

# Music at Walla Walla University

*Walla Walla College, second Seventh-day Adventist college to be started on the West Coast, retained that name until 2007. Although most of its students were initially elementary and high school students, by the turn of the century it was offering four-year courses which would be equivalent to today's junior college programs. One of the first Adventist colleges to offer a fully accredited four-year college program, it now offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees.*

**W**hen Walla Walla College opened its doors on December 7, 1892, just three years after Washington officially become a state, it was one of fewer than a half-dozen colleges in the region. Its location in the southeast corner of the state, three miles from Walla Walla, frontier capital of the state, was controversial, with some wanting to locate the college in Milton, Oregon, ten miles away, or in Spokane, Washington.

However, once the General Conference had decided where the college would be located in 1891, believers in the Northwest united to construct a commanding four-story brick structure with a bell tower that could be seen from Walla Walla. Like many of the colleges in the Northwest, it offered courses for elementary, high school, and college students, since at the time of its founding there were only three public four-year high schools in the state and one in each of the adjoining states of Idaho and Oregon.<sup>1</sup>

**F**rom the opening of school on that cold December day, when 101 students and six teachers gathered in an unheated chapel, music teacher Caroline Wood was present,

leading the singing with a clear soprano voice. Wood, who had come to the region in 1859 at the age of 19 with her family in a caravan of oxen- and cow-driven wagons, had become known as the "Jenny Lind of the West," because of her remarkable voice and its extended range. Although she had nine children and her husband was in ill health, she sang frequently, and in her lifetime sang for two U.S. presidents when they visited the Northwest.

Raised as Seventh-day Baptists, she and her husband became Seventh-day Adventists when they were visiting in San Francisco in 1868. Upon returning to Walla Walla, they led out in efforts to share their religion and, in 1874, organized the first Adventist church in the Northwest.<sup>2</sup>

**W**ood, with her musical background and identity as a founder of the church in the region, was a natural choice to teach music at the new college. She taught voice, piano, and reed organ for two years, before leaving because of her husband's ongoing medical problems.

Carrie Hill, a graduate from a music conservatory in Kansas, followed Wood. She organized the first choirs and in her

four years at the college created a diploma course in Sacred Music. In 1898, at the end of her last year, seven students graduated from that program.<sup>3</sup>

**W**hile enrollment and financial problems plagued the school in its first ten years, the importance of music was never questioned, probably because of the role it had played from the start of the school.

In addition to the voice and keyboard lessons that had been offered from the beginning and the formation of choirs in the third year, a student, George W. Miller, had started a popular cornet band at the end of the college's first year. Although the band played only marches and similar types of music, the college faculty viewed the group with concern and their rehearsals as a frivolous use of time.<sup>4</sup> This was particularly true of Ernest A. Sutherland, the college's president,<sup>5</sup> who viewed brass instruments with distrust and felt that they and sacred music were not compatible.

His attitude is best illustrated by an incident that occurred in the spring of 1894. Miller was in his room on the fourth floor of the dormitory, a wing of the college building, on a Sabbath afternoon when, for want of something to do, he took out his cornet and started playing *Nearer My God to Thee*. His window was open and the sound could be heard all over campus.

Sutherland ran up the steps to Miller's room and pounded on the door. When Miller opened it, Sutherland, irate and out of breath, told him, "I never want to hear you playing that thing again on the Sabbath!"<sup>6</sup>

At that time, the only instrument considered appropriate for church services

and the playing of sacred music was the reed organ. Miller was determined to change these feelings.

Shortly after this incident, he presented an essay to the faculty with evidence from the Bible and the writings of Ellen White that challenged these views. He prevailed and, in 1895, the faculty allowed his brass quartet to play for church services. The band and the use of brass in church were firsts in the five Adventist colleges at that time.

**M**iller followed Hill as music teacher in 1898 and taught for four years before his health broke from overwork. At that time, the college, facing severe challenges and the possibility of becoming an academy, took several initiatives to make its offerings more attractive, one being the establishment of a School of Music that offered three and five-year programs. Carrie Wood's daughter, Grace Wood McNabb, a graduate of nearby Whitman College Conservatory of Music and an acclaimed singer, was hired.

At the end of her first year, she requested a raise from \$50 to \$75 a month, more than the president of the college was being paid. The board, not wanting to lose her, acquiesced, to the chagrin of both the president and faculty. This awkward arrangement continued for two more years until a new president, Marion Cady, arrived and adjusted salaries so that he was making \$4 more than she was.

During her second year, McNabb had become aware that her husband had been previously married and never divorced. She divorced him and offered her resignation to the board. It responded with a unanimous vote of confidence.

She continued to lead the program until the spring of 1906, when she married a student, John Reith, who had graduated from WWC a year earlier. She left with him as he continued his study to be a physician.<sup>7</sup>

**D**uring Cady's five years as president, he was determined to improve the academic status of the college and established four-year college courses. Although music was one of the first four-year programs to be established, a B.A. music degree would not be awarded until 1916.

Gerard Gerritson followed Grace Reith as director of music in 1906. Gerritson, who had come from Chicago without his family because his wife had refused to move, was unable to adjust to life on his own and the food in the cafeteria.<sup>8</sup> He became controversial when the band declared its independence from the college in 1907. He left the following year.

Cady had served as president of Healdsburg College, forerunner of today's Pacific Union College, before coming to WWC. He had been impressed with the work of George B. Miller, an organist who had led the music program at that school, and invited him to lead the program at WWC.<sup>9</sup> Miller immediately defused the band controversy by bringing back George W. Miller to lead the group. In his three years as department head, he built the college's first pipe organ, with assistance from the carpentry class.<sup>10</sup>

**G**race Wood Reith returned to the area in 1912, a year after George B. Miller left. When asked to lead the music program again, she demanded her old salary of \$75, but, in the end accepted \$65, when the board satisfied other conditions, one of

which was to hire Gertrude Shaffer to teach keyboard and voice. The school purchased its first grand piano, a ten-foot Chickering, that autumn.

Reith led the department for the next six years, a period of unusual growth for both the school and music program. For three of those years, Lloyd E. Biggs, a theology student and violinist, taught strings. In 1913, he became the first person from WWC to join the Walla Walla Symphony, an organization that had started six years earlier.

In her final year as chair, Reith was assisted by three full-time teachers, including Estella Kiehnoff, a singer with a degree from the University of Nebraska; Margaret Holden, an accomplished organist who had graduated from WWC in 1914 with a diploma and in 1916 with the first B.A. in music; and William Morey, who had choral experience and could teach voice and theory classes.

**H**olden became chair when Reith left in 1918. In her two years in that position, a complete change in faculty happened, with experienced teachers being replaced by talented but inexperienced persons.

Blythe Owen, a precocious pianist, was hired in 1919 at age 20 and taught for the next four years. Pearl Job, a coloratura soprano with remarkable range and power who had studied in Europe and had been attending WWC at the urging of her mother, had joined the church and started to teach voice when Holden became chair. She taught for two years before marrying Titus Kurtichanov and going with him as a missionary to Russia in 1920.

Her departure, coupled with Holden's unwillingness to continue as chair, created a dilemma for the department. Desperate, the

college president telegraphed Reith, who was in England with her husband preparing for mission service to Africa, to return to teach voice and calm the department. She consented, and then rejoined her husband at the end of that school year.<sup>11</sup>

**R**eith returned to teach five years later, when the family returned from mission service. In the years since her emergency one-year return, college-age enrollment had increased more than three-fold.

The music program, which had been led by choir director Gladys Manchester Walin since 1923, was now firmly established as a collegiate program, located in a large house near the original 1892 school building. Its ensembles were popular and a third of the student body was taking music lessons.

Many of those lessons were in piano, which was being taught by the Brown sisters, Vivian and Frances, and Kathryn Foster Meeker. Most of the music diplomas awarded during this time were in piano.

**I**n 1927, Christopher Johnson, a minister in Portland, Oregon, offered WWC \$7,000 for the construction of a music building if additional funding could be obtained. The conference donated \$2,000 and the students raised over \$3,500 with the slogan "Money talks; teach yours to sing." Another \$3,700 was donated to purchase 2 grand and 13 upright pianos.

The new facility, a brick building with a 150-seat recital hall, classroom, 5 studios, and 10 practice rooms, was the pride of the campus. Inspired by the success of this project, the students raised another \$1,000 for a nine-rank, two-manual Reuter pipe organ, the first real organ at WWC, for the

church. It was dedicated in October 1929 with a concert by former teacher Margaret Holden Rippey.<sup>12</sup>

**W**hen Walin left the college in 1927, Reith again led department during the following year. At the end of that year she requested part-time work and recommended that Victor Johnson, a violinist and string teacher who had been teaching in the program since 1921, be chair.

When he unexpectedly left for a position at Washington Missionary College, now Columbia Union College, that summer, the president, unable to find a replacement for Reith, asked her once again to resume leadership. Although she consented, she stepped aside that fall when it became apparent that the choir director, Lon Metcalfe, was willing and able to lead the department. Reith retired two years later.

**M**etcalfe, a well-known singer and choir director in the East and Midwest, led the choirs and music program for the next three years, the last two during a time of economic uncertainty for the country and school. Within two years after his leaving in 1931, the music faculty dropped from six to two. It was a demoralizing situation that would continue until the school's fortunes improved midway through that decade.

Ruth Havstad, an outstanding voice teacher and choir director at Southern California Junior College, now La Sierra University, became choir director in 1932. She quickly established a reputation as a gifted singer and continued the a cappella choir that Metcalfe had started. She served

as head of the music program during her first two years, until Victor Johnson returned to the campus in 1934.<sup>13</sup>

Johnson had been successful during his six years in Washington, D.C. Though his primary purpose for going there was to complete a degree in music, he ended up chairing the music department at Washington Missionary College, touring extensively with its glee clubs, and conducting a band and orchestra at the college and at the Review and Herald.<sup>14</sup>

Johnson returned with a new found confidence, inspired by completion of a music degree and his success at WMC. He was appointed chair, assumed direction of the college orchestra, gave lessons, taught a number of classes, and organized an oratorio chorus in the community. He also accepted an invitation to conduct the Walla Walla Symphony.

While the opening years of the 1930's had hurt enrollment and the operation of the college, by the time of Johnson's return both the local symphony and music department were rebounding from the effects of the Great Depression. In the fall of 1934, WWC had the largest enrollment of any Adventist college.

In 1935, the college hired Stanley Walker, a young pianist and organist to perform, give lessons, and teach theory. Both Johnson and Walker were added faculty who, working with Havstad, Edna Smith Cubely, a pianist who had started teaching at WWC in 1931, and Louis Thorpe, a part-time music teacher, started to rebuild the department.

From 1928 until 1936, Thorpe, principal of the academy and head of the education department, directed the college

band and, when needed, the college orchestra. He was an accomplished woodwind player and conductor who had played professionally in Chicago and under John Philip Sousa during World War I. The first teacher at WWC to have a doctoral degree, he was a charismatic person whose band concerts were highlights of campus life.

When Thorpe left in 1936 to teach at the University of Southern California,<sup>15</sup> Johnson added direction of the band to what was already an overload, with disastrous results. By December, he fell ill and had to give up leadership of the local symphony and make other adjustments in his load.<sup>16</sup>

Harry Hadley Schyde followed Havstad as choir director when she married and left in 1937. Known for his contagious smile and outgoing personality, he had a resonant bass voice and had been a popular singer in New York City and on Boston area radio programs. He conducted for three years before leaving for graduate study. Two years later, John T. Hamilton assumed direction of the choral program.

Sterling Gernet had also come to the campus in 1937 to teach piano, woodwinds, and music theory. He was known for his incessant practicing and an extended memorized repertoire that included 11 concertos, the 24 preludes from Chopin's *Opus 28*, and numerous other works.

Gernet was the first music teacher at WWC to have a doctorate in music. Although he left in 1945 to chair the music program at Pacific Union College, he would return six years later and teach at WWC for eleven more years, until 1962.<sup>17</sup>

By the end of the 1930's the school had fully recovered from the effects of the

Great Depression. In that decade WWC had also achieved accreditation for its college offerings, one of the first Adventist colleges to do so.

In spite of a devastating theological controversy in February 1938 that cost the college a highly respected president and several teachers,<sup>18</sup> it had a record enrollment when the next school year started, again the largest in Adventist colleges.

**O**n December 7, 1941, John T. Hamilton, in his first year as voice teacher, was featured soloist for a concert given by the Walla Walla Symphony. By the time of that Sunday afternoon program, news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands earlier that day was creating fear across the country, and panic on the West Coast. The immediate entry by the U.S. into World War II following this attack affected every aspect of life in the country.

The effect for WWC was a shift in gender balance when the ratio of men to women at one point decreased to one in four. In spite of the decline in enrollment during the war years and a decrease in men, the music department and its ensembles flourished. The school's celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on December 7, 1942, which coincided with the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, was a subdued chapel service.

**T**he return of veterans in the fall of 1945 swelled enrollment at colleges and universities across the country. By the end of the decade, WWC had over 1300 students.

This increase in size was accompanied by a change in the atmosphere on the

campus when veterans refused to live under restrictions that had been in place for years. The resulting changes would dramatically affect the campus and higher education for the rest of the century.

**T**wo new music teachers, Virginia Gene Shankel, a young violinist, and Harold Mitzlefeld, an experienced conductor, came to the college in the fall of 1945.

In her year at the college, Shankel soloed with the Walla Walla Symphony and premiered an oratorio she had written. Mitzlefeld's leadership of the ensembles resulted in a band of 75, the largest yet, and an orchestra that grew to over 50 by the end of his second and last year at WWC.

When both Shankel and John T. Hamilton left in the summer of 1946, Julian Lobsien, a violinist and teacher in a nearby academy, was hired to replace Shankel. Stanley Walker, who had become chair in the fall of 1945, conducted the choirs on an interim basis for one year.<sup>19</sup>

**B**y the end of Walker's first two years as chair, he had presided over a complete change in music faculty and a doubling in size of the music program. Thelma Johnson and Janet Miller, pianists, and Clarence Dortch, an experienced choir director, were part of that two-year transition. Dortch, who would do only sacred choral music, spent the last nine years of his career at WWC, where he was known affectionately as "Fessor of Professors."

Janet Miller was hired in 1947 to be the primary piano teacher, joining Thelma Johnson, who had been hired a year earlier as she graduated, to teach piano after Gernet had left. A year after Johnson married Dick McCoy in 1950 and left, Gernet returned. During the next 11 years,

Florence Clarambeau, Morris Taylor, and Richard Randolph would assist in teaching piano.

Two years after Mitzelfelt left, Clarence Trubey was hired to direct the band. When orchestra director Lobsien left three years later, Melvin Johnson, a talented violinist, assumed direction of the orchestra for the next four years. When both Trubey and Johnson left in 1955, John J. Hafner, who had been teaching at Pacific Union College, assumed leadership of both ensembles.

Melvin W. Davis succeeded Dortch as choir director in 1956. He immediately expanded the choir's repertoire to include secular music and formed a select 24-member College Chorale, showcasing them in programs that delighted the campus. The group's final performance in his first year was given four encores.<sup>20</sup>

In 1959, Walker accepted an invitation to chair the music department at Atlantic Union College. For 24 years, he had provided a musical thread of continuity on campus, serving for 14 of those years as chair of the department.

From his arrival in 1935 when his only credential was his reputation as a good pianist and organist, Walker had obtained bachelor's and master's degrees from Northwestern University and gained recognition as a Fellow in the American Guild of Organists. In 1953, he had been honored with a yearbook dedication applauding his standards, exemplary Christian life, and service to WWC.

Melvin West, new music chair, arrived on campus in the summer of 1959 at

the age of 29. He had already established a reputation at AUC as a gifted organist and teacher. A pipe organ for the music building, a condition for his coming, was installed early that fall.

After he had assessed the curriculum, needs of the department, and the condition of the 40-year old facility, he realized that changes had to be made. By the end of his first year, he had worked with the faculty in drastically revising the curriculum and expectations for students, acquired a new grand piano and harpsichord, and started lobbying for installation of a pipe, rather than an electronic organ for a campus church that was soon to be built.

The church was the first in a series of new buildings in the 1960's that would transform the campus. By the middle of that decade, the music conservatory building had been demolished and a new Fine Arts facility, the first in a series of large comprehensive music facilities in Adventist colleges, was being constructed at that site.

When completed, the building, with its 27 practice rooms, 2 classrooms, 2 rehearsal rooms, 10 teaching studios and 300-seat auditorium, was the largest in Adventist colleges. It was fully equipped with new grand pianos, 18 new upright pianos and 2 practice pipe organs for practice rooms, and a 3-manual 36-rank pipe organ in the auditorium.

By the end of his first 8 years, West had presided over the installation of 5 pipe organs on campus, construction of the Fine Arts center, and an expansion of the music faculty from 5 to 8 members. He had also gained accreditation for the program in the National Association of Schools of Music and membership in Pi Kappa Lambda,

national music honor society, both firsts for Adventist college music programs.

**I**n those 8 years, a complete change in music faculty occurred. With the addition of several young teachers, the average age of the music faculty by 1967 was barely over 30.

Lloyd Leno, the first of several faculty to be added under West, was hired in 1960. A 1948 WWC graduate, he had since taught at two academies and directed the band at Union College for the previous 7 years. He would direct the band for 16 of his 25 years at WWC and form a large brass choir that traveled to Europe three times under the auspices of Friendship Ambassadors.

Leno also organized a college-sponsored music festival in 1963 that continues to the present. When he completed a doctorate in 1970, his dissertation on brass playing gained national recognition.

Blythe Owen, who had started her career 42 years earlier at WWC, returned in 1961 to teach piano, theory, and composition. In those intervening years, she had completed a Ph.D. in composition at Eastman School of Music and gained national recognition as a composer. Four years later, at age 65, she went to Andrews University, where she taught until age 82.

**I**n 1963, Marvin Robertson, a 1958 WWC graduate, joined the faculty to direct the choirs at the nearby academy and grade school and oversee the college music education program. When his choral programs flourished and became too large for one person to direct, he requested assignment to the elementary level because of his interest in children's choirs.

His college music education classes were exceptional. Students were disappointed when he left after three years to chair the music department at Southern Missionary College, now Southern Adventist University, a position he would hold for the next 33 years.

Bruce Ashton began teaching piano and theory during Robertson's second year at WWC, just as the new Fine Arts Center was nearing completion. An honors graduate in piano performance from Capital University, he had just completed a master's degree in piano at the American Conservatory of Music. He would later observe,

I felt at the time I was starting at the top as far as the available music departments in our colleges. Walla Walla College was the place to be. It was very upbeat. There was a feeling within the music faculty of lots of horsepower under the hood.<sup>21</sup>

**T**hat feeling was created, in part, by the fact that during Ashton's four years at WWC, before he would leave to join Robertson at SMC in 1968, five new teachers joined the department. Harold Lickey, a tenor, who had successfully led choirs at three other Adventist colleges and worked with West at the Faith for Today television program, became choir director in 1965.

Glenn Spring, a violinist who had taught for a year at Otterbein College in Ohio, also came to WWC in 1965, to direct the string program and teach music theory. Students immediately recognized and appreciated his gifts for teaching. He started an annual Honors Concert with his string orchestra in his second year and served as concertmaster for the Walla Walla Symphony during his first 10 years.



In 1965 and 1966, Jeanette McGhee and Robert Hunter were hired to assist in piano. Hunter would teach for two years before leaving for graduate study and then return to teach from 1971 to 1977. William Murphy, a bass-baritone, was also hired in 1966 to assist in the vocal choral area.

**T**he move into the Fine Arts Center in February 1966 and the completion of the church organ in 1967, largest pipe organ on the West Coast north of Salt Lake City and San Francisco, closed what had been a period of dramatic change for music at the college.

Other faculty additions and replacements continued through the end of the decade. When Hunter and Ashton both left in 1968, Dan and Judi Myers, and Vinson and Anne Bushnell were hired to teach piano and assist in class instruction.<sup>22</sup>

**I**n 1968, Robert L. Reynolds became president of the college. A skilled and progressive administrator, he was a visionary who revolutionized the way the school operated. In his nine years, he established a shared governance model that empowered faculty to participate in all decisions affecting the school. At that time, it was a departure from the usual mode of operation at Adventist schools, where administrators operated with minimal input from their faculty.

The result was an increase in faculty morale and a greater sense of ownership and pride in their school. Although some later administrators have been uncomfortable with the arrangement, it continues today as a force on campus and a model adopted in varying ways by other Adventist colleges and universities in the U.S.

In retrospect, the changes affected by Reynolds were prescient, given what happened in the next decade. The 1970s were a turbulent time in the nation and on college campuses as traditional lines of authority were questioned and the challenges of forging a working reality in the realm of civil rights gripped the country.

Music at WWC and other Adventist colleges was changed by a generation of students that challenged the traditional restrictions on music. The uneasiness earlier students had felt over rules about acceptable music in life and worship on college and academy campuses changed to a questioning and challenging attitude. The inevitable clashes affected music programs and changed the rules about music at Adventist schools.<sup>23</sup>

At WWC, a tradition in presenting a number of stellar performers had started in the 1950s and continued through the 1970s. Singers Marion Anderson and Jerome Hines, organists E. Power Biggs and Virgil Fox, pianists Van Cliburn and Victor Borge, violinists Isaac Stern and Itzhak Perlman, and numerous other notables played in a high profile lyceum series.

By the mid-1970's, however, students started to lose interest in these programs and challenged and stopped the fees they were being assessed to support the series. The lyceum program shrank and then essentially ended when a fire destroyed the legendary campus auditorium in 1978.<sup>24</sup>

**N**ew music faculty hired in the 1970s included Robert Tupper, an organist to assist West, and Sandra Camp, a pianist who was hired to replace a teacher who had left in 1972. Gerald Ferguson, a tenor and a

1948 graduate who had started his career at WWC, was also hired in 1972, when William Murphy left.

Sherrick S. Hiscock, III, a clarinetist and saxophonist who had played in and been a soloist with the U. S. Marine Band in Washington, D.C., was hired in 1973 to teach in the instrumental area. With his hiring, there were nine full-time music teachers, the largest faculty ever. During this decade, Hiscock, Leno, Lickey, Spring, and Camp completed doctorates.

In 1974, Lickey became chair when West, who had led the department for 15 years, the longest tenure in music leadership to that time, decided he wanted to teach full-time. Three years later, West accepted a position at the Kettering College Church as full-time minister of music.

West and Lickey had presented numerous choral works for 12 of West's 18 years at WWC. West would later observe that working with Lickey in doing works such as the Brahms and Durufle Requiems, Creston *Prophecy of Isaiah*, and Poulenc *Gloria* had been some of his most satisfying experiences at WWC.

Lanny Collins followed West as organist in 1977, a position he would hold for the next 6 years. When Camp left for a position at Andrews University in 1978, Leonard Richter, who was starting graduate work at New York University and studying piano with Adele Marcus of The Juilliard School, became primary teacher in piano.

In the last years of the decade, philosophical differences over teaching methodology and course content as well as what should happen in teacher-student relationships led to tension and distrust within the faculty. Preoccupation with these

differences and teachers' weaknesses rather than their strengths led to a crisis in shared confidence and respect.

Deterioration in communication and support followed, which, by the end of the decade, was apparent to music students and the rest of the campus. It was a troublesome and uncertain period for the program.<sup>25</sup>

I was invited to come to WWC as music chair in the autumn of 1978. It was a difficult decision to make. I was enjoying my work as chair of the Fine Arts Department at Union College, and the problems in the WWC music department were common knowledge in the circle of Adventist colleges.

When I arrived at the college in the summer of 1979, any concerns I had about coming proved to be unwarranted. The music faculty was committed to getting past the turmoil that had developed.

Although only 13 years old, the building had been neglected, acoustic problems had not been resolved in rehearsal areas, studios, and practice rooms, and audio equipment in studios, classrooms and the music library needed updating. That summer, the faculty worked together to bring about numerous changes by painting rooms and installing tile to reduce acoustic problems. Carpet was also installed in the studios and audio equipment was replaced throughout the building.

The office area was also completely remodeled to facilitate department business and communication between faculty and students. Sixteen new adjunct faculty were added to assist in lessons. It was a good beginning for what would prove to be some of the most enjoyable years in my career.

**M**arianne Scriven came to WWC that summer, succeeding Lickey, longest serving choral director at the college at that time, who had accepted a position at the Seminary at Andrews University. Scriven had been an adjunct teacher at WWC earlier in the decade, before going to Pacific Union College, where she had taught full-time for the past 5 years. She had completed a doctorate before teaching at WWC and, while at PUC, was honored as an Alumna of Achievement by Andrews University.

In her 7 years of leadership, the choirs performed the *German Requiem* by Brahms and the Verdi *Requiem* with the Walla Walla Symphony. In 1984, her groups, accompanied by the College Orchestra, presented the Faure *Requiem* with soloists Thomas Hampson and Julie Boyd, and Rutter's *Gloria*.

Scriven took I Cantori, the select choir, to Romania and the Soviet Union in 1982, and led them in an invitational performance for the Washington Music Educators Conference in 1986. At the end of that school year she and her husband, Charles, accepted positions at Sligo Church in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Ralph Coupland, a singer and conductor with over 20 years of experience, became director of choral activities that fall. In his three years as director he toured with the choir in the Northwest and Canada.

Stephen Zork, a singer and composer as well as conductor, followed Coupland in 1989. His departure two years later to direct the choral program at Andrews University was a disappointment to many.

Kandice Dickinson served as interim choir conductor in the following year and then on a regular basis until 1995. A soprano, she was a frequent soloist and

recitalist. In her four years at WWC, she was noted for her musicals and a series of three Opera Gala programs.

Bruce Rasmussen, a versatile singer and conductor, succeeded Dickinson and led the choirs until 2001. He presented numerous major choral works on campus and with the Walla Walla Symphony. He was also a featured soloist with the WWS and a frequent singer on campus.

**D**uring my first four years as chair at WWC, I also directed the band program. I had been surprised when 103 had joined the band in my first year and 110 in the second. Although the group decreased to 80 when we moved rehearsal time to the noon hour at the beginning of the third year, the quality and depth of talent more than compensated for the decrease in size. Working with an ensemble that was able to play the most challenging repertoire for concert band was a rewarding experience.

After four years of directing the band, teaching lessons and classes, and chairing the music program, it became apparent that a change was needed if my goals for the department were to be accomplished. Joseph Brooks, who had served as assistant conductor while a student, and then associate conductor after he had graduated in 1982 and joined the faculty as primary woodwind teacher, became band conductor.

**S**herrick Hiscock, who taught woodwinds for nine years, had left in 1982 to head the music merchandizing program at Elizabeth City University in North Carolina. During those years he had been principal clarinet and a soloist with the Walla Walla Symphony and played in and

conducted WWC band and woodwind ensembles.

Brooks, like Hiscock, was a former U.S. military bandsman who had been a clarinet and saxophone soloist with the United States Continental Army Band in Washington, D.C. While a student at WWC, he also developed proficiency on the oboe and flute.

From 1983 to 1987, Brooks directed the band, presenting refined performances of both challenging and traditional works for that group. He was a frequent recitalist and a player in and soloist with the Walla Walla Symphony.

Three years after Brooks was hired, Lloyd Leno, who had made a significant contribution in his work with ensembles and the teaching of brass instruments for 25 years, left to chair the music program at Antillian Union College in Puerto Rico. Leno, who had a degree in Spanish and was intrigued by the idea of mission service, found the offer from AUC attractive. When he left in 1986, he had served longer than any other music teacher since the school had started.

When Brooks left the following year, his and Leno's positions were merged. Carlyle Manous, band director at the nearby academy, who had been serving as an adjunct brass teacher after Leno left, was chosen to fill that position and serve as band director.

Manous, an accomplished French horn performer, had completed master's and D.M.A. degrees in horn performance at the University of Michigan while teaching earlier at Pacific Union College. During his 13 years at WWC, he played numerous recitals, soloed with the Walla Walla

Symphony and served as principal horn in that group for a number of years.

Manous, a band and brass clinician and conductor who had conducted numerous festival and music camp groups, provided enthusiastic leadership for the band and related ensembles until he retired in 2000.

Leonard Richter had been hired to teach piano the year before I became chair. A native of Czechoslovakia, he was a prize-winning pianist there before coming to Canada in 1968. He subsequently completed an M.Mus. at Andrews University in 1971, taught at Kingsway College for two years, and then completed another M.Mus. at the Manhattan School of Music in 1977. When he accepted the position at WWC in 1978, he was studying piano under Adele Marcus while at New York University where he completed a Ph.D. in 1984.

Now in his 38<sup>th</sup> and final year, a record tenure in teaching music at WWU, He is retiring at the end of this school year. Richter has made a distinguished contribution as a performer and teacher. He has given numerous recitals and soloed with the Walla Walla Symphony four times.

Many of his students have won numerous top prizes in regional, national, and international competitions. Graduates who studied with him are now teaching at colleges and universities and have enjoyed successful careers as recitalists and soloists with orchestras.

When Gem Fitch, who had been the primary assistant in the piano area since 1975, left in 1982, three others who had been assisting in that area reached over to teach the overflow of piano students. When two of those left in 1984, Stephanie

Kambitsch, a pianist with a master's degree in performance was hired.

A year earlier, a college piano preparatory division, headed by Debra Richter, now Bakland, had been established. A successful venture from the beginning, its growth and the success of its students quickly established her as a gifted and inspiring teacher. In 1990, students from the prep division were featured in a Concerto Gala Concert at the annual convention of the Washington Music Teachers Association hosted by WWC.

The precocious playing of orchestra-accompanied concertos by very young students amazed attendees. This event led to an enthusiastically received invitational performance of a Concerto Gala Concert three years later at the Music Teachers National Association Convention.

In addition to the success of these and other Concerto Gala Concerts, prep division students have won countless awards in regional competitions and performed often as soloists with regional orchestras. Many college piano majors assisted in the program, under the guidance of Bakland.

She continued to oversee the prep division as well as perform and teach college classes and piano majors until 2007, when she left to become head of the piano department at Canadian University College. While at WWC, she had soloed with the Walla Walla Symphony three times.

In 1983, when the organ position was vacated, student Kraig Scott, a gifted organist nearing completion of a performance degree at WWC, was invited to serve as organist and teacher pending completion of his current program and a

master's degree. Kenneth Rudolph, a 1971 WWC graduate in organ who had completed a Ph.D. in musicology at the University of Washington a year earlier, was hired on an interim basis.

When that appointment ended three years later in 1986, Scott began teaching at the college. In 1990 he took a graduate study leave to pursue doctoral work at Eastman School of Music.

In his absence, David Worth, a 1968 graduate who had studied under West and had since taught at Atlantic Union College, taught for one year. Kenneth Logan, an organist who had studied under Warren Becker at Andrews University and was pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Michigan, then taught for two more years.

Scott returned in 1993, having completed an M.A. in musicology, a D.M.A. in organ performance and earned a coveted Performer's Certificate at ESM. Since his return, he has made a distinguished contribution as a teacher, performer on organ and harpsichord, and, since 2009, director of the choral program. Scott's playing in services and recitals at WWC and elsewhere is acclaimed for its finesse and inspiring musicality.

Glenn Spring retired in 2001, having taught for 36 years, at that time the longest tenure in music since the school had been founded. By the time of his retirement, his perspective, insights, and wisdom had made him an important member of the faculty and a beloved teacher.

Approachable and accessible, he possessed a gratifying sense of reality and a depth of thought and expression that lent substance to his observations. This was true

whether he was working with his colleagues, college age young people, or younger persons.

In addition to overseeing the string program, he had become the primary theory teacher, a composer who had enjoyed many successful premieres, won in composer's competitions, and had had a number of commissions. These accomplishments and the performance frequency of his published music, affirmed by ASCAP, spoke to the quality of his composing.

**A** grade school string program that his wife, Kathleen, a violinist, started in the 1970's developed by the late 1990s into one of the largest Suzuki-based string programs in the Northwest, with 140 students and four adult assistants. Several of its students won awards in regional competitions, soloed with local orchestras, and, in some instances, are pursuing careers in music.

Ben Gish, a cellist who had assisted Spring while a student in the 1970's, returned in 1993 to assist in the program while overseeing and developing a string program at the nearby academy and giving lessons and teaching at the college.

In 1994, Cantabile, a select string orchestra, was organized and directed by the Springs and Gish. Open to all qualified string students in the region, it performed frequently with great success and toured in Europe and Canada in its six years.

**D**uring my 21 years as department chair, we instituted procedures for running the program, published *Opus*, an attractive annual departmental news magazine, and established six fully funded named scholarship endowments. We also

continued to renovate the music facility, update office and teaching equipment, and purchase instruments.

The spring before I arrived, a new two-manual Dowd Harpsichord had been purchased. Twelve new pianos were added in the next two decades.

By the time I retired in 2000, it had been my good fortune to spend over half of my career at WWC, working with gifted teachers and students whose record of achievement was extraordinary. In those years, many students brought honor to the department and a number of faculty received teaching awards.

**F**ollowing my retirement, the department began a transition that continues to the present. Brandon Beck, a WWC graduate who had taught at three academies and, most recently, at Southern Adventist University, became director of bands in the fall of 2000.

Now in his fifteenth year of leadership, his band performances are highlights in worship and musical life at the college. During his first year he formed a steel drum ensemble which has become a widely popular group on the campus and in the community and tours nationally.

When Glenn Spring retired in 2001, Maria Zlateva, a violinist and native of Bulgaria, who was working on a DMA at the University of Texas at Austin, filled the string and theory position for the next two years.

Lyn Ritz, a violinist with a D.M.A. from the University of Kentucky who had been teaching for the past 8 years at the University of Dayton, succeeded her in 2003. In her time at WWC, Ritz has proven to be a thorough theory teacher and an

accomplished performer. She is in her eleventh year as concertmaster of the Walla Walla Symphony.

**W**hen Rasmussen also left in 2001, Cyril Myers, who had taught at two academies and was doing graduate work at Michigan State University, where he was a teaching assistant, directed the choirs for the next two years.

In 2003, John Dennison became director of choral activities. Dennison had served as chair of the Oakwood College music program and director of its choral program in the 1980's.

More recently he had taught in the Los Angeles area and directed a church choir and the Southeast Symphony Orchestra. In addition to directing the choirs, Dennison became director of the college orchestra in 2005, a post he held until his retirement in 2009.

**M**atthew James, a versatile musician with a D.M.A in vocal performance, became department chair in 2002, following two years of interim leadership by Scott and then Trina Thompson, a piano and theory teacher. James had sung in numerous opera and oratorio productions and taught for 12 years at Northern State University in South Dakota.

Most recently, he had been an adjunct faculty member at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga and Southern Adventist University. He also plays viola and taught in UTC's Cadek Conservatory Suzuki program.

In his six years as chair, James facilitated challenging personnel transitions and was an articulate public spokesman for the department. In 2008, he accepted an

administrative position at the University of Louisiana-Monroe.

**K**arin Thompson, a 1991 WWC graduate followed James as chair beginning in January 2009. She had completed an M.Mus. in cello performance at the Peabody Conservatory of John Hopkins University in 1993 and a doctorate in musicology at the University of Maryland in 2001, a year after joining the music faculty at Atlantic Union College. At AUC she served as music department chair from 2007 to 2008 and, during her last year in that position, also as interim academic dean.

At the time of Dennison's retirement in 2009, leadership of the choir was assumed by Kraig Scott and Brandon Beck became director of the orchestra. Both ensembles have flourished under their leadership.

*Dan Shultz 2016*

1 Terrie Dopp Aamodt, *Bold Venture, A History of Walla Walla College*, 1992, 1-5.

2 Dan Shultz, *A Great Tradition, Music at Walla Walla College, 1892-1992*, 1992, 14-16 This book is the primary source for most of this overview.

3 Although there are no official records of their completing this course, there is a photograph of 7 graduates notated Church Music, 1898. Shultz, 16,20.

4 Shultz, 17-19.

5 The first president of the college, William Prescott, simultaneously served as president of Battle Creek, Union, and Walla Walla colleges while residing in Battle Creek. Sutherland served in his stead as "principal" from the beginning of the school until 1895, when he officially became president. Aamodt, 4, 26.

6 From an interview by Melvin S. Hill with Miller in the 1950s. The incident is described in Hill's dissertation, *A History of Music Education in Seventh-day Adventist Western Colleges* (1959, University of Southern California). 7 Shultz, 21-23.

8 Gerritson actually wrote a letter to the WWC Board on 6 November 1907 requesting "an expression of your opinion" and stating that "... my system has been disagreeably upset with the present diet now furnished." WWC Board Minutes, same date.

9 Hill, 41-45.

10 Shultz, 25-28.

11 Shultz, 32-41

12 Shultz, 53; *The Collegian* (WWC newspaper), 24 May 1928; 26 September, 3, 10, 17 October 1929; WWC Board Minutes, 14 May 1929.

13 Shultz, 55,56-59, 65-72

14 *The Sligonian* (WMC newspaper), 14 November 29; 13 & 20 March, 6 November 30; 5 March 31.

15 Thorpe would become nationally noted for his writings on education. For more detail, see his biography in Dan Shultz, *Adventist Musicians Biographical Resource*, 849-851.

16 For more on Johnson's work with the WWS, see Dan Shultz, *A Dream Fulfilled, One hundred Years of the Walla Walla Symphony Orchestra*, 2006, 38, 39.

17 Shultz, *GT*, 74-77, 106, 107.

18 Aamodt, 96-107.

19 Shultz, *GT*, 83-92.

20 Ibid, 103-117.

21 Interview with Bruce Ashton, 13 June 1990.

22 Shultz, *GT*, "A New Era, 1959-1970" 121-160. This segment of the article is a synthesis for the most part of the listed chapter from *GT*.

The chapter and the article are both based on interviews I conducted from 1990 to 1992, listed in sources for *GT*, 267-270.

23 personal knowledge and experience.

24 Shultz, *GT*, 186-191; *The Collegian*, 23 September 1971, 1 November 1973, 30 March 1978, 20 April 1978.

25 This brief characterization and the more extended narrative in *GT* (193, 194) of the situation in the music program at that time are based on numerous interviews and conversations with faculty of that time.

The remainder of the article is based on personal knowledge and experience.

Biographies for the following WWU music teachers are  
Can be found at [www.iaonline.com](http://www.iaonline.com) under SDA Musicians and  
in *Adventist Musicians Biographical Resource*

Ruth Havstad	CLARENCE W. DORTCH	THELMA JOHNSON MCCOY	KENNETH Rudolf
Almandinger	Gerald Ferguson	KATHRYN FOSTER MEEKER	KEVIN Schafer
J. BRUCE ASHTON	STERLING K. GERNET	LON C. METCALFE	HENRY Hadley Schyde
DEBRA Bakland	Madge Gould	GEORGE B. Miller	Kraig S. M. Scott
BRANDON Beck	SONJA RENNINGS	GEORGE W. Miller	MARIANNE SCRIVEN
CHARLES Bell	Gourley	JANET Miller	DAN Shultz
MARGARET REYNOLDS Bell	HAZEL GRAHAM	HAROLD E. Mitzelfelt	GLENN Spring
Lloyd E. Biggs	JOHN J. HAFNER	William I. MOREY	KATHLEEN Spring
CAROLYN RHODES BISEL	JOHN T. HAMILTON	Cyril Myers, Jr.	ELAINE Myers Taylor
Joseph Brooks	JOHN HICKHAM	ARLADell BOND NELSON	MORRIS Taylor
VIVIAN VIRGINIA BROWN	MATTHEW JAMES	Blythe OWEN	KARIN THOMPSON
ANNE BUSHNELL	MELVIN JOHNSON	BRUCE E. RASMUSSEN	TRINA THOMPSON
VINSON BUSHNELL	VICTOR N. JOHNSON	ROSALIE RASMUSSEN	LOUIS T. THORPE
SANDRA CAMP	ESTELLE W. KIEHNOFF	GRACE WOOD REITH	CLARENCE TRUBEY
FLORENCE BERNHART	TERESA HANSON KOCH	LEONARD Richter	ROBERT TUPPER
CLARAMBEAU	TERRY LEE KOCH	MARGARET HOLDEN	FRANCES BROWN URNER
RONALD COLEMAN	BRADLEY KRUEGER	Rippey	Gladys MANCHESTER
LANNY L. COLLINS	H. Lloyd LENO	VIRGINIA-GENE SHANKel	WalIn
Ralph Coupland	HAROLD Lickey	RITTENHOUSE	STANLEY E. Walker
Edna Smith Cubely	JULIAN Lobsien	Lyn Ritz	MELVIN K. WEST
MELVIN W. DAVIS	KENNETH LOGAN	MARVIN ROBERTSON	MARIA Zlateva
JOHN T. DENNISON	CARLYLE MANOUS	GERTRUDE Shaffer Rowland	STEPHEN P. ZORK