



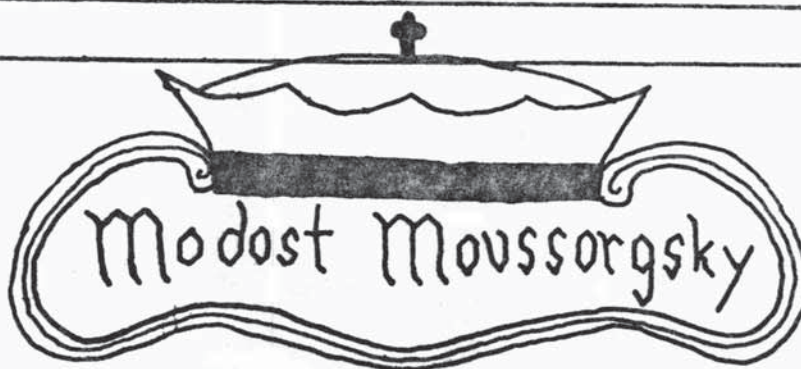
THE

CLIFF

21

National Publication of Mu Beta Psi Honorary Musical Fraternity

1972



To: THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF MU BETA PSI

I apologize to Mu Beta Psi for my performance as National Editor of the Clef. I, more than anyone else, realize what a poor job I have done. Any reasons that I may give would make it appear that I am trying to cop out on the responsibility that I had been given, and failed to meet it. However, my personal life has been pretty well messed up since August. If our representatives to the National feel that it is necessary to say more, there will be nothing that I can do about it. I regret that I cannot attend the National to take the blame that is due to me. However, I feel it is more important for me to straighten out my personal life, rather than attend the National.

I thank those chapters that responded to the Clef. One work that I did include is the "Great Works in Music." I personally do not feel that it is necessary, or relevant to the workings of Psi. The Fraternity as a whole, should examine and evaluate this work and decide if it is necessary. It is also an added expense to the Fraternity and extra work for the editor.

To the editor of the future, I would like to offer several suggestions. First, to contact Ralph Daniell about arranging for the printing of the Clef and designing a standard cover, which would lower printing costs. A major expense was the artwork on the cover. This would also eliminate the necessity of hunting all over to find the best place to have it printed. The future editor should also ask each chapter how many copies it will need (including actives, pledges, advisors, and alumni members). This would have helped me greatly to determine the number of copies to print.

Having failed at the job of editor, I do not feel that I can offer anything of value to the Clef, so I merely apologize again, and wish the next editor much luck.

Fraternally yours,

JERRY HAMPTON
NATIONAL EDITOR

MINUTES OF THE MU BETA PSI NATIONAL CONVENTION

Washington & Lee University - Lexington, Va.

March 18, 1972

PRESIDING: Mike Agee, National President

The meeting was called to order by President Agee at 1:25 p.m. A welcome was extended to the attendees by Paul Weeks, president of Epsilon Chapter which was hosting this convention. Weeks then presented the Outstanding Member of the Year award to President Agee on behalf of Epsilon Chapter.

Executive Secretary Ralph Daniel read the minutes of the 1971 national convention, and presented the financial report of the national treasury. The minutes and financial report were accepted as read.

Old business was called, beginning with chapter reports.

Alpha Chapter reported a membership of 24 brothers, ushering at campus concerts, entertaining visiting musical groups after performances, a pladje class of 20, and plans for the hootenanny. In addition, the chapter was now responsible for equipment set-up prior to concerts, for which the chapter received pay. An opinion paper was presented outlining some problems of the fraternity and suggested remedies.

Delta Chapter was entertaining visiting musical groups, contacting alumni, ushering, and planning *Spring Sounds*. The All-College Band for South Carolina was being hosted at Clemson, and Delta would be providing services for this event, thus allowing a great deal of contact with prospective schools about expansion. A recording, *The Clemson Tradition*, was also being planned.

Epsilon Chapter has 18 members. The chapter room in the student center is still being furnished, and will eventually become exclusively a Mu Beta Psi room when the new music building at Washington & Lee is finished. Epsilon had also put considerable effort into hosting the national convention this year. Help was being extended to the faltering Eta Chapter at neighboring Virginia Military Institute.

Zeta Chapter has 25 members, and is planning the annual *Excursion in Sound*. Chapter members are active in all facets of student government, resulting in maximum campus awareness of the chapter. Zeta had brought the latest edition of *The Clef* with them for distribution at the convention.

Expansion reports were given, beginning with the national office. A colony had been established at Emory University in the fall, starting with about 18 members. However interest dropped until, after about 6 meetings, efforts were abandoned for a chapter there at this time. There was no evident reason for the decline, and it was suggested that a policy and program for expansion be discussed during new business. Delta read a report from Vice President Tony Hilton, who could not be present, stating that 21 schools had been contacted. This had resulted in North Carolina A&T and Southwest Louisiana State responding, too recently for any results to be reported at this time. Agee reported contacting Averett, who had been expected to have attendees at the convention, but did not. A general discussion then ensued on expansion problems, with any action being deferred until new business.

Zeta Chapter was called upon to report on *The Clef*. The latest and only issue for the term had been distributed prior to the meeting, and it was felt that the cooperation received was again minimal. There were numerous recommendations contained in the issue, and the intention was made known to act on these recommendations under new business.

Delta Chapter reported that the situation with Psi Mu Psi on the Clemson campus was still amiable and unchanged.

New business was then called. Weeks moved that the national constitution be amended as follows: "Amendment 10. The responsibility for publication of *The Clef* shall rest with a chapter. Said chapter shall elect from its ranks the National Editor. Both editorship and publication responsibility shall be subject to re-election annually." A friendly amendment added after seconding resulted in the last sentence above. During discussion it was pointed out that when a single chapter has responsibility for a project, the results are usually better than when an individual or a group spread across chapter lines has the responsibility. Examples of this were the convention arrangements this year (handled by Epsilon) and the national by-laws (handled by Alpha). By having annual re-elections, a chapter's accomplishments could be judged and awarded elsewhere if necessary for the following year. Question was called, and the amendment was passed unanimously.

The situation with Eta Chapter at Virginia Military Institute then came under discussion. It seems that all of Eta's members had graduated without holding a spring initiation, and the officers had taken all fraternity materials with them. Professor Robert Stewart of Epsilon reported that different faculty members at VMI had different ideas on what Eta Chapter's functions should be, and each would only give support if the chapter conformed to his ideas. Originally Mu Beta Psi had been informed that the Timmins Society, a local music club, was going to become Eta Chapter. However, this had not happened, and apparently each group had gone its own way after the alleged conversion of Timmins into Eta. After further discussion it was decided that Epsilon Chapter, due to close physical proximity, would be the only hope for re-activating Eta and that the matter would be left in their hands.

Expansion was discussed next. Daniel moved that the chapter from which the national vice president hails be responsible for execution of expansion policy. After seconding, the "chapter project" concept was again discussed. Since Amendment 9 delegated expansion activities to the Vice President it would be natural for his native chapter to have those duties if an entire chapter was to undertake the project. The motion was passed.

Ed Reed moved that the newly elected Executive Committee formulate the policy for expansion which the national vice president's chapter would be responsible for executing. After seconding and discussion the motion was passed.

Daniel moved that Article V, Section 3 of the constitution be amended so as to lower the charter fee to \$25.00 for prospective chapters. After seconding, he stated that the \$50.00 charter fee hits a newly organized group at the time when they can least afford it. Trying to build a chapter treasury, pay local fees, national fees, degree team transportation costs, and a charter fee all at once can overtax the ability of the chapter members to support the new chapter. Discussion centered around whether another way might be found to ease this burden. A friendly amendment which would have substantially changed the content of the original motion was rejected, and question was called. The motion was defeated by a vote of 2-6.

Al Marshall moved that the national initiation fee be abolished for the charter members of a petitioning chapter. This would require no new constitutional amendment, as Amendment 7 gave the convention in session the power to set or change this fee. The motion was seconded and passed.

A brief recess was called to allow time to clear up housing problems at the host hotel.

Following the recess, Ted Halverson spoke on *The Clef* and the need for maintaining a standard cover heading. This was not only traditional, but would be necessary if the time came to obtain second-class mailing privileges.

Carl Dawson moved that the convention pass the following amendment to the national constitution: "Amendment 11. Any chapter whose active membership falls below six (6) men and/or women shall lose its privilege of voting at National Conventions unless invited by the President to speak in their behalf. After a period of one year of membership less than six (6) men and/or women, said chapter shall lose its charter." After seconding, a friendly amendment during discussion produced the above wording. Since six is the minimum required for installation, it was felt the above amendment would prevent political power groups or elite cliques from dominating a chapter to the exclusion of all others. Question was called and the amendment was approved 6-2.

Dawson then moved that the national office obtain credit cards with the telephone company for use by national officers. The motion was seconded and during discussion the problems presently encountered with the U.S. Postal Service were enumerated. It was decided that if the expense of these credit card phone calls became excessive, the Executive Secretary would have the power to recall and cancel the cards. The motion passed 7-1.

Chuck Emki requested that the attendees remain after the business meeting long enough to allow pictures to be taken. Emki then moved that the 1973 National Convention be held in Atlanta, Georgia with Delta being the host chapter. After seconding, the delegate voting produced a 4-4 tie. President Agee broke the tie by voting against the motion.

It was then decided that a slate of cities be put up for voting, with the convention going to that with the most votes. Proposed cities with the votes received were Atlanta (4), Houghton (2), Washington DC (2), and Columbus, Ohio (0). The 1973 convention will be held in Atlanta. Daniel moved that the date be decided at this convention as March 24, 1973, in order to eliminate the usual last minute hurry to decide on a date. After seconding, the motion brought a 4-4 tie vote. President Agee broke the tie by voting against the motion. Friedman moved that the date be decided later with all chapters furnishing the national office with preferable and objectionable dates by May 1st. The motion was seconded and passed 8-0.

The Zeta delegates then spoke on the relative disadvantage with which their chapter was faced, due to the great distance to any point central to the other chapters. It was pointed out that the original idea behind the "host chapter" concept would be to give each chapter a break as pertains to travel expenses. It was moved, seconded, and passed that Zeta would be the host chapter for the 1974 convention. Therefore the slate for the next three years would be 1973 Delta, 1974 Zeta, and 1975 Alpha (decided at the 1971 convention).

There being no further new business, the floor was opened for nominations to the office of National President. After chapter caucuses, Dale Williams, Marc Lipman, and Dave Powers were nominated. The nominations were closed, the candidates spoke on their behalf, and supporting speeches were made. Voting was by secret ballot, but the first ballot did not produce a majority for either nominee. A second ballot was taken, with the result that Dave Powers is the National President for 1972-73.

Next, the floor was opened for nominations to the National Vice Presidency. Nominated were Duane Evans and Hank Owens. Nominations were again closed, speeches were made, and secret ballots cast. The voting resulted in a tie, so the outgoing Executive Committee was called into session to break the tie according to the national by-laws. Duane Evans is the National Vice President for 1972-73.

According to the 10th amendment to the constitution, ratified by the convention, the office of National Editor is filled by the chapter responsible for the publication of *The Clef*. The floor was opened for chapter volunteers for the publication of *The Clef* for the following year. Zeta Chapter volunteered, and there being no further volunteers, was accepted by acclamation.

Ted Carson moved that prospective candidates for national offices, who know in advance that they intend to run, be requested to furnish resumes to the chapters in advance of the convention. The motion was seconded and passed 6-2.

The subject of travel expenses authorized by the national by-laws was then brought up. As Zeta Chapter was the only one with more than 500 miles (one-way) to travel next year, the delegates were asked for an estimate as to their needs. Owens moved that Zeta Chapter be reimbursed \$80.00 at the next convention for their travel expenses. The motion was seconded and passed.

The motion still in effect from the 1967 convention that each chapter select one member-at-large, a general caucus was held for this selection, with the following results: Alpha, Dale Williams; Delta, Larry Sloan; Epsilon, Marc Lipman; Zeta, Gary Rogerson (pro-tem).

There being no further business, closing announcements were made, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ralph W. Daniel
Executive Secretary
Mu Beta Psi
National Honorary
Musical Fraternity

COMMITTEE REPORT: Committee on the Promotion of Jazz

At the September 27th meeting of Alpha chapter, President Randall Laxton formed a two-man committee, the purpose of which would be to offer music in the form of jazz to the students of MCSU. Jazz is an area sadly lacking at State, and it was agreed that it is the responsibility of the Psi to boost it. To achieve this end for jazz, the president appointed Lawrence Carringer to the committee with Dale Williams as chairman. The committee was named the Committee on the Promotion of Jazz. It was suggested that the committee take advantage of the fact that the office of Musician-in-Residence for 1972-73 had been given to David Mauney, jazz pianist, vibraphonist, and bassist.

On September 28, the committee approached Mr. Mauney and asked him what Mu Beta Psi might do to aid him in achieving his idea of fulfilling his office. Mr. Mauney stated a desire to conduct a series of seminars dealing with jazz and improvisational theory, but he said he was not sure as to how to instigate the operation. The committee offered to organize the series for Mr. Mauney, leaving him concerned only with subject matter and medium. Mr. Mauney gratefully accepted the offer. He suggested holding a preliminary seminar and judging from the response whether or not to start a series. The date chosen for the preliminary seminar was October 18, one week after the next meeting of Alpha chapter. This was done to allow the brotherhood to vote on necessary motions relating to the organization of the seminar, particularly funding publicity.

Reserving a rehearsal room in the new music building was no problem for the committee. The problem was in the early stages of securing publicity. The music department refused financial help because of its limited budget for publicity. Indeed, the department's concerts are not well publicized. Mr. Mauney told the committee that he knew people who had offered to help him financially for just such occasions, and he could probably acquire a sizable portion of whatever was required. He was told that the brothers would have to vote first, however, before anything was done. None-the-less, that Monday, an announcement was started in the campus newspaper, the Technician, which of course cost nothing. Duane Evans, Mu Beta Psi National Vice President and skilled artist, drew up masters for prospective advertisements and posters.

At the meeting there was some controversy as to how much money, if any at all, should be spent on the project. Fearing Mr. Mauney's private backers might not come through, the brotherhood was somewhat reluctant to commit itself to the entire cost of the advertisement and the posters. A motion was passed deciding that the Psi would fund exactly half the total cost of publicity, after which a contradictory motion allowing the bills to be sent to Mu Beta Psi was also passed. It was unanimously decided that Duane be reimbursed for his generous work.

The advertisement was run in the next three issues of the Technician, which is published tri-weekly. The announcement also ran up through the day of the seminar. An article written by the committee chairman was printed in the paper Monday, October 16. The two hundred green-on-yellow posters had already started going up on the thirteenth. An announcement was submitted to the weeks edition of the Student Activities Calendar. Starting three days prior to the seminar, announcements were made through the campus radio station, WKNC. On the day of the seminar, the committee chairman was interviewed for the news program on WKNC. Also, after it was over, the seminar was summarized on the news. Throughout all of this publicity, the name "Mu Beta Psi" was

conspicuously displayed.

In spite of mid-term exams, the N.C. State Fair, and two concerts the same evening by Country Joe MacDonald, the seminar was enthusiastically received by at least forty students. The response was such that another seminar has been set up for the first of November, again to be organized by the Committee on the Promotion of Jazz. There ^{will be} no more money involved. Sadly, no one responded to the committee's invitation to set up jam sessions. Mr. Mauney greatly encouraged by the first seminar, and he anticipates even greater response to the second. He said he might even conduct workshops for instrumentalists who wish to get a deeper into jazz.

Total cost of publicity came to \$65.40. The fifty percent backing of Mr. Mauney's private sources has been promised. Alpha is grateful to David Mauney and his secret financiers for their part in this victory in overcoming Mu Beta Psi's comparative obscurity. Mr. Mauney expresses deep gratitude for helping him to obtain a personal goal of giving jazz to an increasing number of music lovers.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale T. Williams

Dale T. Williams
Chairman, Committee on the Promotion
of Jazz
Alpha Chapter

STUDENT RADIO PROGRAMS RETURN

Ed Porrett, a member of the Zeta Chapter at Michigan Technological University, announces the return of a radio program dedicated to student performances in the arts. The program will be aired on WGGL, a public service FM station broadcasting at 100,000 watts from studios at Tech throughout the surrounding area.

Last year, the program (known as "The Other Side of Tech" featured the Jazz Lab Band, Varsity Singers, and other Tech groups, as well as a Northern Michigan University group, The Fantastics.) This year, the plan is to expand the horizons of the program to include performances by artists from other campuses across the nation.

The program is being presented on behalf of Mu Beta Psi but performances by all students are welcomed. If you have or can arrange suitable recordings, please contact Ed at 813 Sheldon Avenue, Houghton, Michigan 49931.

HONORARY BROTHERHOOD?

Duane Evans (Alpha)

Other fraternities select prominent people in their field of interest upon whom to bestow honorary brotherhood. This action both provides recognition for the honoree and links the fraternity to the success of others; a little image goes a long way, and there's reason to believe that image is our weakest spot with regard to our expansion efforts, and, on some campuses, the attraction of new brothers.

The matter of National Honorary Brothers will probably arise at the next National Convention, so we may as well begin considering the issue now in the forum of the CLEF. Here are two situations to consider.

Epsilon has had only pleasant experiences in its honorary induction of Pablo Casals. Mr. Casals has shown genuine interest in the Psi and has been very gracious in offering appreciation and service.

Alpha, however, was confronted by the other side of the coin last winter: over a beer at Alpha's favorite tavern, conductor Andre Previn said he had no idea what groups he had been drafted into, that he hated strangers confronting him with supposed fraternal relationships. He felt that "Honorary Brother" was the antithesis of brotherhood.

And so we have two opposite reactions from two notable musicians. Our decision may be a hard one.

EDITORIAL

Jim Lucas

There are many worthwhile projects and purposes toward which the brothers of Mu Beta Psi might be exhorted, but few are so immediate and vital to the interest of the fraternity as the issue of expansion. The question is not one of expansion for its own sake; rather, the question we must face squarely is this - just how effective can we expect to be if we remain a "national" fraternity of only four chapters, three of which are located on the Atlantic seaboard? Indeed, how long may we continue to bear the tag of "national" in good faith when our influence is so limited?

This is not to suggest that Mu Beta Psi engage in a contest of sheer prolificacy with Phi Mu Alpha. Indeed, one of the major "selling points" of Mu Beta Psi may be the fact that Psi offers to many student musicians a meaningful alternative to the more professionally oriented Sinfonians. We are presently faced with the problem of breaking out of an extremely vicious circle: we are not well known nationally, therefore we need to start new chapters; however, we are hindered in starting new chapters because we are not well known nationally. That is "Catch-22" in its purest sense. There is, however, a way out.

First, we must, for reasons of immediate practicality, recognize the fact that, at present, we are a predominately regional, Eastern organization (considering Zeta Chapter as our western boundary). In ordering priorities for a program of expansion, it is advisable to build our strength first in our present "area of influence." Once this is accomplished, expansion into other regions will be much easier.

The means of accomplishing this first phase of an expansion program constitutes the crux of this proposal. The proposal is simply this: that each chapter of Mu Beta Psi take, as a chapter project, the establishment of one new chapter. This would put the whole effort on a one-to-one basis between the

schools involved, would tend to generate a more intensive effort, and, if successful, would double the present size of Mu Beta Psi, establish Psi firmly as a strong, viable musical organization, and encourage expansion efforts in schools outside our immediate area.

A general "plan of attack" for each chapter might run something like this: First, letters of inquiry would be sent out to likely prospects. It would be advisable to concentrate on schools with some traditional ties with your own, or on schools with which brothers of your chapter have personal ties or connections. Once you have found a likely "target," the intensive effort begins. By all means, continue the methods presently used, i.e. correspondence and visits by brothers to the target school. Do not stop there, however, reciprocate! Invite interested students to spend a weekend on your campus as guests of your chapter. Bring them to a Psi party or get-together, and let Psi sell itself. If you're fortunate enough to host the band of your target school for a football (or basketball) game, there are all kinds of opportunities: a Psi sponsored drop-in, party, reception, etc., for the visiting group. Remember - the brotherhood of Mu Beta Psi, its activities, and the enthusiasm of its brothers are the best selling points we have, and these are best displayed on your own campus to your guest prospects. No matter how enthusiastic a delegation you might send to your target school, the impression cannot compare with that created by bringing a group of prospects to your campus to observe Psi in its own element. Once they get back to their own campus and start telling their friends what they saw, you may as well start the paperwork!

There's the proposal - a one-to-one, chapter-by-chapter, intensive campaign for expansion. The means of implementation are limited only by your own imagination and determination. Are we up to it?

ZETA CHAPTER

Hockey and football are popular sports (athletic wise that is) at Michigan Tech. and as with everything else on campus Zeta chapter lends its services. The Zeta chapter has taken charge of selling the programs at the games. In addition to this the chapter has participated actively in such functions as Homecoming, Coffee houses, and little theater productions.

Participation in the concert-lecture series is one of the major activities for the Zeta chapter. Two such features were Your Father's Mustache presented on October 27th. and Woody Herman presented on November 6th. The efforts for these concerts by Zeta included setting up the stage, collecting tickets, and running the lights.

The fifteenth annual 'Excursion in Sound' sponsored by Mu Beta Psi was presented this past fall and again it proved to be a roaring success. All the arrangements, set up, and production were accomplished by the close cooperation of the fraternity members.

The program was presented to help bridge the cultural gap on a basically engineering oriented campus. Many different types of acts filled the stage from guitar to modern dance.

With its involvement in campus activities, Mu Beta Psi has gained a name unlike that of any other organization on campus. Zeta chapter's involvement is seen almost everywhere.

DELTA'S SISTER GROWING

Jim Lucas

Delta Chapter is unique - and fortunate - in having a sister organization on the Clemson campus. Psi Mu Psi, a local honorary music sorority, was founded in November, 1970, by interested women musicians and the brothers of Delta. It has since become a significant force in the social and cultural life of Clemson University.

The membership requirements of Psi Mu Psi are similar to those of Delta: prospective pledges must have completed two semesters in any campus musical group and must be enrolled in the third semester in order to be eligible for selection.

The stated purpose of Psi Mu Psi is "to promote music on the Clemson University campus, and to assist the brothers of Mu Beta Psi with their projects and activities." The sisters of Psi Mu Psi, in addition to ushering at concerts with the brothers of Delta, are busy with many worthwhile projects of their own. The sisters maintain a bulletin board in Daniel Hall, the liberal arts building, to keep students informed about musical events on campus. In addition, they provide musical instruments for area schools, assist with music education programs in these schools, and maintain an emergency loan fund for the sisters.

Psi Mu Psi officers for 1972-73 are: Louise White, president; Brenda Pace, vice-president; Sandy Charles, secretary; Sandi Brunson, treasurer; and Patti Roffe, sergeant-at-arms.

DELTA DOINGS

Jim Lucas

Delta Chapter, as usual, has its hands full this year with a number of projects. With a membership for fall semester including 25 brothers and 13 pledges, Delta is expanding its activities as well as its size.

Heading the list of new projects for this year is an alumni mailing list for Delta alumni. Arrangements are being made to begin a mailing list to all Delta Chapter alumni, for the purpose of keeping them up-to-date with chapter activities. Along with a newsletter and any other relevant material, a copy of the current CLEF will be included in the mailings.

The major new project is the sale of a Delta-produced record album. This album, entitled The Clemson Tradition, Vol. II, is a follow-up to the earlier Delta production. Included will be marches, the University Alma Mater, and three different arrangements of the ever-popular Tiger Rag. The record will be sold at home football games, to students, and to parents, friends, and alumni back home by the brothers. We hope eventually to add \$1000 or so to the chapter treasury by means of this project.

After Clemson's Homecoming victory over Virginia, the brothers of Delta held the second annual Alumni Drop-In in the Psi Lounge. Following up the success of last year's Drop-In, many "old" brothers and their wives or dates met with the brothers and pledges, meeting each other and renewing old acquaintances.

One of Delta's long-standing activities, ushering at University Concert Series events, is in full swing again this year. For the first concert we had the brilliant young Israeli violinist Itzhak Perlman, and upcoming concerts feature Virgil Fox, the Houston Symphony, and the Gregg Smith Singers.

Plans are under way already for Delta's major annual production, the student musical extravaganza modestly entitled, "Spring Sounds." Spring Sounds is

likely to feature anything from the Norty Cord Trio to Schoenberg on the flute to zither virtuosi, all held together (?) by two emcees selected for their total lack of redeeming social value. All in all, it's a lot of fun, and flashes of honest-to-gosh talent have even been known to pop up, despite all we can do. Spring Sounds is eagerly anticipated by Clemson students, and somewhat dreaded by the powers that be, who often find themselves the target of our lovable emcees.

This year, Delta Chapter will host the Mu Beta Psi National Convention down in "Hotlanta", Gerogia. The city itself offers a tremendous amount of entertainment so there should not be a dull moment. Convention sites are now being sought in and around the city. A new "Days Inn" motel and the nationally famous "Regency" are two sites among others now under consideration. We hope that this year's convention will be as enjoyable and as crowning as last year's in Lexington Virginia. We have no caves to explore and no beer for 99¢ a six-pack, but we do have "Underground" Atlanta and the Atlanta Playboy Club plus the rest of the city if there is anymore time remaining. If we find we have nothing to do, we can always ride over to Clemson - and have nothing to do there. .

GREAT STORIES IN MUSIC

"Boris Godounov"

Preface

From Alexander Pushkin's complicated play Boris Godounov, based on Shakespearean models, Moussorgsky put together the libretto for his masterpiece and the only opera he completed himself (Rimsky and others had to posthumously help him with Khovantchina and Rimsky re-orchestrated Boris into the form that is most familiar today). Moussorgsky's opera is based on the tragic life of the Russian czar of that name between 1598 and 1605. Reduced from twenty-four scenes to under half that number, the opera is still possessed of an epic grandeur. It has been said that Moussorgsky was the only operatic composer who could compete with Wagner on his own ground, and certainly Boris Godounov, with its many complex characters, spectacular choral scenes, and music that puts across what has been called the "Russian mystique" in no small terms, almost defies the limits of the operatic stage.

Moussorgsky composed a first version of Boris between 1868 and 1870, and revised it during the next several years. It was published in 1874 and performed at the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg with considerable success. Moussorgsky died in 1881, and Rimsky-Korsakov reorchestrated the opera to add more brilliance in tone color, and in his version the opera enjoyed much greater success than before. Feodor Chaliapin sang the first title role in the first production of the Rimsky version. In Paris in 1908, Diaghilev produced the opera for its first success in the West.

* * *

Long before the action begins in the opera, Czar Ivan the Terrible died in 1584. History tells us that of his two sons one was a teenaged half-wit and the other was a small child. Boris Godunov had been the Czar's closest friend and adviser, and he was made Regent while his sister married the half-wit. The younger boy, having been placed in a monastery, soon died. Boris' feeble-minded brother-in-law, for whom he was acting as Regent, died seven years later without having any children. Thus the throne was open.

The members of the nobility and (as some historians claim) the Russian people themselves, wanted the most qualified man in the country to be Czar. And this man was Boris Godounov. But Boris, faithful to his old friend's memory, refused, at least at first.

Here the libretto differs from history. Like Shakespeare's King Richard III before Boris, the libretto's Boris is seen to have plotted to this very end: obtaining the crown for himself. Like Richard, he has created an artificial demand for his coronation as Czar. Also, like Richard (and this is the keynote of the whole opera) he was supposed to have the rightful heir (the little boy in the monastery) murdered for this purpose. But unlike Richard, Boris' conscience bothers him, and is to bother him throughout the opera, haunting him until his very death.

The action in the opera begins with Boris' refusal to accept the throne, so let us now go among the Russian people who are asking a noble to convince Boris he should accept the crown—

PROLOGUE, "Boris Godounov"

Scene 1

The people of Russia are gathered, outside the monastery at Novodevichy, being ordered to pray that Boris take on the crown. The police are ordering them to do this, and so does the clerk of the seventeen-century Russian equivalent of a Parliament, the Duma. The people are hesitant; they are not clear about what they should do, and they have to be prompted by knouts and the example made for them by some passing monks. Nevertheless their efforts are in vain, for as Tchelkaloff, the Clerk of the Duma, hears their solicited prayer and goes inside to convey their "requests," he finds that he must come out and tell them, at the end of the First Scene, that Boris will not accept the crown.

Scene 2

But Boris will not remain obdurate forever. He finally accepts, and now comes one of the most grandiose scenes in the operatic repertoire, the Coronation Scene.

In the courtyard of the Kremlin in Moscow, between the two great cathedrals of the Assumption and the Archangels, the people are gathered. Prince Shuisky shouts at them from the porch of the Cathedral of the Assumption, urging the people to acclaim their hero Boris, as his long procession begins to move out of the Cathedral. "Like unto the bright sun in the sky is the glory of Russia's Czar Boris!" they cry. "Glory! Glory!"

As the procession moves toward the Cathedral of the Archangels, the police make the people fall in line. Czar Boris appears, in a

somber and reflective mood; his conscience is already at work on him. He prays to God for help, for he knows he is unworthy.

(For the purpose of the opera, we must assume, like Moussorgsky and Pushkin, that Boris ordered the murder of little Prince Dimitri, whether he did or not.) "My soul is sad," laments Boris. "Strange, dark forebodings and evil presentiments oppress my spirit."

After reflecting awhile, Boris relaxes into a more festive mood; he invites the people to go with him to kneel before the tombs of the former Czars, and then, as was the Russian tradition, the day belongs to the people: Boris announces that there will be a great feast to which all are invited, from the boyars (nobles) to the blind beggars, to be his honored guests.

The procession moves on toward the Cathedral of the Archangel, and the great bells ring into life; the people join in a magnificent folk chorus as they rush toward the Cathedral to try to reach Boris, while the police try to establish order amid the general confusion. Boris and his procession have moved inside, and now he reappears again, moving in procession toward the Czar's apartments, and the scene comes to a conclusion.

ACT ONE, "Boris Godounov"

Scene 1

Five years have passed since the Coronation, and the scene is the monastery of Chudovo. The old historian-monk, Pimen, is at work in his cell, completing his chronicle of the Czars of Russia. Asleep nearby is a monastic novice, Grigori. Pimen muses that in past days were eventful, but now they pass

peacefully. He broods that as he writes, he is reliving the past—"History rolls before my eyes like the waves of an ocean." As dawn approaches and Pimen's lamp burns low, Grigori awakens. They converse awhile, and Pimen discusses the final story he is writing into the Chronicles. Grigori asks questions about it, and Pimen answers them. Grigori's last question is: How old was the little Czarevitch Dimitri, whom Boris has murdered? And the answer is that he would have been Grigori's age now, if he had lived.

A bell summons the monks to prayer. Chanting is heard off-stage, and Pimen leaves to join the prayers. Grigori, however, remains: Pimen's comment on the dead Czarevitch's age has given him food for thought. He conceives of an adventurous plan, and the pretender to the Russian throne is born as Grigori decides to leave the monastery and proclaim himself as the rightful heir to the throne--the Czarevitch Dimitri.

Scene 2

Grigori is on his way to attempt to mount the throne of Russia. The scene is on the border of Lithuania, in a roadside inn. The merry hostess sings a folk song about a drake the color of a dove.

In come two renegade monks, Varlaam and Missail, and hard on their heels comes young Grigori, dressed in peasant's garb. Varlaam is already well-oiled, and he sings a boisterous song about a campaign of Czar Ivan the Terrible's in the town of Kazan; Varlaam credits him with 83,000 Tartars disposed of, by Ivan's exploding mines in their midst.

Varlaam rears with laughter at his own wit in singing his song, and drinks more and more as Grigori questions the hostess. She informs him that he is near the Lithuanian border, and that the police are after some man who has escaped. Soon, who should enter the inn but the police themselves, bearing a warrant for the arrest of someone or other. But, like any Russian police officer in the seventeenth century, the police officer cannot read. Therefore Grigori volunteers to read it for him, and when he finds it applies to himself, he cleverly changes the description of the fugitive to fit Varlaam. The drunken monk protests that there is some mistake, and grabs the warrant to read for himself. Of course, the description is then found to fit Grigori, but by that time, the latter has made his escape from the inn through a window. They are all hard after him instantly, but are too late to catch him, and he goes over the border into Lithuania--and reaches safety.

ACT TWO; "Boris Godounov"

The setting is the Kremlin, where the Czars have made their residence for always (Peter the Great, and St. Petersburg, had not yet come upon the Russian scene).

The two children of Boris, his son Feodor and his daughter Xenia, are with their old nurse. Xenia is mourning the death of her fiance', and the nurse vainly attempts to comfort her by singing a fable about a couple of young lovers. This doing no good for Xenia, the nurse turns her attention to the little boy, Feodor. She sings a song to him also--about a gnat who threw a stick at a flea, and fatally injured himself in so doing.

The nurse and Feodor play games with each other, clapping their hands in time. But presently the Czar himself enters, and the games come to an end. Boris is all business; he turns to the map of Russia that Feodor has been studying, and it saddens him. Here Boris sings a great monologue. The "Time of Troubles" in Russian history has begun. Things are going badly, both politically and economically. As is the case of any head of state, however deserving or undeserving, when times are bad, everyone is blaming the Czar, who still feels guilty—for he still remembers the murdered body of the little Czarevitch.

A nobleman enters to whisper to Boris some news—there are dangerous intrigues going on at court, but the Czar peremptorily dismisses him, turns to his son once more, and is comforted and is made happy by a ridiculous story about a parrot that the boy tells him.

This comfort does not last long, for Prince Shuisky enters. He too bears news—the growing success of the pretender, who is raising an army. Boris demands to know whether it was really little Dimitri who was murdered by his orders. The crafty Shuisky tells him that it was—but that the body did not decay, and that a smile continued to play on its face. The Czar dismisses Shuisky.

Now, left alone, he is victim to all his superstitions. His conscience bothers him, and he imagines that he sees the blood-stained body of the little boy. In an agony of fear, he cries for it to leave him in peace. As the act ends, he pitifully begs for God's forgiveness.

ACT THREE; "Boris Godounov"

It is a matter of reference that much of the music in this act--called "the Polish act"--was added by Moussourgsky in his own second revision of Boris. Apparantly the criticism had been made that there wasn't enough music in the act for the part of a good leading lady (Marina) and Moussorgsky agreed.

Scene 1

Indeed, the pretender has been making progress--he has reached Poland and he has begun to raise an army of followers. Shuisky's intelligence report to Boris was not wrong; Grigori has the support of certain Polish nobles, including the Governor of Sandomir. The Governor's lovely daughter, Marina, has her own ambitions--she wishes to become the Czarina, and in this first scene, after being entertained by her ladies-in-waiting with some songs about love, she tells them that tales of bravery and daring suit her better. She dismisses them, and sings an aria, in the rhythm of the mazurka, indicating her intentions in no small terms--she is after power, not a relationship with Grigori, but she will use him to realize her dream.

Suddenly there appears in her apartment the sinister Rangoni, a Jesuit, who lectures her sternly on her duty to convert Russia to Roman Catholicism once she is Czarina. Aware of the impossibility of the task, she is terrified. (It is a matter of historical note that ascending the throne as Czarina meant accepting the Russian Orthodox Church as one's own--she could neither marry the Czar nor ascend the throne without doing so. No wonder Marina is terrified!)

Scene 2

The fountain of the romantic garden of the castle of Sandomir is the setting for this scene. The false Dimitri awaits a meeting with his beloved Marina; he once thought of giving up the pretensions to the throne, and giving up his ambitions, if it meant winning her. Rangoni, the methodical Jesuit priest with his own ambitions in mind, appears to strengthen these ambitions of Grigori's. He assures Grigori that Marina loves him, despite certain icy snubs she has had to endure for his sake, and Rangoni asks that he might be allowed to go with them to Moscow and be Grigori's spiritual mentor.

And now the garden is filled with fashionable guests, who engage in dancing a polonaise, paying court to and even flirting with Marina, as Grigori grinds his teeth in jealousy. The pretender, outraged, takes a solemn vow to lead an army to Moscow and make Marina his Czarina; the scene concludes with a long duet in which Marina alternately repulses and encourages the pretender, in keeping with her own form. The false Dimitri now publicly voices his vow, and as he embraces Marina, Rangoni, who has been in hiding, steps into the open—while the music in the orchestra shifts from the famous love theme to music implying that the victory would not be Grigori's, or Marina's—but rather that of the church of Rome.

ACT FOUR, "Boris Godounov"

The Rimsky-Korsakov version gives the scene listed as Scene 1 here first; in other arrangements the second scene appears first.

Scene 1

The people of Russia are rising to follow Grigori in rebellion. Czar Boris is now hated. The setting is the forest of Krony; a

tattered crowd drags in a nobleman, a follower of the Czar, and subject him to ridicule, mocking the Czar at the same time. The rebellion is picking up tempo, for it is the middle of the winter, when the times were at their worst.

Enter the village idiot, and as he sings a silly song a group of children mock him. Varlaam and Missail, the two renegade monks, join the rebellion. But when two Jesuit priests come in, praying, the crowd turns on them, led by Varlaam and Missail. The peasants drag the monks off, intending to hang them.

But now Grigori enters on a fine horse. Everyone does obeisance to him; he promises to eliminate Boris, and they shout their allegiance and their willingness to follow Grigori. He rides off, as the crowds follow him; only the village idiot is left. Sadly he seats himself, as snow begins to fall, and he sings this prophecy: "The enemy will come—darkness will descend—weep, weep, you hungry Russian people!"

Scene 2

The council hall of the Kremlin; the year, 1605. The Czar's noblemen are discussing, rather foolishly, the progress of the revolt. Prince Shuisky enters, and he tells them of the agony he saw the Czar suffering a few days before, and he describes a scene in which Boris imagined he saw the murdered Czarevitch. The nobles do not believe him—but Boris himself enters, deeply distraught. Prince Shuisky calls in an old priest, who turns out to be the historian Pimen. The latter tells Boris about a dream of a blind shepherd. He had seen the murdered Dimitri in that dream, and the boy had urged him to pray at his grave. So the

blind shepherd had gone to the cathedral of Uglich and prayed there-- and received his sight. Boris hears this tale with growing horror. At its end he cries for air, and falls, fainting, into a chair. He rouses himself, he calls for his vestments, knowing that it is the end and death is near. He calls for the Tsarevitch, Feodor, to be brought, and as he comes rushing in, Boris icily dismisses the nobles to be alone with his son.

Some of the nobles go to the Monastery of the Miracle to bring the monks, knowing that Boris' death is upon him; after they have all departed, Boris sings a last, deeply touching farewell to his son; he advises him how to be a good ruler--"Do not trust the nobles, and watch closely their treacherous dealings with Lithuania," he tells Feodor, and he begs him to care for his beautiful sister Xenia. "You will be her only defender, our Xenia, our gentle dove." Then Boris prays heaven to protect the boy, and to guide him.

Boris folds his son into his arms and kisses him; the somber funeral bell is heard outside; Boris sadly takes note of it: "The bell! The passing bell!" he groans.

The chorus of the monks of the Monastery of the Miracle are heard now offstage, singing a somber chorus; Boris harmonizes with them, crying "Funeral tears, holy priests! The Czar awaits you!"

The boy Feodor tries to comfort his father, telling him that God will defend him; Boris shakes his head. "No, no, my son, my hour has come!"

The chorus enters now, and their song is about the murdered Czarevitch; Boris starts up, shouting in agony, "Will my sin never be forgiven? O cruel death, must you torture me so!" Then, as the

chorus continues, the once mighty Czar rises to his full height and shouts them into silence—"I am still the Czar!" A last spasm overtakes him, and he relapses, pointing at his son—"Forgive me—Death!—there is your Czar—forgive me, forgive me!" As he whispers these last words, he falls back dead into his chair—or, as some of the more daring basses act it, rolls on the floor. The boyars cluster around, as the music rises to its somber climax, and they whisper but three words—"He is dead."

The music of this final scene is as powerful as any Moussorgsky ever wrote; it conveys the solemnity of the hour and the somberness of death to the point that it has few, if any, parallels. The bell-like ostinati (reminiscent of the similar device employed by Moussorgsky in the Coronation Scene) reflect the sad end of the Czar that began his reign in such splendor.

Postscript

The regency and reign of Boris were, historically, a very mixed blessing for Russia. He introduced the law that prevented peasants from moving off their land, thus establishing serfdom in Russia which was to remain fixed under the Czar-Liberator, Alexander II, issued his Emancipation. This law introducing serfdom inspired many peasants to join Grigori.

Grigori's army included many Poles, Russian exiles, Hessians, and Cossacks. At Boris' death they were nearly to the gates of Moscow; Grigori had himself crowned Czar, executed the widow and son of Boris, formed several alliances with the West (Boris had sent young men to the Western nations to learn their ways; none ever returned) and saved the life, on more than one occasion, of

the slippery Prince Shuisky. He was also received into the Church of Rome by Rangoni.

Grigori married Marina on May 3, 1606, less than a year after his coronation--and nine days later, his lifesaving of Shuisky proved his undoing, for the foxy Prince had hatched a plot to assassinate Grigori, and Grigori met his end and Shuisky became Czar.

The "Time of Troubles" were not to conclude until young Michael Romanov had been named to the Russian throne, had survived several attempts on his life, and had established the Romanov dynasty that received its final solidarity in the accession of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great, and lasted until the deposition of Czar Nicholas II in 1917.