

Philip Bate

March 26, 1909 - November 3, 1999

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Word has come from London of the death of IDRS Honorary Member, **Philip Bate**, on November 3 at the age of 90. Bate was known to the double reed world for his book, *The Oboe*, and for his many contributions to the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Other publications were *The Flute* and *The Trumpet and Trombone*. He was, however, a man of many interests and enjoyed a long career in broadcasting for the BBC, in television production, and above all, as a collector of musical instruments. It was through his friendship with Canon Galpin that he turned toward the scientific study and copying of early instruments in his own workshop. In 1946 Bate helped to found the Galpin Society. He was the first chairman of the Society and its president from 1977 until his death.

His lasting legacy is the Bate Collection of over 300 instruments and early methods and tutors which he presented to Oxford University in 1969. According to his wishes, a curator with specialized knowledge of the care and history of the instruments is in charge of the collection which is available for study by students and scholars. It now attracts visitors from all over the world.

A London newspaper, *The Independent*, carried an obituary by the eminent writer, Margaret Campbell, which concluded with a personal note. "As a man, Philip Bate was kind and generous to his friends and colleagues and had a delightful, dry sense of humour. He liked people to say what they meant and would listen to an opinion even if he disagreed; he could not tolerate hypocrisy of any kind."

I will always cherish the memory of my visit in June of 1998, when Philip and wife Yvonne, took



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me by train from London to Oxford, where he had arranged for me to look at and play several early oboes, including a beautiful violet wood instrument made by Henri Brod in the 1830s. After several hours at the Collection, we had lunch at a nearby pub where Bate was welcomed as an old friend. It is good to know that earlier this year in March of 1999, he was able to enjoy the celebration of his 90th birthday at Oxford, serenaded by students playing on instruments from the collection. ❖