



# OBSERVATIONS

FROM THE SIDELINES  
by Kathryn Hall Bogle

**I**T'S MUSIC, music, music for Roland Harris all day, every day and most evenings, too. It's his life and he loves every minute of it.

A regular soloist at Sunday services at First Christian Church, Harris has taught music in the Portland public schools for many years. For the past nine years Harris has sung as a chorus member of the Portland Opera Association. "Basically," Harris says, "I'm doing what I've always wanted to do: I'm singing and I'm teaching others to sing."

"I have been involved with some form of music since I was a child. I was born right here in Portland. I went to Boise elementary school and while I was still in grade school I became the accompanist for the children's choir at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church.

"When I was a student at Jefferson High School and had a spot in the *a cappella* choir, I learned I had a voice. A baritone worth training. The school choir director encouraged me to study music and I'm still grateful to him for his interest and his advice."

Harris went on to be graduated in music from the University of Oregon and earned his masters degree in music there as well. His voice is classed now as bass-baritone.

The jazz scene absorbed Harris during a stint in the U.S. Army at Fort Ord and Fort McArthur. He polished his syncopation at piano, added drums and piano-bass and became a member of the Army's dance band. After the Army service Harris, and four members of the group, formed their own company under Dennis Thiel and entertained audiences on the west coast for several years.

When the group broke up, Harris taught music in the elementary and high school of Oregon's coastal cities—Seaside, Cannon Beach and Gearhart.

In the early '70s a place opened on Jefferson's music teaching staff and Harris joined the faculty there. He also began with the Portland School of the Opera about that time and within two or three years Harris was selected as a regular chorus member of the Portland Opera.

This season Harris had a bit part in *La Traviata*. His voice will also be heard in the off-stage chorus of *Wuthering Heights* in its world premiere in November. Since Harris is understudy for the role of Joseph in *Wuthering Heights*, there is a chance that Harris might also be seen on stage for that opera in at least one of its performances.

Later in the opera season Harris has a bit part in *Girl of the Golden West*. He will sing in the chorus and play the character, Happy.

With the sound of music ever with him it is no wonder that Harris has tried his hand at composition. He has written both words and music for songs he has sung at First Christian Church. He also has sung with local madrigal groups, the Oregon Repertory Singers and as a member of the Portland Symphonic Choir.

Harris and his wife, Delores, have a son, Barry, age 15, a student at Centennial High School, and a daughter, Carla, an 11-year-old stu-



Roland Harris, bass-baritone, rehearses with Portland Opera Chorus for "Wuthering Heights." (Photo: Judith Siewert)

dent at Lynch-Terrace Elementary School. Between the two they play five or six instruments and music in the Harris household goes 'round and 'round.

**L**ENORA MORRIS, author of *The Ebony Princesses of the Portland Rose Festival*, and her book are to be featured at the "1982 Assembly of Black Artists and Talent," a presentation of the Portland Chapter of The Links, Inc. The setting is to be at the newly renovated Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. Sunday afternoon, November 14th, is the date. Time is 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Many gifted artists and their outstanding work will be a part of the exciting afternoon. Keep the date open. The public is invited. Free.

**S**OMETHING different from the usual in teas may be expected when members of Semper Fidelis Club entertain guests at a Halloween Tea on Sunday, October 31. A little donation (or a big one) will go towards swelling the proceeds of the tea which are to benefit the "Give Us This Day, Inc.," an adoption agency which specializes in locating homes for hard-to-place children of all races.

Gloria Fuller, tea chairman, promises that Virginia Phillips, a founder of the Newberg-based, non-profit organization, will be present to furnish details about "Give Us This Day." Assisting Fuller with the arrangements are committee members Frances Johns, Minnie Belle Johnson and Gustavia Bonner.

Other Semper Fidelis members are Juanita Robinson, Celestine Austin, Quindella C.Age, Amelia Lanier, Viola Bonner and Dorothy McDowell. Ernestine Wiseman is club president.

**W**INE AND cheese will be featured at a benefit taster for the Black Educational Center on November 6. Mr. and Mrs. James DePriest and Mr. and Mrs. John

Toran are entertaining that Saturday evening at the Toran's home. You need a ticket for this special evening event but the hosts will be glad to see that you get one. Just ask.

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## Providence honors Works



WILLIE WORKS

Willie Works, a northeast Portland resident, was honored recently for 25 years of service to Providence Medical Center at the hospital's annual employee awards ceremony on October 15.

Willie is lead attendant in the housekeeping department. She is one of eight individuals honored for 25 to 35 years of employment at Providence. Also cited for 10 to 20 years of service were 78 men and women.

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Pacific Northwest Bell