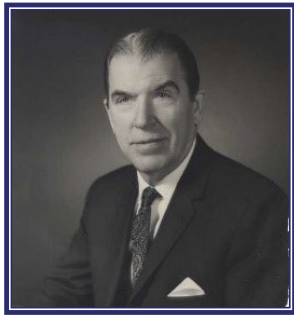


NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* TEACHERS *of* SINGING



BERTON COFFIN

THE BERTON COFFIN ENDOWMENT

PROVIDES FUNDING FOR THE NATS ARTIST AWARDS

Berton Coffin, Ed.D., was the thirteenth president of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and a member of the American Academy of Teachers of Singing. He earned his B.A. in 1932 from Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, a Mus. B. from Chicago Musical College in 1935, a Mus. M. from Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, in 1938, a M.A. in 1946 and an Ed.D in 1950 from Columbia University, New York City. He did additional study at New York's Juilliard School of Music and at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. His private study with several teachers of singing and vocal coaches included such notables as Graham Reed, Paola Novikova, Mack Harrell and Werner Singer.

A concert baritone, Berton Coffin sang professionally in New York City, along with the Robert Shaw Chorale, before joining the voice faculty as an Associate Professor in the College of Music, University of Colorado, Boulder, (CU-Boulder) in 1946. He became a full professor in 1959 and later chaired the voice division. He remained active in oratorio and opera, and as a recitalist.

During his tenure at CU-Boulder, Boulder, Coffin established the first DMA in Voice. From its inception in the early 1960's, 25 students graduated with that advanced degree before Dr. Coffin's retirement in 1977. Annually, four-six students study in this doctoral program. An average of two graduate each year after receiving their degree. It has now been expanded into a DMA in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy.

Professor Coffin was elected to the NATS Board of Directors at the 1955 Chicago convention and served continually for a period of eleven years. Concomitantly, Professor Coffin was a member of the Research Committee from 1958 through 1967, plus a deep involvement with the AIVP, later the Fellowship Program, from the late 50's through 1967.

At the 1967 Chicago convention, he was elected President of NATS. The Coffin presidency was one of renewal and revitalization. Highlights of the Coffin presidency include: (1) the establishment of the New York office, staffed with a part-time Executive Secretary; (2) the initial efforts to institute a non-taxable organization; (3) the introduction of *Inter Nos*, removing internal affairs from *The NATS Bulletin* to create a learned journal; (4) the initiating

of a job-placement service for NATS members at our Silver Anniversary Convention in Cleveland; (5) the reorganization of the Singer of the Year to be known henceforth as the NATS Artist Awards; (6) the appointment of a committee to study redistricting; (7) the setting up of student subscriptions to The NATS Bulletin at reduced rates; and (8) the change of the fiscal year, running mid-year to mid-year. Berton Coffin readied NATS for the next quarter of a century.

On January 1, 1972, Berton Coffin became a member of the Editorial Board of The NATS Bulletin and in January 1975 succeeded Bernard Taylor as Chairman of the Editorial Board.

Dr. Coffin's daughter, Martha Coffin Evans, recalls the importance of the annual NATS Conventions. "Our December calendar typically revolved around this convention no matter its location. Following the Christmas Eve services at First United Methodist Church, where my father served as choral director for 19 years, we'd head off to the convention which met around December 26. Driving through a snowstorm in Show Low, Arizona, on the way to the convention in Los Angeles, remains a fond memory. I doubt if he ever missed one!"

Berton Coffin's legacy in print is as follows: (1) The Singer's Repertoire, 2nd Edition in four volumes - Vol. 1, Coloratura, Lyric and Dramatic Soprano; Vol. 2, Mezzo-Soprano and Contralto; Vol. 3, Lyric and Dramatic Tenor; Vol. 4, Baritone and Bass, 1960; (2) Program Notes for The Singer's Repertoire, Coffin and Singer, 1962; (3) Phonetic Readings of Songs and Arias; Coffin, Errolle, Singer and Delattre, 1964; 2nd Edition, 1982; (4) Word-by-Word Translations of Songs and Arias, Pt. I, German & French: Coffin, Singer & Delattre, 1966; Pt. II, Italian: Schoep & Harris, with Foreword by Coffin, 1972; (5) Sounds of Singing, 1st Edition, 1976; 2nd Edition, revised and enlarged, with Foreword by Nicolai Gedda, 1986; (6) Overtones of Bel Canto, with Chromatic Vowel Chart, 1980; (7) Historical Vocal Pedagogy Classics, a composite of his column in The NATS Journal (Bulletin), 1981-1984.

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