



Bev and Professor Jones on the choir tour to Europe in 1977. Jones began the popular tours in 1974.

# “That Idea”

*A tribute to Art Jones*

by bev betz bucar '78

One eyebrow arched and head tipped slightly forward, eyes squinting. “It’s that idea,” sang Dr. Art Jones. “Resonate your voice in the front of your face,” he’d say. “Get your voice out of your throat.”

So went my first of many vocal experiences with Doc Jones. Joining the Adrian Community Chorus, of which Doc was the director in the mid-1970s, gave me the hope of singing with the Adrian College Choir in the future. I was still a student at Sand Creek High School. It was surprising that Doc was so welcoming though I had no choir experience whatsoever. Later when I sang for him in his office in the basement of Mahan Hall, he said, “It’s there; your voice is there, let’s work on it.”

During the next four years I learned more and more of what “that idea” meant. Private voice class with Mrs. Betty Smith, an Adrian faculty member for non-music majors, was encouraging, and I had the opportunity to participate in the Chapel Choir at Adrian College. I recall very well feeling overwhelmed with joy when I heard the group sing a hymn for the first time. The 100-member choir, all eyes on Doc waiting for his direction, sightreading a hymn. I had never heard anything so beautiful in my life. The walls of Spencer Hall were filled with a capacity of praise. I could barely breathe.

My sophomore year I tried out for Adrian College Singers, touring with them in the next two springs. The memories of riding the coach to high schools and Methodist churches for concerts are so dear. Doc was always there keeping us together, expecting the best performance, the best behavior. “You may never again sing with a group with this much talent,” Doc said. “Enjoy it, and appreciate it!”

There were also musical theatre performances like “The Student Prince” and “Fiorello,” which incorporated fine music

with dance and acting. Because Doc Jones was the chair of the department of music, he guided and directed these musical performances as well. It was clear that Doc loved music in many forms.

Doc Jones believed many things with a passion, first and foremost don’t be late! His motto: punctuality is the pure point of a perfect personality! Rehearsals started on time, be there! He also believed in doing things well no matter how difficult. The works we rehearsed and performed were most often difficult, but he expected all choir students to do their best.

Mostly what I appreciate about Doc is that he loves people. “Hey, how ya doing, kid!” was his greeting, along with a big smile. There was always a joke or pun to follow. He loved to make a play on words. Many times, he and his wife Reda asked choir students to their home, and it was always a pleasure to spend time with the Jones family. Doc, a wonderful potter, would show us the beautiful pieces he’d created. When the Adrian Singers toured Europe in the summer of 1997, he took dinnerware he’d made to a friend who had helped arrange our tour. This was Art Jones’ way: personal and impressive!

I continue to practice “that idea” with my worship team where I live now, but more importantly attempt to be proactive about the values and lessons learned from a talented and wonderful teacher and friend, Dr. Art Jones.

*Dr. Art Jones taught at Adrian College from 1964-1990, and under his leadership the music program flourished. He and his wife, Reda, live in North Carolina and Florida. Bev Bucar lives in North Canton, Ohio, with husband Paul '78 and son.*