement in 1987, Principal Stephen J. Kurtz wrote, "Your contribution to the Academy is, in my opinion, second to none. When I leave Exeter it may well be music as I have known it under your direction that will remain uppermost in my fond memories."



department became a magnet that brought many students to the Academy. Besides teaching classes and private lessons and directing the glee club, choir, band and orchestra, Forbes advised the Outdoor Challenge Program, coached cross-country skiing, developed and mapped trails in the Academy Woods and directed the Rockingham Choral Society.

Forbes now makes his home in Blue Hill, ME, where he directs the Peter's Cove Men's Chorus, the Unitarian Church Choir and the annual Handel Messiah community sing-along; performs for special events with Margery, his favorite accompanist for the last 47 years; and sings in the Bagaduce Chorale. He also stays in close contact with his six children: Alexander '67, Benjamin '68, Elizabeth Perkins, Lawrence, Douglas, and Eben '87.

Within days of February's announcement that Forbes was to receive the Founder's Day Award, a group of his former colleagues and students—led by Mimi Bravar, Lodowick Crofoot, Chip Kaufmann '73, and Julie Scolnik '74—began to plan a celebratory concert in his honor. The program would reflect the musical diversity that he had nurtured, including baroque, classical, romantic, folk, Broadway and New Age music, with offerings from three composer-performers and a hand drum soloist. The Brahms Sextet in B-Flat would bring together three former Academy orchestra conductors: Carol Block Hall, violin, from Washington, D.C.; Mimi Bravar, viola, from Bedford, NH; and Irving's cousin, Charles Forbes '54, cello, from Langhorne, PA.



Because Forbes is a bassoon aficionado (he was principal bassoonist of the Portland, ME, Symphony for 10 years), Kaufmann chose three pieces to showcase the baroque, classical, and modern bassoons. Kaufmann, who teaches bassoon at Bowdoin College and performs with the Handel & Haydn Society of Boston, had studied with Forbes until—in a characteristic combination of encouragement and humility—Forbes fired himself as Kaufmann's teacher and sent him to the Boston Symphony's solo bassoonist for lessons.

The Forbeses' entrance into Phillips Church began the roundelay that culminated with his conducting the audience in the beloved round "Dona Nobis Pacem," followed by "God Moves in a Mysterious Way," from Benjamin Britten's *St. Nicholas*. With the organ chords of the "amen" still vibrating, the audience rose to give Irving his third standing ovation.

Forbes' friends regaled him after the concert with letters, tales and limericks. A tribute sent by Robert Shannon '67, concert artist and director of keyboard studies at Oberlin Conservatory, told of Forbes' lasting influence:

"...As a PEA student I was in a piano trio. We had much more ambition than skill, I suppose. But Irving was our guiding spirit. He had recently been building a stone wall around his house, so we called ourselves the Stonewall Forbes Trio. I think I was intrigued that musical excellence might be accompanied by a very earthy embrace of practical things. There was something so solid and healthy about the spirit of the man... I think Irving showed me how to be forthright, honest, and yet demanding in his dealings with students. No grandiosity, no hint of bitterness or melancholy. Just straight ahead enthusiasm and honest appraisal done with unflagging good humour and cheer... Whenever I find myself confronted with seemingly impossible odds in my teaching career, Irving's image comes before me. I take heart and go on."

—Carolyn Crofoot

Honoring Another Musical Great

Phillips Church was the setting for another memorable musical celebration this spring when alumni/ae of the Exeter Concert Choir from 1990 through 2005 returned to campus on May 28 to take part in Concert Choir director Steve Kushner's final Exeter concert. Exeter's choir director for the past 19 years (as well as the Michael V. Forrestal '45 Professor of Music and a past chair of the music department), Kushner is moving to Philadelphia to teach at Germantown Friends School, where he will direct the upper school choir and serve as director of studies, a position he also held at Exeter. Concert Choir alumni/ae joined the current choir in a performance of "Carmina Burana," and then surprised Kushner at a post-concert reception by performing a piece composed in his honor by Jamie Pohotsky '04.

(Above) Past and current members of the Concert Choir rehearse "Carmina Burana" with director Steve Kushner (right), who led the choir for 19 years.



MARILEE TUOMANEN

