

## Jean Lagor, Flute

Dating back to the late 1960's through the early 1970's I had the rare opportunity to have studied with three strikingly diverse private flute teachers; diverse in the sense that each had come from a different era in flute playing both in America and in Europe.

My musical journey began in the Pinellas County public school system where my first private flute lessons began with W. Fred Campbell (1901-1993), piccoloist with the Florida Gulf Coast Symphony (eventually the Florida Orchestra). Mr. Campbell's legacy included private secretary to John Philip Sousa and a position in his famous Band. The next 40 years of his musical career was spent as a member of the Fred Waring Band "The Pennsylvanians". Mr. Campbell brought tremendous technical facility and joviality to every piece of music he performed.

During my high school years I began lessons with Charlotte Snell of St. Petersburg. Her mastery of the flute was directly influenced by Ary Van Leeuwen, (1875-1953) an Internationally known Dutch flutist and composer. He studied under Carl Joachim Anderson and served as the principal flutist of the Berlin Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Vienna State Opera, and the Cincinnati Symphony. Under Charlotte I spent the next three years producing a very pure, sweet tone using a tight embouchure emanating a smile. Her lessons on vibrato were to be likened to the delicate, even peaks of whipped cream, whilst yawning in the back of the throat. Articulation was accomplished by simply tapping the roof of the mouth with a slightly curled tongue.

I was a member of the 77member Largo High School Band of Gold under Robert R. Cotter 1970-1972. During my senior year I played the second flute positions in both the Pinellas County Youth Symphony and the Florida All State Orchestra. My private flute teacher urged me to audition for "High School Music Day" at Rollins College in Orlando where I was awarded a full 4 year scholarship to study music. However.....

I did not accept the Rollins College Scholarship, but rather, an invitation by Mr. Gilbert to be one of his 12 flute students at Stetson University School of Music. 60 other flutists had vied for one of these three open freshman positions. Having heard this, I felt compelled to be a flute Performance Major even though I had wanted to pursue a career in the Medical field.

Geoffrey Gilbert, world renowned British Flutist formerly of the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham, had taken a teaching position at Stetson University School of Music in Deland. Mr. Gilbert had spent his entire career as a professional flutist in England from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, where he began on a wooden flute. During the popularity of discography in the late 1920's-1930's he noticed that flutists of the French School were being recorded more often than the English flutists. French flutists were producing an entirely different sound. Louise Moysé and other influential teachers from the conservatories in France were using a looser embouchure (the lips were not in a smile) and very expressive vibrato. The result was that flutists could produce a fuller tone with many different colors and expressions. Many of the British flutists used the tighter embouchure and more forceful air pressure to make the wooden flutes sound full and reedy. Geoffrey studied in Paris with LeRoy and others and in the 1930s completely revamped his flute playing technique. He adapted many of the techniques of the French School which were then becoming known internationally. Gilbert is considered one of the most influential flutists to have affected this change throughout British flute practices.

I learned so much that first semester taking all the requisite Comprehensive Musicianship classes and completely de-constructed the way I played the flute. My smiley embouchure had to learn relaxation and at the same time my tongue needed to come forward. After one very productive semester as a performance major, I knew in my heart that I did not possess the competitive personality necessary to secure a future professional orchestral position. I transferred out of the School of Music and enrolled the Liberal Arts College to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. During this time, however, Mr. Gilbert kept me on as one of his students. I also attended the weekly performance classes for the next three years.

After my graduation from Stetson and Medical Technology School at Bayfront in St. Pete, I married my husband, Frank, of 41 years (also a Stetson Graduate). Our family began soon after- three boys and two girls. Four of the five are now married and have added eight grandchildren to the Lagor Clan. Besides my passion for the flute and desire to be an integral member of such a fine orchestra, my husband's commitment to my weekly rehearsal for the past 30 years is the only reason that this gig has worked for me. He made it a point to be home from work *every Tuesday evening by 6pm, even during tax season!*

I currently work at the James A. Haley, VA Medical Center in Tampa as a Flow Cytometry Technical Specialist. I work in the Pathology Laboratory and Medicine Services department to implement customized test panels aiding in the diagnoses of Leukemia and Lymphomas present in the blood, bone marrow, and lymph nodes. I know firsthand that our Veterans are truly getting the *best healthcare anywhere.*

I keep busy with Tampa Bay Symphony and a local Tampa Bay flute choir (play Alto Flute); State and National Flute Conventions are also favorites. One of my passions for playing the flute over the years has been playing in the Catholic Mass and especially for Funeral Masses and other important celebratory events in the church. One highlight of my flute career was playing with my church choir in the many grand Cathedrals and Basilicas in Italy (Vatican Mass) and Ireland.

Favorite things: Sagacious Artistry, Chocolate, Miniature Doll Houses, Grandchildren  
Favorite saying: Don't Grow up. It's a Trap!