

The Edinburgh Conference also marked the first one attended by Honorary Members **Lyndesay Langwill, Karl Öhlberger, and Robert deGourdon.**

The eighth and ninth Honorary Memberships went to two bassoonists: **Frederick Moritz** (1897-1995) and **Ferdinand Del Negro** (1897-1986). They were installed at the Conference in Lubbock, Texas, in August, 1981.

Frederick Moritz was for many years the legendary principal bassoon of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He taught at least two generations of bassoonists, some of whom still hold important positions in the bassoon world. His influence on important aspects of bassoon playing, such as venting of the middle register notes, double tonguing, etc., gave him a leadership role in American bassoon playing that persists to the present day.

In the Vol. 2, No. 2 issue of *To the World's Bassoonists*, editor Gerald Corey wrote the following biographical article on Frederick Moritz.

BASSOONIST BIOGRAPHY

Frederick Moritz - Los Angeles

The career of Frederick Moritz as a musician and as a bassoonist in particular was a highly interesting one. Born in the small hamlet of Sulzthal near the famous Spa "Bad Kissingen" in Germany, the youngest son of a well-known bandleader, he entered music school in 1910 in Coburg, where he studied with Emil Hoffmann who was then 1st bassoon of the Coburg court-theater orchestra.

After graduating in 1913 Moritz advanced rapidly so that, already in 1914, he was principal bassoon in the Dortmund Philharmonic. But after two years there the draft-board caught up with our young bassoonist.

In 1919, after the war ended, in another great leap, Moritz auditioned for the Berlin Philharmonic and was successfully installed as first solo bassoonist in that renowned orchestra under the great Arthur Nikisch. There followed four of the most illustrious years of experience for any bassoonist, aged 22.

Besides Nikisch, many more conductors who later were famous also in America frequently conducted the Philharmonic. Among them: Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, Wilhelm Furtwaengler (who later became permanent conductor), Weingartner, Koussevitsky, Richard Strauss and many others.



Frederick Moritz

But with all these successes on hand there were hard times in Germany and the outlook was dark. So Moritz tried his luck in America. He came to Los Angeles in 1923 and was engaged by Walter as solo bassoonist for the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In this position Mr. Moritz remained for 47 years, turning down all offers, including solo bassoon at NBC with Toscanini, the New York Philharmonic and some prominent positions in movie studios. Moritz said, "I belong to Los Angeles", and his wife Katherina, his son Roland and daughter Evamaria were of the same opinion.

In Los Angeles, Moritz says, he performed as soloist more than 15 times, playing: the two (sic.) Mozart concerti repeatedly, also Weber, some Vivaldi and four performances of a new concerto by Ernest Kanitz. But none of these performances were quite as exciting as the two farewell performances of K. 191 on November 25 and 27, 1970. The November 27th was broadcast widely in the U.S.

Following the performance during the first concert Mr. Moritz was presented by the conductor, Zubin Mehta, with a beautiful plaque whose inscription Mr. Mehta read to the audience:

"To Frederick "Fritz" Moritz
with
Gratitude and Admiration for
47 Years of
Distinguished Musicianship
Loyalty and Devotion as
Principal Bassoonist of the
Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra"
The Directors and Management of the
Southern California Symphony
Hollywood Bowl Association.

This was followed by tremendous applause, and after Mr. Mehta said some more nice things, in particular, "As you have just heard, Mr. Moritz is leaving us in top form," the entire audience and orchestra membership rose for a thunderous standing ovation.

I think we all can join with a "BRAVO" of our own to Frederick Moritz for such a brilliant conclusion to a 60-year musical career!

When **Frederick Moritz** died in 1993, his portrait was on the cover of the Winter, 1993 (Vol. 16, No. 3) issue of *The Double Reed*. In the same issue, his obituary which first appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, written by Myrna Oliver is reprinted on page 35. Finally, one of his former students, IDRS member George Adams, wrote a tribute to his memory which can be found on page 36. The reader is referred to these articles.