

# UC Santa Cruz

## Santa Cruz History

### Title

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

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### Authors

Kretschmer, Ernest T.  
Reti, Irene  
Jarrell, Randall  
[et al.](#)

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### **Early Life in Michigan**

**Jarrell:** Just to start, when and where were you born?

**Kretschmer:** I was born in Saginaw, Michigan on July 29, 1914.

**Jarrell:** Into what kind of family circumstances were you born?

**Kretschmer:** I would say it was middle class . . . my family had a fancy food market in Saginaw and it was probably one of the finest stores of its kind in the state. We had a large clientele of affluent people in our hometown and we delivered the groceries all over town. My father, who came from Germany when he was 15, was first employed in Chicago by Morley Brothers, a large mid-western wholesale firm. The company transferred to Saginaw, where they put him in charge of a grocery store when he was 25 years old, that at that time was owned by the Morley family. The Morley family was the number one family in the city and they transferred him there to straighten out their food store and before a year was up he was named manager.

He was learning his trade under that set of circumstances and about two years later he decided to go out on his own. So he opened a large store downtown. They had three delivery trucks and about fifty percent of the business was delivery. Orders were taken over the phone and were delivered within half a day. He had a motto that the customer was always right. So if Mrs. Jones called up and said her bananas were over-ripe or the iceberg head lettuce was a little bit brown, they would immediately find a suitable replacement and dash across

town to deliver these items to the lady. We would pick up the item that she did not like and would bring it back and give her credit for it. No ifs, ands, or buts.

**Jarrell:** It sounds like the carriage trade.

**Kretschmer:** Yes. I would say that on a good Saturday we delivered between two and three hundred grocery orders. Many of our carriage trade had summer homes along the beaches up in Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron and when they moved up to their summer homes, we continued to serve them by truck. We devised an iced container to handle perishable things like meat and butter.

**Jarrell:** This was way before refrigerated trucks so you had to ice everything down?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. We utilized containers normally used to keep ice cream in grocery stores. On the inside it would have a pan of crushed ice and sometimes when we were going up there in the summer time, which I did when I was in high school and college, we'd slip a few bottles of beer in there.

**Jarrell:** (Laughter) For that long ride.

**Kretschmer:** For the long ride. I remember on one occasion the temperature reached 114 degrees; I was taking my college buddy from Grand Rapids up with me and we had to stop and pull over the side of the road to cool off the motor and to cool off. There were three boys and two girls in the family. My father was a person who believed that his boys and his girls should start working at the first opportunity. So I was told when I was still in short pants, that it was time for me to come up to the store and help out. The first job they gave me was to pile P&G and Naphtha soaps on the shelves. Since I wasn't strong enough to carry the box, it was necessary for another bigger clerk to carry the box for me. I had the unenviable task of piling those bars of soap on the shelves.

**Jarrell:** So you were working in there as soon as you were able.

**Kretschmer:** I was initially working there during the summer time months. Shortly thereafter Saturdays were added to my work schedule. Meantime, I was always looking for some excuse to get a vacation. I found it when I was 11 going on 12, and that involved membership in the Boy Scouts. I had to be 12 to pass the

examination. If I were a Boy Scout I could go to camp for two weeks. One of the young fellow clerks who was a Boy Scout gave me some lessons in all the qualifying rules and I took and passed a special examination. The examiner gave me a ticket to go to the camp just a few days before I was 12. So it was 1926 and I went to camp for two weeks. When the second weekend came and I was supposed to go home, one of my father's card playing buddies came up to the camp, which was about 60 miles from home, and he says to me, "Bud, why are you looking so sad?" I said, "Because I have to go home, go back to work tomorrow." He says, "Oh, I know your father. He won't care if you take another week or two." I says, "Do you think so?" He answered, "No problem, Bud. I'll tell him when I get home." So the next Tuesday I got a special delivery letter from my father. It said, "Dear Bud. Get back to work. We need you." All through grade school, high school and sometimes when I was in college I worked during the summer time. I worked weekends and when I was in high school I would work after school. When I was pursuing piano studies in high school I took time off to practice. For my four years in high school I was allowed to play football after school. The same privilege did not extend to basketball, however.

**Jarrell:** And that was allowed?

**Kretschmer:** Well, that was allowed. However, about the only time I got out in the summer time was to drive my mother to Chicago, where her mother was residing. I also took a whole summer when I was between my second and third year of college because I needed some additional credits to get into law school. I matriculated at the University of Colorado for two sessions. So I didn't work that summer. This was quite an occasion in my life.

### **Piano Study**

**Jarrell:** Maybe we could back up a little bit. I was going to ask you about your study of the piano from 1924 to 1933. What were the cultural interests in your family?

**Kretschmer:** My mother came from quite a poor family in Chicago and it was their custom when they finished the eighth grade to go to work. So she went to work with the telephone company as an operator. My father came from Germany when he was 15 years old, and his education in this country consisted of six

months of business school in Chicago. From that point on he worked for a fairly large corporation and I think that his orientation was mostly in business.

**Jarrell:** What were the early influences then, in your childhood or adolescence which shaped your lifelong devotion to music?

**Kretschmer:** When I was in the first or second grade, my older sister took piano; while she was not advanced she was fairly good. But even more important was her best friend, who was actually a superb pianist. She used to come over and play on our piano and I was dazzled by the speed and beauty of her playing. At least it sounded beautiful to me at that particular stage, and this attracted me. At that particular point, I think going into the third grade, I happened to have a schoolteacher who was also a piano teacher and came from Germany. She was an excellent piano teacher but for some unknown reason she was sent to teach at our four room grade school. So I started with her and found her to be a very, very knowledgeable teacher. She gave me pieces that were both melodious and technically challenging. Unfortunately she left after about one year. Then I transferred to another teacher who belonged to the same parish, and happened to be the organist at the church. She had a large clientele of students from all over the city, so I studied with her until I was through high school.

**Jarrell:** When you went to Aquinas College you majored in music, did you not?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, in piano.

**Jarrell:** Given your family's business background, I wonder did you have any opposition, or second thoughts from your father and mother?

**Kretschmer:** Well, they were supportive but never expressed any enthusiasm. I was a fairly good pianist and I would say that in a very unmusical town, which Saginaw was, I was probably considered a piano hot-shot. Not a wunderkind because . . .

**Jarrell:** Hot-shot?

**Kretschmer:** Just a hot-shot. I was probably as good a pianist as any of my contemporaries in town. Having said that I would say that my teacher, unfortunately, who was actually a very good teacher, had limitations. She only

had one semester of college. We studied in the progressive system that was published in St. Louis. In checking over the programs that I played from 1925 to 1935 I find that I started on the top of the list and as the years went by I would move down, until towards the end of my tenure there when I was a senior student, I was the last person to play. There were about 25 pieces in the repertoire and over time a student would play them all. I played very little Bach. I was a very poor sight reader. Everything I learned I had to memorize and consequently my repertoire was very limited. In high school I became more interested, and I spent more time practicing. I gave a solo high school recital when I was a senior in high school. Then I began to think more in the way of pursuing a career in the piano, either in teaching or in solo work. I began looking at catalogs, and came across one from Munich, Germany and also one from the Eastman School of Music. In the back of the catalog they listed the students and their hometowns. There was a lady from nearby Flint, Michigan who was attending Eastman. I went over there to talk with her but she didn't happen to be at home. Then it was getting towards time to be matriculating. I broke the news to my father. This was in the depth of the Depression and my older brother, who was the mainstay in the grocery store was going into his fourth year at Notre Dame. So my father told me that it was out of the question for me to go away to school.

My teacher then suggested that perhaps Sister Evangelista, originally from Germany, who was the top piano teacher in the Dominican order at Grand Rapids, might be interested in taking me as a student. It just happened that two Sundays later she was visiting from Grand Rapids and I played for her. She said that she would be glad to take me. My teacher also decided that she would like to take lessons from her. So for the next year, we made a weekly trip to Grand Rapids from Saginaw, which was 120 miles. Sister Evangelista had marvelous instincts; she was a born musician. Really she should also have been in psychology, because she handled students so well, especially me. Those trips were a joy. She had a six-foot Steinway grand. It was thrilling for me to play my old and new pieces on that piano because each time I heard new sounds. I studied with her for a whole year. She studied with two [Theodor] Leschetizky pupils at the Chicago Musical College. Leschetizky was considered one of the greatest, if not the greatest, piano teachers of the 19th century. I decided after taking that year from her that I would continue studying with her at Catholic



Junior College in Grand Rapids as a full-time student at Aquinas College, which was the first coed Catholic two year junior college in the country. In 1941 it expanded to a four year college, Aquinas College.

I became quite a serious student, although I was taking a regular academic course. I was able to practice two or three hours a day. In the middle of the second year I began to think of a music career in terms of economics because it was the midst of the Depression and it was just terrible. Grand Rapids was the furniture center of the country and they had blocks and blocks of factories that were all boarded up. My business orientation was quite advanced because of my years in the family business. Moreover, my father discussed financial problems. He was having to reduce costs in his business and to monitor closely his charge accounts. So I started to think of a career in music in terms of economics. During all these years in Grand Rapids and in Saginaw I heard some of the finest piano and vocal artists in the world. I also was a reader of the *Music Courier* and what the concert artists were doing. But I figured there probably were not more than 25 international artists who made more money than my father did in the grocery business. So I thought, well where do I stand? I didn't hear many other hometown student pianists, really, because there were no competitions in Saginaw. When I got to Grand Rapids I began to hear these other students and contemporaries and I was gradually comparing myself to my peers. I realized that I was really not quite that high up, that my chances of doing well economically in light of my limited ability were not that great. So I decided to switch my major to business. I broke the news to my teacher one day. I said that I had decided to pursue business as my vocation and music as my avocation. She didn't argue with me. So I think I made the right decision.

**Jarrell:** Who were some of the artists that you heard during that period?

**Kretschmer:** Well, I started out with the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch. That was before they consolidated with the Philharmonic. Then I heard Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Sophie Breslau, Tito Schipa, Lawrence Tibbett, Ossip Gabrilovich, Fritz Kreisler, Paderewski. Then through the two years in Grand Rapids, Josef Lhevinne, Jascha Heifetz, Szigeti, Rosa Ponselle, Lily Pons, José Iturbi, Walter Gieseking, and then I spent a year in Chicago where I heard all of the Chicago Symphony's concerts and all of the Chicago Opera productions, plus all the major soloists.

**Jarrell:** Now what year were you in Chicago?

**Kretschmer:** In 1935-36. After I finished school, I decided that I might like to go into law. In order to get into law school I had to take some additional credits. So I went off to the University of Colorado for a six week summer session there. It was there that I fell in love with the organ when I attended weekly organ concerts by a splendid organist. They had a marvelous organ. Every Friday afternoon I used to go over and listen and it was just a wonderful experience. Since then I've loved the organ, but you don't get that much opportunity to hear organ in this area, unless you go to big cities.

When I lived in Chicago, I don't think I missed many major concerts. I was getting five dollars a week for food and I saved enough money to go to all the concerts. Food was cheap in those days. I heard Josef Lhevinne and Rosinna Lhevine. I heard Rachmaninoff several times and Piatigorsky and Arthur Rubinstein and the great thing about it is that I kept not only the programs but also the critical reviews.

**Jarrell:** So these materials are in your archive?

**Kretschmer:** Oh, yes. I decided after one year of law school that law wasn't exactly my cup of tea either. So I transferred to Michigan State, where I spent my junior and senior years. They had a remarkable concert series there as well.

**Jarrell:** So you finished your bachelor's degree there?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, I was there from 1936-38.

### **Military Career**

**Jarrell:** During the war years I see you listed your military service from 1941-49?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. After I finished at Michigan State, the Depression was still on. So I decided to start my own business. In our grocery business we were always trying new things. The newest thing at that time was frozen foods. So I decided that I would start a wholesale frozen food business. For the next two years until I was called into the Army, I worked up a wholesale business that covered one third of the state of Michigan. The business area was so spread out that it was

necessary for me to take on a partner. We operated in different cities, but we both lived in Saginaw and kept our merchandise in a public storage warehouse.

In October 1940, all the young men in the country were given a draft number. Both of our numbers were pretty low. It didn't make sense for us to buy a whole year's supply of frozen food and not be around to take care of the business. So we arranged to sell the business for a very nominal amount. Then I went down to the draft board and I volunteered my services. I went in with the first group in February, 1941, as a draftee, at twenty-one dollars a month. I was in the United States until September of that year when our hospital unit was alerted and we were shipped off to Iceland. I was in Iceland three months before Pearl Harbor. A short time after, I was interviewed and selected for officers candidate school in the spring of 1942 at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. I graduated in August and was supposed to be sent to some stateside assignment in Michigan, but I ended up at Fort Ord where I caught up with my hospital unit from Oak Park, Illinois. They were housed in the grounds adjacent to the Rodeo in Salinas. The housing was set up for the Japanese but they were already gone when I arrived. Then I called up my girlfriend, Jean Scarborough, in Denver and I said, "Do you want to get married? I'm going overseas again." So she came to Salinas and we got married 50 years ago this coming September 21. I was sent overseas for two-and-one-half years. That's where I spent my "honeymoon," in the New Hebrides. In the 750 bed 25th Evacuation Hospital.

I came back in the spring of 1945 for "rest and recuperation." While I was overseas Jean joined the WAVES and was a recruiter in her hometown of Denver. Later she was transferred to Oakland. When I came back to this country she was in Oakland. So I stayed there for a while and then we visited our families. I didn't have to return overseas because while I was home the War ended in Germany. I decided to get out of the service because I had made prior arrangements with my brother to invest in the family wheat germ corporation which he struggled with through the War. So we went back to Saginaw. We stayed there until the fall of 1947, when the Army inquired as to my interest in returning to the regular Army. We agreed that the Michigan weather was a little bit too rough for us since my period in the South Pacific did something to my resistance. The winters in Saginaw were damp, windy and cold. I accepted the assignment and was sent to Brooklyn in the fall of 1947. I was in the Army until I

asked to be transferred to the Air Force. It was the Army Air Corps during the War. They became such a large element that it was decided to set them up in a separate department so it would be the Army, Navy, and the Air Force. It would be the U.S. Air Force. I was transferred there in 1949.

By that time I had been selected by the Army to go to graduate school at Columbia University in New York. I was at Columbia University from 1949 to 1951 in the Graduate School of Business. That's when Dwight Eisenhower was president of Columbia University.

Then I was reassigned to Brooklyn at the Armed Services Medical Procurement Agency. I worked there until 1953, until I was transferred to the Surgeon General's Office in Washington, where I stayed until 1956. I was then transferred to the Alaskan Air Command in Anchorage until 1959, when I was assigned to be administrator of the Beale Air Force Hospital at Marysville. I stayed until I retired November 1, 1962.

### **The Nursing Home Industry**

**Jarrell:** I see. Now I'm getting an understanding of the nursing home phase of your career. It really was built on the expertise you'd gotten in the service as a hospital administrator.

**Kretschmer:** I was involved in medical procurement of supplies and equipment, and also in the transfer and the storage of these items, in the distribution system. During the Korean War I worked in industrial mobilization. I was assisting the industry to expand their capacity to meet wartime requirements by granting accelerated amortization of new plants and equipment. My last job was to build and administer a new hospital at Beale. This gave me quite a bit of administrative experience and subsequently I visited a civilian administrator of the hospital in Salinas. I told him I was going to retire pretty soon and thinking of going into the hospital business. He said, "Oh if I were you I'd get in the nursing home business because there's a lot of money there." So I started to check it out and I found a young corporation in Santa Cruz that had owned a nursing home in San Mateo. They were going to build one on Water Street in Santa Cruz and so they hired me.

**Jarrell:** What was the name of that corporation?

**Kretschmer:** It was the Palmcrest corporation. I retired and came here on the first of November, 1962. I spent 20 years in the nursing home business in San Mateo. I had two facilities with a partner on Arthur Road in Watsonville. We opened those facilities in 1964 and 1968. We called them the Pajaro Convalescent Hospital, and Pajaro West. In 1966 I opened one in Monterey and later on I had facilities in Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo. It kept me rather busy.

**Jarrell:** You were a founding board member of the Citizens for Better Nursing Home Care, now called Ombudsmen/Advocates Inc. Can you talk a little bit about that, how you became interested and involved in that aspect of the nursing home industry?

**Kretschmer:** I was a president for many years of our trade organization, the California Association of Nursing Homes and then they later changed it to the California Association of Health Facilities. I was president of the Monterey Bay chapter which took in three counties, very active as president and also in state affairs.

I was very much concerned because over the period of time I was in the business there were a lot of organizations that were damning the nursing homes for the poor service and overcharging and that sort of thing. I felt that since I was running a very high class operation, usually the best operation in the cities where I operated, that I would like to be a representative of the industry on these nonprofit councils like the Citizens for Better Nursing Home Care. So I introduced myself to them. I said I'd like to be an advisor on their board and help them in any way I could to tell them what makes a nursing home tick, what was involved. I would take them through my nursing home and just show them what they could expect. We had monthly meetings and they asked me to be on the board and be treasurer. I was very active with them.

The program that they had for federal and state reimbursement for nursing home patients prior to the establishment of Medicaid and Medicare was the Medical Aid for the Aging—MAA program. There were many technical requirements for that and we were always fighting to get a rate that would cover our expenses. But with Medicare and MediCal they had federal requirements and state requirements and they had the inspectors in there all the time. I thought that the inspectors did a marvelous job but then again I agreed in some places that some

of these nursing homes were able to get away with really a lot of schlock operations.

I objected to that as an operator and personally because it reflected on the professionalism of the industry I was involved in. But I had to realize too, the more I was into this thing, that there were a lot of people in it just for a buck. When I first went in the business a lot of these so called suede-shoe operators were starting to get these marginal facilities financed, built and then operating. In some towns they had more nursing homes than hospital beds.

When you open a nursing home you've got to fill those beds because if you lease a facility you have to lease it for 25 years and you have to buy all that equipment. You have to have start-up money to pay rent, taxes and meet the payroll. Until you meet your break-even point you've got to provide that money yourself, cut your expenses, or get it from some other source. It was a matter of professional pride that you have to not only stand up to your own standards and try to get the industry to adopt those . . . you need state organizations with high standards and you have to see that the people that join live by those standards. I enjoyed working with these people. I was with them for many years.

**Jarrell:** You were involved on the board of the Ombudsmen/Advocates Inc. Even after you had sold your last facility, or one of your last facilities, you were still involved. Was it in 1977 you sold your two facilities in Watsonville?

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** . . . and then you had several . . . one in San Mateo until 1981.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, that's the last one that I sold. The original group that I was active with, the Citizens for Better Nursing Home Care, were mostly people who had sons and some parents or relatives in nursing homes and they gave a lot of their time. They also raised money for operations. I dropped out of active participation when a new group of people came who thought that the organization should be expanded and modernized. We had paid staff and were able to get grants from some of the foundations. With the reorganization and change of name, the operation was professionalized. The core of the organization is the volunteers who are trained to go in these nursing homes and work with the

patients to make sure that they are being taken care of, and they know their rights.

**Jarrell:** So you settled in Santa Cruz in 1962. Why did you decide to settle here?

**Kretschmer:** I was transferred to San Mateo but I decided to stay here because my wife had gotten a teaching job and I liked the area very much. So I commuted to San Mateo on a daily basis for several years. In order to justify our staying in this area I agreed to go into partnership for the new facility that was under construction in Watsonville, on Arthur Road. We opened there in 1964 and we opened the second adjoining one in 1968. In the meantime I'd also agreed to go into partnership in a facility that was under construction on Pacific Avenue in Monterey. So I was quite busy.

### **Santa Cruz County Musical Affairs**

**Jarrell:** (Laughter) So you settled here in Santa Cruz and immediately became active in Santa Cruz County musical affairs. To start, in 1962, you attended the organization meeting of the first Cabrillo Music Festival. How did you become involved?

**Kretschmer:** When I was in Saginaw as a young student I was fascinated by the May Music Festival in Ann Arbor. That was one of the few music festivals in the country. I knew an organist in town who was able to take time off and go to these concerts in Ann Arbor where the University of Michigan is located. At that time, they'd had the Chicago Symphony giving concerts with Frederick Stock; they also featured world class soloists and also organ concerts. They would have many of the great pianists and leading instrumentalists playing there. I thought if a person would have time to go and spend several days doing nothing but concentrating on music, that that would be the "life." It was always my dream when I retired to live in a place where they would have good music like that because we certainly didn't have it in my hometown.

Well, I no sooner arrived here than the first thing I did was to ask my daughter's piano teacher if they had a concert association. She said they did, in Santa Cruz and in Watsonville. I asked which one I should join. "Oh," she said, "Watsonville, they need you more than Santa Cruz." So I joined the Watsonville

Concert Association. The next thing I saw was a big poster where the Sticky Wicket restaurant was going to have a series of concerts.

**Jarrell:** In Aptos.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, so I went over there and I was very favorably impressed with the quality of the programs and Bob Hughes, the music director. I didn't miss any of those concerts and I heard a lot of music for the first time, a lot of contemporary music. I saw [composer] Lou Harrison there. I became very much fascinated by their offerings. I was new and they didn't ask for anybody to help or anything like that, except that they passed around a little dice cup for donations during the intermission.

### THE CABRILLO MUSIC FESTIVAL

**Kretschmer:** So the next thing I saw in the newspaper, that they were considering starting a music festival here, and they were going to have an initial meeting at Cabrillo College. I went up there to see what was going on. A fellow by the name of Ted Toews who was the choral conductor there, was giving a talk about the possibility of starting a festival. They discussed hiring the conductor of the Oakland orchestra, Gerhard Samuel as the music director. They were moving ahead on this plan and asked anybody interested in getting involved as a volunteer to step forward. So I stepped forward and they ended up by putting me in charge of housing. That was one of the ideas to keep their expenses down, to pay just a modest per diem. But they would have to offer the musicians something besides the beautiful weather. If they could house them with some music lovers here this would be an added incentive. So that was my first assignment.

**Jarrell:** Do you have any recollection of about how many musicians were involved in that first season?

**Kretschmer:** Well, I would say that the orchestra numbered between 50 and 60. During each season Gerhard Samuel presented an opera. It was either a concert version or it was actual stage. In that case you'd have some additional people;



some people brought their wives and kids and some brought their girlfriends and boyfriends. It was quite a merry time.

**Jarrell:** Early Sixties?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. I, a stranger, had the job as a newcomer of compiling a list of local music lovers who might be interested in housing a visiting musician. I had to get a list from the Concert Association and then I had to contact them. I found out that calling from Aptos to Watsonville was a long distance call, so I asked Alyce Vestal in Watsonville who was one of the idea people behind the whole festival to start with, and she said come on over and use her telephone. So I would go to Alyce's at noon time. Alyce would provide these names with their telephone numbers, and I would commence making my calls.

Well the first thing is that nobody knew about this festival. It didn't have a name. We didn't know exactly what the dates were. This whole idea was strange to them. Besides that, the person who was calling was a foreigner. (Laughter) I was Mr. Nobody. So it required quite a bit of patience and ingenuity. Unfortunately I wasn't able to carry through with the whole assignment because when we moved down here we took a six month lease on a house on Beach Drive and on the first of June that's when they rented it out . . .

**Jarrell:** Oh, for the summer season.

**Kretschmer:** For the season. So they shoved us out the first or second week of June. We took an apartment in Redwood City near my nursing home. But I came back for the Festival itself. I didn't miss any of the concerts. So necessarily I had to turn the project over to Gene Hambleton, who was the administrative director, and to Bob Hughes.

I was so excited about it and I worried about the ticket sales before leaving. As I said, I was on this housing committee. I normally met weekly with the president, who was Jerry Barnes, and Gene Hambleton who was the administrative director, and they discussed all the current problems that they were having. Of course I was relating those problems to the things that I was doing too so I had a better insight into what was going on than many of the people on the board of directors. Because the people selected to a board like that initially are just usually prominent local people. Some of them had very little prior connection with

music. I was here for the Festival, in fact I was so excited that I just couldn't wait till the first concert started. I stood out on the porch of the theater watching the cars come in. I was almost counting the cars as they were coming, hoping that they would get a full house.

**Jarrell:** This was the summer of 1963. That was the first Festival. . . at Cabrillo College?

**Kretschmer:** Right. Our first meeting was either in January or February, and we didn't have much time to really put this thing together. I remember seeing Gerhard Samuel, I'd never seen him before, walk on the stage. I think that was one of the most musically thrilling moments of my life. It's always exciting the opening night of the Festival. Of course they've got so much more going on now. In the interim period we've heard so much music in so many different places that it's just a little bit different.

**Jarrell:** Well it's so startling to realize that the Cabrillo Festival is having its 30th anniversary . . .

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** I happened to turn the television on last night at 11pm and I saw the video tape that has been produced by the Cabrillo Festival as a promotional . . .

**Kretschmer:** Of Marin Alsop?

**Jarrell:** Yes. It's a ten or a twelve minute video tying together the city of Santa Cruz and its regional history, with the history of the Festival. It's beautifully produced. It gave a pictorial history, showing Dennis Russell Davies on a big Harley Davidson motorcycle with his long hair and . . .

**Kretschmer:** I've got a T-shirt with that on it. That was his first year. He was quite a character up at St. Paul's Chamber Orchestra where he conducted. That's where he was when we hired him at age 29.

Good music was sparse when I arrived. We had two concerts in a series, which were average for towns of this size and the symphony orchestra really was a voluntary group. They didn't even charge admission. They were giving their concerts in the Civic Auditorium, and you know that's quite a barn.

**Jarrell:** Yes. But at that time when you first moved here the University was not open yet. The demographics of our population here were altogether different.

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** The Cabrillo Music Festival really had some faith that there would be this small stable group of people who would be willing to travel and visit but I don't think that any of the participants in these early cultural endeavors knew that there would be a strong local audience.

**Kretschmer:** Right.

**Jarrell:** Which has subsequently developed over these years. So we have a very sophisticated audience now.

**Kretschmer:** Very sophisticated.

**Jarrell:** Yes.

**Kretschmer:** In fact we have added plenty of seats at the Civic to hopefully secure some additional sophisticated people to warm the seats.

**Jarrell:** To warm the seats. (Laughter) Yes. Well we'll continue when we meet next time to talk about other aspects of the Cabrillo Festival.

**Kretschmer:** You know who I sat next to at the first concert?

**Jarrell:** Who?

**Kretschmer:** He introduced himself. Dean McHenry.

**Jarrell:** Really!

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** Founding Chancellor of UCSC.

**Kretschmer:** Well, you know where UCSC had their offices?

**Jarrell:** Down at Cabrillo.

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** So you sat next to McHenry during the first concert?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, and he introduced himself.

**Jarrell:** Oh, that's very interesting, that he was there.

**Kretschmer:** Well he's always been a strong supporter of local music. Even to this day.

According to my memory they intended to program music that was not usually played during the regular season. Then they would introduce contemporary pieces. Gerhard Samuel was a pioneer in performing contemporary music, in fact he was sort of a persona non grata in Oakland with some of the patrons for all of this advanced stuff that he put on there. They eventually were relieved when he left. He was an excellent conductor.

**Jarrell:** Where did he eventually go?

**Kretschmer:** He went down to Los Angeles, as an assistant conductor for a year or two and then he went to Cincinnati. He's been there ever since with the Cincinnati Conservatory and university.

**Jarrell:** I see.

**Kretschmer:** He's in charge of opera there. I see his name listed once in a while conducting different operas in the Midwest. But he came out here for the fifteenth anniversary.

Well we had a special deal with him where he insisted having a house for a whole month on the beach and that would be the gathering place for his friends. (Laughter) Of course that was a little strong for the local people.

**Jarrell:** Was it known as the Festival the first year or was it just a series of concerts?

**Kretschmer:** Well at first it was rather difficult for me to contact people and tell them about the music festival because we weren't quite sure what name we were going to give it, the Aptos Music Festival? But I think the reason it was given

Cabrillo was because Cabrillo was a public institution, because they had the facilities there. Most importantly they had the administration of the college and the community college district that was willing and eager to take on all the logistical and financial aspects. In addition they had the Community Services division there, with funding and a director. It was a new school and they had certain individuals, both in administration and in the music department, who were eager to support such a thrilling project. The assistance and encouragement by its president Bob Swenson, was outstanding.

**Jarrell:** Now I had no idea that Cabrillo College was so closely administratively involved with the early festival.

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes.

**Jarrell:** I thought it was just the site and the performing arts . . . the hall.

**Kretschmer:** No, you see before Proposition 13 came and cut off the money and logistical support, the chief of Community Services was administrative director of the festival.

**Jarrell:** I see.

**Kretschmer:** He was the administrator and the civilian aspect of it was a non-profit corporation called the Cabrillo Guild of Music. They had their separate membership and their board of directors. Then you had the music director, the conductor, Gerhard Samuel.

**Jarrell:** Now did the board select Samuel?

**Kretschmer:** I believe Samuel was selected during the early organizational period. But the board was involved in more than mechanics; they had to make sure, at least initially, that the financial aspect was a viable one. They had to be sure that there was enough financial support to handle it and in that regard the board of directors solicited guarantors, about ten or twelve guarantors, mostly from Watsonville, but there were some from the northern part of the county. They each guaranteed \$1000 in the event that it was needed to carry through the first year.

**Jarrell:** I see. So if the ticket sales couldn't cover expenses, for instance, these guarantors would see that the concerts were in the black.

**Kretschmer:** They were assessed \$400 the first year only. Besides ticket sales there was individual solicitation of donations and paid advertising in the programs. So we had about three sources of income.

**Jarrell:** Can you tell me who were some of the key people in this first series of festival concerts?

**Kretschmer:** Well the key people from the standpoint of supporters outside of the music field included Alyce Vestal, who was at that time president of the Watsonville Concert Association. She was an artist, a mother, and she also sang in the Carmel Bach Festival, She long had an idea of wanting to establish a music festival, not necessarily like the Bach festival, in the new college. Actually before Cabrillo College had the building, they had their classes at Watsonville High School. So they felt a close kinship to the college. The other person was a Cabrillo College choral teacher, Ted Toews. Ted was newly graduated from the Stanford music department and also had enthusiasm.

Between the two of them they came up with this idea and it was passed around to other people. They had the initial meeting which I understand was in January or February, 1963. I attended and there was a groundswell of support for the Festival. Then they had to get into gear in a hurry because they put on the festival that summer. When you do something like that, especially when it's a strange project, it takes a lot of movement and a lot of meetings and a lot of consultations. I will say that insofar as the college is concerned their chief of the Community Services played a very key role in monitoring their expenditures and also the budget. For many years there was a constant pressure on Gerhard Samuel on holding the budget. Gerhard resolved to continue as director only if they increased the size of the budget every year. This attitude irritated the board since each year efforts to reach budget goals were herculean. I understand he did the same thing in Oakland for many, many years and finally they allowed him to have his wish and he departed.

**Jarrell:** Now how many years was he musical director here at the Cabrillo Music Festival?

**Kretschmer:** Well I believe he was here for eight years. When Dr. Ruth Frary was president it was agreed to accept his desires, or his threats that he would resign and leave the festival and it was at that point that they began looking for a successor.

**Jarrell:** Now if we could go back, to this first phase, these eight years of Samuel's tenure. Can you discuss the sense of direction, of the niche that the Cabrillo Festival would fill in terms of the kind of music which was emphasized? Today we think of the festival in terms of its always moving in a new direction, of being very attentive to contemporary composers, with a backbone of classical and romantic standards. There's always a little chamber music; there's always something from the past, but the real innovation is in the contemporary direction. Was that true in those early years, that emphasis?

**Kretschmer:** I would say that it was true and that they were greatly influenced by Gerhard Samuel because he was an outstanding conductor in his directions of emphasizing contemporary music. In fact, he did it to such an extent in Oakland that he really turned off a lot of his audience. But he was highly regarded by the San Francisco Bay Area music critics for his musicianship, and also in being able to interpret the scores of contemporary composers. His assistant at Oakland was Robert Hughes who played a role as director of the music series at the Sticky Wicket. Hughes originally came here to study composition with Lou Harrison.

Their series of concerts at the Sticky Wicket featured the best musicians in the area. We had quite a number of them, and these concerts had a lot of contemporary composers, both American and European. They also introduced us to Lou Harrison's works. He'd been composing for many years and he had quite a number of pieces that had not been played before. This is where the role of the Sticky Wicket, and their supporters and followers melded into the music department at Cabrillo and some other supporters from the county. As I said before, the local music situation was rather stagnant. We had a symphony orchestra that was on very shaky, uncertain financial grounds. It was fairly well supported but it was a group of mostly amateur musicians and the organizational structure was very weak. The two concert associations in Watsonville and Santa Cruz were struggling, the one a short time later in Santa Cruz went out of business.

**Jarrell:** Now which one was that?

**Kretschmer:** That was the Santa Cruz Concert Association.

**Jarrell:** Oh, yes.

**Kretschmer:** They had their concerts at the civic auditorium . . . I remember attending one of their concerts with Jan Peerce. But the Concert Association in Watsonville survived for quite a number of years after that. I was president for a number of years. Finally in the last few years we transferred the administration of it under the wing of the community services, so that eventually the community services provided administrative support for the Festival as well as the Symphony, and then the Watsonville Concert Association, which at that time was renamed the Pajaro Valley Concert Association.

**Jarrell:** I see. I didn't know that.

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** So at the time that the Cabrillo Music Festival was just getting started, the Santa Cruz County Symphony was really in its infancy organizationally. There was a lot of support but it wasn't financial support?

**Kretschmer:** Well, when I joined the board of the symphony they were not charging admission.

**Jarrell:** That's what you said!

**Kretschmer:** There was a big barrel in the lobby there where you supposed to throw in your nickels and dimes as you went in. However, I found out that the board did have a fund drive. Like the Festival's, they usually divided into three groups insofar as responsibility is concerned—one in mid-county, one in Pajaro Valley and the other one for North County.

When I joined the Symphony board in 1968, their tenth year, their fund drive goal was \$4000-\$6000 for the entire county. By that time they were paying their musicians a modest sum. During the early years the musicians paid 25 cents per rehearsal/concert to cover the conductor's fee.



**Jarrell:** I didn't know that, about the conductor coming from San Francisco. Do you recall who that was?

**Kretschmer:** It was Detlef Anders, a cellist with the orchestra and in George Barati's playing days with the [San Francisco] symphony, he sat right next to him.

**Jarrell:** So in terms of that first phase of the Cabrillo Music Festival, Samuel was there and things were stabilized in terms of an ongoing festival that had its definition, that had an arrangement with Cabrillo College, and this was all pre-Proposition 13. The end of Samuel's period was the result of his demands or his insistence that the budget always be increasing.

**Kretschmer:** That was one factor and of course he always wanted . . . Samuel was a composer too.

### **Cabrillo Festival Art Exhibits**

**Kretschmer:** He was also involved with art. About the first ten years of the Festival we also had an art exhibit. That was quite a large factor in the Festival. I remember in the early Festivals the special art exhibit was in the Library and in the latter phase the art exhibit actually was on the walls and in the corridor of the Cabrillo theater. Usually some person on the board who was interested in art was chairperson of the exhibit. At the first Festival Gerhard Samuel's father, a physician and artist, had some of his paintings on display. At one point Gerhard sent over Bob Hughes to meet with the board, where he presented the proposition that Gerhard not only wanted to be music director but he wanted to be the artistic director. In all phases of not only music but also art, publicity and policy, and a lot of details.

**Jarrell:** I see. Like the kinds of paintings that would be selected for the exhibits, etc.?

**Kretschmer:** That's right. He wanted to take over much of the work and responsibilities of the board of directors and maybe even the administrative director.

**Jarrell:** I see. How did this sit with the board members?

**Kretschmer:** He made no points. Actually they turned it down. At that stage I think they were becoming a little bit irritated with the difficulties that they were having in dealing with him and the continued annual threats. Now we had some very fine and strong administrative directors. We had George Clark who went on from the job as director of community services to the presidency of a community college up in Napa. We had John Peterson who later received his doctorate at Berkeley and became president of Foothill College and then Cabrillo. We had Rich Hart, who was acting director one year. He was chair of the engineering department and a great supporter of music of his own. The last person that we had was Tim Welch, who had that position until Proposition 13 abolished the department. The first administrative director was Gene Hambleton. He was an instructor at Cabrillo in public speaking and he shortly thereafter left to pursue further graduate studies.

**Jarrell:** So that during the first years then, there was this close relationship with Cabrillo and then Proposition 13 passed and this changed?

**Kretschmer:** When they lost their financial support, it was decided by Cabrillo College that they could retain their space in the office there.

**Jarrell:** The Cabrillo Festival could use the office space?

**Kretschmer:** And the Symphony and the Pajaro Valley Concert Association, but they would have to pay for their own administrative support. In other words, we had to get an administrative director and we also had to pay for our stenographic help and I'm not quite sure at that time whether they continued providing accounting services for us, but eventually we had to handle all those things ourselves, including the payroll of the musicians.

**Jarrell:** You were already organized as a nonprofit, and that didn't change at all. When funding changed that, the Festival had to become much more self-supporting.

**Kretschmer:** You bet.

**Jarrell:** That must have been an enormous change?

**Kretschmer:** That was an enormous change. Cabrillo's economic support of the Festival and the Symphony was very significant. There was also some fear, amongst the Symphony as well as the Festival, as to whether they could really weather that additional load, but they did. I played sort of a unique role around 1970, because I was hired as the first person to fill in that particular slot. I was available at that time since I sold out my nursing homes to a corporation and I had no business responsibilities. So I was the manager of the Festival and the Symphony on a part-time basis, with a half-time secretary.

**Jarrell:** Now I never knew that.

**Kretschmer:** Not many people do. I had been president of both organizations prior to that so I was very familiar with the personnel and problems. I had done everything in those capacities, especially when I was president, including writing fund drive letters, monitoring income, discussing problems with the board, developing projects to raise additional moneys.

**Jarrell:** How did the Festival change after Samuel left?

**Kretschmer:** With Gerhard's leaving we had very little or no time to get a replacement. We were in a panic situation. We visited Robert Hughes up in Berkeley and asked him if he would like to take over. Bob said that he was very flattered but was not interested in conducting. He had just passed up an offer to conduct an orchestra in Iowa and he thought that he would rather stick to his composing. Soon thereafter I noticed an article in the *Sunday Examiner* about Richard Williams who had organized a professional orchestra in Santa Clara. He was on the faculty of Santa Clara University. In establishing this orchestra he had received financial support from the University and they had given a concert in San Francisco. The concert was very well received by the critics as one of the best prepared concert programs in San Francisco in a long time. So I made it a point with one of the members of the board to attend a concert over there that they put on in Oldtown in Los Gatos. I was very much impressed. So we brought him in to be interviewed by Tim Welch, who was administrative director, and also by the board. We told him what our financial restrictions were and he agreed to present a program for us for the entire Festival within those figures.

**Jarrell:** Using the same musicians as previous years?

**Kretschmer:** Well actually he had an orchestra. What he did, in effect, was to use his orchestra and put on his proposed program. His orchestra had toured around the country the prior year. They had a good presentation as far as critics were concerned but they weren't able to get along on their income without continued subsidies from Santa Clara University. So Santa Clara University in the meantime decided to pull the financial plug on them, just as we were hiring them, at the peak of efficiency. They were given the word that they were going to be . . .

**Jarrell:** Their water was going to be cut off?

**Kretschmer:** That's right. So the orchestra that we agreed to with Williams soon began to lose many of its key players and by the time of the summer festival they had to fill in with other musicians. So there was a lack of continuity, insofar as some of the musicians who started with the Festival and are possibly playing today. One of the things that we were able to do that year was to get a \$4000 dollar grant from the state for an original composition.

### **Carlos Chávez**

**Kretschmer:** That's how we connected with Chávez in Mexico City. We asked him if he'd be interested in doing a composition and he said he would. So when he came that summer for the concert we got to know him and he got to know us and our people.

**Jarrell:** So the original connection with Chávez was with a commission for a composition and then when he came was he going to conduct it or was he just there to hear it?

**Kretschmer:** Well, he was there primarily to hear it.

**Jarrell:** What year would this have been?

**Kretschmer:** It would be the ninth year of the Festival. Well, I can tell you because I have some statistics here. Williams was conductor in 1969, so he came here in the summer of 1969.

Board member Ed Bennett had visited Carlos Chávez in Mexico City and evidently Chávez said that he would be interested in coming to the Festival. So Ed Bennett came back to the next board meeting and said that if the Board would

hire Carlos Chávez he personally would give \$1000. This was quite a challenge and of course we were favorably impressed with Chávez's music and Chávez as a composer and conductor who had a very high reputation internationally. We were very flattered that he would consider conducting for us. So we had Chávez as our conductor for the next four years. I think they were quite successful years, although Chávez did play a lot of his own music, which was new to us. It was different but it was challenging and he brought with him some outstanding soloists, including the pianist Maria Teresa Rodriguez from Mexico City. She has played here many times. The most notable person Chávez brought, as far as I'm concerned, is the pianist William Masselos.

**Jarrell:** Chávez brought William Masselos?

**Kretschmer:** He did. You see Chávez lived most of the year in New York City. He did a lot of his composing there. In fact he served on the jury of the Mitropoulos competition every year, which was under the leadership of Leonard Bernstein. In that capacity George Barati got to see him every year, and got to know Chávez quite well. But Chávez brought William Masselos.

Now his programming was more Chávez compositions and not so much of the contemporary scene as was Samuel's but he did go into early years of jazz in France, in Europe, but . . . I remember one year he wanted to do all the Brandenburg concerti and that was turned down.

**Jarrell:** Can you tell me, in terms of the consultation between the board or a program committee and the musical director, was Samuel and then . . . it sounds like with Williams it was kind of a stopgap . . . okay . . .

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** And then with Chávez, was there consultation or was the musical director completely on his own with programming?

**Kretschmer:** Well, I would say that the music direction up until the time was pretty much in the hands of the conductor. They made their own selections and this was pretty much in keeping with what we were looking at, although I would say in the Sixties we had an awful lot of electronic and taped music. And I

remember some of these big booming speakers that were mounted on the walls and about blew us out of the auditorium.

**Jarrell:** (Laughter)

**Kretschmer:** We even had some dancers in the early years. So they really tried to spread themselves out beyond the field of music.

**Jarrell:** In the Sixties there was a lot of very innovative, avant garde work in San Francisco, of taped and electronic music and improvisational dance and singing that was what we would really call performance art now.

**Kretschmer:** Right. Well, you know UCSC had some early exponents and practitioners of taped music and some of their works were done over here, and I remember after one of the concerts inviting the audience to come up and look at the equipment and have the composer explain it. There was quite a bit of interest, and some of them weren't too bad but others were horrible.

Chávez had an orchestra. The original orchestra was made up mostly of members of the Oakland orchestra with some local people filling in gaps. But over a period of time we did acquire musicians. Some of them were teachers from the Pacific Northwest and some of our members would move back east or along the Atlantic coast. So we picked up members from all over the country and although we didn't pay them much on a per diem basis, we offered them housing and a lot of times it would be the annual visit to California for these people. They'd bring their family sometimes and for them it was a great experience to play for a person like Gerhard Samuel, to play this new music, to get away from the standard repertoire that they were accustomed to.

**Jarrell:** And that routine.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, the routine. The fresh air, and some of them made good friends with the families that they stayed with. Sometimes they stayed with the same families year after year and the family looked forward to seeing them again.

But what happened to Chávez was that Chávez was in his early seventies and he had to rehearse twice a day. He was getting a little bit on the tired side. Towards the end of his fourth year the orchestra complained to the personnel manager,

and to Bob Hughes, that they really were not getting anything more in the way of musical experience from Carlos. They complained that his efficiency, his interest and energy level were just not there anymore. They indicated that they would not be willing to continue playing in the Festival if his tenure were not terminated. So the word was given to Manny Santana, who at that time was board president, that he should give Maestro Chávez the word that we were not going to renew his contract. Manny, being a soft-hearted individual (laughter) kept on putting this off for a good part of the time of the Festival, until the point was reached that Carlos was telling Manny what he had planned for the following year! So Manny had to tell him that they'd decided to make a change.

**Jarrell:** What a difficult task!

**Kretschmer:** That was very difficult for Manny to do. At the same time contact was made with other interests, who brought up the possibility of getting some young conductor who was at that time, at the Aspen Music Festival. So we contacted Dennis Russell Davies and were able to have him visit the Festival's the last concert. He met with the board and was very much impressed. This was really his cup of tea. He was 29 years old. He had the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, but this was what he was really interested in, furthering the cause of contemporary American composers. He fit into the groove perfectly.

### **Dennis Russell Davies**

**Jarrell:** I think it's very interesting to recognize somebody like Davies. He was the conductor of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, relatively unknown, a wonderful pianist, very enthusiastic . . . But, to recognize and select him out of all of the young conductors at that time who might be interested in our little niche, I think that was very imaginative.

**Kretschmer:** That is, and it was very fortuitous because of all the hundreds of conductors, young conductors . . .

**Jarrell:** Yes! Coming out of the schools and the conservatories and how do you pick somebody?

**Kretschmer:** I'd been at Aspen many times and I see the different musicians from different music schools and universities and the influence that they have.

Some of the leading conductors in the country are there and some of the members of very prestigious orchestras play there in the summer, and teach. They have a lot of young conductors, and it would be very interesting to find out just who was responsible for getting Dennis down there.

**Jarrell:** Once Davies was here, did he like what he saw and heard?

**Kretschmer:** Oh he was very enthusiastic. One of his first innovations was to have a free prelude concert, and the locations of the initial ones were (laughter) some barn-like structures. But Dennis would try to interest people in the new types of contemporary music, and to give a little flavor of each of the composers that were going to be featured during the succeeding two weeks. Sometimes he would have the composers there playing their own music or talking and sometimes Dennis would do the talking. He was a brilliant conversationalist and very articulate. This is how we got to know Keith Jarrett and William Bolcom, Joan Morris and all of the other people that he brought in.

**Jarrell:** And Romuald Tecco.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, Romuald Tecco was his concertmaster at St. Paul and I think they may have known each other at Julliard because although Romuald Tecco came from France, he did his graduate training at Julliard.

**Jarrell:** Davies was here for how many years?

**Kretschmer:** Dennis was here for ten or twelve years and we had him here for the entire two weeks, but then he reached a stage where he was offered the directorship of the classical portion of the Saratoga music festival. This was in conjunction with the Philadelphia Orchestra, and this was an *extremely* prestigious thing. He had been on the lookout for years and we all expected that he would get one of the major American orchestras. Although he did guest conduct some of the larger orchestras, this was a very prestigious thing. He tried to work his conducting around Saratoga and so he began to do the Festival on a part-time basis. Although he was a music director of the Festival his conducting was confined probably to only one weekend. There was one year when he was not here at all. We had guest conductors.



While at Saratoga he was also at the Stuttgart Opera for five years and then was extended two more years. Then from Stuttgart he went to Bonn. It's my understanding that his personal European sponsor almost from the beginning was Hans Werner Henze.

Well, when Dennis was at Julliard he conducted as a student one of Hans Werner Henze's operas. Hans Werner Henze was in the audience. After the concert he came backstage and talked to Dennis. He told Dennis that he intended to have him do some further work with his operas in Europe. Of course Dennis didn't take him very seriously. He thought that he was just being pleasant. So it was understandable that Dennis now had operatic engagements in Europe. I think his first conducting in Europe was in opera, and then of course he got some engagements with orchestras there. Much of his repertoire with orchestras there were contemporary and some American, Bolcom and Harrison but also contemporary European composers . . . whose works he later brought to the Festival.

**Jarrell:** If you look back over the very long time that Davies was the musical director, how would you characterize his contribution, his defining of the Festival?

**Kretschmer:** Well, he was a perfect exponent of the original ideas that we had. He just developed them. He perfected and enlarged them to include music from all over the world, whereas previously we were programming mostly American composers. In fact, towards the end there was some critical comment on the part of supporters that maybe we should switch our main emphasis back more on American composers and less on composers who were at that time cited in Europe. Dennis not only brought composers from Europe but he'd also bring some of his guest artists from there.

**Jarrell:** During this time you were always on the board?

**Kretschmer:** I was on the board and I became a life member. They put me in charge of the fund drive in 1966 and then they made me president in 1967. The following year I was vice-president when Bud Wyckoff took over in 1968. I was vice-president and then I was on the board and then that following year I was vice-president in charge of the fund drive. Chávez's first year. Then one year

under Manny. In 1973 I was the treasurer for two years. And in 1981 they made me a life member.

**Jarrell:** Would you say, since you've sat on different boards, that this is a real working board?

**Kretschmer:** Well, I've never seen a board that was perfect. It seems that almost any board you want to talk about, one third of the board doesn't come to meetings, or sometimes don't even buy tickets or make donations, or show up. We've had board members who didn't show up for any of the meetings during the year, although they were fairly good contributors, so you could live with that. You have board members who are big names. They are chosen because of their positions or status. They'll come to the first meeting but you won't see them for the rest of the year. But they will give you a certain prestige, and you understand what their situation is, and you live with that sort of thing. If you can get a board where two-thirds of the members will come to meetings and really work, you're doing very, very well.

**Jarrell:** I imagine that the Festival board has gotten more specialized in its sub-committees and tasks over the years, since the Festival has expanded from a few concerts into two weeks of events, concerts, recitals, galas, etc. etc. It's a much more complex undertaking now.

**Kretschmer:** It's much more complex and the people and the methods of operating musical organizations in this town have become quite sophisticated. The Festival, the Symphony, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz have many, many committees, and each committee has a chairperson. They have their meetings, financial goals, and budget requirements, so it's really a working situation now. We are very much more selective in obtaining members. We sit down with them and tell them what we are and who we are and what we expect of them in the way of buying season tickets and also giving donations and actively working on the board. This way you are able to eliminate the people who have insufficient time or interest.

**Jarrell:** So you have a process now where you mutually assess each other and are really clear about what your expectations are?

**Kretschmer:** Well, of course we always had that goal, for the last ten or fifteen years we always thought we were going to achieve that. Every annual meeting you have five, ten, or fifteen new people there and a lot of times they didn't get proper orientation, never got to know the organization really. A lot of them would drop out after six or eight months, when they found out what was really involved.

**Jarrell:** How many people sit on the board of directors now?

**Kretschmer:** Well usually our goal is around 30.

**Jarrell:** That's a big board.

**Kretschmer:** It's a big board, but you know, if you get 15 or 20 people to a meeting you are doing pretty well. I think that the perfect situation would be getting twenty-five people. Historically in the music organizations in the county that I've been involved with, the officers and the chairs of the different committees, when they have committees, did the work. They made a lot of the decisions and there wasn't that much input although there were certain people who did come to meetings who were quite articulate, but a lot of times it depended upon the efficacy of the key people.

**Jarrell:** Today, Bud, I'd like to do a Cabrillo Festival wrap-up and then move on to other subjects. Could you add to the history behind the appointment of Davies?

**Kretschmer:** Since our last interview, I talked to other individuals who were involved and they brought me up to date. It's my understanding that John Orlando and Ed Bennett went to Aspen to hear Dennis conduct and they were very much impressed. But there was a selection committee prior to that and they met with quite a few conductors. Dennis's name came up in conjunction with a request of the manager for another conductor. The manager said this conductor's not available but another name on the list that he would highly recommend was Dennis Russell Davies. So Dennis came in. John Orlando tells me Dennis occupied in a small room the sofa, all himself, and he just started talking. He was so impressive and direct. He really struck them as a person who was extremely gifted and able to describe a vision of the Cabrillo Music Festival that enchanted everybody. They immediately became interested in Dennis and Dennis only.

Also I understand that Dennis was invited to the Festival for the last series under Carlos Chávez and he stayed at the Buchanan's house and was sort of incognito.

**Jarrell:** To continue from last time, would you like to add to your assessment of Davies' tenure in terms of shaping and defining the Festival?

**Kretschmer:** Well, he further defined the Festival with his own ideas and with the musicians and the music that he brought in. I don't know of anybody living who could have articulated this vision any better than Davies, because he just developed it, even though he was only 30 years old, and especially now as a great exponent of American music.

**Jarrell:** So we got him here when he was very young and he . . .

**Kretschmer:** And he was ambitious.

**Jarrell:** Yes.

### **The Cabrillo Festival's Reputation**

**Kretschmer:** He saw this as a star to which could attach his whole musical career. The Festival would thrust his career forward insofar as his playing a unique role in American music. Today of course the Cabrillo Music Festival is very prestigious; in Germany, in the East, in Boston, New York, you mention it to a conductor or to a musician, especially one who's interested in contemporary music and they just pick it up right away. Excitement has been created over the years by our presentations, and of course this is reflected by ten consecutive ASCAP awards.

**Jarrell:** Tell me about the ASCAP awards vis-à-vis the Cabrillo Music Festival.

**Kretschmer:** Well, the ASCAP award is given to an orchestra every year that goes out and has the most imaginative programming of contemporary music and American music. We've won that hands down all these ten years.

**Jarrell:** I see. Artistically then, under Davies' leadership, the Cabrillo Festival has become nationally renowned. I know that there have been ups and downs financially in the fortunes of the Cabrillo Festival. Could you say something about the finances, in terms of the ups and downs as you've perceived them, and

the strategies that the Festival has devised for maintaining community-based support and community corporate support?

**Kretschmer:** Well, initially of course we had guarantors, I think most of them from the Pajaro Valley, who said that they would give \$1000 each if necessary to back up any losses for the first Cabrillo Festival. To my knowledge at the time it seemed that they would perhaps have to put up a maximum of \$400. There was another occasion, about the time of my presidency where they went down \$12,000 which was about 25-30% of the total budget.

**Jarrell:** You mean in the red?

**Kretschmer:** In the red. Someone devised the idea that if there were eight members of the Board who would be willing to sign notes for \$1500 this would take care of our immediate problems. Then perhaps in the future the Festival would be in the financial position to repay those. However, in the following year we decided that this would be too much of a burden to add on to the budget, so all of the eight members just canceled the debt.

I was president in 1967. This was probably in 1968 and the big deficit was mostly due to the fact that the opera by Frank Martin, which was to be scheduled on the first and second weekends, was not ready for showing on the first weekend. So we had to cancel the concert. This was primarily responsible for that deficit. There was another occasion, when we moved to the tent at the University, and we found out that there were a lot of additional costs that we didn't anticipate. The rental of the tent was a lot more expensive because it required a standby maintenance group to take care of it while the Festival was on. We didn't know that we had to get a portable generator, which cost over \$10,000. We didn't realize that the weather would be so windy, whereby the flaps on the tent would be beating away during the concerts. In fact, during one windstorm at a concert we were really afraid that it was going to blow down. It was a dangerous situation. In addition to that we did not have restrooms, so there were 12 portable toilets outside lined up alongside the tent. They were being used during the performances.

The music production itself was not too bad. The tent held maybe six to seven hundred people. It was however very dusty for members of the orchestra; it was

really not a very favorable situation as far as the musicians were concerned. Rehearsals outside were sort of an unpleasant environment in which to really concentrate on the music.

**Jarrell:** How did the Cabrillo Festival decide to have the tent up at the University? Was it to be in more proximity to the Shakespeare Santa Cruz activities up here in the summer, or what was the reasoning?

**Kretschmer:** Well I wasn't that active on the Board at the time, but I read the reports of a special committee and they thought that perhaps what we needed to do was get away from a building. They thought putting a tent on the hill overlooking the Bay would create such a favorable atmosphere that it would draw people from the entire area and it would really enlarge the size of their audience. It would just be a fantastic experience and would draw many additional people.

**Jarrell:** Was that the case?

**Kretschmer:** We had a significant number of additional people come. I think they were impressed with the music but they were not impressed with the physical aspects of it and as a consequence, even though we received a lot of financial support from the University, in the way of parking and other amenities, the amount that they lost was just almost catastrophic. We received for instance, from NEA, a grant of \$75,000 to cover additional costs for 3 years and it was necessary to use the whole \$75,000 just for the first year, during 1988. I know Mary Kay Hubbard was the board president at the time. Because the sales of seats in advance had not met our expectations for meeting the cash flow requirements during the Festival, they went to the banks and obtained a loan based on the anticipated grant receipts. Some of the grants are not received until after the Festival. So using the grants as collateral they borrowed the money to get through the Festival. The losses could have been catastrophic.

On another occasion, it may have been the same year, we ended up \$45,000 in debt and our staff resigned. It was necessary for us to get a new executive director. We got through this particular crisis by a device which I proposed when I came back on the board to a more active status. I suggested that to meet our \$45,000 in debts we obtain money on loan from our board members and

interested parties, that we would pay an 8% interest on it and we would be hoping to repay it within possibly 2-3 years. The rest of the board members who did not do that could make their annual contribution early to provide cash flow. By that means I believe we raised up to \$30-35,000 to pay off our obligations, and then in addition to that we got enough annual contributions to provide cash flow and to hire new staff. The notes have all been repaid.

**Jarrell:** The scale of the whole Festival has grown over the years, so what would you say its annual budget is now?

**Kretschmer:** The annual budget for this year is \$270,000. But in prior years it's been up to around \$400,000. It has kept up with the Symphony budget pretty much through the years, but this last year we had a sizable deficit and it ate into the money that we had accumulated over the years. This year if we absorbed a like deficit that would wipe us out.

**Jarrell:** To what do you attribute these deficits?

**Kretschmer:** Well, over the years we have failed to significantly increase ticket sales.

### **The Impact of the 1989 Earthquake**

**Kretschmer:** As a result of the earthquake a lot of these businesses went under, and the sale of program advertising cut in half. We received a considerable amount of money from earthquake relief funds. This helped us to get through that crisis year.

**Jarrell:** Oh. I see, earthquake relief funds from . . . what source?

**Kretschmer:** From many sources.

**Jarrell:** I see. I didn't realize that.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, the money was distributed by the Cultural Council amongst a lot of the cultural and nonprofit organizations.

**Jarrell:** To help them make it through this very rough time.

### **The Need for a Local Performing Arts Facility**

**Kretschmer:** To help them make it through. But over the period of the last ten years, our ticket sales really have not advanced as far and as fast as our reputation. Much of this is due to the fact that we never had a home. We left Cabrillo College. Cabrillo College actually is limited in size and besides that is not a really good concert hall. It was built primarily for the demands of the drama department. So it was necessary for us, when we had to leave Cabrillo to find other halls.

We have tried everything and the only thing that was satisfactory was the San Juan Bautista Mission. It was very confusing for the people to come to the Festival from out of town and to know just exactly where that particular concert was, because there might be half a dozen different venues over the two week period. Besides that it was difficult rehearsing for the musicians who were involved with the orchestra or in small chamber groups. They had to rehearse. The University was very helpful towards the end in providing certain areas where they could rehearse. For instance, if you rehearse a symphonic work that might be perfect at Porter College, when played in the First Congregational Church, it just didn't fit. So they had a lot of physical handicaps there, and in spite of the inspired direction that we received from Dennis and the high quality of his performance and the wonderful soloists and composers that made up the whole Festival, we were just struggling against enormous, insurmountable problems. This problem is probably going to continue until somebody builds a hall in the area that is suitable for the Festival. That's one of the reasons why I worked so hard for four years as president of the Wingspread Foundation because that would have been the perfect place.

**Jarrell:** I was not aware that you were working on behalf of that project, which of course was eventually . . .

**Kretschmer:** . . . voted down.

**Jarrell:** Yes. Because that would have had a concert hall.

**Kretschmer:** Oh, it had not only a concert facility with 1200-1400 seats, but there would have been an income from the entire project which would have gone to support that. They would have had all of the facilities and all of the expertise and



professional staff to market the product. They would have a place where people coming in from outside areas could live during the concerts.

I will say that one of the influential aspects of the decision to set up a tent on the campus here was the experience in Bear Valley. They have a Festival up there that has a tent that holds a thousand people. I've attended it several times and it is delightful. The acoustics are just marvelous and it's set up on a large parking lot, a big tent with comfortable seats and although it's miles and miles from any populated area, many of the concerts sell out. With that actual example of a good acoustical tent, we thought if we put it on a hill with the most beautiful scenery in the world, that this couldn't miss.

**Jarrell:** But the logistics apparently were very difficult?

**Kretschmer:** The logistics, the weather conditions, and the extra cost involved.

**Jarrell:** Yes. You've been involved in virtually all of the music organizations in this county. An ongoing need is for a concert facility. We have the Civic Auditorium in Santa Cruz. We have Performing Arts up here at the University, but that's a University facility. Since you have the big picture in terms of concert music making needs throughout the calendar, how do you envision a solution?

**Kretschmer:** Well, I think there are several solutions but I don't know if you're going to reach them in my lifetime. We have a new performing arts complex that's going up in conjunction with Watsonville High School. They have been able to enlarge their 500-seat proposed theater there to 850. The plans were drawn up under the supervision of a professional acoustician. An 850-seat facility with plenty of parking is can eventually be fully utilized for the needs of mid-county and Pajaro Valley. However, there has been a historic bias against performing or scheduling anything in Watsonville by the people in the northern county, and vice versa.

It seems to me that the perfect answer, of course, would be to have something in mid-county. We tried when Max Walden was president of the Symphony. He headed a group to buy the movie theater downtown which at that time was available for \$250,000 and there was just not enough interest shown by the city fathers in assisting that. Today of course that price would be a bargain. They would pick up something like that and just take the ball and run with it. When

donors are obtained in future years, the University is eventually going to have a hall holding between 1200-1500 people, and that will be available to the Symphony and the Festival. There's another group that is still thinking in terms of building something on the hill behind Cabrillo College. So there are some committees working on these things, but these are all long-term projects.

### **Cabrillo Festival Home at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium, 1991**

**Jarrell:** How is the Cabrillo Festival faring right now in terms of moving among these different venues?

**Kretschmer:** Last year we settled on the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium. They've spent quite a bit of money fixing the acoustics and they were not too bad. Now they have some ideas and some money to further improve that for the Festival. I think that it will even be better next year. One of the things that was very successful and is in the marketing plan was setting up a Festival in front of the Civic Auditorium where they closed the streets. With the cooperation of shops and restaurants in town they had all these booths and they had some entertainment. This year we're going to have a lot of local music groups scheduled to play on different nights so about an hour and a half before each concert there will be a street festival. We think that this will create an ambiance that will help draw people, even those that might not be potential lovers of contemporary music. Our program is going to be all American composers this year for a change.

We have been able to obtain the services of two expert people to staff our office, an expert in obtaining grants, an expert in marketing and public relations. With those two people and computers, they have been able to handle the requirements of the Festival. We're very much attuned to the ideas that they bring and their capability of obtaining grants from additional foundations has encouraged us to believe that the present goals are going to be met. The budget has been reduced a significant amount. We are on budget right now and we're about ready to send out our annual announcement pamphlet. I think that the response this year is going to be quite good.

## Marin Alsop

**Kretschmer:** A considerable amount of enthusiasm has been generated by the appointment of Marin Alsop as music director. She comes to us as Dennis Davies did last time, very young and with a lot of ideas. Very articulate and she has his highest recommendations. Dennis said he couldn't think of anybody in this country who would be better prepared and more ambitious to launch her career, actually, on a Festival. We think also the aspect of having a woman conductor here is an appealing one. In the last ten years there have been three or four women conductors who have done very well here. JoAnn Falletta has been very successful with the Symphony, to the extent that she is now so busy that the Symphony couldn't hope to hold her down. We've had Victoria Bond, who was one of the first women conductors here in the early days of Dennis Russell Davies' directorship. We also had Catherine Comet here. Dennis has been very generous in spreading his conductorial modes amongst the sexes.

**Jarrell:** Would you like to mention any notable Cabrillo Music Festival board members who've been on the board for a long time who you think have really contributed to and shaped the Festival? Manny Santana comes to mind.

**Kretschmer:** Manny of course has been an outstanding member. We've had many excellent presidents. Suzanne Paizis served for two years and she was a strong person. Bud Wyckoff came in for only one year but he came in with a tremendous amount of prestige from the legal community, and the business community. He gave confidence to the people who were very much concerned about the Festival's financial viability. Dr. Ruth Frary was a president for four years. She was a physician in Pajaro Valley and ended up her career as director of the medical facility at the University. Manny Santana was president for five years and he had a vision and a way of expressing this vision that was very unique. He was a very articulate person, sort of a philosopher. He didn't approach this thing on a meat and potatoes basis. He was concerned about the financial aspect but his contributions were beyond the financial. He was a big financial supporter in providing his San Juan Bautista restaurant for after the last Festival. It's traditional that the people attending that evening concert at the Festival at the Mission would go to his restaurant. He generously provided food and libations and it just made for altogether a different and festive spirit. The Mission's main attraction is the grounds, the picnics. Everybody comes out there

to have a good time and to enjoy the festivities during the day time while they are having these picnics and lunches. We would always have a dance group or a singing group or an instrumental group there and many of the people would bring children. It's almost like a fourth of July picnic. Manny has also been so generous in the utilization of his local restaurant for meetings and for gatherings of new people to announce the new season. He does it very quietly. He's been a generous contributor and an outstanding person.

Earleen Overend has served as president of the Festival for three years and besides that she has been the manager of the Festival too. She had a good background there so that in later years when she was on the board and as president she served in a very, very capable capacity. Dick Klein served for a couple of years and he's done an expert job. He's given up his time and his talents and his money and he's introduced us to a new group of business and professional people. His brother, of course, was the music director of the symphony for a couple of years. When you get a new strong person on the board, and especially as president, they have a whole group of people as associates that they are able to bring in, not only as financial supporters but also people who potentially will advertise in our program as well as buy tickets. Carol Brancich did an excellent job for two years. Bob Korns and Gayle Ortiz brought in a lot of innovations.

**Jarrell:** When did Gayle come onto the board?

**Kretschmer:** Gayle was on for 1985 and 1986. She was surrounded by a group of business people in the Capitola area that also were new to the Festival and they were personal sponsors of very great importance to us at the time. Mary Kay Hubbard was president for two years but she was also active in the early Festival, not as President, but as a strong supporter through many years.

**Jarrell:** How is the board president chosen?

**Kretschmer:** Well, they have a personnel and a nominating committee to bring people on the board in the first place. Then they usually work themselves up as a member of a committee. Pretty soon they are a committee chairman. If they really show a lot of promise and if they've got the time then they are pushed up on a chair basis. I was looking through the history of this thing and I find in looking at

the programs, my initial position was to be in charge of the fund drive in 1966 but the next year I was president. So we must have made our goal.

**Jarrell:** Yes. (Laughter) But somebody who is president of the board will have had seasoning as a board member and working in various committee positions.

**Kretschmer:** That's right. They must have been unusually successful and of course of almost equal importance is that they have the time to give to a job like this, because initially a president will want to attend all the different committee meetings to find out first hand what's going on, what their goal is and how well they are accomplishing their task. It takes really about a year for a person to become trained, even though he is a president, in all aspects of the operation. So it's pretty important that they take the job for the second year. Now the agreement is that they will come on for two years, because you are training them for the first year and then the second year you've got maximum utilization out of this training.

**Jarrell:** What has kept you engaged and committed on this board for so many years? What do you get out of it?

**Kretschmer:** Well the biggest thing I get out of it is going to the concerts. Looking forward to the new composers, the new types of compositions. I love to meet the musicians, composers, soloists, and conductors. I know many of the musicians who have been coming since year one. I look forward to that time of the summer when I can just hopefully get away from all other problems and just go there and fulfill a dream I had when I was young, to live in a community where I could attend concerts constantly. I had this dream and within the last ten or fifteen years there are quite a few festivals that I've been able to attend out of town—Aspen, Bear Valley, Grass Valley, Carmel Bach, Gina Bachauer, and Cliburn Piano Competitions. But this one here, being able to help these people solve their problems, and be a viable operation . . . You know when you've got an investment of a lot of years of sweat and pain in helping them through their formative years, it's just like having a child, and if they're having problems down the years as they get older you don't abandon the child just because you are having something of a problem. Sometimes when they did have problems I would get more involved on the board and be much more active.

**Jarrell:** So you were continuously on the board but sometimes your participation would be less than at others?

**Kretschmer:** I was made a life member in 1981 and there would be periods . . . I always got board minutes and once in a while I'd go to their meetings and I'd always go to the Festival. I had season tickets for the Festival from the first year and I've only missed three concerts in all those years, but when I felt there was a problem that they might not survive then I would get back into the fray. (laugh) This has especially been true for the last four or five years.

### **Music Education and Building Future Audiences**

**Jarrell:** I see that you've been a kind of a musical midwife of a very special kind. How are we going to create audiences made up of people like you in the future?

**Kretschmer:** It's very discouraging thinking of the future, because in the twenty-five or thirty years I've been in this area, the amount of attention and money that's given to music in the public schools has been diminishing. In 1965 I appeared before the board of the Watsonville High School to protest the decrease in funding of their public school music program, which at that time was just superb. I've never seen anything quite as good as that. Here were these people on the board making decisions and I will say that the people on the board were well educated. There were two ladies on the board. Norman Masonson and I tried to convince them that music was a vital part of children's education, but over the years it seems from that point on, when they were to make any cuts, they usually started with music. The last thing of course they would cut would be athletics.

**Jarrell:** But the viability of all of these organizations, the Festival, the Symphony, and the concert associations, depends on an informed audience in love with music.

**Kretschmer:** That's true. In the Symphony they've always had a very active women's guild and some of them belong to the bridge club. They have musicals; they have an annual housing visitation. They have a rummage sale that has been very productive financially. Some of these people that get involved in the non-musical aspects, the social aspects, are drawn into the musical aspect of it and become quite good supporters.

Of course the Youth Symphony has been quite a favorable factor in sort of enlarging the musical experience of the young people who have taken lessons privately. There have been music teachers who have stretched themselves in teaching classes in many schools. Some of our youth have found interest in specific instruments, started private lessons and they've developed quite nicely. They had music camps here for many years and perhaps some of them are still going. The Suzuki strings program that they have at Cabrillo College has been outstanding for over ten years and they have just done marvelous things. It's really inspirational to go to their concerts. They've got so many students they have to spread their concerts over a longer program. To see these young people stand up before an orchestra and fiddle away from memory, it's just mind-boggling.

**Jarrell:** In terms of the Cabrillo Festival, is the push towards cultivating the local audience as the base, or outside the region, or both?

**Kretschmer:** Both. One of the inhibiting factors in getting grants from foundations in the East is that our statistics don't show that we have been able to enlarge our market beyond our local area. If they're going to support something on a national basis they want for us to be able to show that we have brought outside people into the Festival from a larger area.

**Jarrell:** Like the whole West?

**Kretschmer:** That's right.

**Jarrell:** Or the East Coast too?

**Kretschmer:** That's right.

**Jarrell:** Yes, I see.

**Kretschmer:** That's right. The highly sophisticated people in our staff that we have now have had national experience in marketing, public relations, and grant writing. They have many connections that they have used in prior jobs in Boston, and in Houston. We find that this additional sophistication and knowledge is now starting to produce. We are hoping that this will result in larger audiences at the auditorium. Last year it was kind of discouraging for the musicians to be

putting on just a marvelous concert and staring at maybe 50 percent of the seats being empty.

**Jarrell:** Pretty grim.

**Kretschmer:** That is grim. So they are trying this year to devise means and methods of getting a larger group of support. I think they're going to be successful. But bringing people from outside to downtown Santa Cruz now is quite an endeavor.

**Jarrell:** Because we still have the downtown devastation from the earthquake?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, You're walking by big holes in the ground and it doesn't create a very festive . . .

**Jarrell:** Ambiance. Yes, it's very depressing, actually.

**Kretschmer:** So we're trying to make up for it by creating an ambiance in the immediate neighborhood of the concert hall. The Civic is really the only thing we have to offer. And the advantage of the Civic of course is all the concerts are in the same place. They can do the rehearsals there as well. They can store their valuable instruments there. When they achieve perfection, or near perfection in the rehearsal they know they are playing the same thing for the program itself.

### **Marion Taylor**

**Jarrell:** Last time you mentioned Marion Taylor, who's a veteran Cabrillo Music Festival Board member and you were indicating that you thought that she had been a particularly valuable Board member. Would you like to elaborate?

**Kretschmer:** Well, I can't imagine in my almost thirty years of participation in the activities of the Festival, in depth, that I've met anyone who is more dedicated and more productive than Marion Taylor. I have a great admiration for her. I sat on her music committee for many years, mostly to find out what was going on and what was being developed in the way of programs . . .

**Jarrell:** That was the program committee?



**Kretschmer:** That was the program committee that we formerly called the music committee.

**Jarrell:** I see.

**Kretschmer:** I got myself appointed to that because I like to know what's going on. I was always impressed with Marion's fine musicianship which she demonstrated when she played with the different music groups here. Also the depth of her knowledge of music and of composers and the good judgment that she showed in coming to certain conclusions when we were discussing the pros and cons of certain projects. I have the most wonderful memories of Marion. I would say that no one really has done more for the Festival than Marion. She has done it in a different way. Manny Santana has given his wisdom and his dedication and an awful lot of money to the Festival. Both of them now are in the ranks of the life members, and they certainly deserve it very much.

### SANTA CRUZ SYMPHONY

**Jarrell:** I thought we could talk about your participation as a board member with the Santa Cruz County Symphony. How did you become involved with the Symphony, which was a very much different organization then, in 1965 when you became involved, than it is now? Could you describe what the Symphony was like . . . what the organization was like, what the base of support was like, in those early days?

**Kretschmer:** Well, when I arrived here in the fall of 1962, I was looking for music venues and one of the first ads that I saw in the paper was the announcement of the concert by the Symphony. So I hustled over there and went to the Civic Auditorium. The orchestra was on the stage and they had a very nice crowd there. The music was fair to middling for an orchestra that had just started a few years before and the acoustics were terrible, of course. After the concert I had an opportunity to meet with a friend of mine who was on the board. He discussed the problems of the Symphony and how they were going and I was very much interested in going to their concerts. After having been involved with music organizations for quite a number of years in other towns, I was surprised to walk into the Civic Auditorium and in the lobby they had a large barrel there with a big sign on it, for donations for the orchestra. So the concerts were free. As I got

to know over a period of time how they started I was really impressed and amused in a way, because I found out that the local musicians were so anxious to get one started that they were willing to pay one dollar a registration fee and 25 cents for each rehearsal so that they could pay for the expenses of the conductor, Detlef Anders, who came from San Francisco.

### **Detlef Anders**

**Kretschmer:** Detlef Anders' first concert was in 1958 and he stayed through 1964. The first concert was May 22, 1958, and he conducted through the 1963-64 season. In researching this project, I was amazed. This was before my day. I was amazed to find that the original budget for the 1958-59 season was \$2200. Actually two years later it was only \$2400. As I showed some interest in helping them raise money I was invited to sit on the board, and in 1968 they made me second vice president. I must have raised my quota for that year because the next year I was elected president. The management of the Symphony and the board was very elementary at the time . . . fund drives, and fund drive letters and that sort of thing. In that era I wrote quite a few, and I followed them very closely to monitor them to see that the people who were recipients of this letter came through. We normally sent them a follow-up letter. Mr. Anders was replaced in the 1964-65 season by Norman Masonson.

### **Norman Masonson**

**Kretschmer:** Norman was a graduate of Columbia University. He had received his master's degree there. He was hired by the board and stayed on through the 1970-71 season.

**Jarrell:** Now can you tell me, during his tenure, what would a season involve?

**Kretschmer:** Well a season would involve about six or seven or eight concerts. There would be concerts both in Watsonville and in Santa Cruz. We found out that we no longer could use the Civic Auditorium, because it was really too large and the acoustics were not that great. So we used other venues for a number of years. We used Porter Dining Hall at UCSC. At that time it was called College Five. We also used the First Congregational Church. In Watsonville we used one of the middle schools. We tried out Crossetti Hall at the fairgrounds. We used the Methodist Church on one occasion. That was a rather small church. When we

joined and were taken under the wing of Cabrillo College, then we started to use their theater on quite a regular basis. We normally gave two editions of each concert, one in mid-county or Santa Cruz and the other one in Watsonville.

### **Commissioning Barati Compositions**

**Kretschmer:** Later, George Barati was musical director, and a very fine programmer. I think the only additional things that he added were those compositions of his own, which were commissioned. During his nine years there I was instrumental in getting a commission for piano concerto, for a two piano concerto, for a violin concerto, a piece for the Cabrillo Music Festival and also for some other works for other musical organizations.

**Jarrell:** So this was part of your initiating Barati's commissions?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. Of course I commissioned him for a piano sonata.

**Jarrell:** Yes. The B.U.D. Sonata.

**Kretschmer:** The B.U.D. Sonata. This sonata was commissioned to celebrate the dedication in 1984 of the Kretschmer Recital Hall at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids. Also during that particular time . . . this has nothing to do with the Symphony, but also . . . as part of fostering George's music, we obtained cooperation from the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, and they presented, with our backing, with Barbara Lingefelter, a special program of Barati music, including his Symphony and his Two Piano Concerto, which is called *Branches of Time*.

### **George Barati**

**Jarrell:** Now, when was George Barati appointed conductor?

**Kretschmer:** Well I have the first year as 1970-71, and his last was 1979-80.

**Jarrell:** Can you describe how the organization grew and evolved during his tenure? Were you quite active on the board then?

**Kretschmer:** I was on the board, all these years. In fact in 1973-74 I was treasurer. In 1974-75 I was treasurer. In 1975-76 I was president for the second time. In 1976-77 I was vice president.

**Jarrell:** And I'm sure that the budget grew from \$2400? (laughter)

### **Financial Support for Santa Cruz Symphony**

**Kretschmer:** Yes, the budget grew, but not significantly until perhaps the last ten years. This is probably due to the fact from 1958-1963 there was free admission.

**Jarrell:** Yes, that policy was changed then.

**Kretschmer:** That policy was changed but then the admissions were very modest and the orchestra members were paid but that amount was rather minuscule. The conductor was paid perhaps \$1000-1500 per pair of concerts and rehearsals. The fund raising was mostly a straight contributions fund drive. Then there was sale of season and single tickets. We always had a strong women's guild. When I was active on the board we could expect between eight and twelve thousand dollars per year from that particular source. The active membership sponsored luncheon lectures by the conductors on the Wednesday noon before the concert. So it introduced an awful lot of women to the Symphony. They have between two and three hundred dues paying members.

**Jarrell:** Yes, now was there any kind of corporate sponsorship or business sector sponsorship of the Symphony in those days?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, there was a certain amount of it. It was not a significant factor. Most businesses were approached for ads in the program. We had an annual program and most of the businesses expressed their sponsorship, or their support in the form of ads. However, in later years when we were looking for new sources of funds it was decided to raise money by getting sponsorships from individuals or from businesses for specific concerts. There would be sponsorships of composers, of principal players in the orchestra and things of this nature.

**Jarrell:** When did the era of grant writing or foundation support commence? Of the Packard Foundation or any foundation support for the Symphony?

**Kretschmer:** I would say that that came in perhaps in the last fifteen years. And we always received support from the state of California.

**Jarrell:** Through the state arts commission?

**Kretschmer:** That's right. We've received support from them, I think, since the very beginning of that organization. We've received substantial support from the Cultural Council from the very beginning. We've received support on occasions from the NEA and both the Packard and the Hewlett Foundation. That has been very significant. During the last few years when we had the earthquake, there was a significant amount of money that was funneled into the city and was dispersed by the Cultural Council to different organizations, depending upon their budgets and their size and their requirements. That was a big help, both for the Symphony and for the Festival.

**Jarrell:** For tiding these organizations over, because of the drop in ticket sales.

**Kretschmer:** We found out last year that half of the advertisers for the previous year for both the Symphony and the Festival program were no longer in business. It impacted severely on achieving certain budget goals.

**Jarrell:** Where do the players in the Symphony live? In Santa Cruz?

### **Recruiting Musicians**

**Kretschmer:** Well initially they probably all were from Santa Cruz. There was a very interesting philosophical difference amongst the people in Santa Cruz, and it still exists, but not as strongly as when I first joined the Santa Cruz County Symphony, because there were people who believed that the Symphony existed for the enjoyment of local musicians. Then Norman Masonson came in and was able to spot certain areas where they were weak on talent. He would hire musicians from over the hill. We had to pay them a little extra fee; we paid them for mileage up to the county border. This created quite an amount of criticism, especially from the then president of the Symphony, since it impacted on the budget. There was a feeling too amongst the board members that when you hire a conductor, this conductor is a professional who has certain standards and he wants to present the very finest that his artistry and the available musicians can

produce. If he has to accept anything less than that for no particular reason, he is not only unhappy but he may just resign that position.

During Norman Masonson's tenure that condition existed and there was considerable complaint on the part of some of the musicians and also some of the board members that he was going out of his way to replace certain musicians in order to improve his orchestra's performance. When George Barati came in this became more pronounced. However when he came in they had a new element here, and that was the musicians who arrived as students at the University. Now the problem with that was they had many good young musicians coming in but you couldn't really plan too far in advance because you didn't know the numbers and the quantity and the quality until they came in the front door.

**Jarrell:** Until they got here, yes.

**Kretschmer:** That was not until September, and normally in a season you pretty much firm up your musician's spots in the spring or the summer, so there was always a certain amount of uncertainty as to what you could expect the next season . . . Barati was very adventuresome in programming. He began to play Mahler and Nielson and compositions containing actually a lot more musicians and more difficulty involved as well. So this was an element of uncertainty that was a factor in trying to keep both the board and Mr. Barati happy.

### **Relationship between the Santa Cruz and Monterey County Symphonies**

**Jarrell:** And then there was, I gather, some kind of unspoken or spoken competition between the Santa Cruz County Symphony and the Monterey Symphony, where we would have players from Santa Cruz commuting, so to speak, down the road to Monterey and playing there rather than playing here.

**Kretschmer:** There were two problems with the Monterey orchestra. Number one, they paid more than our orchestra. Naturally the musicians, everything else being equal, would rather play for more money. That was their means of livelihood. Another factor of course was how the musicians themselves evaluated the value of playing for Mr. Barati or the conductor at Monterey. George, being a conductor of international stature, won in most cases. However,

it became so much of a problem that at one time I went down and had lunch with the president of the Monterey Symphony Board and their conductor. I told them that we were a little nervous about the so-called competition and we wondered if they would take into consideration the fact that this was sort of upsetting our programs over here. They assured me that they were taking this into consideration and they talked to each one of these auditioned musicians and they told them that they had a responsibility to play with our orchestra and they didn't knowingly proselytize any of our musicians.

**Jarrell:** So they weren't on a raiding expedition. This was just something that was happening?

**Kretschmer:** This was something that was happening. Later on there was a cooperative program between the managers of both symphonies, where before the season was set firm, with dates, performances and rehearsals, they tried to work out a cooperative scheduling so that there would be no interference. This worked quite well, I think, for a number of years, but then in the last few years we decided to go ahead and schedule ours where we could because one of our problems was to find places for our concerts and a place to rehearse. A lot of times where we rehearsed we didn't actually give the final concert. So there just were so many factors. We were growing in size and our following and budgets were getting better. We had unionized the orchestra and they were being paid fairly well. So we thought that we could go out on our own.

### **UCSC Board of Studies in Music**

**Jarrell:** Also, during Barati's tenure, and perhaps later as well, I wonder if you know first hand, of any kind of talks or negotiations or meetings in terms of bringing together the Santa Cruz County Symphony and some arm of UCSC's music department. George Barati mentioned this as a possibility. The University would seem to be such a natural home for a cultural endeavor like this. I just wonder if you know about that?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, I do. I first heard about it from Professor Ed Houghton, who was on the Symphony board. Ed Houghton was one of the strongest supporters of music in Santa Cruz, as far as the Symphony was concerned. He served on the board for many years and always in a very valuable capacity. He was also on the

Music Board. Now, it's my understanding that in the early days of UCSC Chancellor McHenry asked George Barati to help out with some classes at that time in the music department that needed a lecturer. George took over this class for one term or one semester, whatever it was, and George remembers that period as a very pleasant and rewarding experience. When George first joined the Symphony he had a regular job as the Director of Montalvo Performing Arts. He remained doing that job and living on their premises there and he commuted to his job here.

At one stage George had indicated that he would be interested in quitting his job at Montalvo and moving over to Santa Cruz if he could obtain part-time employment at UCSC, conducting their orchestra. UCSC up until that time had not been successful in recruiting an orchestra or obtaining anyone to direct the orchestra to any degree of satisfaction as far as the music board was concerned. So there was a discussion within the music board about Mr. Barati's availability for the job. At one stage I was told by Ed Houghton that there were enough votes on the music board to employ George. A short time later I was told that the vote had been taken again and it was decided not to employ George. About two months later three of the members of the music board appeared before the Symphony Board to discuss the reasons why they voted against George's employment. It centered around some of the music students from UCSC who played in the Symphony orchestra, the so-called treatment that they received from George during rehearsals.

Anyone who knows George realizes that he works by the clock. He has certain requirements when he either conducts a performance or a rehearsal. He has figured out how many minutes he needs for each composition that he's going to rehearse that night. He had little tolerance for people who don't show up for rehearsals, who come late for rehearsals, or for those who came to a rehearsal and were not prepared, or had not practiced. I believe that on some occasions that when such difficulties arose that he may have been somewhat harsh in tone of his comments to these individuals and saying them in public before the rest of the players didn't particularly help the situation either. The players talked to the teachers on the music board and evidently convinced them that as far as they were concerned they didn't believe that Mr. Barati could make a harmonious transfer of his talents to the university.



**Jarrell:** So Bud, in these discussions, this dialogue then, it was more centered around the person of George Barati rather than some kind of integration of the two organizations, as such.

**Kretschmer:** Well, I don't think that there were plans to integrate both organizations. I think that what they were doing is utilizing George's experience, and his musical ability.

**Jarrell:** I see. Now, after Barati's tenure, who was the next musical director that you worked with?

**Kretschmer:** Well we had an interim year in 1980-81 when they were searching for a new conductor and Ed Houghton offered to be the interim music director.

### **Kenneth Klein**

**Kretschmer:** During that year we chose Kenneth Klein, who had been the music director of the Guadalajara orchestra for about 17 years. Kenneth Klein served for four years. It was our understanding when he applied for the job that he intended to settle in Santa Cruz and have a family here and that he would be present to help establish a working relationship with the city and with business.

**Jarrell:** So in addition to his musical and programming activities he would be promoting and building bridges?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. We knew that he had an orchestra in Long Island, New York, but then after he accepted our job we found out that he had accepted a job in South Dakota with another orchestra. Although he would have a presence here, he would be traveling between the orchestras.

**Jarrell:** Long Island, South Dakota, Santa Cruz . . . Even at that level of regional orchestra, regional symphony we have these peripatetic music directors.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, and that made it rather difficult for the management of these orchestras because they had to be in communication on a daily basis with problems coming up. At one stage when our manager called the manager of the South Dakota Symphony to ask if they knew where Kenneth Klein was, the response was, when you find out you tell us! On several occasions he was unable to make scheduled rehearsals and it was necessary to obtain Mitchell Sardou

Klein as a substitute. It was disappointing because we found Kenneth Klein to be a very fine conductor. He worked well when he was here, with the local groups, and he was the best of the six conductors that we tried out. As a conductor and music director I thought his tour was quite successful, from the musical standpoint. Now he also was hired by the University to organize and direct their symphony. That was less successful because he didn't spend enough time on the campus to actually recruit these students and try to build a permanent organization. So that was one disappointing aspect of his tenure here.

**Jarrell:** Why did Klein leave?

**Kretschmer:** Well, after he joined the South Dakota orchestra he organized another orchestra in New York, the Virtuosi Orchestra, and according to him, it was made up of musicians from New York, several of which belonged to the New York Philharmonic. In other words it was a quality group. Most conductors in their lifetime aspire to reach the big time, and New York was the big time. He had the Nassau Orchestra in Long Island and the Virtuosi Orchestra in Manhattan and between the two of them they kept him fairly busy in that town. Perhaps the reason for leaving on his part was mostly one of being overcommitted. On the part of the Symphony Board, it had reached a stage where it was not working out satisfactorily. So in 1985 and 1986 when we were recruiting a new music conductor Ed Houghton stepped in again to be the acting music director.

After that selection was made we got Mitchell Sardou Klein as the conductor. He also was on the staff of UCSC as their chamber symphony conductor. He was a conductor for three years and then the board decided to make a change. They obtained the services of JoAnn Falletta who was one of the fastest rising young women conductors in the country, who had won all sorts of prizes and awards in the New York area. She had her doctorate from Julliard and we were flattered when she agreed to at least step in and work on an interim or advisory basis which she did very nicely for two seasons. She brought here a lot of additional interest on the part of the music community. She was a very articulate, charming person and an excellent conductor. She was overcommitted herself. She had the Denver Chamber Orchestra and she had the [Bay Area] Women's Philharmonic Orchestra in San Francisco. Then she had an orchestra in New York. As time went on she just took on additional large orchestras. So she was not in the

position to stay here on a permanent basis. When she left the Symphony selected John Larry Granger who had an orchestra down in Southern California and also is an interim conductor at Claremont College. He presently is our music director.

**Jarrell:** Well that's very interesting about these different conductors and seeing how, as you use the phrase, they are overcommitted. It seems at all levels that conductors in this country have multiple appointments, geographically distant from each other, and that they've really become commuting musical directors, more and more.

**Kretschmer:** Well, at one time Seiji Ozawa was music director of the San Francisco Symphony and then he took on the Boston Symphony and the third orchestra was one in Tokyo. You'd think that San Francisco would be enough of a challenge to whet his appetite. However if you are offered the conductorship or music directorship of Boston it's pretty hard to turn that down. Because the Boston orchestra along with the Philadelphia and the Chicago and the New York Philharmonic are orchestras that very few young conductors could turn down, actually.

**Jarrell:** But it's very interesting, how the kind of quiet backwater of regional symphony orchestras is now quite in turmoil. There's so much activity. There's so much competition. I mean, it's really like musical chairs. That's where the young conductors have to go to serve their apprenticeships, and to move up?

**Kretschmer:** Well, one of the problems I think, why so many of these conductors are taking more than one orchestra, is because a lot of these orchestras, especially like Santa Cruz County Symphony, can't afford a large enough salary for a person to come here and bring his family and live. When we were recruiting about ten years ago we brought a conductor from Michigan State University here and he brought his wife with him. They loved the place. He was a very fine conductor but when his wife checked out the cost of housing here she said it costs three times as much for a house here as it does in East Lansing, Michigan. Besides that he found out that it would take ten years for him to get his boat into his slot in the Santa Cruz Harbor.

**Jarrell:** To get a slip! That's right. (Laughter)

**Kretschmer:** (Laughter) So he turned down the job selectively.

**Jarrell:** Yes. Well, how would you assess the Symphony organization as a laureate board member?

**Kretschmer:** In 1981 I was made a life member of the Cabrillo Music Festival. In checking over my positions in that orchestra while I was on the board, I find that in 1967 I was president of the Festival and second vice president of the Symphony. In 1968 I was vice president of the Festival and president of the Symphony. In 1970 I was vice president of the Festival. And in 1973 I was treasurer both of the Festival and of the Symphony. (Laugh) In 1974 I was also treasurer of both organizations. Then I came back as president of the Symphony in 1975 because of the crisis. And the following year I was the first vice president. So in the Festival I was an officer five out of nine years. In the Symphony I was officer six out of ten years.

### **Evolution of the Symphony**

**Jarrell:** How do you assess the state of the Symphony as a cultural entity in this community and its development?

**Kretschmer:** Well I think the Symphony has made tremendous strides. They have a fine working board. They have quite a large staff. Their officers and committees are quite well trained. They approach their goals quite conservatively and up until the last couple of years they have met their financial goals. It's a much different organization in its development over a period of years. The last two years they've sustained sizable deficits, not overwhelming because their assets and endowments are quite considerable. But there is some worry that this year might be another year of deficit and so they are considering perhaps taking such measures as the Cabrillo Festival . . .

**Jarrell:** Oh, scaling back?

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

**Jarrell:** We are in a recession. We've been hard hit by the earthquake.

**Kretschmer:** This is true. They have to be quite realistic about it. All of the big corporations have done the same thing. In fact, just two days ago I noticed that

two fairly large orchestras in the midwest and the east have cut short their season because they had insufficient funds to pay the musicians.

**Jarrell:** In terms of objectively ranking regional symphony orchestras, have you ever seen Santa Cruz evaluated in that light?

**Kretschmer:** No, I really haven't. I think Santa Cruz has always compared since at least the arrival of George Barati, although we have a much smaller budget than Monterey, I think artistically we equal them in almost every regard. I remember on one occasion we played a concert in Carmel and a few of the music lovers who attended the concert came up and told George afterwards that this is really a good orchestra and they wished that Monterey was as good. I think we compare favorably. There are many orchestras. Of course we don't compare with San Jose because that's . . .

**Jarrell:** They have a million people in their community to draw from.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, and of course they have big deficits too.

**Jarrell:** Yes.

**Kretschmer:** I think we compare with Modesto. We compare with Stockton. We're probably not quite as up to Fresno because Fresno has a larger budget and . . .

**Jarrell:** They do rank them also according to the annual budgets, don't they?

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes. This is true. So I think we rank artistically with other orchestras in the area with comparable budgets and I think that as far as the development of the staff and the volunteer efforts we are in a very favorable position.

### **Santa Cruz Cultural Council**

**Jarrell:** Well, I think we'll move on now, unless there's anything more you'd like to say about the Symphony. I would like to talk about your participation in the Santa Cruz County Cultural Council. If you could describe the year that the original study group was established, and what the genesis of the study group

was, which led eventually to the Council's being instituted. You didn't put the year on your dossier here, just that original study group.

**Kretschmer:** In 1979, I was on the original research group headed by Hal Hyde with the assistance of Ralph Burgard to develop a master plan for the establishment of a county-wide cultural organization. He chaired the study group and it was based on a study that was made by a gentleman that was brought here from New York state who had been a national pioneer in establishing organizations of this type. As a result of the hearings for that one year period it was decided to go ahead and establish this unique type of a council. It was the first of its kind in the state of California. I think it might have been unique in the West. Because when the California Arts Commission found out what we were doing they gave us a special boost in the way of funding and it was sort of a United Way for music activities and artistic activities in the county. We received very, very significant support from the Board of Supervisors and we received support from most of the school districts because of the Spectra program.

There were two types of grants that they were going to make. One to the larger organizations who have been nonprofit for a certain number of years and another was to be given to smaller nonprofit organizations. The maximum amount of grant money for the small organizations was \$4000. The amount to be given to the larger organizations, there were about five or six at the time, depended upon their budgets and the proportion of their size of the budget to the budgets of all the organizations in that particular category. I was on the first committee to give out the smaller grants. There was always more money requested than we had.

**Jarrell:** Of course. Who were the donors? You describe it as the United Way of cultural enterprises. You would be the clearinghouse, and do the inventory of all the large and small-scale cultural entities in the county. Then the money would be given and you dispensed it based on what you thought was needed.

**Kretschmer:** Well we got money from the foundations. We got money from the state. We got money from the school districts, the board of supervisors and then we had individuals.

**Jarrell:** Individual donors.

**Kretschmer:** Individual donors and business donors. Many businesses looked at this as a way to simplify their donations to our organizations.

**Jarrell:** What was the purpose of the Cultural Council? How did they become defined?

**Kretschmer:** Well, actually the purpose was to provide financial support to deserving non-profit cultural activities within the county. Music, art, drama . . . I don't know whether there were any individual grants, but there were small groups . . . music ensembles, and education in the schools.

One of the most successful was the Spectra program whereby a school district would say donate \$25,000 for which they would receive \$50,000 or more in services from the artists. There could be at least 100 artists or musicians, or groups, who were enrolled and accepted by the Cultural Council staff, and their services would be listed in the booklet which would be provided to the teachers of the participating school districts. The teachers would be given a budget as to how much they could spend on such programs. It caught on like wildfire and to this day it's been very, very successful, although I understand some school districts have had to cut back on their contributions, because of their dire straits.

**Jarrell:** Can you list some of the people who have been movers and shakers in the Cultural Council?

**Kretschmer:** The people who do major funding and provide the financial support are very, very important. You couldn't get along without them. But your voluntary individuals who step forward and take chairmanships of an organization like this . . . they deserve a lot of praise too. Beverly Grova was one of the most effective staff persons as director. She was followed by Lance Linares who is the present incumbent. The organization under his leadership has made marvelous progress and they've been consistent in their fair dealing with the organizations in making grants. I've appeared a dozen times for different organizations before their grant committees.

**Jarrell:** You would be representing the Symphony or the Cabrillo Music Festival or . . .

**Kretschmer:** . . . or the Crown Chamber Players or the Barati Ensemble or the Bay Concert Arts or the Cabrillo College Distinguished Artist Series..

**Jarrell:** For a grant from the Cultural Council?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. And Cabrillo College's amazing Suzuki strings program.

**Jarrell:** I didn't know you were involved in that as well.

**Kretschmer:** Oh yes.

**Jarrell:** I would like to move on to the Crown Chamber Players at the University. You said that you were the chair of the Crown Chamber Players support group.

### **Crown Chamber Players**

**Kretschmer:** That's right.

**Jarrell:** Now I know something about the history of the Crown Chamber Players. When Kenneth Thimann became founding provost of Crown College he was a musician himself, a pianist, and I know that he was instrumental in encouraging this group to get started, but would you please fill in where you came in.

**Kretschmer:** Well I came in as a faithful attendee of their concerts when I first arrived. They were free concerts. They had a marvelous collection of musicians—Rosario Mazzeo and his wife Katie Clare Mazzeo. Willie Van den Burg. Willie was a cellist/conductor from the Stokowski era with the Philadelphia Orchestra. The Crown programs were just splendid. This went on for years and they continued to be free for almost twenty years. When you say that Kenneth Thimann was a supporter, well, I'll tell you he not only was a supporter but he was a financial supporter, a big financial supporter.

**Jarrell:** Personally?

**Kretschmer:** Personally. Many times he would find the money from UCSC sources but if he couldn't find the money I understand he personally made up quite a few deficits. But eventually came a time when this situation had to change because the costs were increasing and getting reimbursement from



different pockets of the University funds was getting more difficult. We'd get a Chancellor's grant every year but it was very tentative.

**Jarrell:** You never knew for sure?

**Kretschmer:** We never knew until Chancellor Stevens came in here and he firmed it up at \$2000 a year. Then we had to start charging admission and we charged \$5 and \$6 for senior citizens and adults. We got a lot of complaints from these older people saying that they couldn't afford it, so Peggy Musgrave, who was the Provost at the time, wrote them a letter and said she would reduce it to \$4.

One of the things that bothered me . . . in spite of these marvelous concerts that were given, so few students came. Now the student fund was tapped for \$1000 or more every year and it just seemed rather strange that the fund was putting out money for these concerts and they did not take advantage of it. We had an excellent customer base from the city and from the campus; many of the campus staff would be there. I never saw too many from the music department but they probably were studying for their classes the next day.

There came a time when Peggy Musgrave suddenly resigned from that particular job. An interim provost was appointed. He had another job on the campus and so he was in absentia most of the time and I, as a chairman of the support group, had only two or three people on the board. I had to work with the bursar of Crown College. I had to work with the the provost's secretary and I had to work with the public relations department. It required so much personal attention, and so many trips up here that it was sort of frustrating as far as I was concerned. I reached a point where, with all my activities, I just couldn't fit it in. There was a recommendation that the music board appoint a half-time coordinator and on that basis they could continue. But then they decided that they just didn't have the money to support such a position and at that stage there was really no more support at least externally, from the community, to continue it. Kenneth Thimann wrote a very pleading letter that he wanted it continued and that he would be glad to support it with an additional donation. But at that stage, having received no assistance from the music board or from the University to fund that position, I just was not able to continue covering all of the bases myself. So that was the end of it. Unfortunately. It was a beautiful chapter.

**Jarrell:** Yes, it certainly was.

**Kretschmer:** Yes. Many, many dozens of memorable concerts.

**Jarrell:** For me likewise.

**Kretschmer:** Yes.

### **Barati Ensemble**

**Jarrell:** Yes, and that leads into your association with the Barati Ensemble from 1988-90, and maybe you could talk a little bit about what the Barati Ensemble was and how you became involved.

**Kretschmer:** Well, I seem to get involved with almost anything that George Barati does. He was approached by some of the better players from the local music scene. Some of them were principal players in the Symphony. Others were teachers. They missed playing under the directorship of George Barati and to get his inspirational directorship they said that they would be willing to be part of a group of three or four or five musicians who would play in a nonprofit group for a very small stipend. Would he be interested? So George discussed it with a few of his friends and followers. We subsequently had a little meeting to which I was invited. We ended up with an interim board and started plans to raise some money. We put a budget together and got incorporated. Over a period of two years we had four concerts in public and four other duplicate concerts that we gave out at the Stroke Center. One of the problems was finding a suitable venue for the concerts. We found that Resurrection Church was really quite nice. The programs that George put together were just outstanding, pieces that you didn't hear during the year, small pieces for trio or quartet or sextet, octet and the response was quite good.

But then of course we had to organize as a nonprofit. When you get into the nonprofit, and I was the treasurer for the whole two years, you have social security, liability insurance, unemployment insurance, workman's compensation, legal costs, bookkeeping costs. You have your rental costs and they were just so overwhelming although we did raise a considerable amount of money from individuals and from the Cultural Council. But it just wasn't sufficient to cover these costs. We did have a good response to our concerts, but you can't finance

an organization and keep it afloat by admissions alone. You have to have a supplementary income. It was just of such magnitude that quite a few of the people on the board resigned and we didn't have replacements. It was just another case of the Crown Chamber Players, running out of financial gas.

**Jarrell:** I didn't really appreciate how cumbersome and how heavy this apparatus was.

**Kretschmer:** That's true. The attraction of it initially was that these players would play for \$100 a concert. Well of course eventually we paid more than that. But you are enticed by seemingly small numbers like that, counting everything that I just mentioned the concerts cost us on the average of \$6000 each.

**Jarrell:** For each occasion?

**Kretschmer:** During the two or three years we were in existence our expenditures were between \$24,000-\$25,000.

**Jarrell:** That's amazing. For something modest. You just want to play some chamber music and . . .

**Kretschmer:** And of course I ended up as a president.

**Jarrell:** (Laughter)

**Kretschmer:** So I ended up as both the president and treasurer.

**Jarrell:** You were it.

**Kretschmer:** I was it.

**Jarrell:** (Laughter) Well, we've come to the end of the listing that you've put together here, Bud. I'm leaving out a couple of things, Actors Theater . . .

**Kretschmer:** I was treasurer of that.

**Jarrell:** Yes. And the Cabrillo Foundation and the Wingspread Foundations of which you were a board member in the 1980s. So I'm kind of leaving those out because this is our final interview. But now that it's kind of all said and done, I

haven't asked you about Aquinas College very much, you've mentioned it. Or your piano connection with Fresno State?

**Kretschmer:** Fresno State.

**Jarrell:** Yes, and I wonder if you'd like to mention those because I know that they are ongoing also. Let's start with Fresno State. We've mostly just focused on activities in Santa Cruz County. However, I know that your connection with Fresno State University and some of the music faculty there is important to you. Maybe you could tell me how that began and what place it plays in your musical life.

### **Fresno State University**

**Kretschmer:** Well, in the Fresno State case it was in connection really with Philip Lorenz, who was their star piano teacher there. Unfortunately he died last January at the age of 56. He was a student of Claudio Arrau and I met him in 1972 when he came here to the Cabrillo Festival to hear William Masselos. He and William Masselos had been very good friends in Washington, D.C. and in New York. In fact, when Philip Lorenz left New York for Fresno, William Masselos took over his apartment. So I followed his work very closely. I became a close friend of Philip in his different concert activities and teaching his outstanding students. As a result of the book where he publicly recounted his experiences as a student of Claudio Arrau, he received students from Germany, from Italy, from Spain, many from the Orient. These students were mostly conservatory graduates. They came to Fresno State for graduate work. Philip would tell me about these students and I worked out a system with Cabrillo College whereby I would bring them over here and they'd play a free noon concert at Cabrillo on their great Steinway. It would be a free concert for the students and of course I would reimburse them a small amount for the costs of their trip. In this way we probably put on maybe twelve concerts in the last few years and some of these students have gone on. One of them, Andreas Werz, has gone on to become an assistant professor at Fresno State Music Department. After he studied there he went back to Freiburg to get his doctorate. But there are many other of these foreign students there that we presented here. I was able to place Andreas as a soloist with our Symphony the last year. Also I was able to arrange many concerts in past years for Lorenz with the Symphony and with the

Berkeley Symphony. His two wives, Ena Bronstein and Sally Christian have played with our orchestra here, both with the orchestra and in a solo capacity.

**Jarrell:** His two wives in succession?

**Kretschmer:** Yes. Ena Bronstein also was a fellow student of Claudio Arrau and she's presently the head of the piano faculty at Westminster College in New Jersey. In working with these musicians, especially with Lorenz, I was able to arrange for a concert and lecture series at Aquinas College. And at one time we had a program there where we hired half of the Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra and Lorenz and Sally Christian played George Barati's Two Piano Concerto. Also Lorenz gave a dedication at the concert of a Knabe Grand that I'd given the College. I've had Andreas and Sally and Ena do concerts in Aquinas. And I've arranged for Ena to appear as a symphony soloist with an orchestra on the Peninsula. So I've become very involved with my Fresno friends.

**Jarrell:** Yes, you're a very individual kind of impresario.

**Kretschmer:** Yes, in a way. We also presented Philip and Sally in a Two Piano Mozart Concerto with the Nassau Symphony Orchestra in Long Island under Kenneth Klein.

**Jarrell:** Yes. So you have these lovely connections all over.

**Kretschmer:** That's right.

### **Contributing to Musical Life in Santa Cruz County**

**Jarrell:** You said when you first came here, Bud, that you wanted to settle in a place where there would be a rich musical life where you could have concerts to go to. (Laughter) You've certainly contributed mightily to this realization, haven't you?

**Kretschmer:** Well that's true. I certainly found a place where I always wanted to live, in an environment that was satisfying as far as my musical desires were concerned, my music goals. I managed to enjoy what they had to offer, but at the same time I've tried to give something back. In spreading the gospel, or the word of the music that we have here, I've tried to enlarge the horizons and the quality of the product. I've been dismayed with what the state has been doing to our

music programs in the schools. I've tried to help offset the dire situation that that has created. My next goal really is to be involved in the establishment of permanent scholarships at the local schools. I have managed to do that with Cabrillo and also with Aquinas College. I hope to be able to do something with the University here, and to see that the young people who are striving to reach the top or at least the next step on the way are given encouragement. There's no better encouragement you can give than an additional stipend.

**Jarrell:** Yes, for study. But we need connoisseurs of those programs, of those concerts. We need to create future audiences.

**Kretschmer:** Yes. I was especially pleased when I read the line-up for the 1992 Cabrillo Music Festival. We have a person coming whose composition is being played. I remember when he was a student many years ago, a piano student at UCSC. Someone asked me if I would be willing to pay for his piano lessons at so much a week, or so much a month. I said yes. It didn't really amount to that much. But this young man was a very fine pianist and he'd won a local contest. So he went on to graduate from the school and I had read recently in the pink section of the San Francisco paper where his compositions were being played. I often wondered whether this was the person that I had supported. I was just amazed when I saw this program for this year's Festival, to see his name there.

**Jarrell:** As a composer?

**Kretschmer:** Yes, I'm looking forward to meeting him.

**Jarrell:** Well, thank you so much, Bud, for working with me in these spoken sessions on your life here in Santa Cruz and contributions to our musical life. I've enjoyed talking with you very much.

**Kretschmer:** Well the feeling is mutual.

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