

Voices United: The Contributions of Eleanor Mews Jerrett to Choral Singing in Newfoundland

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Abstract

This paper explores the pioneering contributions of Eleanor Mews Jerrett (1895-1996) to the development of choral singing traditions in early to mid-twentieth century Newfoundland. Mews Jerrett's story is an inspirational one. After suffering severe burns to her face and body during a childhood accident, she persevered to become an accomplished singer and pianist, graduating from the Methodist College in her native St. John's in 1913 and pursuing further study at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto (where she studied voice with Ethel Shepherd and harmony and counterpoint with Healey Willan).

After receiving her Licentiate of Trinity College of Music, London (LTCL), diploma, she taught voice at the conservatory and began concertizing extensively, including a series of "costume recitals" in St. John's during the 1920s. Subsequent studies were undertaken abroad in Denmark, England, and the United States. The Toronto music critic, Augustus Bridle, once remarked of her voice that the young singer possessed "an excellent sense of phrase and sentence," adding (with reference to her Newfoundland roots) "the sea colours her voice," while *Saturday Night* commentator, Hector Charlesworth, hailed her as "the mistress of perfect diction."

After serving as director of the A Cappella Choir of the University of West Virginia during the early 1930s, she returned to Newfoundland in 1933 on the invitation of John Lewis Paton (the first President of Memorial University College, the early precursor to Memorial University of Newfoundland) to establish a special choral group for students at the college. It was due in large measure to Mews Jerrett that a program of vocal music was established at the fledgling college and the growth and the development of the college Glee Club—an integral facet of college life in the 1930s—was entirely due to her tireless dedication.

Following an extended hiatus brought on by her marriage to Eric Jerrett, she returned to the podium in the 1950s to lead the newly founded St. John's Glee Club. In an impressive career that extended into the 1970s, Mews Jerrett taught generations of young voices as a private teacher, among them accomplished Newfoundland singers Stuart Godfrey, Joan McNamara, and much later Catherine Cornick. In honour of her still largely unsung contributions to music and music education in Newfoundland, a rehearsal room in the Memorial University School of Music was named for her. This paper will draw upon interviews, archival documents, concert programs, and reviews, to provide a comprehensive overview of Mews Jerrett's remarkable life in music.

Introduction

Eleanor Mews Jerrett (1895-1996) will long be remembered as one of Newfoundland's most influential choral conductors and voice teachers. The daughter of Mabel Woods and organist and choir director Arthur Mews,¹ she was raised in a cultured household that included siblings Marjorie (1902-1985), an amateur singer, Gwendolyn (Duffill Mews, 1893-1973), a visual artist,

and Henry (Harry) (1897-1982), a member of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment during World War I and later Mayor of St. John's. An uncle, Alex Mews, was an accomplished cellist. The Mews family had emigrated to Hant's Harbour, Newfoundland from England during the mid-nineteenth century.

Despite suffering serious burns to her face and body at the age of two and permanent damage to her fingers as a result of the incident, she learned to play the piano and graduated from the Methodist College in her native St. John's in 1913 after winning the Jubilee Scholarship for highest marks in the Council of Higher Education examinations. Following voice lessons at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto with H. Ethel Shepherd and harmony and counterpoint with Healey Willan, she received her Licentiate of Trinity College of Music, London (LTCL) diploma. By the 1920s, she had taught singing at the Royal Conservatory and established an emerging presence on the Canadian concert scene. Critical response to the young mezzo soprano was warmly receptive, with Mews' tone, diction, and interpretive sensitivity receiving special notice. The *Toronto Star* lauded Mews for "the liquid softness of her tone which could not become harsh or strident in any kind of song," while the *Evening Telegram* of St. John's remarked similarly that hers was "a voice that is delightful to hear alike for its velvety tone, its purity, and its richness." *Saturday Night* commentator Hector Charlesworth hailed her as "the mistress of perfect diction," while the Toronto music critic, Augustus Bridle, once remarked of her voice that the young Mews possessed "an excellent sense of phrase and sentence," adding (with reference to her Newfoundland roots) that "the sea colours her voice (Eleanor Mews Press Notices)."

It was during this time that she returned to Newfoundland to give a series of "song recitals in costume" with pianists, Gordon Christian,² Florence Mews (née Pittman), her piano playing aunt and cellist uncle, Alex Mews. Repertoire included operatic excerpts from Mascagni, Scarlatti, Monteverdi, Pergolesi, Mozart, Bizet, and Rimsky-Korsakov, song selections from Vaughan Williams, and selected French Canadian folk songs. Subsequent studies were undertaken abroad in Copenhagen with Ingenus Bendtsar, England (where her teachers included choral director, Sir Hugh Robertson, and Irish baritone, Harry Plunket Greene),³ and New York (where she resumed studies with Bendtsar and assisted him in the coaching of opera singers).

Mews served as director of the A Cappella Choir of the University of West Virginia from 1931 to 1933, where for a period of time, the choir instituted the peculiar policy of conscripting male football players to address a shortage of tenors and basses. In 1933, she returned to Newfoundland to concertize, open a studio for private voice pupils, and, at the invitation of John Lewis Paton (the first President of Memorial University College [MUC]), and establish a special choral group for students at the eight-year old institution. Still much sought after as a mezzo soprano, she was invited by Charles Hutton, a prominent choral director, impresario, and music shop owner, to sing the leading female role in an acclaimed production of Greenbank, Jones, and Hall's *Geisha*.⁴ This production, in turn, prompted an irreverent, locally inspired spoof of the operetta by Newfoundland musical parodist, John Burke, entitled *The Topsail Geisha*.

In an impressive career that extended into the 1970s, Mews Jerrett taught generations of young singers as a private teacher, among them Stuart Godfrey, Kevin Osmond, Frederick Emerson, Joan McNamara, Helen Marquis, Michael Donnan, and much later Catherine Cornick. Osmond would later recall that "she was an outstanding teacher with extensive knowledge of voice-production and presentation," (Godfrey, 1991, p. 108), while Cornick (2005), Mews' final voice pupil, remarked in a recent interview that her teaching in later years tended to focus on

abstract concepts such as lightness and darkness of tone rather than concrete, physical ones. Godfrey would later compile a sympathetic account of her life in music in which he identified several hallmarks of her teaching: 1) an interdisciplinary approach to the study of music in which students were encouraged to consider parallels to literature and the visual arts; 2) emphasis on listening to instrumental music (for example, legato string bowing) as a means of enriching young singers' conception of tone production; and 3) emulation of vocal models she believed to be exemplary, such as the German-born soprano/mezzo-soprano, Elena Gerhardt and, in the later years of her teaching career, Canadian soprano, Teresa Stratas.⁵

An adjunct of Mews Jerrett's teaching was her pioneering role in the developing music festival movement in Newfoundland. In addition to preparing students for festivals, she served on the Kiwanis Music Festival Advisory Committee during the early years of the organization during the 1950s, a passion shared with collegial interest by the German-born pianist and pedagogue Andreas Barban.⁶ She was likewise a strong supporter of the St. John's Community Concerts Association, an outgrowth of the American Concerts Association movement that emerged in Newfoundland in the 1940s under the leadership of Darroch Macgillivray, and the sponsorship of local Rotary Clubs.⁷ The Community Concerts Series introduced many musicians of international stature to Newfoundland audiences, among them singers Anna Kaskas, Mario Lanza, George London, Jean Watson, Arthur Kent, Walter Cassel, Louis Quilico, and, interestingly, the singer whose voice Mews Jerrett championed as a model for her pupils, Teresa Stratas.

It is as a choral director, however, that Eleanor Mews Jerrett is best remembered today. It was due in large measure to her efforts that a program of vocal music was established at MUC, Newfoundland's first post-secondary institution and the pre-Confederation precursor of Memorial University of Newfoundland. The growth and development of the College Glee Club—an integral facet of college life in the 1930s—was entirely due to her tireless dedication. It must be remembered that at that time in Newfoundland, there was a dearth of opportunities for musical instruction of any kind and scarcely any at the post-secondary level. The problem was especially acute for rural "outport" students, for whom travel remained costly and difficult. Prior to Mews' arrival at the college, Charles Hutton had taught music (both in theory and practice) to teachers in training at the St. John's Normal School beginning in 1921 and subsequently at the newly founded college from 1934 until his retirement in 1941.⁸ Hutton endeavoured to establish a college glee club as early as 1925, the first year of the institute's operations, an undertaking later attempted (with varying degrees of success) by the Church of England organists Richard T. Bevan, LRAM, ARCO, and David Morgan, LRAM.⁹

It was not until Mews' arrival, however, that the college glee club became a fixture of cultural life at the college, enjoying a period of uninterrupted growth from 1933 to 1939. By the mid-1930s, the Glee Club had evolved into one of three streams of musical activity at the college (the others being Charles Hutton's singing lessons to teachers in training and musical performances by visiting artists at college assemblies). Mews' Glee Club commenced operations in the fall of 1933 as an a cappella ensemble, consistent with Paton's desire to model the group upon the unaccompanied choral singing traditions popular in British schools and colleges. Weekly two-hour rehearsals began in September of each year and ran until May on the college campus.

The Glee Club was strictly a voluntary activity and, membership in church choirs aside, the vast majority of students had little or no background in choral music or, for that matter, formal musical training of any kind. With notable exceptions, relatively few Newfoundland schools during the depression era had the financial resources to adequately support music in the

curriculum and private musical instruction was attainable only to the privileged few. For many MUC students, therefore, Mews' Glee Club was not merely their first exposure to choral singing, but a practical introduction to the world of classical music.¹⁰ To bolster her vocal forces, Mews enlisted the services of several college alumni, private singing pupils, friends, and relatives.¹¹ The director, for her part, received no remuneration as the cash-strapped college was in no position to hire a salaried choral specialist. Accompanists included Elsie Tait (Mrs. F.G. Wylie), a music graduate of Mount Allison University in New Brunswick and the first woman to be appointed organist and choirmaster to a church in St. John's, and relatives Kathryn Mews and Douglas Mews. The latter would go on to international acclaim as a composer and music educator in England and later New Zealand, where he is still fondly remembered today.¹²

Public performances of the Glee Club took place in the College Assembly Hall in December (Yuletide Carols) and May (Springtime in Song) of each year. Repertoire included full choruses as well as a variety of arrangements for smaller chamber groups. The group's spring 1936 concert, for example, saw the Glee Club perform an eclectic range of repertoire (mostly sung to English texts) that included Elizabethan madrigals (Morley's "Now is the month of Maying"), romantic repertoire (Elgar's "As torrents in summer"), British folksongs ("Swansea Town"), Negro Spirituals ("Roll, Jordan, roll"), and operetta excerpts (the "Dance a Cachucha" from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*). Chamber music by Mozart, Franz, Handel, Beethoven, Bach, Percy Grainger, and Gounod, was likewise featured, as performed by frequent Glee Club soloists Dorothy Templeman, Eric Jerrett, John S. Coleman, Kathleen Howley, Stuart Godfrey, Kathryn and Douglas Mews, and Brenda Marshall. On March 13, 1939, six of these singers (under Mews' direction) performed in a landmark concert broadcast (the first of its kind in Newfoundland) marking the inauguration of the radio station, VONF. Eclecticism of musical styles and genres was in fact quite typical of Glee Club concerts. Choral music from the "canon" of the Western art music tradition, folk song arrangements from Western and non-Western traditions, and popular songs and operetta excerpts all found a welcome place. So it was that the group's spring 1938 concert included art music by Morley, Sibelius, Pergolesi, Handel, and Johann Strauss (an odd quintet if there ever was one), folk songs of Irish, Scottish, and Slavic origins, Negro Spirituals, and Zuni Indian Music.

Consistent with her approach to the teaching of singing, Mews emphasized the importance of choral role models for her young singers to emulate. Of special note here are the Glasgow (Scotland) Orpheus Choir, conducted by her former teacher Hugh S. Robertson, and the American Robert Shaw Chorale, both of which Glee Club members were encouraged to listen to through commercial recordings and radio broadcasts. The Glasgow Orpheus Choir (1901-51) in particular, was a model that Mews found well suited to her young singers. Synonymous with Robertson, its founding (and only) conductor, the Orpheus Choir gave acclaimed performances to audiences throughout Europe and North America before being replaced by its aptly named successor, the Phoenix Choir. Its repertoire, moreover, borrowed extensively from folksong traditions of the British Isles, a heritage with which many of her Newfoundland choristers could closely identify. Compositions and arrangements by Robertson figured prominently in Glee Club concerts, where Newfoundland audiences identified closely with their memorable folk melodies and textual themes. Fittingly perhaps, the Glee Club's final series of concerts in May 1939 opened with Robertson's *Celtic Hymn* ("The Outgoing of the Boats"), performed by double octet.

By the mid-1930s, Mews' efforts were clearly paying dividends. A.G. Hatcher (1938), in the Report of the College President for 1935-36, confidently asserted that "the Glee Club is a very bright spot in the picture of our College life," while the following year's concerts were heralded

as “artistic triumphs.” The conductor, for her part, was praised for her “sympathetic methods,” “highly successful” teaching, and the rare ability to “bring out hidden talent and arouse enthusiasm for choral singing” amongst students at the college (Hatcher, 1938).

The cultural significance of the Glee Club extended well beyond the walls of the college in ways that were perhaps not fully comprehended at the time. In an era when opportunities for musical instruction in rural Newfoundland were all too scarce, the ensemble sparked the birth of like-minded glee clubs, singing classes, and school choral groups in outport Newfoundland, many of which were directed by MUC Glee Club alumni. As the college calendar entry for 1938-39 suggests, “The Glee Club is intended to foster a love of music among the students, and to help those who will later be in outports to organize similar clubs in their own communities (Woodford, 1988, p. 180).” As Hatcher (1938) noted in the previous year’s Report of the College President (1937-38), these goals were already meeting with tangible outcomes:

The College Glee Club, directed by Miss Eleanor Mews, LTCL, has had a very successful year. Its two recitals, both given twice, were Carols by Candlelight and Springtime in Song, which reached high levels as choral productions of the first order. Already we hear of at least one or two Glee Clubs in certain outports and can trace their origin here. This activity can be further extended and, I hope, will be.

As the testimonials of former MUC choristers attest, the legacy of the Glee Club experience would last a lifetime. Alice Wareham (née Taylor) of Moreton’s Harbour, Newfoundland, described the experience as “the highlight of my teacher-training days at Memorial,” while another former chorister, Elizabeth Summers, had the following recollections:

The Glee Club was one of the highlights of my MUC experience. I was delighted to be part of it and was absolutely fascinated by the sound which we were able to produce, partly because it was my first experience with a mixed choir, and specifically as it was the “a cappella mode” which was new to me. All of which would have been, perhaps, merely another choir had it not been for our conductor who kept us all on our toes in a most charming manner. It was an enriching experience which led me to more in-depth music appreciation and was a measure in the development of increased self-confidence in myself as I pursued singing through private lessons with our conductor, Eleanor Mews Jerrett, to whom, I believe, we all owe a debt of gratitude, was a highly gifted, inspiring musician and friend (Quoted in Godfrey, 1992, p. 108).

Following an extended hiatus brought on by her marriage to lawyer and former Glee Club member Eric Jerrett in 1939,¹³ Eleanor Jerrett (née Mews) returned to the podium in 1951 to lead the newly founded St. John’s Glee Club, a community choir comprised largely of MUC alumni. The group’s ties to the college were furthered underscored by the use of university premises (including the university piano) for rehearsals. The new entity was established on the initiatives of two of these alumni, Stuart Godfrey and P. Lloyd Soper, with support from individuals such as Frederick Emerson, Andreas Barban, and Helen Lodge, a former MUC Glee Club member and a faculty member in the teacher training program at the college during the 1930s. A Board of Directors oversaw the administrative operations of the group.¹⁴

With Jerrett accepting the invitation to become its inaugural music director and conductor, the St. John's Glee Club was established as an a cappella choir at a meeting of approximately 60 persons in a lecture theatre of Memorial University on June 18, 1951. Accompanists for the new Glee Club included former MUC pianist, Elsie (Tait) Wylie, and Douglas Osmond, LRAM, of Moreton's Harbour, Newfoundland. Not unlike the conductor, Osmond (2003) had returned to Newfoundland following studies in England and the United States, becoming music teacher at Prince of Wales College and organist and choirmaster at Wesley United Church and later Gower Street United Church. His piano playing was often heard in recital with local soloists in the St. John's area in the mid-twentieth century.

Although comprised of a loyal core of MUC alumni and voice pupils of the conductor (both former and current), the new Glee Club drew upon choristers of diverse backgrounds. Roman Catholic and Protestant members – many of whom also sang in church choirs – were equally welcome and, like the MUC Glee Club of a previous era, the group served as a model of tolerance and cooperation in an era when denominational rivalries were at times pronounced. The main criteria for membership were a capable singing voice, a desire to interpret music artistically, and, as was the case with her college glee club, punctual and regular attendance. While the majority of singers in the new Glee Club were native Newfoundlanders, a substantial portion were American servicemen and their spouses (Godfrey estimates as much as 25% of the Glee Club). The impact of American military personnel – composer John Williams among many others – on Newfoundland's increasingly eclectic music scene in the mid-twentieth century (particularly in the realm of jazz and popular music) is an important topic that still awaits exhaustive discussion. Yet the St. John's Glee club serves as a useful reminder that the influence was by no means unidirectional. While a number of the American choristers enriched the Glee Club with prior vocal training in the United States, so too did Eleanor Mews enriched their lives as she had done with her Newfoundland and West Virginia students before that. By September of 1951, the community glee club with an increasingly international flavour had attracted a more than 100 applicants. During its all too brief period of existence, the average complement was 80 to 85 singers per year.

The concert season, modelled closely upon the MUC example, featured performances in December and May of each year. Repertoire was once again varied, with classical masterworks, folksong arrangements, and Negro Spirituals figuring prominently, while varying groups of chamber singers supplemented the full choral portion of the program. As with the earlier college glee club, Sir Hugh S. Robertson and the Glasgow Orpheus continued to serve as important choral models. Glee Club members were encouraged to listen to recordings of the group and, most significantly perhaps, the St. John's Glee Club programmed Robertson's compositions and arrangements on a regular basis. Among these were "Nightfall in Skye," "Maureen – An Irish Cradle Song," and choral arrangements of the Scottish folk songs "Belmont," "Crimond," "All in the April Evening," "Ay waukin' O," and "Peat-Fire Smoothing Prayer" ("Song of the Hebrides"). The "Peat-Fire Smoothing Prayer," sung by three-part women's chorus, evoked special meaning for the Glee Club. As Godfrey (1992) later recalled, with respect to one such performance,

The singing by the Women's Chorus of "Peat-Fire Smoothing Prayer" achieved performances of near matchless beauty and maturity... Numberless Newfoundland women – wives, mothers, and lovers, through two centuries of folk memory as well as in living memory – have watched through the terrors of "countless lantern'd nights" of storm and fire, or at

the bedside of a stricken child. In the singing of "Peat-Fire Smoothing Prayer," the Women's Three-Part Chorus and Eleanor Jerrett came together in unusual empathy between singers and conductor, and with Sir Hugh Robertson's artistic purpose. For this listener each performance was a memorable and utterly moving musical experience (pp. 73-74).

In the fall of 1953, the Executive Committee of the St. John's Glee Club, acting on the wishes of membership, issued a recording of several carols from the Christmas 1952 concert. A limited quantity of 500, 12" records were produced on the RCA Victor label and arrived in Newfoundland stores just in time for the 1953 holiday season. For reasons unknown, only one-third of the recordings sold; a situation that may be at least partly attributed to a lack of sufficient advertising. It was to be the Glee Club's one and only venture into the recording industry. The St. John's Glee Club was active under Mews Jerrett's direction until 1954 when, on the advice of her physician, she once again relinquished the role of Glee Club director. The group's final Springtime in Song concert in May 1954 would turn out to be its farewell performance.

Although seldom accorded the same recognition as her male counterparts, among them Charles Hutton and later Ignatius Rumboldt, Eleanor Mews Jerrett played a pivotal role in fostering a vibrant tradition of choral music at MUC. The extent of her achievement is all the more remarkable given the era in which she lived, the dearth of opportunities for careers in music in Newfoundland at the time, and the physical challenges she was forced to overcome from a very young age. Her fledgling Glee Club helped plant seeds that would flower fully following the college's evolution into a degree granting university in 1949. Rumboldt's revival of a Memorial University Glee Club decades later was a product of this impulse, a rich tradition that continues to the present day with the choirs of the Memorial University School of Music. The St. John's Glee Club, in turn, built upon its college roots to help foster a vibrant and ongoing tradition of community choral singing in Newfoundland. Lastly, the legacy of Eleanor Mews Jerrett has endured in the musical careers of the many young singers to study under her tutelage, among them Godfrey, Osmond, Emerson, McNamara, Marquis, Donnan, Cornick, and others. Gilles Potvin, in an article on "Singing and Voice Teaching" in the *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, makes brief mention of Mews Jerrett as one of the leading voice teachers in Canadian history (the only Newfoundlander named), while a rehearsal room in the Memorial University School of Music is named in her honour.

Why then does the name Eleanor Mews Jerrett remain a somewhat shadowy one in Canadian music history, even in her native Newfoundland? Her extended periods abroad and sabbaticals from professional activity may be partly to blame, yet more so perhaps was the fact that virtually all of her choral activities in Newfoundland comprised voluntary work with amateur singers (a legacy that stands in sharp contrast to the professional operatic career of Newfoundland musical icon, Georgina Stirling). Questions of reception and recognition aside, her impact on the Newfoundland music scene was staggering and continues to be felt to the present day. Eleanor Mews was truly one of the most remarkable women in the history of Newfoundland music.

Endnotes

1. Arthur Mews (1864-1947) was a senior civil servant in the Newfoundland government from 1898 to 1935 and organist at Cochrane Street Church in St. John's for nearly six decades, beginning in 1883.

2. Christian was music master at Prince of Wales College in St. John's and organist and choirmaster of George Street United Church in the Newfoundland capital.
3. Harry Plunket Greene (1865-1936) was perhaps best known as an oratorio singer who gave his first public appearance in a performance of Handel's *Messiah* and subsequently was renowned for his renditions of works by Parry and Elgar. In 1899, he married Parry's daughter. One of the leading interpreters of English song of his generation, Greene was the recipient of many of Stanford's finest songs (Shawe-Taylor and Blyth, 2001a, p. 365).
4. A leading male performer in the same production was one of Newfoundland's finest musicians of the era, the singer/organist/choir director, Ignatius Rumboldt (1916-1994). Rumboldt would become perhaps best known as the director of the Memorial University Glee Club and St. John's Extension Choir during the 1950s and 1960s, and especially for programming arrangements of Newfoundland folk songs for choral concerts and recordings. He actively lobbied for the creation of a Department of Music at Memorial University of Newfoundland and was a member of the Canada Council from 1965 to 1968. Rumboldt became a member of the Order of Canada in 1975 and received the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 1978.
5. Gerhardt (1883-1961) studied at the Leipzig Conservatory, where she was closely linked (both musically and romantically) with its director, Nikisch. Later active in England, Gerhardt became well known for her renditions of German song, notably as an interpreter of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and Wolf (Shawe-Taylor & Blyth 2001b, p. 297). Stratas (b. 1938) made her debut with the Canadian opera company before becoming a regular soloist with the Metropolitan Opera in New York. (Rosenthal & Blyth, 2001, p. 469.)
6. Andreas Barban (1914-93) studied at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music before moving to Shanghai, China, with wife, Betty, to teach music during WWII. In 1947, the Barbans moved to St. John's, where he quickly became a stalwart of the Newfoundland music scene. In addition to his pioneering leadership in the music festival movement in Newfoundland, he was a frequent recitalist and chamber musician (both in live concerts and radio broadcasts), a piano teacher, music critic, and orchestral conductor during the early years of the St. John's Symphony (later the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra) in the 1960s.
7. First introduced in the United States in the 1920s, the movement spread to Canada in 1930 with the advent of the Community Concert Association of Kitchener, Ontario. By the 1940s, Community Concert Associations could be found in cities and towns across Canada, including the Newfoundland communities of Grand Falls, Harbour Grace, St. John's, and Corner Brook, the first such association on the island. As with other Community Concert Associations in Canada and the United States, those in Newfoundland were organized by the individual communities involved in association with Community Concerts, Inc., a subsidiary of Columbia Artists Management Inc., of New York.
8. Following Hutton's retirement, vocal instruction for prospective teachers at the college was given by Marguerite Jennings, LRAM, a former music teacher at Bishop Spencer College.
9. Bevan, in addition to directing the fledgling Glee Club, lectured on a variety of musical topics, including a lecture-recital on folksong (assisted by Elsie Herder and H. B. Wardell) during the 1925-6 academic year. In 1927, he arranged music for the celebration of the college's Beethoven Centenary and, in 1928, with assistance from Frederick Emerson and others, he organized the college's Schubert Festival.
10. Add to that the natural attrition in membership as students of the two-year college graduated or left, and one begins to sense the magnitude of the task facing the director.

11. Some of these friends of the Glee Club included John S. Coleman, Kathleen Howley, Eric Jerrett, Molly O'Dea Kelly, Brenda Marshall, Douglas Mews, and Kathryn Mews (Godfrey, 1992, pp. 58-59).
12. Douglas Mews (1918-1993) studied in London, England and became a professor and examiner at the Trinity College of Music. He emigrated to Auckland, New Zealand in 1969 to join the music faculty of the University of Auckland (where he retired in 1984).
13. The couple wed on June 1 of that year.
14. The inaugural Board of Directors of the St. John's Glee Club included P. Lloyd Soper (President), Stuart R. Godfrey (Vice-President), Mary Darcy (Hon. Secretary), Stan Fowler (Hon. Treasurer), Eleanor Mews Jerrett (Music Director and Choral Conductor), and Elsie (Tait) Wylie (Pianist). Other notable supporters of the St. John's Glee Club included Joan Furlong, R. Furlong, Kevin Osmond, and H.D. Rosenberg.

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