

## A SHORT HISTORY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA NATS



**Novie Greene & Edmund LeRoy (2009)**

The Central Florida Chapter of the National Association Teachers of Singing was activated on October 6, 1991 at Stetson University, Deland, Florida with the Florida NATS governor, Mollie Rich presiding. The founding officers, Novie Greene, President, Pamela Hanson Peterson, Vice President, and Edmund LeRoy, Secretary-Treasurer were elected to steer the new chapter. (NATS had chartered a Central Florida Chapter in December 1984 and planning meetings were held with Novie Greene, Edmund LeRoy, Elizabeth Wrancher, and Grace Sanford to discuss organizing a chapter. However, although other local NATS members were contacted, there was not sufficient interest at that time to form the chapter and begin activities.)

Over the years we have been blessed with hard working and imaginative leadership. Presidents Elizabeth Wrancher, Barbara Jones, Alan Gerber, Debra Hogan, and Kimberly Randall; Vice Presidents Pamela Hanson Peterson, Cheryl Brendel, Alan Gerber, Eugenia Garrity, Kimberly Randall, and Claire Hodge. Edmund LeRoy served as Secretary Treasurer from 1991 until 2008 when Jeremy Hunt agreed to take on that huge task.

The first CFLNATS event was Student Auditions held at Rollins College, March 7, 1992 with winners representing the studios of Novie Greene, Mary Landers, Edmund LeRoy, Gordon Ohlsson, and Elizabeth Wrancher. Yearly auditions were held in succeeding years at Rollins, University of Central Florida, Seminole Community College, and Valencia Community College with winners representing many of our members' studios.

CFLNATS began to sponsor workshops usually held in the fall each year. The first workshop on September 16-17, 1993, *Vocal Techniques for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, featured Dr. Tom Cleveland of the Vanderbilt Voice Center. He returned again in 1999 for a presentation on vocal health and master class. Neil Semer of New York City presented a master class featuring singing in the Broadway styles in 1995 and *Musical Theatre and the Old Italian School of Singing* in 1997. Joan Frey Boytim visited us in 2000 to share *Repertoire for the Young Voice* and a master class, *Techniques for Managing Vocal Challenges*. Other workshops addressed national styles and diction with classes by Suzanne Draayer on Spanish Song and Noel Lee on the French Melodie and German Lied. We were privileged to have two excellent presentations on Alexander Technique by Ron Dennis in 1996 and Tully Hall in 2008. We hosted a master class by Clifton Ware in 2008.

CFLNATS members have also presented four valuable workshops for our students. *Preparing for your future—what to do now* featured Bruce Earnest, Novie Greene, Edmund LeRoy, Gail Robinson, and Anne Smith, Disney performer. A master class on vocal technique, vocal health, and stage etiquette for recitals, was presented by John Thomasson, Gail Robinson-Oturu, and Pamela Hanson Peterson. A master class by Priscilla Bagley, Eugenia Garrity, and Jeremy Hunt and workshops on the male and female adolescent voices by Novie Greene and Kimberly Randall gave us ideas of teaching young voices.

Over the years CFLNATS has been a valuable resource for voice teachers and their students through regular meetings, educational activities, and student auditions. We have co-sponsored vocal activities with local colleges and universities and our members are very active in community educational and artistic activities. Our members are regular and popular judges in the Florida Vocal Association solo and ensemble festivals as well as various scholarship competitions.