



# the adamant

## Adamant Music School

The Phillips Experimental Theater in March, 2002

Vol. VI - Issue 4 April, 2002

vol. 6.4

# from the president

Frank Suchomel, President

March, 2002

Dear Members and Friends,

Our 60th Anniversary Concert at Weill Recital Hall went off without a hitch. Our Vice-President George McCormack presided, and very effectively presented each of the eleven performers in a program that was enthusiastically received by a very nice and appreciative audience. This was the 54th concert that our organization has presented in this hall. The first recital was back in 1949. Our archivist-historian, Andy Christiansen, actually found a copy of the 1950 program and to my great pleasure I found that I was one of the performers in that concert fifty-two years ago.

This year's concert was dedicated to the memory of our founders, Edwine Behre, Alice Mary Kimball and Harry Godfrey. George introduced Rosann Hickey and Tom Stevens, who participated by reading letters and diary entries from our founders and, at the end, did a wonderful presentation of a section of Alice Mary's poem, "The Devil is a Woman." Michael John Suchomel wrote the script and directed it with great élan. Typically, he did not seek personal recognition. At the end of the program, while wearing a traditional Scottish kilt he purchased in Scotland some years ago, Michael presented each of the performers with a floral lei from Hawaii where he resides. Our Public Relations Director, M'Lou Gillespie, was extremely helpful to Michael, for which we all say thanks.

Fran Belin from West Virginia was the first performer and played a piece that was one of Edwine's favorites, the Brahms *Intermezzo Opus 118, No. 2*. This was followed by Rachmaninoff's *Prelude in G-Sharp Minor*. It was an auspicious beginning as she played beautifully; Edwine would have been proud.

Next Michael Preddy of California played three Gershwin *Preludes* with great aplomb. Michael was a participant at the Adamant Music School in the 1960s and '70s and of course knew Edwine and Alice Mary. He in fact studied with Edwine for a couple of years.

The Raphael Trio has been having chamber music workshops at the School for the last 18 years and Susan Salm and Dan Epstein, founding members of the trio, graciously consented to play a piece by Lipovšek, called *Balada*. Wonderful! It was kind of them to perform for our enjoyment. They very clearly appreciate the facilities of the Adamant Music School and we are fortunate to have them.

Faculty member Elaine Greenfield, who studied with Edwine quite a few years ago, played three *Preludes* of Debussy with her usual flair. She has been a teacher at the School in excess of 20 years and has always been a very supportive member.

Executive Committee member Myles Pollin played a *Sonata* by Haydn. It was a beautiful performance and we are fortunate to have him on our Board of Directors — he is very talented and also a fine lawyer.

Terrence Wilson, who was a participant in the 1990s, was scheduled to play a Chopin *Scherzo* but at the last moment changed to the *Bromo Volcano and the Sand Sea Daybreak* by Leopold Godowsky. Terrence has become quite well known as an artist and concertizes extensively. He even presented a full program for us in Adamant last summer as our Guest Artist.

Each of the performers was introduced by George McCormack; interspersed with the piano pieces were readings from the School's archives by Rosann Hickey and Tom Stevens.

There is no question but that it was an unusual program with extremely talented individuals. Obviously a lot of care and preparation went into the various performances and we are indebted to many people who helped make it such a success such as Erik Filkorn and Liz Schlegel. A special thank-you goes out to Cheryl Allen, who designed the programs and poster for the concert.

We were all so pleased with the event that we strongly believe we should have a similar presentation in Adamant this summer and are now working on how to bring this idea to fruition. Thanks to all of you who came and helped make it such a success.

Aloha,

Frank Suchomel

adamant music school

**60TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT**  
Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall  
March 3, 2002 at 2:30 pm



<p><small>Introductions and opening remarks: George McCormack</small></p> <p><small>Readings from the archives of the Adamant Music School: Rosann Hickey and Thomas Stevens</small></p> <p><small>INTERMEZZO Op. 118, No. 2 Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)</small></p> <p><small>PRELUDE in G-Sharp Minor Op. 32, No. 12 Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)</small></p> <p><small>Fran Belin</small></p> <p><small>PRELUDES George Gershwin (1898-1937) Michael Preddy</small></p>	<p><small>BALADA Marian Lipovšek (1910-1995) Dan Epstein and Susan Salm</small></p> <p><small>PRELUDES, Book 1 Claude Debussy (1862-1918) Elaine Greenfield</small></p> <p><small>SONATA in D, HOBOKEN XVI:42 Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) Myles Pollin</small></p> <p><small>SCHERZO in E Minor Frederic Chopin (1810-1849) Terrence Wilson</small></p> <p><small>LYRIC PIECES Edward Goring (1843-1907) Frank Suchomel</small></p>
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Presented by Behre Piano Associates, Inc.  
Managing the Adamant Music School, founded in 1942

ADMISSION: \$10<sup>00</sup>

Tickets are available at the Carnegie Hall Box Office, from Carnegie Charge at 212.247.7800 and online at [www.carnegiehall.org](http://www.carnegiehall.org)

For more information about the Adamant Music School, visit [www.adamant.org](http://www.adamant.org)

The poster for this year's concert at Weill Recital Hall

# executive director's report

Sandra M. Rogers, Executive Director

There is excitement this year as we prepare for the upcoming summer. We are celebrating the 60th Anniversary season of the Adamant Music School, and I am looking forward to it with great anticipation! Applications for both the Traditional Piano Session and the Master Classes with Menahem Pressler arrive at a steady pace. The crocuses and daffodils show the first signs of spring, and in no time at all the season in Adamant will be upon us.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome our faculty for the Traditional Piano Session, which runs from July 13th through August 10th. Two of this year's faculty, Eugene Barban and Deirdre O'Donohue, are returning from last summer. Vai-Meng Lei, Matthew Manwarren, Willard Schultz, and Golda Vainberg-Tatz make up the rest of the team for 2002. A wonderfully diverse and cohesive group, our faculty will nurture and inspire, bringing our participants to higher levels of musical understanding and performance.

One of the special things about our small institution is that it is easy staying in touch with everyone. With the help of the Internet, I am in regular contact with our faculty. They keep me informed and up-to-date about their busy lives — their projects, achievements, and students' progress, all of which I would like to share with you.

This past fall, Eugene performed in a series of six recitals with Reinmar Seidler, a cellist in the Arden String Quartet. They played in Boston, Charlotte, Chattanooga, and at several colleges in South Carolina. Two of Eugene's students, including Adamant alumnus Nathalie Clement, won a competition to play a Mozart

Concerto with the South Carolina Philharmonic. When he is not teaching or performing, Eugene can be found on the golf course, having recently returned to the sport.

Deirdre, whom I first met through MTNA, continues to be quite involved with this organization. She has presented lecture demonstrations for the New Jersey Music Teachers' Association and has judged for several local Music Teachers' Associations in the state as well. Other upcoming projects include master classes at New York University and Queens College. In addition, Deirdre has also been invited back to adjudicate the Feis Ceoil, which is a two-week National Competition and Music Festival in Dublin, Ireland.

Vai-Meng recently gave a wonderful concert at Frank Suchomel's NYC loft. Her program was well attended by Adamant participants, members, and friends. Many of her young students — perhaps future Adamanters? — were also present and cheered her on. She played a beautiful program beginning with Bach's *Italian Concerto*, which she played from the heart. She followed with a selection of Chopin *Preludes* and Dallapiccola's *Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera*, highlighting her versatility. Vai-Meng ended with two Liszt *Transcendental Etudes*, which she played with great bravura. We are grateful for her inspiring performance!

Matthew recently performed several recitals, including guest performances in the Valley Concert Series in Cincinnati, the Guest Artist series at East Tennessee State University, and at Winthrop University. Matt was also recently honored for his outstanding teaching and performance accomplishments by being

named the Harriet Pressly Smith Caldwell Professor of Music at Erskine College.

Willard also has student successes to report. Frank Huang, an Adamant alumnus, who is now a senior in high school, was the Gold Medal Winner of the Seattle Young Artists' Music Festival and performed Prokofiev's *Third Concerto (Third Movement)* with the Seattle Philharmonic. Following this, Frank competed in the high school level of the MTNA Northwest Division Competition. Although Frank placed as the alternate, he received a standing ovation from the audience after his performance. Willard attributed Frank's success in part to the summer he spent in Adamant.

It seems that every time I receive an e-mail from Golda, she is embarking on a trip for another concert. However, her most notable achievement of late is the recording of two Mozart Concerti, *K.466* and *K.453*, with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra. Golda recorded these works in the Tchaikovsky Grand Hall in Moscow. In addition to the thrill of making such a recording, Golda has fond memories of the chilling subzero temperatures and the snow banks that reached half her size! Look for the release of this recording in the months ahead.

As you can see, our faculty members are truly devoted to their art: making music, sharing their talent and expertise, and stretching their potential, while becoming better musicians and teachers through their experiences. My hat goes off to all of them! I look forward to working with them as well as our devoted staff this summer.

Until then, I hope to see you at our last concert at the loft on April 14th! ■

## new york concert season 2002



The Sunday concerts are held at 3:00 p.m. at 34 East 30th Street, 8th floor, New York City, New York. Members of Behre Piano Associates are admitted at no charge; non-members are charged a \$5.00 fee.

April 14, 2002

Adamant Music School Participants and Executive Committee Members

# the chef's table

Richard Goss, Chef, Adamant Music School

# dues time

Lots of times I do outdoor functions calling for dishes traditionally made with mayonnaise. Knowing the potential danger of mayo at room temperature, I've modified this recipe leaving the mayo out. And now I think I prefer this recipe to my old one.

## Mayo-less Tuna Salad

- |                                |                                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Can Chunk Light Tuna         | 2 T Olive Oil                         |
| ½ Small Red Onion — diced      | ( <i>extra virgin not necessary</i> ) |
| 1 Carrot — peeled and shredded | 1 T Balsamic Vinegar                  |
| with cheese grater             | 1 T Soy Sauce ( <i>Kikkoman</i> )     |
| 1 Rib Celery — diced           | Salt and Pepper                       |

Combine all ingredients, except salt and pepper, and gently stir until evenly mixed. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

You can spruce this recipe up with any number of additional ingredients, such as chopped capers, hard-boiled eggs, roasted peppers, pickle relish, etc.

## 60th Anniversary items for sale:

To honor the School's 60th Anniversary, we have created some new materials about the School. These are interesting items that, as an Adamant supporter, you may wish to purchase. All proceeds, of course, return to the School.

We've had a local illustrator draw a new map of the School's grounds (see map at right). We were so delighted with his work that we had it made up into a poster, suitable for framing, as well as t-shirts.

FULL COLOR POSTERS are 11" x 17" ..... \$5.00

T-SHIRTS are available in S, M, L and XL; the 100% cotton white shirts have the brilliant full-color map of the School on the front, and the School's logo, in black, on the back ..... \$14.00

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE BOOK  
Written by Frank Suchomel, the book is a history of the School told through personal accounts and archival photos ..... \$12.00

All prices include postage. Make checks payable to the Adamant Music School, and mail to: PO Box 22, Adamant, VT 05640.

As many of you know, our membership year runs from July 1 through the following June 30. Any participant at the School is automatically a member until the following June. Also our contributors are automatically members provided their contributions exceed the dues requirement. We keep tabs on our contributors and when their contribution has "run out" we will send a dues notice. Keep in mind that we are a 501c(3) organization and all contributions are tax-deductible.

We, of course, hope you will renew your membership. We like our members and need them. Our dues have not changed in many years and are listed below:

- Single member ..... \$15.00
- Any two members living at the same address ..... \$20.00
- Family membership ..... \$25.00

Your dues give you the right to receive the *adamanter* and to attend all Waterside Hall concerts in Adamant as well as all studio concerts in New York over the course of the membership year. The dues should be sent to Behre Piano Associates, Inc. c/o M'Lou Gillespie at PO Box 22, Adamant, VT 05640. She will then issue a membership card.

Do you have a friend who would be interested in the Adamant Music School? We'd be happy to send them an issue of our newsletter. Just call M'Lou at (802) 229-9297. *Thank you!*



# echoes of the future: lives of the founders

Andrew Christiansen, Webmaster & Archivist

## Rise of Fascism and War Part 11: 1936-39

### 1936

Good news! We just learned that Alice Mary will celebrate her 50th birthday this year with some extra cash in her pocket. She went to court to take on Hollywood and she won a settlement from the folks that made the Marlene Dietrich movie using the title of Alice Mary's book, "The Devil is a Woman." It will certainly be welcome, as the Depression continues and money and work are so hard to come by. After living on King Street for so long, we were also surprised to hear that Alice Mary, Harry, and Edwine are moving to 29 Charlton Street.

Edwine told us that her friend, Eugene O'Neill, has won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Edwine's sister, Edna, and her husband Kenneth MacGowan are also close friends with O'Neill, who gave them a typescript carbon draft of the 1925 play, *The Fountain*. Kenneth is also in the news, producing Academy-Award winning movies. Working with such luminaries as Katharine Hepburn in "Little Women" and Tyrone Power, he has become a big name in Hollywood.

Emma, now 33, is busy mothering her little girl and boy. Emma's husband, Dr. Albert Slutsky, was honored recently by being appointed to the "Training Committee" of the New York Psychoanalytic Society. In his new position, he is making didactic analyses and conducting seminars in literature and technique.

Freda, at 36, has been taking lessons from Edwine for seven years. For a while, she had abandoned music to study theater, because playing piano caused pain in her

shoulder, wrists and hands. Freda told us that she couldn't tolerate the rigidity of her acting lessons, which consisted of learning how to hold poses.

Edwine is not an arrogant teacher, Freda reports. A couple of months ago, Freda was at her lesson with Edwine and asked, "Would you mind if I work on my own?" Edwine responded, "By all means, do so." Freda went off to experiment with certain techniques. Edwine would stop by and play a piece and say, "Freda, I don't like what it sounds like. What am I doing wrong?" Freda was amazed that Edwine would ask for her advice. "Imagine! She's the teacher. That's how big she is. She is not afraid to ask for help."

In March, Hitler invaded the Rhineland (thereby violating the treaties of Versailles and Locarno). Mussolini declared himself the Emperor of Ethiopia in May. In Spain, the Germans have sent air support to the fascists under Franco, fueling the bloody civil war. After Roosevelt was re-elected President by an overwhelming majority in November, Germany, Japan, and Italy formed an axis, which is a pact for mutual cooperation. The one consolation of the year came during the Summer Olympics in Berlin, when Jesse Owens, a black athlete, shattered records and won four gold medals, making a mockery of Hitler's earlier statements about Negroes being an inferior race. The embarrassed Führer had to make a hasty retreat from the stands in order to avoid the thunderous standing ovation for Owens.

Before leaving the year 1936, we should mention that we have a news item from, of all places, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. We understand there is a six-year old child out there who loves the piano and has started taking lessons from Zoe Varney. The little boy's name is Frank Suchomel.

### 1937

It is hard to believe that Edwine is now 53 years old. This year marks the 20th anniversary of her studio in New York City. She has classes and brings students and teachers together. When there are students who are having physical problems at the piano, she sometimes has Freda work with them, as physical coordination is a specialty of hers. Edwine tells us that she, Alice Mary, and Harry have just moved up the street to 11 Charlton Street, still in Greenwich Village.

Edwine's siblings are following distinguished careers. Her brother, Charles Behre, received a Guggenheim traveling fellowship and will be traveling in Europe the next two years. Edwine visited Europe recently and was able to give Charles the addresses of her friends in Vienna. Edwine's sister, Eleanor Behre, is professor of biology at Louisiana State University, and brother Theodore works for his father's Pelican Ice Company, Ltd., and is president of the Central Council of Social Agencies.

*Freda was amazed that  
Edwine would ask for her advice.  
"Imagine! She's the teacher.  
That's how big she is. She is not  
afraid to ask for help."*

Alice Mary had an exciting event this year as the Query Club celebrated its 20th year with a gala dinner. Painter and writer Claire Dana Mumford started the exclusive luncheon club, which has no elections, officers, dues, committees, or business meetings. Members can suggest others for membership, but Claire alone decides who from her long "waiting list" of women will be invited to join. Many of the members are also members of the Heterodoxy Club. Over the years the membership was held to around fifty. The meetings usually consist of a luncheon, followed by one or more guest speakers and then discussion by the members, many of which were writers like Alice Mary. Cornelia Parker wrote that Club members were required to be "congenial and stimulating women with at some time, if not continually, a professional participation in some interest, skill or enthusiasm."

Labor strife and war in Spain dominate the news. On April 27th, German warplanes strafed marketplaces and farmhouses in Guernica, and dropped bombs on peasants working in the fields. One of the war correspondents is Harry's former protégé, Ernest Hemingway.

Other events this year include the explosion of the Hindenburg in Lakehurst, New Jersey, the disappearance of Amelia Earhart in the Pacific on her trip around the world,



Edwine and her friend, Raj, on board the Steamer *Hunsa* in 1937

# of the adamant music school 1936-1939



An art class at the Weed Farm in the late 1930s

the continuous killings by Stalin in Russia, and the Japanese firebombing of Shanghai.

In late December, Edwine's friend, Elle, writes from Vienna to say how much she enjoyed meeting Charles Behre and his wife. She said that most of their friends from the old days have left Vienna. Also, we heard that Maurice Ravel has died in Paris at the age of 62. Edwine's friend and fellow Leschetizky student, Paul Wittgenstein, commissioned Ravel to compose a *Concerto in D Major for Piano (For the Left Hand)*, after losing his right arm in World War I.

## 1938

With millions of people unemployed (20 percent of the American workforce), brutal police attacks on strikers, and Nazis active in New York, the world continues to head towards total war. The fascists won the war in Spain. Shortly after Charles Behre left Vienna, Austria came under the control of Hitler. Sigmund Freud had to leave Austria to find safety in England. In Palestine, a terrorist bomb wounded and killed dozens of Arab civilians at a market. In September, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and French Premier Edouard Daladier reached a peaceful agreement with Hitler and Mussolini to allow Hitler to take over the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia, while protecting the rest of the country. On November 9th in Berlin, young Nazis engaged in a massive, coordinated attack on Jews throughout the German Reich. The brutal attack has come to be known as Kristallnacht or, "The Night of Broken Glass." Following this outrage, the U.S. permanently recalled its ambassador to Germany.

Given the misery of the world and the backbreaking struggle to survive, Alice Mary felt that there was only one way to deal

with the situation and that was to find some humor and have some fun. On February 20th, she invited friends to a "Washington's and Lincoln's Birthday Ball." Designed as a fundraiser for the Modern Piano School, she asked close friends to entertain party guests. The famous political cartoonist, Art Young, who used to draw cartoons for *The Masses*, gave his Southern Senator's speech. The folk-song collector and host of a radio program on American folk music, Adolph Bregman, sang cowboy songs and folk ballads, and George Everett Marshall sang Negro folk songs. The flyer for the event noted that John Nicholas Bffel, a famous radical journalist who worked with Harry for the Federated Press, "will impersonate 20 characters and one herd of elephants in his inimitable one-man comedy show, *Elephants and Irishmen*."

The flyer concluded:

### **FORTUNE TELLING**

*by a moth-eaten gypsy crone, Alice Mary Kimball. (Free, but not wuth much.) Victuals cooked by the Ladies Aid is free. You kin buy moonshine by the swaller offen the rock-ribbed old mountaineer, Leo Kasanof.*

### **COSTUME PRIZE**

*You kin wear what you're a-mind to. (This here's a free country.) But we-uns figger that what Abe Lincoln and his kinfolks wore in their log cabins is what we'll wear to this party. Rags, tags, shorts, sunbonnets, aprons, dented derbies, overalls, patches, all colors. You-uns better dress up, too. Show your respect for Abe Lincoln who hated a biled shirt. Crabbed old Hank Godfrey, the photographer, will award a pretty schoolmom's pitcher for the best git-up.*

*Admission 50 cents. Proceeds for witless young idiots that don't know no better'n to thump the piano for a living instead of getting themselves a holding company.*

Edwine sent a party flyer to her mother, and wrote on the back: "We all three work like dogs all the time and there always seems more to do. We had the party for our booklet...and that was a lot of work too, I

had to play; and now comes this party; and all the time the lessons & housework & so on goes on just the same."

On March 6th, Alice Mary's sister, Florence Weed, wrote to ask her if she would be coming up to visit. Florence frequently hosted city visitors as paying boarders at the farm, and Alice Mary helped her find guests. Florence complained that she needed to have her publicity re-written to discourage children, because "there is no money in kids in the long run, for they break down your cherry trees, try to set fires in the barn, and club the animals when you aren't looking." She also wrote about her work with the C.I.O. She was helping to form a Non-Partisan League in Vermont, and Governor Aiken had agreed to come and speak at their conference. Florence despaired of all the infighting she saw among the various unions, and was disgusted with both of the communist factions, the Stalinists and the Trotskyites.

Florence was so busy taking in boarders that even family members had to wait for a turn. In July, Alice Mary wrote to Florence to see if she and Harry could come up in early August and stay if there was room. Florence responded that there was if Alice Mary didn't mind staying at the old Parsonage in Adamant, Vermont, up the road from the Weed Farm.

Florence writes again on November 9th that it was a beautiful autumn in Vermont, warm with a bountiful harvest from the garden.



Florence Weed and Alice Mary going for a ride at the Weed Farm in the late 1930s

# echoes of the future: continued

1939

Memories of Adamant and the beautiful summer days at the Parsonage are nearly drowned out now by the discordant clamor from the rest of the world. On February 22nd, 22,000 Nazis held a rally in New York City at Madison Square Garden and five days later, Neville Chamberlain announced recognition of Franco's fascist regime in Spain. Some are calling for Chamberlain's impeachment because they do not trust the remaining German and Italian forces in Spain or Franco's intentions. In March, Hitler's troops invaded and took over the rest of Czechoslovakia, followed in April by Italy's takeover of Albania, and in May, Germany and Italy signed the "Pact of Steel" to work together militarily to reorganize Europe to their benefit.

Following a treaty between Hitler and Stalin, the Nazis invaded Poland from the west, while the Russians pushed in from the east. England and France declared war

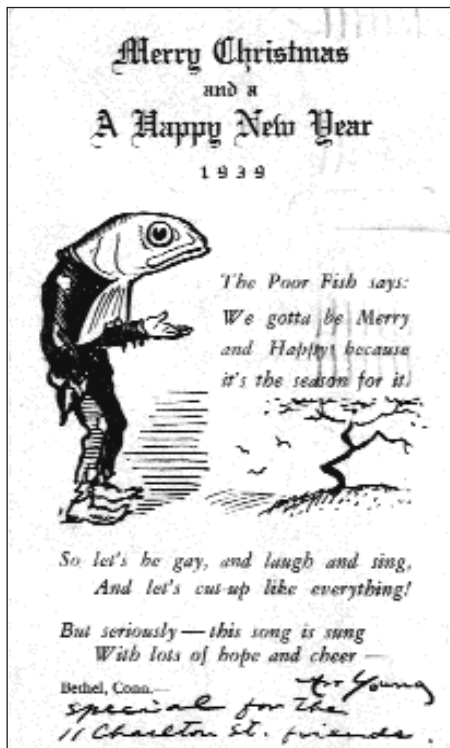
on Germany on September 3rd. Europe is once again at war, and the Atlantic Ocean is hostile territory. Hardly a day goes by now but that we read where more ships have been sunk.

As the year draws to an end, we hear that Germany has launched an offensive along the Rhine, and is calling for the annihilation of England. Russia has attacked Finland, but so far has been repulsed by the Finns. One wonders how much longer the United States can stay out of the war.

Alice Mary tells us that she enjoyed her visit a short while ago with Eleanor Roosevelt, who had invited the Query Club members to a White House luncheon. Eleanor has been a long-time friend of political activists in New York, going back to 1922 when she was a tireless worker for the militant women's group, the Women's Trade Union League. Living on 65th Street at the time, Eleanor met other members of the Heterodoxy Club, such as Katharine Anthony; she also was listed as a member of the Query Club.



Cartoonist Art Young's 1938 holiday card



Cartoonist Art Young sent this card to Harry, Alice Mary, and Edwine in 1939

*Perhaps it is time to think about that music school out in the country, where studies can be conducted in quiet safety.*

We noticed that on November 24, 1939, in her newspaper column in the *Washington Daily*, Eleanor wrote a Thanksgiving message that highlighted the efforts of the Washington Electric Co-op, which is forming to provide energy to farmers in the Central Vermont area, including Adamant. She praised the newsletter they put out and wrote:

"I have just received a little bulletin published by the Washington Electric Co-operative of East Montpelier, Vermont. The bulletin is only two months old, but I predict it will appeal to its circulation... The question and answer department in this little bulletin amused me, particularly the answer to the question: 'If I should want to do something to my wire, is it all right if I put a ladder on the pole and turn off the transformer?' The answer ran: 'It is

a convenient way out. In order to save trouble for your family we suggest that you make the funeral arrangements first and leave a note for the police so that they will not think it was murder.'"

We wonder if Alice Mary had anything to do with getting that news bulletin into Eleanor's hands, since she and Florence worked so hard to help start the Co-op?

As violence and hatred grow around them, Edwine, Alice Mary, and Harry wonder if New York will continue to be a safe place to teach and work. Edwine worries about her students, many of whom are Jewish. Perhaps it is time to think about that music school out in the country, where studies can be conducted in quiet safety. Edwine's experimental camp in North Carolina after the First World War was quite successful. Maybe it is time to think of that again as the world descends into war a second time.

*We thank Lucinda Rochester for the use of her photographs of the Weed Farm. ■*

# phillips experimental theater

Rosann Hickey, Production Coordinator

There is a Noel Coward novelty song that begins, "I've been to a marvelous party." It's a phrase that exactly conveys my feelings about Adamant's 60th Anniversary Concert in New York. Since I answered the first audition notice for the Phillips Experimental Theater back in 1996, one of the delights of working at Adamant has been the chance to hear from Frank and Michael about the history of the School and its founders. I really can't remember when I first heard them mention that, one day, they would like to have some of Alice Mary Kimball's poetry read at a concert. It never occurred to me that this would lead to a chance to perform at the Weill Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall — an opportunity that very few actors ever get. This was another of those experiences that I have come to think of as "Adamant Magic."

On Saturday, March 2, we arrived for our read-through at the loft. My fellow actor, Thomas Stevens, and I met board member George McCormack, who would be serving as emcee *cum* ringmaster for the performance. With some coaching, we managed to produce a reasonable run-through of Michael's script. After going over Sunday's schedule we were sent off with a champagne toast — very classy!

On Sunday we made our way through the stage door entrance to do a voice check (and have a first look) at Weill Recital Hall. A maze of corridors with meandering hallways and steps up and down led to a lovely stage with brilliant chandeliers and a little balcony at the back. I had only ever been in the larger hall and this smaller space definitely had a kind of jewel box intimacy. Because of the tight scheduling we were very lucky to have this preview, however brief.

By two o'clock we were ready to go. Outside the front entrance we met Frank wearing a suit for what he confessed was "the first time in a while." Inside, Michael was formally attired in the Scottish mode — kilt, gillies, sporran and all. Since New York was experiencing record warm weather that weekend, he was probably more comfortable than any of the men in suits or the ladies in velvet and sequins. With some assistance from the union stagehands, we started right on time at 2:30 to a fairly well-filled house.

The presentation began with some introductory remarks by George. Tom and I remained on stage throughout the entire show, sitting quietly to one side during the musical performances. This was one of the most delightful aspects of the event for us. I felt as if I were enjoying music in my living room — if I happened to know quite a few really good pianists and had a Steinway grand.

The variety of ages, musical choices and styles was remarkable and satisfying. Each of the performers exemplified one of the facets of the Adamant experience. The seasoned professional, the dedicated amateur, the gifted teacher, the passionate young artist, the dramatic, the romantic — all were represented.

Our final pianist was Frank. When he appeared there was a wonderful, spontaneous explosion of applause. He accompanied the readings from Alice Mary's "The Devil Is A Woman" with a grace and delicacy that enhanced the expressiveness of the excerpts Michael had chosen. We were blessed with an intelligent and responsive audience. When all of the performers returned to the stage for a final bow, the acclamation was truly satisfying. It was exhilarating, exciting, exhausting — and a once-in-a-lifetime experience. ■



Fran Belin



Thomas Stevens and Rosann Hickey

Performers enjoying dinner after the Weill Concert

## Quarry Works Auditions

Saturday and Sunday, April 20 and 21

10:00 AM — 5:00 PM

By appointment only

### The Shows:

My Fair Lady: July 12-14

The Princess and the Pea: July 26-28

Romeo and Juliet: August 9-11

For information or to schedule an audition contact:

Rosann Hickey  
Production Coordinator  
rosann@sover.net  
(802) 533-2426