
**Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison
On the Death of Professor Emeritus Robert F. Cole**

Robert F. Cole, Emeritus Professor of Music died peacefully in his sleep on December 23, 2016. He was 93 years old.

Born in Erie, Pennsylvania, Professor Cole attended the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where the faculty was composed of many members of the Philadelphia Orchestra as well as other distinguished musicians. After a stint with the Coast Guard Band in World War II, he joined the Philadelphia Orchestra flute section in 1949 and played beside his teacher, William Kincaid. He performed on many Philadelphia Orchestra recordings under maestro Eugene Ormandy and also recorded a television series as a member of the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet, principal wind players of the Philadelphia Orchestra. In particular, the quintet's recordings of the Sextet by Frances Poulenc with the composer playing piano and Samuel Barber's *Summer Music* are among the most significant recordings for quintet and represent the highest level of woodwind artistry.

During the 1960's several top professional orchestral players left their positions to join music faculties at major universities, and Professor Cole was among them. In 1962 he joined the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Music to teach flute, chamber music and perform in the faculty woodwind quintet. He was instrumental in expanding the wind area of the School of Music to include renowned specialists in horn (John Barrows), clarinet (Glenn Bowen), and Richard Lottridge (bassoon). With the hiring of Professor Lottridge in 1965, the Wingra Quintet was established as faculty ensemble in residence in the School of Music (along with the Pro Arte String Quartet and later the Wisconsin Brass Quintet). The quintet's outreach mission, based on the Wisconsin Idea, enabled them to tour extensively within the state of Wisconsin and beyond. At one point, Professor Bowen estimated that the Wingra quintet had performed and taught students in no less than 90 percent of the counties of Wisconsin. The Wingra Quintet gained national recognition, and in a review of their Carnegie Recital Hall concert in 1980, New York Times music critic Peter G. Davis stated, "The performances were so smoothly integrated and technically polished that one was scarcely aware of the skilled discipline that motivated them... the performances were consistently sophisticated, sensitive, and thoroughly vital." The Wingra Quintet also produced several recordings and Professor Cole was flutist in two of these recordings (Nielsen, *Quintet*, and Janacek, *Youth Suite*).

Professor Cole brought the incomparable Philadelphia tradition of woodwind playing to his teaching, and many of his students are performing in orchestras and teaching in major schools of music. He played many seasons with the Madison Symphony Orchestra and taught at several music festivals around the country. He was a founding member of the National Flute Association, a society of more than 10,000 members, and served a term as president of that organization. He was recognized by the Association, and was presented a lifetime award for his meritorious contributions to the society. Professor Cole was noted for the beautiful, rich tone quality he produced from his (Powell) golden flute and his consummate musicianship.

In 1988 he retired from the University of Wisconsin and moved to the Montello (WI) area where he was active in farming on the sheep farm of his daughter Kathy and son-in-law Larry. Robert and his wife of more than 60 years, Doris, enjoyed traveling. After retirement they purchased a

motor home and enjoyed visiting the US national parks. Two of their children, Gordon and John, followed in Robert's footsteps as professional musicians. Gordon taught flute at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, and Gordon's wife, Khristine, graduated from UW-Madison where she studied flute with Robert. Their son, Nathan, attended the Curtis Institute of Music as a violinist and has performed with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and is currently a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Son John attended the Indiana University School of Music and retired as librarian of the US Army's West Point Band after a long career.

Robert resided in Oakwood Village in Madison for thirteen years before his death and was a member of Kiwanis Club, Toastmasters International, and the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Robert was preceded in death by Doris and their son John. He is survived by his son, Gordon (Khristine) Cole of Lexington, KY, daughter Kathleen (Lawrence) Becker of Montello, WI, and seven grandchildren, Nathan Cole, Lauren Cole Brown, Ryan Becker, Ben Becker, Rachel Ginsberg, Ben Ziegler, and Amy Ziegler Bergs.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

Marc Fink, Emeritus Professor of Music, co-chair

Richard Lottridge, Emeritus Professor of Music, co chair