

# UC Santa Cruz

## Santa Cruz History

### Title

Ernest T. Kretschmer: Reflections on Santa Cruz Musical Life, Volume II

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7977g916>

### Authors

Kretschmer, Ernest T.  
Reti, Irene  
Regional History Project, UCSC Library

### Publication Date

2000

### Supplemental Material

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7977g916#supplemental>

University of California, Santa Cruz  
University Library

*Ernest T. Kretschmer*  
*Reflections on Santa Cruz Musical Life, Volume II: 1993-*  
*1999*

Interviewed and Edited by  
Irene Reti  
Santa Cruz, California  
2000



All uses of this manuscript are covered by an agreement between the Regents of the University of California and Ernest T. Kretschmer, dated September 2, 1999.

The manuscript is thereby made available for research purposes. All the literary rights in the manuscript, including the right to publish, are reserved to the University of California, Santa Cruz. No part of the manuscript may be quoted for publication without the permission of the University Librarian of the University of California, Santa Cruz.

**University of California, Santa  
Cruz University Library**

**Ernest T. Kretschmer:  
Reflections on Santa Cruz Musical Life, 1993-1999 Volume  
II**

**Interviewed and Edited  
by Irene Reti  
Santa Cruz,  
California 2000**

## **Introduction**

Santa Cruz County musical life has continued to evolve and flourish since *Ernest T. Kretschmer: Reflections on Santa Cruz Musical Life, 1962-1992* was published by the Regional History Project in 1992. This second oral history interview with Kretschmer was initiated at the request of Rita Bottoms, head of Special Collections, to supplement the personal archive donated by Kretschmer to the University Library, and to document the significant developments over the past seven years of Santa Cruz musical life, particularly the founding of the Henry J. Mello Center for the Performing Arts, the Santa Cruz County Symphony, the Cabrillo Music

Festival. Kretschmer solicited updates from representatives of the Santa Cruz County Symphony, the Henry J. Mello Center for the Performing Arts, Cabrillo Music Festival, New Music Works, and UCSC's Development Director of the Arts, Alex Sydnor. This research proved an invaluable basis for this oral history.

The volume is based on the verbatim transcription of two and half hours of taped interviews I conducted with Kretschmer at his apartment at Dominican Oaks on September 2, and 3, 1999.

Kretschmer begins his narration with the founding of the Henry J. Mello Center for the Performing Arts in Watsonville. Watsonville's high school theater/auditorium was severely damaged in the Loma Prieta Earthquake of October 17, 1989. Kretschmer describes the process of raising money for the eight-hundred seat Henry Mello Center auditorium. Sources of funding included Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) earthquake relief money acquired through the assistance of State Senator Henry J. Mello, private donations, and the \$100,000 Lingefelter grant, which was set up many years earlier, and designated for the first

nonprofit performing arts center in Santa Cruz County. Kretschmer is the only living person who remembered the details which established this fund, and he played a key part as a board member of the Mello Center in making these funds available to the center as startup money. Kretschmer discusses the excellent acoustics of the Mello Center, the challenges of attracting north county residents to this south county venue, and his successful efforts in obtaining a Steinway piano for the Mello Center. He also outlines the changes on the Mello Center board, fundraising efforts, and the relationship between the Mello Center and Watsonville High School.

Secondly, Kretschmer details his philanthropic and fundraising efforts to support music through the establishment of scholarships and the resident student ensemble program at UCSC, efforts which have their roots in his own financial struggles as a young music student at Aquinas College in the 1930s.

In the third section of this volume, Kretschmer discusses the changes in the Santa Cruz County Symphony over the past seven years, including



successful fundraising efforts. He assesses the contributions of Music Director John Larry Granger. He stresses the need of the symphony, as well as other Santa Cruz County musical organizations, for a performing arts concert hall in the county, and outlines the efforts which have taken place to find such a venue.

In 1999 the Cabrillo Music Festival retired a debt of \$74,000, partly through the efforts and support of Bud Kretschmer. Kretschmer celebrates the success of the festival's 1999 production of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* which sold out the Civic Auditorium for three performances and received high praise from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He praises the stellar contributions of Music Director/Conductor Marin Alsop, calling her a "godsend." Alsop's innovative programming, gifted conducting, and ability to address festival audiences in an articulate and accessible fashion have carried the Cabrillo Music Festival forward both financially and artistically. Kretschmer talks about the student staff program, the Art and Music Festival and other Cabrillo Music Festival programs developed over the past few years. Finally he details the festival's successful fundraising program—the securing of a number of large grants

through the efforts of co-directors Tom Fredericks and Ellen Primack; the support of Howard Sherer and other key members of the board, and the efforts to cultivate the interest of local business firms.

Kretschmer provides a lively and remarkable report of the history of New Music Works directed by Phil Collins, and devoted to the performance of works by Santa Cruz composers, particularly the works of Lou Harrison. Since its founding in 1979, New Music Works has presented 112 different performances featuring 790 pieces by 235 different composers, including 232 world premieres, eight commissioned by New Music Works in the past four seasons. They have organized remarkable events such as the series *The Night of the Living Composers* and the Avant Garden Party. Kretschmer concludes this section by describing the career of Lou Harrison and his personal friendship with Harrison over the past 37 years.

Kretschmer summarizes his efforts to establish a free concert series at Dominican Oaks. He has brought many of the musicians he knows through his involvement in Santa Cruz musical life to Dominican Oaks,

including pianists Barbara Nissman, and Aaron Miller, and Ray Brown's Cabrillo College Jazz Combo.

Finally, Kretschmer reflects on the challenges facing the Santa Cruz musical community at the turn of the century. He underlines the pressing need for a performing arts facility in this area, and for music scholarships and world-renowned music teachers at UCSC. He concludes by musing, "You come to the end of your days and you wonder just how much good influence you've had on your contemporaries, whether or not you extended yourself as much as possible." Bud Kretschmer's passion for music, his unstinting work on behalf of the Santa Cruz County Symphony, the Henry J. Mello Center, the Cabrillo Music Festival, and UCSC's music programs, as well as numerous other organizations over the past 37 years stand as a testament to his outstanding influence on this region's musical life.

The tape-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, edited for continuity and clarity, organized into chapters, and the manuscript returned to Kretschmer for his perusal and any additional comments. He

meticulously read the edited transcript, and made corrections and changes to the text, all of which have been incorporated into the final manuscript. Copies of this manuscript are available at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley; and at Special Collections, McHenry Library, University of California, Santa Cruz. The Regional History Project is supported administratively by Alan Ritch, head of Collection Planning and University Librarian Allan J. Dyson.

Irene Reti  
January 28,  
2000 McHenry  
Library  
University of California, Santa Cruz

*page xii*  
*Introduction*

*Ernest T. Kretschmer:*

## **Table of Contents**

**INTRODUCTION v**

**HENRY J. MELLO CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS 1**

Steinway Piano 8

The Mello Center Board 10

**MUSIC PHILANTHROPY AND FUNDRAISING 13**

Plans for a UCSC Performing Arts Concert

Hall 15 Music Scholarships 16

Daniel Aldrich 19

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SYMPHONY 24**

John Larry Granger 27

The Search for a Performing Arts Concert Hall in Santa Cruz 28

**CABRILLO MUSIC FESTIVAL 32**

Marin Alsop 33

Student Staff Program  
39 Children's Concerts  
39 Art and Music  
Festival 40  
Development  
Activities 41  
Festival Planning 45

**NEW MUSIC WORKS 46**

**LOU HARRISON 51**

**JEAN KRETSCHMER 54**

**DOMINICAN OAKS CONCERT SERIES 55**

**MR. MUSIC 58**

**INDEX 63**

**Reti:** It's September 2, 1999 and I'm here with Bud Kretschmer at his apartment at Dominican Oaks. It's been seven years since we talked about Santa Cruz musical life. Bud, I thought we'd start with the Henry Mello Center.

### **HENRY J. MELLO CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

**Kretschmer:** Ann Soldo was the father and mother of the Mello Center. While she was mayor of Watsonville and also a councilperson, she took a leadership role in trying to secure city ownership of the Fox movie theater in town that was owned by Hank Garcia. Actually we had presented quite



a few concerts there. The Santa Cruz County Symphony had had several concerts there, and the Cabrillo Music Festival had some concerts there as well. The acoustics were okay, but the big problem was that there was insufficient room behind the movie screen for the musicians and their valuable instruments. When the musicians played there they had to go out the side door and into the building behind, which was owned by the Masons. During the winter, going out there with their instruments was not acceptable.

That was resolved after the earthquake in 1989, when the theater was badly damaged, and of all things, the Masonic Temple behind was just a pile of bricks. So they had to start all over again. The first earthquake did not undermine the high school, but in the aftershock, I think, which was about 5.4 on the Richter scale, it just disintegrated. So they were faced with the problem of rebuilding the high school and at the same time replacing the auditorium. Fortunately, there were a lot of rock stars around; Bill Graham was one of the leaders. They staged big concerts that raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for towns that were hit hard by

the earthquake. Some of that to Watsonville. There were  
cameras other

sources of money, too. So the high school people went ahead with drawing up the specifications. At the same time, fortunately, State Senator Henry Mello had control over a lot of the appropriations, and was able to get additional funds for the auditorium. Instead of having five hundred seats, they ended up with seven or eight hundred seats. It has a main floor and a balcony. The acoustics are just unbelievably good. The seats are very comfortable, and the only thing, of course, they always miss out on, is they have insufficient restrooms and there is insufficient space, really, behind the stage for large groups of people. They had one green room and another large dressing room, but for many of the larger organizations they just are inadequate.

I got involved with them about five or six years ago, when they were having board meetings to discuss how they were going to start up, what kind of an organization they needed, and the necessary technical things required. I had some experience from my involvement with the Santa Cruz County Symphony and the Cabrillo Music Festival. So I thought that at this particular stage I should be involved. Nobody invited me; I just started coming to meetings and figured if anybody asked me who I

represented I would say the Cabrillo Music Festival. I had experience as manager of the festival and the symphony many, many years before and also as president of both organizations, especially in the money-raising field. I thought I could perhaps add a little weight to their thinking and the developments of their plans. It turned out this was very, very true so we kept on meeting. We'd move our meetings sometimes into the city hall and sometimes into the city manager's office.

Then we had the problem when we were about ready to open up that we had no startup money. But I knew when I went onto that board that I was present when the distribution of \$100,000 from the Lingefelter<sup>1</sup> grant was made which was established many years before and was meant for the first nonprofit performing arts building to be built in the county. Since the Lingefelters could not decide where to park the funds, they decided to give it in trust to the symphony. The symphony had about ten years of getting ten or eleven percent interest on that. I knew I was the only person who remembered the details of setting up this trust. I had it in my

<sup>1</sup> In the 1970s and early 1980s the Lingefelters, a local philanthropic family, generously endowed the Santa Cruz County Symphony, the Cabrillo Music Festival, and Cabrillo College for acoustical improvements to its theater.

records. One of the main reasons for my joining the board was to make this \$100,000 available, because when you start up a building or an organization like that, you have to have quite a bit of money. In addition, the theater was going to be turned over to us and it lacked about fifty percent of the required capital equipment. In order to put on the show at the Mello, we had to buy lights and a lot of other things. So we had to spend about half of that money for capital equipment.

We'd had a board, initially, that was selected for ethnic reasons so that it represented all of the Watsonville area population. Getting people on the board who would be very helpful was really a problem, because some people couldn't come to board meetings, some didn't pay much attention to board minutes, so we had really quite a struggle. But thank heavens, at this late date, we have reorganized the board. We have some very solid, business professionals on the board. We are reorganizing our fund drive, and also doing quite well with some of the foundations. Before when we cut back on our budget, we had to lay off practically everybody on the payroll. I think with our new set-up we're going to be able to balance our budget and rehire the basic staff.

One of the big problems we had is with the high school; of course the theater is their building, too. They have some very ambitious music and theater people who want to schedule too many dates. This didn't work very well because we couldn't make our expenses unless we obtained dates. So we worked out an agreement with them when they can use it, and also that when we provide services, that they're going to reimburse us. I think that with this understanding we will work quite well.

**Reti:** How successful has the Mello Center been at attracting people from both north county and south county?

**Kretschmer:** Well it's really been a problem, because until people from North County could visit the place, they couldn't understand how much better it was than any other hall, especially the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium. They didn't realize how comfortable it was, how superior the acoustics were. In fact, the first concert that the symphony conductor played with the orchestra there, he said he wished they could schedule all of their concerts at the Mello Center because on the stage they could tell the acoustics were far better than any of the other venues.

But one of the reasons they haven't scheduled more than three of their six or seven concerts at the Mello is it is so costly to bring the orchestra over there. Unless we could raise sufficient monies in local donations in selling tickets, they just couldn't afford it on their existing budget. However, a few people had made sizeable donations to help the symphony. Their tickets are fairly expensive, \$17-\$24. But once we got the people to come over there and found out how superior it was their resistance was greatly diminished . . . the symphony concerts are played on Saturday night, whereas the Mello concerts are played on Sunday afternoon. Of course this is a much more favorable time, especially for older people. They could come back from the concert and return home when it was still light.

Another problem we had were the rumors in Santa Cruz about the safety of visitors in Watsonville. Santa Cruz and the Pajaro Valley, Watsonville have been at odds for a long, long time. It goes back probably to the beginning of the century. People in Santa Cruz would say they wouldn't go to Watsonville because they have some gangs and they trash cars and things like that. They were afraid to go to Watsonville because of those

T. Kretschmer: *Steinway Piano*

fears. At first there were some problems with vandalism, but now we've worked out a deal with the police department to provide an officer to patrol our parking lot during concerts. Since that time, that's over a year ago, we haven't had any problems at all.

### Steinway Piano

**Reti:** How did you locate the Steinway piano for the Mello Center?

**Kretschmer:** Well that was a funny thing. This was a couple of years ago. For years I've looked at the Sunday San Francisco paper, the *Chronicle- Examiner* to find good pianos. Well they were mostly junkers. And so my wife [Jean Kretschmer] said to me one Sunday, "Bud, there's a piano, a 1965 Steinway. They are only asking \$20,000 for it." I said, "It must be junk." But I thought about it some more. I called up my piano technician and said, "Is there any way you can get over to San Francisco to check out this piano?" And he said, "Yes, I'm going over to Palo Alto tomorrow." I said, "Why don't you go and check that piano out." Well he called back that night. He was so excited. He said, "Bud, that piano is unbelievable!"

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: Steinway Piano*  
*page 23*

For \$20,000 that is . . . that's almost a steal." Well when I called up this lady she said that somebody else had come around and offered her

\$25,000. I believed that we had to get that piano. I knew we didn't have any money at the Mello Center. She needed the money right away because she was facing a foreclosure. So I said, well I'll work it out with the Bank of America. You tell me where you do your banking and I'll make arrangements for you to come in tomorrow and pick up a check for \$25,000.

Well that piano is just a dream. It's the best piano within 100 miles. We got a lot of good publicity with the piano. It's brought us quite a bit of business because when you have a good piano, especially if it's a classical program, that's money in the bank. So I loaned the Mello Center the necessary funds. By the time I got it, had it fixed up and moved to the Mello Center it cost about \$32,000.<sup>2</sup> I said, you owe me \$32,000. About six months later one of the ladies who is now gone came up with \$16,000 to pay for half of it. The other \$16,000 is still on their books as an account payable.

---

<sup>2</sup> New Steinway grand pianos cost about \$65,000.



## **The Mello Center Board**

**Kretschmer:** I think that we now have the basis for a very good board. I'm chairman of the manpower committee and we're going to be looking for a few more good people. We've never really had a fund drive that was managed in a professional manner. We have raised money. Initially we got \$5,000 from Granite Construction; \$10,000 from Martinelli; and \$1000 or \$2000 from other businesses. But we really needed about \$50,000 extra money at the beginning. So we had a going affair. We had an executive director with a lot of experience. In fact she taught a class on fundraising on the side at Golden Gate University. But when you have a changeover amongst the officers, if the incoming president does not realize how important fundraising is to the very existence of the organization, you then have a serious problem. For two years when they made up their budget they always projected \$25,000 for our fundraising goal. Well, unfortunately the new president thought that when that \$25,000 was in the projection that was money in the bank. If we had raised that \$25,000 each of those two years we wouldn't have had a crisis.

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: The Mello Center Board  
page 25*

We reached a crisis of cash flow and we had to cut back on the budget, and lay off most of the employees.

**Reti:** Now when was this, Bud?

**Kretschmer:** Oh this was within the last two years.

**Reti:** Oh really, I didn't know that.

**Kretschmer:** But they've had a series of meetings with the new superintendent of education, to the principal of the high school. They've negotiated an agreement that they would reimburse us for specific services they wanted us to provide. I think that once we put that into effect that it will help us. The facility is jointly owned by the city and the Pajaro Valley School District. Our organization was formed as a nonprofit corporation to run the Mello Center. We were put in there with \$50-75,000 worth of equipment, and then the school expected us to open the place for their and our use. Turning on the lights would cost us about \$45 an hour! This misunderstanding has been clarified and the necessary reimbursement

action has begun. Hopefully this will straighten itself out. It's true that we won't have as many open dates as we had before, because the school administration has been very, very anxious to use all those dates for the plays and musicals that they have projected for the whole year. They are very aggressive, and I'm glad to see that in a way, but I'd like to have it done in an orderly manner.

That's where we are now. We've got a new president, and a new executive director and they are working closely with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and other foundations for emergency funding. In fact, Packard has given us a considerable amount of money since we opened up. But these foundations are not going to keep on giving money if you are running in a deficit and have no specific plans to raise sums from local and regional sources.

**Reti:** Right, you need to show that you can raise money.

**Kretschmer:** Yes. We had to really scamper around for help. Last year we raised \$16,000 just by sending out letters to people we knew. Everybody

was given a bunch of letters of people that they knew who could give money. We raised about \$16,000 in a couple of weeks. But we're going to have to really get down to serious business with our new board members. The big corporations are very prominent in the community and we have never been able to solicit money successfully from most of the businesses in town. There are a lot of small businesses in these industrial parks but we just haven't had the time, technique, or manpower to individually sit down with them and solicit their financial assistance.

### **MUSIC PHILANTHROPY AND FUNDRAISING**

**Reti:** So speaking of raising money, maybe we should move on to talk about the UCSC music fundraising campaign, which is quite an impressive story.

**Kretschmer:** Oh I'm telling you, that was something. When I was put in charge, along with Hal [Harold A.] Hyde, we were thinking perhaps that this would involve a lot of our personal time in getting a list of prospective donors. However, we didn't know that they were going to hire

[Development Director of the Arts] Alex Sydnor, and he, of course, is just a pro. He had that job over at San Jose State University and he came in and did a lot of the personal solicitations. I did some and Hal did some but the last . . . well we were going to raise a million dollars in a year and a half, and we were on almost the 18th month. We needed \$84,000 dollars to get two grand pianos. I knew Richard and Mary Solari very well, and so Ed[ward F.] Houghton and Alex and I went over and we told them just exactly what our situation was, a major university with our good pianos. I said we've made a deal with Steinway that if they would take our old pianos and turn them in, that we could get two 1999 nine-foot (style "D") grand pianos for \$84,000. So after the end of our very pleasant conversation, Mrs. Solari said to Dick, "Well, I think that we could do that \$84,000, don't you think?" Dick said yeah. So in a matter of a week she gave us a check for \$84,000. And that just brought us over that million mark.

**Reti:** And this was just this last May [1999] that you reached that point?

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: Plans for a UCSC Performing Arts Concert Hall*  
*page 29*

**Kretschmer:** Yes. Well there were some people who had promised us up to a million dollars. But there's always a promise, a projection of income. That's nice, but you can't continue that for three years without results. We don't take those promises very seriously.

### **Plans for a UCSC Performing Arts Concert Hall**

**Kretschmer:** Down the line, in the next century, the Music

Department

members are hoping to obtain a performing arts place [at UCSC] and that would cost \$15-20 million dollars. But the problem is that the state will not allow you to use public money to build a facility like that. It has to be built with private money.

**Reti:** Now this would be another recital hall?

**Kretschmer:** This would be a performing arts hall holding about 1200- 1500 people. Dean Ed Houghton had projected that the summer time could very well be filled with music on the campus, with Shakespeare Santa Cruz and the Cabrillo Festival. The Santa Cruz County Symphony

could also use it for some of their concerts. They need something bigger than what they have with the 1000 seats at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium. This will be the biggest hurdle. I don't know when they are going to start it. They are in the thinking stage. I don't know whether they've done anything in the planning stage. I think it's probably going to be well into the next century before the approval is received from the Office of the President at the University of California.

### **Music Scholarships**

**Reti:** Tell me about your work with music scholarships.

**Kretschmer:** Well it's a funny thing about scholarships. I've had a feeling since I was involved with Aquinas College many years ago, that music students didn't have enough money; they needed a little help. So I set up a scholarship. Over a period of time at Aquinas we had probably every year eight or ten scholarships. They weren't big but they were very much needed and appreciated. I got a lot of pleasure out of that, because at that time I went to Grand Rapids, to Aquinas College for meetings of the

trustees and at the same time they were building a new music arts building. The head of fundraising at Aquinas sweet-talked me into making a gift to the college, and so that's why they have a Kretschmer recital hall.

I became interested in Cabrillo College and their music program, especially the Suzuki program. I was just fascinated seeing these little kids walk up in front of a hundred people. Of course the teacher would have to tune the fiddle. But they got up and played from memory "Pop goes the Weasel" or something like that and just brought the house down.

**Reti:** This is Susan Brown's program, right?

**Kretschmer:** Sue Brown. She started that twenty years ago. And bless her heart, she's had Packard Foundation help all those years, which they practically never do. They had about six teachers for these kids. Some of them are teachers at Cabrillo and others are professional musicians. They all have degrees, master's degrees, so these kids are really getting a good foundation. Before they allow a person to come in the class they sit down



with the parents and tell them just what's involved, that they will have to really work with the child and see that they practice, and perhaps even learn something about the specific instrument the child would play. This has been a tremendous help. I don't know of any other place in the country where they've been that successful. Twenty years now. She's even brought her own daughters through the program. One of them is in her master's program at Juilliard in New York. Her youngest daughter is enrolled at Wesleyan in Connecticut.

In the next phase, working with Cabrillo, I initially set up a small scholarship for the music department. That's been running for over ten years. When I met Sue Brown and heard about her program, I just threw some money in there, too. Each year I would get together with her and look over her budget and proposed income and she would tell me how much she needed to get through. I'd give her a check for that. It wasn't large but it was sufficient for operations and gave me a lot of satisfaction.

**Reti:** That's wonderful.

## **Daniel Aldrich**

**Kretschmer:** Yes, so the next phase, of course is my acquaintance with Assistant Chancellor for University Advancement Dan[iel G.] Aldrich at UCSC's development office. I knew him for about three years, and I was interested in music here because from the very beginning, I was a great fan of the Crown Chamber Players. They were just a wonderful group. They operated outside of the music department.<sup>3</sup> But anyway, I ended up there when they were just about going out of business; they had a support organization and I was the head of it. When Peggy [B.] Musgrave resigned as provost of Crown College they had nobody other than a part-time individual to take her place; there just wasn't any interest in continuing the concerts. Besides that they were coming up with some figures in the bursar's office that were not true, and so that was the end of that noble experiment.

---

<sup>3</sup> The Crown Chamber Players was a chamber music group founded and supported by Crown provost Kenneth V. Thimann, which, under the direction of Sylvia Jenkins, offered a series of chamber music concerts from 1966 until the early 1990s.

But talking about Dan Aldrich, over a period of time I got to know him pretty well. I was somewhat interested, but I just didn't have the necessary funds to get involved in initiating a scholarship program. But fortuitously about two or three years ago I came upon a sizeable sum of money that I got from winning a legal settlement. I was faced with all this money and with the fact that I had very little cost for the suit, and I would have to pay a large amount in taxes. I didn't like that a bit. So I went and talked to Dan about it. He had another fellow who was working with him, helping him, and they came up with some scenario whereby I would give them a lot next door to my house which I had originally bought for \$7000. When I gave it to them it had appreciated tremendously. That would save me all that tax money. I told Jean [Kretschmer] about that and she said, "Well, I don't want those trees to go down while I'm here. And besides that we've got some bluebirds out there." So I gave it to the University with the understanding that they wouldn't be able to sell it until Jean was no longer around. The day after she passed away I called up Dan and told him they could sell it. He sold it in two days.

They got that money, and of course they put it in the music campaign; all those funds are then channeled to a central office at the University headquarters where they are managed by very, very skilled investment staff. They have been achieving a 15 to 25 percent gain on those invested funds every year. I had given them a separate sum of money before I donated the lot, and based on that and what had been expanding over a period of years, I had six scholarships for a number of years. But then the other "lot money" went in there and it started sprouting too. Before you know it, the next year I got twenty scholars. Twenty! Of course this will expand and expand and expand. Each scholar is getting \$450 a year. Besides that the University has enough money to partly fund the cost of establishing a new resident string ensemble. That program was started about a year and a half ago. They recruit four high school seniors who are string players. If they pass the audition they are awarded a four-year scholarship, \$4500 a year!

**Reti:** That's  
excellent!

**Kretschmer:** Boy! That's really something. But giving these twenty scholarships they had some left over, so they applied some of it to the new string quartet that's coming. The selected musicians have arrived and already are working on their new quartets, etc. Now, you may want to know where the resident string quartet played its first concert? They played it (laughter) at Dominican Oaks in one of my concerts. I had in the audience the dean of the arts and his wife. I wanted to show him what good players they were, how the money was being used and how satisfied the audience was.

**Reti:** So you've actually gotten to meet these students.

**Kretschmer:** Well, I first got to meet my students at Aquinas, because I visit Grand Rapids about every three months and then they would plan to give me a concert. They'd give me a recital and after that we would go over to the dining room and I'd get to know the kids. It gave me a feeling that I was really doing something in life for music. So that attracted me.

Since these six scholarships came up a couple of years ago, I have used some of those scholars for my Dominican Oaks concerts. They were splendid. I'm going to be looking forward to using more in the future. But I figure with the economy expanding like this I could see scholarships going up from 20 to even 100. My donation at UCSC has increased significantly. About 4 1/2 percent of the income and dividends and interest goes into the scholarship funds. That keeps growing all the time. So at the University we have the Kretschmer scholarships, the Kretschmer Plaza. And of course all the awards you see here, I told Rita Bottoms of Special Collections that when they take me out the door feet first, she can come over and take all that stuff. Besides, I've got an awful lot of memorabilia still packed away.

It's a fascinating thing about the scholarships. You get the fever. When I was small, when I was a young student, I never thought that I would ever be in a position to do something like this.

**Reti:** Because you were really struggling as a young man.

**Kretschmer:** Yeah. Of course over a period of years I've been very generous with the Symphony and the Cabrillo Festival, actually much more than I could afford, but I did give to them and they got through their hard times and I ended up with enough to afford to live here.

### SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SYMPHONY

**Reti:** Would you talk about the symphony and your recent participation?

**Kretschmer:** I was president of the symphony twice and I am a life member as well. I've always gone to their concerts. But lately I'm just going to the ones at Watsonville because you can sit down and really enjoy the music. At the Civic in Santa Cruz . . . they've done as much as they can. They've spent a lot of money and it's certainly improved the quality of the sound, but I came to find that out . . . if you've gone on a symphony night I've had to walk as much as four or five blocks for parking.

**Reti:** The parking down there is terrible now.

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SYMPHONY  
page 39*

**Kretschmer:** Yeah, but you know this new parking garage increases the total capacity.

**Reti:** That helps a lot. How is the symphony doing?

**Kretschmer:** The symphony is doing very well. In fact I got a good report on it. They presently have an organization that is very capable. However over a period of years they had several managers who were not experienced. One year they went down over \$100,000. At that particular point, I think Rowland [K.] Rebele came in, along with Harvey Nickolson, the president of Coast Commercial Bank, to organize a repayment program.

**Reti:** And when did Rowland Rebele come on?

**Kretschmer:** He came in about ten years ago, something like that. And he's just a genius at ideas of how to raise money, how to keep the books, how to present, how to bring people in there, and he's a champion "arm twister" as far as getting money is concerned. My arm has never been the



same. But I've given to the symphony and the festival in equal amounts. The festival went down \$100,000 too at about the same time. They had to put on a campaign; in order to receive money from the foundations; they had to start a program of repaying that money. I think that the festival and the symphony were raising about \$15,000-20,000 additionally to meet that goal. These were in addition to some of the direct donations. I think that the festival had ten or twelve people who gave \$2000 a year. And the symphony needed to make up their \$100,000 loss. I think the idea was generated by Jack Baskin. He has always been very, very helpful in music. He was on the festival board years ago. When they would come to him for a large donation he would suggest that he would give them \$10,000 if they would go out and raise an equal amount from extra donations.

**Reti:** So it would be a matching program.

**Kretschmer:** Yes. But there were about ten of us, I think, that gave \$2000 a year extra. That was to last for six years. They were supposed to be paid off. But actually at the end of six years they still didn't have part of it paid

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: John Larry Granger  
page 41*

off so they extended it. The symphony is now in the black. Of course, the symphony and the festival both have considerable endowments, but they are for special purposes. In order to get through the critical period they had to put their endowments up as equity and to obtain funds to pay off their debts.

### **John Larry Granger**

**Reti:** What do you think of Music Director Larry Granger?

**Kretschmer:** Well Granger has been there about nine years and he's been a very energetic person. He's been very much involved with assisting the board of directors in putting on money-raising events, and very aggressive in helping the league make their budget. The league is an unbelievably efficient organization and they raise between \$30,000-\$35,000 for the symphony every year through different fundraising programs and special social programs. So Larry Granger has been very cooperative.

He's a good conductor, has excellent programming talents, and an ability to talk before concerts to the audience. He speaks in words that they can understand. No technicalities. That's been very helpful in the education of the people who come to the symphony. The symphony has been pretty much selling out their concerts for the past few years. I think they get 1000 or 1100 people attending. I remember one night a couple of years ago when Aaron Miller played a concerto with them and they ran out of tickets! He opened this season with the symphony, and the next day he repeated the Prokofiev concerto at the Mello. Aaron says the Steinway at the Mello is the best piano he's ever played on, and he's played on pianos all over the country, in a lot of these contests.

### **The Search for a Performing Arts Concert Hall in Santa**

**Cruz Reti:** That's quite a statement, then. That really means

something. Now,

when Larry Granger was interviewed for his position, somebody told me that he was talking about how important it was for Santa Cruz to get a performing arts hall in the city, and that he would make it a priority to try to make that happen.

**Kretschmer:** Well you see about fifteen years ago we had a thing going to develop a performing arts venue in Santa Cruz. The president at the time, Max Walden, who also owned the Cooper House, started a movement to buy the Del Mar theater. We had some concerts there and it was quite good. I think we could have bought it for a quarter of a million dollars. But of course the symphony couldn't afford to buy it. It would have to be some government agency like the city or county. But there wasn't enough interest on the part of the council members to use their money for music. Now music has become such a big part of life here with the success of the symphony and really reflects a certain amount of credit to the city. Of course the civic is owned by the city. It has had very good management and been very helpful to the festival and the symphony in improving the acoustics. We've had some help from the state and also from different foundations. But prior to that there was a study made of the possible conversion of the place. They had some of the most prominent authorities in music and studied the facility and they said they couldn't do anything with it. It was poured concrete. It was put up by the WPA during the Depression. And the only way they could fix it was just to blow it up.

**Reti:**  
(laughter)

**Kretschmer:** You walk up the steps and it's all poured cement.

**Reti:** There's only so good it's going to get. Is there any talk of other possibilities for a performing arts venue?

**Kretschmer:** Well we have had a talk going on with the people at Cabrillo. In fact a few years ago they were high on the priority list for getting a new music building along with the 500-600 seat theater. They were just about ready to get the money when there was a statewide vote which took away from the community colleges a certain amount of the revenue that was to be used for its construction. So it never got built. Now they've got the money to put up buildings and they are talking about putting up a performance arts place and including the music department, because the music department and that theater are in the same building. They've had some teachers in there for 20, 25 years, sharing a little room with another teacher. There's no provision there for interviewing students or anything like that. Very depressing. I've always

felt sorry for those teachers. They've had some very good ones. Many have retired without having had the satisfaction of having a decent work place. I think some of the other departments were in better shape. But the Cabrillo College auditorium was never regarded as a good venue for music because when it was built the people in charge of the college were mostly interested in drama. It was a fine place for drama, but difficult to put an orchestra in there. One of the problems they had was a fan that was going during the concerts. Dennis Russell Davies hated that place! So that's why we tried to use other places.

They thought they had reached the possibility of going really big time when they put up a tent in a field at the University. That was a disaster in a way, because it cost a lot more to bring all of that equipment in, and the tents and the people who had to stand by. It cost \$10,000 for the generator alone. And of course they had all those outside Johns and during the concert those things would go bang.

**Reti:** I remember that! You live and learn, I guess.

*CABRILLO MUSIC FESTIVAL*

**Kretschmer:** Oh gosh, we went down. I think that's the year we went down over \$100,000.

**CABRILLO MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**Reti:** I noticed in the recent festival program that Cabrillo has just retired their \$74,000 debt.

**Kretschmer:** That's right. We just paid that off. About 10-13 people gave

\$2000 a year to pay off the debt. We've got about ten people who loaned the Festival on an 8% note sums of money, two to ten thousand dollars. We raised about \$40,000 that way, and we used that to pay off some debts. I also suggested that the regular supporters of the festival make their annual donation commitments almost immediately, to provide necessary cash flow to run the office. So that was successful. It got us through that difficult period, but we finally paid it all off.

The recent season of the Cabrillo Music Festival featured Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*, which received the highest praise from the *San Francisco*

*Chronicle* critic Joshua Kosman, and sold out the Civic Auditorium for three performances.<sup>4</sup> The ASCAP has given us the national Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music since 1982. Every single year. It's no wonder that the *Wall Street Journal* has called it, "Two of the most thoughtful and original summer musical weekends anywhere in America."

### Marin Alsop

**Reti:** Tell me about Music Director/Conductor Marin Alsop. Since your last interview Marin Alsop has come to be the director.

**Kretschmer:** Did you do an interview with her?

---

<sup>4</sup> Cabrillo Music Festival performed a millennial production of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass: a Theater Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers* on Friday August 6, 1999 and Saturday August 7, 1999. Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* was written in 1971. It combines the setting of a Catholic mass with rock music. According to the Cabrillo Music Festival's program notes, "*Mass* would weave the Latin text of the Mass (also the text of the Beethoven work) with songs and choruses in English expressing a familiar Bernstein theme: the problem of finding and sustaining faith in God at a time of man's continuing inhumanity to man."—Editor.



**Reti:** No, it would be wonderful to do that.

**Kretschmer:** Well, Marin Alsop was a godsend. Dennis Russell Davies had been with us so many years and he's one of the best conductors in the world. However, in his later years, for about four or five years, he was permanently stationed with operas and symphonies in Europe. When he came back to this country for the Cabrillo Music Festival, very frequently he brought German composers, soloists, and singers. These individuals were quite good and we really appreciated them. Towards the end, he had commitments over there which made it only possible for him to be with us for one weekend. There was one year when he couldn't come at all; we had all American conductors. It reached a stage in the last few years of his tenure, that the attendance at the Festival was more or less static. I think that between four and five hundred was the average. So we figured that it was about time to relieve Dennis Russell Davies of his job, and he was in complete accord with this because of the commitments he had in the city of Bonn, for both the opera and their symphony. He was in Stuttgart for seven years as Music Director of the Stuttgart Opera. We had a wonderful service from him over the years and we were always proud to

present him. He always did a great job. However we were looking for someone to take us out of the four hundred plus bracket as far as attendance was concerned.

Marin Alsop was brought in here, and she had very innovative programming, some of which she conducted in her other assignments in Eugene, Oregon, and also in the Concordia Orchestra in New York. Over the years she has built up the attendance, so that last year we were able to fill the Civic Auditorium for all three programs of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*. In fact I've talked to a lot of people about their reaction to the *Mass* and they agreed with me that it was one of the most thrilling musical experiences in their whole life. So we were very proud of that, and in fact when we got a review from the *San Francisco Chronicle* on the front page we were just jubilant. All of the groups just did so well and fulfilled Bernstein's ideas and his vision of this *Mass* that was originally very controversial. I remember reading the paper when it was first premiered in Washington, D.C. and there were a lot of comments, some of them from traditional Catholics, that this was sort of a blasphemous composition. But for this performance here in town I sat in the front row

right next to the Catholic priest who is the pastor of my parish, and he enjoyed it as much as I did.

**Reti:** What is it about Marin Alsop that is so exciting?

**Kretschmer:** Well, Marin Alsop was educated at Yale and the first conducting teacher she approached told her that he didn't think that she had the ability to be a conductor. But she persevered and went on to graduate training. She spent two years with Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood and this was the most influential period of her life. Bernstein was not only an inspirational teacher, but an outstanding musician. His teaching, of course, was one of his high points. People might remember his early television series for children. Marin was recommended to us by Dennis Russell Davies because he knew she had presented many works by contemporary American composers. And this was what we were interested in. As a result of this I think that we are considered the foremost contemporary music festival in the country. She's very close to the music scene and to the chief composers in this country. She has been able to feature the same ones on several occasions, and each time it seems

that the music has improved. She had the advantage over Davies in that she works in this country, so she is in communication with the board of directors. She gives them insight as to what she has in mind, about six months in advance. She creates a lot of enthusiasm amongst the board, and also enables us to get recordings of her selections for future programs so we can play them at the meetings and get some feeling as to the quality of the music. She's very articulate and can talk to groups, and to the festival audiences in a language they can understand. She is frequently very humorous. Her style of conducting is quite remarkable and she is able, especially in the *Mass*, to at the same time conduct all the different groups involved. We feel that we were very, very fortunate in getting her and are hoping that we will be able to keep her at least a few more years.

She wanted to present this *Mass* about two ago and the board said they were just getting out of debt and the prospect of adding \$50,000 to the budget at that time just seemed impossible. However, this year they bit the bullet and just decided, by gosh, they were going to go and pull out all the stops. They were going to get a lot of the original cast back here to put this thing on and to be part of the production. They spared no expense.

The board went out to find new contributors or contributors who had already given, but might give a second time. They went out to foundations and found additional money. So they had anticipated to have an income of \$103,000 maximum and I understand the gate brought in \$110,000. I think what I'm talking about is just the *Mass.* They had hoped to sell a lot more tickets and fill the place. They had hoped that they possibly could fill the auditorium. It turned out that tickets all sold several days before the first concert. In addition, we sold 98% of tickets for all concerts.

So Marin can do no wrong now as far as the festival is concerned, and they feel very happy and privileged to have her stay. Usually conductors move along every five or ten years as she has done. She has other commitments now. She's a permanent guest conductor in Glasgow, Scotland, and also of an orchestra in London. During the last couple years she has been touring in Europe, and New Zealand and Australia. Her popularity and her fame have been leaping all over the continents. We hope to be able to keep her for a few more years and we expect that

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: Student Staff Program  
page 53*

she will be able to keep on giving us productions and compositions of the same quality that she has in the last few years.

### **Student Staff Program**

**Reti:** Yes. Now, there are quite a number of other programs that the Cabrillo Music Festival has come up with in the past few years, like the Student Staff Program.

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes. This was a wonderful addition, because we've been trying to gather a group of young people who are interested in music and who would be thrilled to serve in some capacity, even though it is giving programs and doing a few physical things. The leadership of this group of 25 or 30 people is an outstanding young man named Christopher L. Smith. They have really been a big plus factor.

### **Children's Concerts**

Another activity they have is a free concert where they bring on all the children and introduce them to different orchestra players and their

instruments. This has always been a sell-out. They come with their parents. And of course trying to keep order because you can only take a certain number through . . . It can create a logistical problem but they did very well, because after they got all the kids through there they played the program. The composer of the piece conducted and he was able to give them all the explanations and identify all the parts of the composition. This has been a big success. However, at the same time, it's been fairly expensive. But we figure that this creates a lot of goodwill, especially amongst the younger parents and these are the people whom we expect will support the festival very heavily in the future.

**Reti:** You've got to cultivate your audience.

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes.

### **Art and Music Festival**

Another thing they started a few years ago was this Art and Music Festival which is a series of tents down one block on both sides of the

street. They have offerings of food and desserts, and a lot of jewelry, clothing and things of that nature. It got to be such a big thing that this last year they had to add another half a block. The Civic Auditorium and the city help us considerably. They blocked off cars on most streets and made it so much easier to be able to walk in the streets and not worry about parking. They've been very supportive. In fact, the Civic Auditorium management has been terrific as long as we've been there. They've bent over backwards to give us what we've wanted and they could afford.

### **Development Activities**

**Reti:** The Cabrillo Music Festival has also gotten Hewlett and Packard grants?

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes, the Cabrillo Music Festival has received many grants. For more than two or three years they got big money from the Irvine Foundation. They've had money from the NEA. They received money from the state. They received money from the Ann and Gordon



Getty Foundation, and also the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am Youth Fund. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Clarence

E. Heller Charitable Foundation in San Francisco gave us support for the

*Mas*  
s.

We are very fortunate to have in our office two outstanding people, Tom Fredericks and Ellen M. Primack, who are now co-directors. It just takes a lot more digging, and they came up with presentations. They have been working for quite a few years, and finally the load got so heavy that the festival had to give them some part-time help.

**Reti:** So do they do the actual grant writing?

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes. Tom Fredericks is an MBA from Stanford. Prior to that he was a professional dancer and a manager of a dance company in Switzerland. Then he was in Houston, where he was involved with managing the touring program for the Houston Opera. Then he went to Stanford and did the MBA program. He's a jewel and Ellen Primack, his assistant, who is now his co-director, is very talented in her field. I think

her original field was art but her good taste carries over to a lot of associated fields. We've also had members of the board who have been very, very helpful and knowledgeable in their technical fields, and they have given us a lot of ideas and led us to different sources of doing things just a little bit better, or maybe a lot better than we had in the past.

**Reti:** Is there anybody in particular on the board whom you would like to mention?

**Kretschmer:** Well one of the biggest supporters, he was president then . .

. he had been on the board a long time, was Howard Sherer. He has his own business in packaging, communications, and presentations. He is a young person with many friends and associates in his peer group. So he was not only helpful in the technological field, but also in getting supporters from different commercial firms more than ever before.

Now, I might say that our support from the business firms in town has not been terrific. It takes an awful lot of arm-twisting to get people to the concerts and then show them a presentation as to how this festival

enriches our community. We get a lot of people from outside of Santa Cruz, too. The movement of industry in large numbers in the last couple of years coming over the hill to Santa Cruz from Silicon Valley has been notable. Most of these people are well educated and quite sophisticated, although they've got their attention mostly on their business. But when you get a supporter like that it means quite a bit from the financial standpoint. Not only from a financial standpoint, but their name on our advertising carries a lot of weight with other people, even though they may not be personally too much interested in that type of music. It's always good to be considered in a group that is able to present these types of music.

In the first oral history volume I mentioned Marion Taylor. She's a member emeritus of the board, and she does a lot for them and provides them with recordings of pieces programmed for the next festival. This is a big help because you get a sense of the music and look forward to hearing that music performed at the festival. She's very knowledgeable and she plays excerpts from those pieces and creates a good feeling.

**Reti:** Well she was the music librarian at UCSC.

**Kretschmer:** That's right. Of course she was on the board for a long time and she also is a fellow life member. But she's retired now from the University and she finds time to do these things. It's always a pleasure for her and she looks forward to the times when Marin Alsop sends the music for the next season's programs.

### **Festival Planning**

**Reti:** How far ahead do you plan for the next season?

**Kretschmer:** We start in the winter. We start getting ideas; we get ideas from Marin. She has a FAX and computer and all that sort of thing and so there's no lack of opportunity, no matter where she is, to consult with her.

She comes to Santa Cruz during the year between the last festival concert and the start of the next festival. One visit will be a sort of a social event

and also a preliminary discussion of her program. At the social event we will invite about 50 people to a brunch, and she will give a little pep talk. Then she comes back in the spring and they have a press interview. All of the music critics from this area come and she announces the new program, provides background, and answers questions . . . this usually gets quite a bit of publicity in the papers, and gets people warmed up for it.

In the fall we send out our fund drive letters and follow up on that. In the spring time we use advertising professionals from town who do all the program solicitation. They are very productive because they know all the people in these organizations and they will be soliciting new ones, people who've never participated in the festival before.

## **NEW MUSIC WORKS**

**Reti:** Let's move on to talking about New Music Works.

**Kretschmer:** About twenty years ago, I saw an ad in the paper where a group of local composers and musicians had wanted to create an organization that paid more attention to the works that local composers were turning out. I remember the first concert in the First Congregational Church. It was sort of an informal thing but they had people like Tim Bell. Phil Collins, of course, has been with it for about twenty years . . . and Richard Freman-Toole and Gene Lewis. They put on concerts, mostly of local composers, and they went out of their way to present Lou Harrison's works. The first of his works was the ballet of *Johnny Appleseed*.

They went on for a number of years. Phil Collins was the music director and still is. Their financial and administrative efforts were not very effective. They were not organized like the festival and the symphony. It was always a mystery to me how they could put on performances every year at different places and still hang on. About half a dozen years ago they finally were talked into establishing a tax-free organization, so when people give their money they get a tax deduction, although originally they were under the wing of another local tax-free organization called Democratic Management Services. In 1986 they got the first board of

directors. These people were very enthusiastic about Lou Harrison's music and they started going out and asking for goodly sums to get them organized. They had to have an audience and the equipment, which requires quite a bit of money.

They established a resident ensemble and called them the Works Players. This ensemble toured Carmel, Pacific Grove, Monterey, Mountain View and San Jose. We never heard of these trips because of the lack of communication and expertise in obtaining representation from local newspapers. Then they started another series, *The Night of the Living Composers*, and they did some touring. From the founding from 1979 to 1999 they presented 112 different performances featuring 790 different pieces by 235 different composers, including 232 world premiers, eight commissioned by them during the past four seasons.

Now, it's hard for me really understand how they could have presented all those in twenty years, all of those compositions from so many different composers. But they evidently were able to interest . . . there must be some sort of a society in the state that promotes local composers, because

Phil Collins was not only a founder and a leader, but he spent practically all of his time doing these things. He composed operas and he composed many different things. The most successful one was the Avant Garden Party that has been presented for twenty years in the backyard of a home on Spring Street. They had a stage in the garden and maybe 50 or 75 seats. After that they had an hors d'oeuvres session, and it became quite a thing to do and quite a place to really meet a lot of old time friends, to hear just actually how good local composers were.

Over the years they presented a lot of Lou Harrison's music, and of course George Barati one year and then they had some composers from the University including Gordon Mumma and David [H.] Cope. So the composers up at the University were recognized and this created a good relationship with them, and as a matter of information, the leader, director, Phil Collins, went over to the University and got a master's degree in conducting. So he's got all kinds of credentials.

Then they started up the SoundSites of American music, featuring nine free concerts in public locations. They had 20 ensembles, including 250



musicians from Santa Cruz and Monterey County. They travelled quite a bit, performing these works. They also collaborated with the Moving and Storage Performance Company and they put on *The Stockpile Waltz* that was presented in 1996 inside of the Capitola Mall and a week later in an earthquake crater in downtown Santa Cruz. For New Year's Eve in 1998 their ensemble and fifty dancers premiered in *City of Grace* on the sidewalks of the Pacific Garden Mall before an estimated audience of 10,000.

**Reti:** Have you attended any of their performances over the years?

**Kretschmer:** The first ones I always attended. But the most important one was the first Sunday of June, the big one in the garden. There was always something else that was scheduled for that day, some big concert or something that I had to go to. I felt badly that I couldn't make those concerts but I was glad to know that each year they were gaining more support. I attended when they were doing the works of George Barati and Lou Harrison and some of their own works, and they had quite a good crowd. I think that was a big money-raiser too.

## **LOU HARRISON**

**Reti:** I'd like you to talk about Lou Harrison.

**Kretschmer:** I've known Lou Harrison since I first arrived. I heard about him from a lady who sold me our house when I first came. "Lou Harrison", she said, "has got a whole trunkload full of compositions that have never been played." I used to see Lou Harrison in the Sticky Wicket concerts, because his works were played there. He got to be quite a well-known music character around town. Of course he went through some pretty difficult times surviving. But he had the good fortune of being hired by San Jose State University where he was a teacher for many years. Then as his pieces became better known all over the world he was invited by various orchestras to participate in Lou Harrison days. In fact the San Francisco Symphony, a couple of years ago under Michael Tilson Thomas, presented several concerts of Lou Harrison's works. That's the first time that Lou Harrison had ever been acknowledged by the San Francisco Symphony. One of the reasons for that was that all of their

Kretschmer: LOU HARRISON

conductors had been European-bred and they shied away from contemporary works.

Lou has appeared all over the country and even in Europe. He started out in New York. He was a friend of John Cage, Aaron Copland, Virgil Thompson and people like that. In his twenties, he also for a short while was a ballet dancer. During the war he was a music critic for the *New York Herald Tribune*. A short time after that he decided to move out west and made his home here. He lived up on the hill overlooking Cabrillo College. His connection with the Asian music has really been long. He spent a time in Hawaii on grants from very important endowments. He has spent time in Indonesia, because he's one of the outstanding composers, pioneers of gamelan music. In fact, he was so thrilled about gamelan that he'd give free lessons up in his home and then he would give free lessons for quite awhile at Cabrillo College. Finally they had to tell him . . . he didn't want any money for it . . . but finally they had to tell him that they were a public institution and they were not supposed to do things like that, so I think they made him take the checks. But his works are played all over the world. He's had a lot of recordings, a lot of

commissions. He's had so many commissions that when he was sick a few years ago he thought he wouldn't be able to compose any more, but he just keeps on composing.

**Reti:** So he's still going strong?

**Kretschmer:** Well I don't know how strong he is because he has a heart condition and I think he's got a pacemaker. The University has treasured his friendship and they have worked out a situation whereby they have agreed to take a lot of his memorabilia. If you've ever been in his house you'd be amazed, because it's filled with all kinds of musical instruments from the Orient. Lou is the old-time, number one composer in this area, and now he's regarded as one of the most important composers of this century. There have been several books written about him.

**Reti:** Yes, I noticed you have a book right there.

**Kretschmer:** In fact I have two copies. One was given to me by Leta Miller, the co-author, and the other by Lou Harrison.

page 68

Ernest T.

*Kretschmer: JEAN KRETSCHMER*

**Reti:** Can I read the inscription for the tape?

**Kretschmer:**  
Sure.

**Reti:** "For our friend Bud. Kind, generous, with admirations. In all best, from Lou and Bill."

### JEAN KRETSCHMER

**Kretschmer:** My wife, Jean Scarborough Kretschmer, was not a professional or classical music lover. Her field was dancing and teaching. But over the period of years she came to concerts with me. And she began to enjoy it, too.

**Reti:** So you influenced even your wife.

**Kretschmer:** Yes. She was at the University of Denver when I met her. I met her at a dance. Oh she was a marvelous dancer. Locally we were members of the Ballroom Dancing Club. We did square dances over in

the country and folk dancing was the thing that she really got involved in when she arrived here. She helped out at Cabrillo on Friday nights for twenty, twenty-five years. At the University of the Pacific they had a folk dance camp every summer for two weeks. They'd bring in folk dance teachers from all over the world. Jean, she was always ready to go for that! She'd go with a person who had a station wagon. Boy, all the dresses that she brought. These people were coming from the Balkan area and they brought their fancy clothes. They wouldn't wear them here. She bought a bunch of them. They have special shoes. She had probably 300-400 records. And sometimes I'd find her . . . I'd come home and she would have that record on and she would be doing her steps. She knew over 400 dances and they were very complicated. I used to dance for six or seven years on Thursday morning at mid-county. We had a class there. We used to have a lot of fun.

### **DOMINICAN OAKS CONCERT SERIES**

**Reti:** Would you talk about the Dominican Oaks Concert Series?

*DOMINICAN OAKS CONCERT SERIES*

**Kretschmer:** I'd been involved with presenting free concerts for many years at Cabrillo College. I'd find young musicians who were just marvels. I made an arrangement with them and paid them a small fee and we presented them during the noon hour about once a month. Students would be coming in and going . . . I did that with John Orlando for several years.

When I arrived here at Dominican Oaks on August 26, 1998, it so happened that in the next month Barbara Nissman was coming to town to play a concert and do a master class at the University. She's an old friend of mine, and I've been involved with her in maybe twenty concerts around the west, and even back in my college in Grand Rapids many times. In fact, she played the dedication concert there in 1984. So I was instrumental in getting this concert over at the University. When she came down here to play at the University she had a lot of other engagements, so I said when you come down here for a week why don't you come . . . we have a visitor's suite and we'll put you up there. She asked if I would like a little concert and I said sure. (laughter) Oh boy! What a pianist! What a pianist!

I've known Sue Brown for many years, and her husband Ray, who is a jazz marvel and a wonderful teacher. He teaches at Cabrillo and at the University. Their daughter is a violist/violinist at Juilliard. I always set up a piano for these musicians coming through Santa Cruz. We also set up a Suzuki program with the little kids. Ray came over here with his Cabrillo College Jazz Combo. We've presented a lot of people.

I've got a trio playing next week: a flute, violin and cello. They are professional musicians and also teachers. I've had one fifteen-year-old boy from a small town near Fresno who had been taking lessons for four years from my friend at Fresno State University. He came here and just finished his first year in high school. and he gave a brilliant concert. Just amazing. I've got another one next month, a young man who has been taking lessons for four years at Santa Clara University. He's going to be playing next month. Another concert will be given by the head of the piano department at Fresno State. He came here from Germany originally, and was a conservatory graduate. He's now a full professor in the piano department. I presented him several years ago in his first concert here at the First Congregational Church. His mother and father came from



Germany and his aunts and uncles! It was a big thing for them. I get such a thrill out of it.

## **MR. MUSIC**

**Reti:** You've been Mr. Music here in Santa Cruz County for almost 40 years.

**Kretschmer:** The name Mr. Music was given to me by a fellow from Cabrillo College.

**Reti:** You've been part of the music community here since 1962.

**Kretschmer:** I arrived on the first of November, 1962.

**Reti:** 37 years.

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Reti:** What do you think the issues are going to be for the Santa Cruz music community as we go into the next century?

**Kretschmer:** I think that they will be more or less the same, except they will be on a higher scale. The symphony is growing all the time and they are getting better. They are raising more money. They are getting better musicians because they are unionized, and they have a source for musicians that they couldn't afford before. The only thing is that somehow they have got to get a performing arts hall. Now if Cabrillo College comes up with it, of course that might be the answer, because that is centrally located. Ed Houghton has been talking for many years about the performing arts facility that they have planned for the University, and that was going to be 1200-1500 seats. The University has already made a written commitment to the symphony that when that place is built that the symphony will have a home. But as I mentioned before, they don't have state or federal money to construct it. They are going to have to raise the money from private donations. I imagine that if someone came along with five million dollars it would be named after this donor. I think it will happen sometime between 2005 and 2010.

**Reti:** Do you think that is the main challenge that we are facing?

**Kretschmer:** The music school at UCSC has got beautiful new buildings, but they have to compete with Juilliard and Eastman, the schools of the East, which have been there for a long time, and are getting the best students in the country, a lot of them from overseas, and can offer large scholarships. We've got the location but UCSC has to have the money for scholarships . . . that's what we're trying to get. And they have to have outstanding teachers to draw these students. We don't have the teachers here at present.

**Reti:** How do we get the teachers?

**Kretschmer:** I never knew this before, initially the music department was set up by the University as an experimental and ethnic music program. So the professors there right now, that's their field. I approached them about fitting Barbara Nissman in there two or three times a year for concerts and master classes, but they don't presently have financing and University approval for that. I don't know where they get their spots, but

they don't presently come around very fast. They're going to have to get world-renowned teachers. I don't see that happening. Tenured teachers, they don't like to leave. They said they were going to get a Ph.D. in the department. I've been talking to Ed Houghton. He said they have one coming. I finally read that the appointment is in composition. Who's going to come here for composition? If they had a composition class that Lou Harrison was teaching that would be different.

**Reti:** Bud, what drives you to do all this work on behalf of music?

**Kretschmer:** When I saw an opportunity, something I really liked and it really needed some help, I would offer my services. You come to the end of your days and you wonder just how much good influence you've had on your contemporaries, whether or not you extended yourself as much as possible. I just enjoy this so much that I try to bring in other people. My greatest joy now is these young people who have received scholarships. I don't know if I've influenced anybody but I think a lot of these people who've had my scholarships over the years are teaching or they are music directors at churches and places like that.

*page 76*

*Ernest T. Kretschmer: MR. MUSIC*

**Reti:** Well, thank you very much,

**Kretschmer:** It's my pleasure.

## **Inde**

**x**

### **A**

Aldrich, Daniel G. III 19

Alsop, Marin 33, 45

American Symphony Orchestra League ASCAP award 33

Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation 41

Aquinas College 16, 22

AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am Youth Fund 42

Avant Garden Party 49

### **B**

Ballroom Dancing Club 54

Barati, George 49, 50

Baskin, Jack 26

Bernstein, Leonard 35, 36

Bottoms, Rita 23

Brown, Ray 57

Brown, Susan 17, 18, 57

## C

Cabrillo College 17, 30, 52, 59

Cabrillo College Jazz Combo 57

Cabrillo Music Festival 2, 4, 16, 32, 34, 39, 40, 41

Cage, John 52

*City of Grace* 50

Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation 42

Coast Commercial Bank 25

Collins, Phil 47, 49

Concordia Orchestra, New York 35

Cooper House 29

Cope, David H. 49

Copland, Aaron 52

Crown Chamber Players 19

Crown College 19

## D

David and Lucile Packard Foundation 12, 17, 42

Davies, Dennis Russell 31, 34, 36

Del Mar theater 29

Democratic Management Services 47

Dominican Oaks 1, 22

Dominican Oaks Concert Series 55

## **F**

First Congregational Church 47

Fredericks, Tom 42

Freeman-Toole, Richard 47

Fresno State University 57

## **G**

gamelan music 52

Garcia, Hank 1

Golden Gate University 10

Graham, Bill 2

Grand Rapids, Michigan 17, 22, 56

Granger, John Larry 27

Granite Construction Company 10



## H

Harrison, Lou 47, 48, 49, 50

Henry Mello Center for the Performing Arts 1

Houghton, Edward F. 14, 15, 59, 61

Houston Opera 42

Hyde, Harold A. 14

## J

Juilliard University 18

## K

Kosman, Joshua 33

Kretschmer Plaza at UC Santa Cruz 23

Kretschmer Recital Hall, Aquinas

College 17 Kretschmer, Ernest T.

and Cabrillo Music Festival 24

and music scholarships at Aquinas College 16

and music scholarships at UCSC 23

and Santa Cruz Symphony 24

Kretschmer, Jean 8, 20, 54

**L**

Lewis, Gene 47

Lingefelter grant 4

Loma Prieta Earthquake 2

**M**

Martinelli Company 10

*Mass* 35

Mello, Henry J. 3

Miller, Aaron 28

Miller, Leta 53

Moving and Storage Performance Company 50

Mumma, Gordon 49

Musgrave, Peggy B. 19

**N**

National Endowment for the Arts 41

New Music Works

46 *New York Herald*

*Tribune* 52 Nickolson,

Harvey 25

Nissman, Barbara 56,  
60

**O**

Orlando, John  
56

**P**

Pacific Garden Mall  
50

Pajaro Valley School  
District 11

Primack, Ellen M.  
42

**R**

Rebele, Rowland K.  
25

**S**

*San Francisco Chronicle*  
32, 35

San Francisco

Symphony 51 San Jose

State University 51 Santa

Clara University 57

Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium 6,  
24, 41

Santa Cruz County Symphony 2, 4,  
16, 25

Santa Cruz, California  
28 Shakespeare Santa  
Cruz 16 Sherer,  
Howard 43  
Silicon Valley 44  
Smith, Christopher L. 39  
Solari, Mary 14  
Solari, Richard 14  
Soldo, Ann 1  
SoundSites of American music 49  
Stanford University 42  
Steinway piano at the Henry J. Mello Center 8  
Sticky Wicket restaurant 51  
Student Staff Program, Cabrillo Music Festival 39  
Stuttgart, Germany 34  
Suzuki Strings Program, Cabrillo College 17, 57  
Sydnor, Alex 14

**T**

Taylor, Marion 44

*The Night of the Living Composers* 48

*The Stockpile Waltz* 50

Thomas, Michael Tilson 51

## U

UC Santa Cruz

    music scholarships 16

UC Santa Cruz music fundraising campaign 13

UCSC performing arts concert hall

    plans for 15

## W

Walden, Max 29

*Wall Street Journal* 33

Watsonville High School 3, 6

Watsonville, California 1, 2, 5, 8

Wesleyan University 18

Works Players 48

**Y**

Yale University 36



**IRENE RETI** is the Assistant Editor at the Regional History Project and has worked with the project since 1989. She was born in Los Angeles and moved to Santa Cruz in 1978. She received her B.A. in Environmental Studies from UCSC in 1982. She also is the publisher of HerBooks, a small press publisher of creative nonfiction and literary anthologies.



