

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1976-77

Lynne Jacobson

Beside being the first female president of this group, I've had the dubious distinction of serving a 13-month term - not by choice. It has been a very challenging year, as I'm sure each one is, an interesting year because I've learned a great deal about many things, and a very frustrating year in some respects. We seem to have had a little more than our usual share of problems, beginning with the loss of our rent-free rehearsal space, continuing through the illnesses and retirement of our accompanist, the lack of availability of an auditorium for our Spring show at the usual time, and the inevitable budget problems. Then there was the weather! Well, all things work out for the best - they say - and it's a good thing we didn't plan on doing our show in May after missing the month of January.

Bob Maxwell has given his report so I won't comment on specific finances. I find it somewhat embarrassing to turn over the administration of this group with such a sick treasury. Hopefully the next Board will be able to do better; they'll have to be extremely creative and frugal. We obviously need more bookings for choral shows, and should get a broader base of support from our members and their respective communities and organizations. As in the past, it seems that a small number of members are finding bookings for us.

As long as I'm complaining and criticizing, I'll get it all done at once; I've been extremely frustrated by the number of members, although a handful, who think that they shouldn't do anything more than show up for rehearsal - if that. A group like this cannot function successfully if only 3 or 5 or 10

people do all the work. Little things, like making your own costumes, or erasing the pencil marks in your books, can be so important - I spent 5 hours erasing those books because some people wouldn't take the 15 minutes necessary to do their own. Unfortunately, all organizations face the same problem - but this one is supposed to be for our enjoyment and our pleasure. Think how much nicer it would be for all of us if EVERYONE shared the responsibility.

Now for the part I like - recounting the good things that happened this year. First, we've added some wonderful new members, most of whom don't belong to the last group I spoke about. It's been a delight to work with you and I hope that by now you feel like an "old" member. For those who joined in the Fall, your probationary period is over; the rest will have to wait 'til next year before you can vote or become President - if you'd want that. I certainly feel that we've conquered last year's criticism that the dancers didn't feel like part of the group. These ladies (?) were terrific - sewing, painting scenery, cleaning up the school the day after, and keeping everyone's spirits high. And with no griping - after all, I did enough of that for everyone! I think we've finished the year on a high note with an artistically successful show - if not financially. Let's keep the morale high and get the new Board off to a roaring start to cope with the problems ahead of them.

I have a few specific recommendations - my own very biased and personal ones - which I would like the members in general and the Board in particular to consider when planning for next year. Someone must be made responsible for acquiring new warehouse space IMMEDIATELY; however, every member of the group

should assist...in the search. If our finances allow it, I think we should hold auditions for a director and accompanist in order to obtain talented leadership at competitive prices. Or find volunteers. Because of our (dire) financial situation, I think it might be necessary to locate new, free rehearsal space. I say this knowing that I will be accused of deserting a sinking ship, etc. but if we cannot survive as a group, then Beulah Church has gained nothing from charging us rent. Even if we can afford it, I don't think we should do a "book show" next year. From comments I have heard, people want to hear the entire group as well as our very talented soloists, and I think that a show such as the one we did in December will spotlight our flexibility, please our audience, and give all of us more of a chance to participate - not that I mind moving scenery...!

I thank all of you who gave me your support by helping or just saying a few kind words now and then. To the rest, do me a favor and use all that saved energy to help the group and its leadership next year, so we can all enjoy it together. Many thanks to everyone for making this an interesting year for me and my best wishes to the next Board and the new officers.