



# *Frank McKinley*

Material prepared by Charles Nelson

Biographical Sketch  
Frank A. McKinley, Director of Choral Activities  
University of North Texas • 1947 – 1980

Upon the birth of their second child, on June 13, 1915, in Winnipeg, Ontario, Lillian Belle (Arnold) and David Francis McKinley could not have foreseen the outstanding musical future of their new born son, Frank. Four years later, the parents made the decision to move their family to the area where Belle had grown up in New Concord, Ohio, a pleasant town with a population of about 1,500. Beside family ties, New Concord was the home of Muskingum College, which was affiliated with the United Presbyterian Church. It was a good place to live and to educate their children.

Both parents were musical. D.F. even had a touch of fame when, during his summer vacations from Maryville College, he served as song leader for the great evangelist, Billy Sunday. When he was five years old, Frank, and his sister, two years his senior, began formal piano lessons. It wasn't long until everyone in the house realized that young Frank had quite an ear for music, when, upon hearing his older sister practicing, would yell downstairs, "You missed the C sharp!"

Frank was diligent with his piano studies all the way through high school. Being a precocious student, he entered Muskingum College a year ahead of his age group with the intention of becoming a chemist. During his sophomore year, while working in the chemistry lab, amid clouds of smoke and acrid odors, he came to himself and said, "What am I doing here! I don't want to spend the rest of my life in a chemistry lab!" Since he had already had a dozen or so years of piano study and was singing tenor in the college quartet, he decided to turn all his efforts to music.

Upon graduation, he had been offered a job teaching music in a high school in Western Ohio. He knew he wanted to teach music, but he wasn't sure he was yet qualified. One of his mentors had a music degree from the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, PA. She was a friend of Dr. John Finley Williamson, Founder and President of the Westminster Choir School, in Princeton, NJ. Dr. Williamson was holding a choral clinic in North Carolina. Frank's mentor made arrangements for

Frank to audition for Dr. Williamson during that clinic. With \$3.00 in his pocket, 21 year old Frank McKinley “hit the road” and hitchhiked from New Concord, Ohio to North Carolina to sing and play for Dr. Williamson. A part of Dr. Williamson’s audition procedure included pitch memory and pitch recognition. After Frank played and sang, Dr. Williamson discovered Frank’s remarkable ear, and offered him a “room and board” scholarship to Westminster Choir College. Frank’s parents were able to provide money for the tuition.

In addition to the regular musical and singing training he received at Westminster Choir College, in the next two years, he had the opportunity to sing in the chorus of major choral/orchestral works with the New York Philharmonic under the baton of the great conductors, Bruno Walter and Arturo Toscanini. At no time did Frank long for the chemistry laboratory.

After earning his Master’s Degree from Westminster Choir College in the spring of 1940, he was hired by Wilfred Bain at North Texas State Teachers College, Denton, Texas, to teach singing, direct the Chapel Choir and to serve as his choral assistant. December 7, 1941 was a day that changed the lives of every citizen of the United States. Frank McKinley was no exception. As a healthy male, in his middle twenties, he was of prime age to become a soldier. Duty to his country pulled him away from his chosen profession. Following his basic training at Camp Walters in Mineral Wells, he was shipped to Providence, Rhode Island, where he joined the Headquarters of the 13th Corps as a Warrant Officer, assistant to the Chaplain. With his training and experience, Frank was placed in charge of music. After forming in Rhode Island, the 13th Corps paused in England for a month before traveling to France to join the “real war”.

After his separation from the Army in 1946, he joined the music faculty at Kentucky Wesleyan College. After one year in Kentucky, Frank McKinley was hired as the director of choral activities at North Texas State University in Denton, Texas, a position he held for the next thirty three years.

During his tenure, the A Cappella Choir gained a notable reputation for its dedication to the cause of advancing contemporary choral music as they sang Southwest premieres of over 40 compositions, including important works by American composers Samuel Adler, Leonard Bernstein, Roy Harris, William Latham and Martin Mailmen.

During his entire tenure, the UNT Grand Chorus served as the choral instrument

for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, boasting 60 performances with such conductors as Antal Dorati, George Solti, Paul Kletschi, Anshel Brusilow, Walter Hendl and Donald Johanos. His choirs have appeared with L'Orchestre National de Belgique, the Royal London Philharmonic, the National Symphony, Houston Symphony, Ft. Worth Symphony, Corpus Christi Symphony, Wichita Falls Symphony and the San Angelo Symphony.

Under his leadership the UNT A Cappella Choir presented concerts throughout the United States. In 1964 the choir was selected by the U.S. State Department's Cultural Presentations Program to represent the United States with concert performances in Portugal, Spain, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Luxembourg, Belgium and Switzerland. On returning to the United States, the choir performed at the Texas Pavilion of the World's Fair in New York City. In 1972 McKinley served as a participating conductor for the Third International Choral Festival at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and in 1974 and 1976 prepared choruses for performances at the Kennedy Center for the performing Arts with the National Symphony Orchestra. In 1978 the A Cappella Choir became the first collegiate choir to record with the Royal London Philharmonic.

In 1978 Frank received the Alumni Merit Award from Westminster Choir College. In 1980 he was presented the Texas Distinguished Choirmaster Award by the Texas Choral Directors Association. Because of his outstanding contribution to music education and international cultural relations, the Muskingum College Alumni Association gave him its highest honor in 1984, the Alumni Distinguished Service Award. UNT has established an endowed scholarship in his honor. Following his retirement, Frank McKinley filled interim positions as director of Choral Activities at the University of Colorado and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University.

A teacher does not compile this list of accomplishments without having an enormous impact upon those students he leads in those activities. Through it all, the students and the music they served, always came first. Frank McKinley's influence, on the thousands of students who have come under his influence, is incalculable.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Marvin Pollard  
(from 2002 UNT Choral Reunion Book)

Frank McKinley is a remarkable person as well as an outstanding role model as a choral director. I was a student in his voice studio, a member of choirs under his direction and worked as his choral librarian and part-time secretary. The most impressive personality trait is that he was never motivated by his own ego. The outstanding programs and experiences he planned and carried out for the choirs he directed were done for the good of the choral program and not his own identity. He finds time to take an interest in his students and, even after they leave the campus, follows their careers.

It was a surprisingly frigid Sunday afternoon for Denton, Texas. The old administration building auditorium was the location for a presentation of Bach's St. Matthew Passion by the Grand Chorus with students and faculty soloists and the Symphony Orchestra, bolstered by faculty instrumentalists. Dr. Walter Hodgson, Dean, conducted. Audience and performers were uncomfortably cold and the instrumentalists struggled with tuning. Almost immediately after the opening downbeat, the lights went out plunging the orchestra and chorus into a darkness which was relieved slightly by outside daylight seeping through the curtained windows.

Dr. Hodgson continued to conduct and the orchestra began the opening measures of the introduction. Gradually, instrumental parts dropped out until the Basso Continuo was alone - and Dr. Hodgson carried on in the best tradition, "the show must go on." Suddenly, the skill of the backstage technician brought the lights back on. A few members of chorus recognized their entry cue and began singing.

Within moments the full ensemble was together and completed a most unique and memorable rendition of this great Bach masterpiece. Being in a North Texas choir has impacted my life in wondrous ways; not the least of which is my 40 plus-year career as a choral director and teacher of voice. I have traveled nationwide as a member of the music-education/church music profession and without exception, when my alma mater has become the subject of conversation, the respect for UNT is evident. And let's not forget the lasting friendships that have resulted in being colleagues in rehearsing and performing with the North Texas choirs.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Charles Ray Holbrook  
(from 2002 UNT Choral Reunion Book)

Being selected as a member of the A Cappella Choir was one of the highlights of my life. To this day, I still deem it an honor and a privilege to have been chosen as a member. The choir was an outstanding musical group and was composed of many fine people, several of whom have remained my friends over the years. Frank McKinley was loved and respected by each and every member of the choir. Not only did he know how to evoke the choir's very best effort, he always retained a winsome and engaging approach to the task at hand. I'm grateful for his inspired leadership as well as for the lasting friendship of the other choir members.

It was a privilege to serve as a member of the A Cappella Choir for two years (1948-1949). During that time the choir had several amusing and memorable moments. One day, while on tour, our bus driver crossed over a railroad track and deposited the bus differential gear on the ground. Needless to say, Frank McKinley had to call for another bus.

Another evening, during a concert, we were preparing to sing our next number and waiting for Earl Tom Keel to give us our pitch. Just about that time, someone's stomach growled and the choir assumed that that was our cue to begin singing. Frank McKinley, being the astute director that he was, stopped the choir after a brief and hectic moment. During another performance, one of the female members standing in front of me, fainted in the middle of a number. We proceeded to ease her down gently onto the riser and continued singing.

After leaving NTSU in the summer of 1949, I began a thirty-eight year career in the United Methodist Church, first as a Choir and Educational director, and then as a Director of Christian Education and Pastor's Assistant. In 1961 I moved to Tyler, Texas where I served on the staff of the Marvin Methodist Church until I retired in February of 1990. (From February 1950 until December of 1952, I served in the Chaplain's Corps of the U.S. Army.)

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Ava Nell Donoho Chambers  
(from 2002 UNT Choral Reunion Book)

Appreciating the beauty of music and the joy of sharing that feeling with others; the emphasis on discipline and practice; developing a commitment to excellence; continuously striving for "ensemble" and the enduring friendships of fellow choir members are a few of the ways the choir experience impacted my life. These experiences gave me a foundation on which to build as I worked thirty-five years from a classroom music teacher to administrator in the Fort Worth Independent School District, and as an adjunct teacher at TCU and UTA.

I treasure singing with symphony orchestras in Dallas and Houston and with great conductors (especially Antal Dorati). Learning to sing German, Italian, Latin and Hungarian without a Texas accent was quite a challenge!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Barbara (Lewis) Austin  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

In the early 50s, when Walter Hendl was conductor of the Dallas Symphony, our Grand Chorus, under the direction of Frank McKinley, was paired with the orchestra to perform some of the great choral/orchestral masterpieces. It was a wonderful musical experience.

I have always felt greatly indebted to Charlie Nelson, who was my instructor in wonderful choral conducting classes during summer sessions. Thanks Charlie, you were "with me" at every level of my teaching and directing. (1954-1994)  
Toward the end of A Cappella Choir tour in 1953, we unloaded the bus at a large church in Oklahoma City where we were to sing a concert in the sanctuary that evening. Mr. McKinley left Eldon Black with instructions to get all of us in the sanctuary to check sound and rehearse. We were exhausted. Everyone picked a pew and stretched out. When Mr. Mac came in the back of the church, he couldn't see us. We heard his voice, loud and clear, "Eldon, where's the choir"? That was our cue. We all arose at the same time. It must have seemed that we just materialized and looked very funny. We were too tired to laugh, but Mr. Mac did.



Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Paul Harrison  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Choral singing and directing seemed to be the single most important factor in my life. I have done one and/or the other of these activities for about 50 years. I have always been interested in directing or singing in choirs. My time in the choirs at UNT gave me a chance to meet and keep many great friends. One of the dearest friends, at the top of my list, is Frank McKinley. Mr. McKinley built in me a real love for choral singing. My entire life and work has been based upon the foundation of musical training started at UNT.

Many happy memories come to mind when I think about my days in the North Texas Choir. One of these is still vivid in my mind. It was the spring of 1953 and the choir was on tour in the Valley. All choir members were kept in private homes. I was lucky enough to be sent to the home of a farmer that had an orange orchard. The home was in the middle of the orchard and the trees were in full bloom. We slept with the windows open. I have never experienced an aroma that was better. What a wonderful night's sleep.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Sandra (Fulmer) Davidson  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

After one semester at UNT, I discovered that I could take accompanying instead of choir as a lab. I was assigned to Mr. Mac's studio and loved it. This was the most relaxed, fun, part of college.

The students I remember accompanying were Eldon Black, Vernon Moody, Bill Blankenship, George McKinley, Walter Foster and my husband, Neil Davidson. I remember that in some students' lessons, Mr. Mac would ask me to transpose certain songs at sight. He would sit in a chair off to one side --just the right distance to nudge me with his foot anytime I faltered. He is one of the dearest people we have ever known and our sons know they missed something special by not getting to know him.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Jean (Rapp) Garrett  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in Frank McKinley's A Cappella Choir taught me the meaning of true excellence in performing choral music: a standard that I have always tried to achieve in my teaching.

I am retired from the Garland Independent School District with a total of 31 years of teaching in public schools. I now am adjunct faculty with Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, working with Dallas area student teacher.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Janette Kavanaugh  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

I have been so grateful to Mr. Mac for broadening our knowledge of 20th Century music with performances of such works as Honegger's "King David", Copland's "The Creation", and others. I have continued to use 20th Century works in my own recitals as well as those of my students.

Mr. Mac and Marilyn married shortly before one of our choir tours. Marilyn went with us on tour. We enjoyed observing them -- more importantly, Mr. Mac was always in a good mood on that trip!!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Rebecca (Breining) Nunez  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

I always loved to sing. Being a part of a group that works together to make beautiful music is very important to me. I have sung in church choir all my life, and now sing with the Denton Bach Society Chorus.

My most memorable choir experiences were when The Grand Chorus, directed by Frank McKinley, sang with the Dallas Symphony. Having grown up in Lefors, a small town in the Texas Panhandle, I had heard few professional groups. I could not believe I was singing with a major symphony.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Donald Pugh  
(From 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in the North Texas choir was a great help to prepare me for the first part of my professional life as a High School Choir Director. Frank McKinley was the best mentor one could have had for that career.

Some of the most outstanding memories from that time were the splendid musicians I had the opportunity of knowing and performing with and the great choral/orchestral works we performed.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Frank Roberts  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being a member of the choirs at North Texas reinforced my love of music and broadened my musical horizons by introducing me to a greater and greater variety of music literature. Even after leaving the profession 30 years ago, I still consider myself a serious consumer, and sometimes performer, of music.

It was the spring of 1957, during our final A Cappella Choir tour concert at Lawton, Oklahoma that my most memorable event occurred. All who know Frank McKinley recognize his professional bearing during performances, and his reputation for this is what makes the story so humorous. The final selection of the concert was Tom Scott's "Prodigal Son" for choir and narrator. Our narrator, Deuce (Lewis) Woodward, who did a very convincing job of imitation the speaking style of a southern preacher, decided to switch his admonishments on Christian living from the audience to none other than Frank McKinley.

Deuce suddenly turned, eyes glaring, finger pointing directly at Mr. Mac and declared: "OH SINNER"! and continued with the climax of his sermon while Frank almost dissolved into his white tie and tails. Shocked and surprised as we all were, we were able to quickly regain our composure (including Frank) and finish the piece to the delight of all in the house.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Mel Ivey  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in the A Cappella Choir and Grand Chorus under Frank McKinley had a great impact on me. That is why I became the choral conductor. I taught junior and senior high school in Big Spring, Texas. Taught at Loyola University in New Orleans and at Western Michigan University. Was hired as director of choral studies at UNT from 1990 to 2000.

Memorable experiences include performances with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Grand Chorus major works with great conductors such as Antal Dorati, Paul Kletzki, George Solti, Walter Hendl and others.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Cody Garner  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

During my many years of advanced schooling,(bachelors to doctorate) two periods stand out as the most outstanding musical experiences of my life. The first was being a member of the A Cappella Choir at North Texas from 1961-1962 while I was pursuing a Master of Music degree. This was a period when the A Cappella choir, the core of the Grand Chorus, performed numerous times with the Dallas Symphony orchestra. The thrill of performing the great choral/orchestral works left a very positive, indelible impression upon me. I still recall after all these years, the joy and excitement that these performances brought in me.

The second period was in 1963 when you called me, the high school choral director in Conroe and asked me to come back to North Texas, and be a member of a select 40 voice choir. The UNT choir had been selected by the United States State Department to represent the United States on a 16 country, three month cultural exchange tour.

The selection of the UNT choir stands as a testament to your talent and skill as a conductor. Officials of the State Department were asked to secure the services of the best college choir in the nation to represent the United States. These officials contacted many of the leading orchestra conductors of the day including Solti, Kletzki and Donald Johonos and asked them their opinion concerning college

choirs which could best represent our country. They overwhelmingly recommended professor Frank McKinley and the North Texas A Cappella Choir!

This reputation did not just come about. I remember the many hours of rehearsal and your insistence on memorization. Another of your talents was your ability to work with other faculty members, especially the voice department. Your respect for these people, your constant cooperation with them, resulted in a unanimous support for the choral program. Your habit of involving the voice faculty in decisions which affected student was greatly appreciated and gave you access to the most talented students in the college, both graduates and undergraduates.

I am also indebted to you for instilling in me a love for the choral art and for giving me the opportunity to immerse myself in so much of this great music. The legacy that you have left at North Texas and the many lives that you have touched will never be matched. Thank you, Frank.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Ruth J. Holmes  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

The experiences I had at UNT studying voice with Frank McKinley and singing in his choirs, added greatly to the other experience I had, studying piano (I was a piano concentration) and playing cornet in the concert and marching band. The choral music I learned was invaluable to my music education.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Lucia (Woodbury) Smith  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in the A Cappella and Grand Chorus were the highlights of my music education at N.T.S.U. and reinforced my desire to be a music teacher, teaching choir. I also remained in touch with my good friend, Connie Frederick Townsend whom I met while in the choir. I still have the records of our choir and love the music, always.

My favorite memory has to be the bus trip we took to New Mexico and West Texas; staying in homes most of the tour; eating pizza in New Mexico and

overwhelming Mr. McKinley with our first chord ( pizza breath) at the concert; losing my dress and having to borrow one; learning Japanese phrases from Don Morton; and eating fried chicken on most of the tour.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Carroll W. Barnes  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

I was and still am proud of having been in the choral department at UNT. While there, I met people who became lifelong friends. Choral music became my career and my life.

The A Cappella choir was on tour in Gary, Indiana and one of the selections we were performing was the Mass in G minor by Ralph Vaughan-Williams. The sopranos had been pushing the pitch sharp and in the middle of the mass. Mr. McKinley had to give the choir a new pitch, otherwise it would have been too high to sing. This night, in Gary, Indiana, Mr. Mac had had enough!!! So, at midpoint in mass he decided to teach the sopranos as a lesson. He didn't stop and give the new correct pitch. By the end of the mass only 3 soprano's could sing that high note. The bases were singing falsetto and the tenors were hemorrhaging! Needless to say, the sopranos were never sharp again under fear of death by the tenors and basses.

I won't tell the story of one choir member who walked on the outside ledge of a hotel 23 floors up, in the snow. But it sure was funny.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Terry Killingsworth  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in choir gave my life purpose and direction and established relationships which lasted a lifetime. The death of President Kennedy impacted the choir tour to Europe and Scandinavia greatly. Preparation for the tour as well as the tour itself were affected. The high point of my UNT experience was that tour. The lasting memories come from knowing my classmates and their relationships. Mr. Mckinley is an example of greatness and a personal friend.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Dwight Whitsett  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being a choir member gave a deep appreciation of fine music and the discipline and hard work required to perform it well. That discipline not only served me well in my career and other pursuits, but also as I have sung with other choirs and vocal groups through the years. It impressed upon me the value of working with a team. The members of the choir once agreed to substitute the words Mr. McKinley for some similar sounding Latin words in a Carl Orff piece and to do it in a performance! I shall never forget the surprised look on the face of our, normally unflappable director as we sang Mi - ster Mc - Kin - ley!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Dave Clark  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Frank McKinley continues to be very special to all of us, and I am very proud to have been under his “care and feeding” for those years I spent at UNT. I am thrilled to be able to participate in this reunion and look forward to many more. My memories of Mr. Mac are numerous and specific examples need some cultivating.

However, I remember our 20th reunion when I served as M.C. I was introducing all the attendees, leaving Mr. Mac until the end, of course. I made a point of noting just how good he looked. He seemed timeless in my eye. I remember thinking, while we were in Europe, what an old man he was, and how impressed I was that he had the stamina to be able to keep up with all of us “young guys”.

Now, when introducing him, I noted that I was about the same age that he was when we were in Europe. I had gained a much better perspective on the “old age” issue over the last 20 years, and now saw clearly just how special he was at that time.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Morris Martin  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

I learned so much from Frank McKinley that I have been his minister of music for 30 years at St. Andrews Presbyterian in Denton. Think of the pressure, guys! Every Sunday he is out there listening!

I shall never forget singing in Beethoven's Missa Solmnis with George Solti in Dallas, the Southwestern Premier of Bernstein's Khaddish with Maurice Peress in Corpus Christi, and singing three different concerts at the MTNA convention in one day in 1964. Who else would of had the courage to will us into doing that but the great Frank McKinley?

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Brenda Whitsett  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in A Cappella was an incredible experience for me. The discipline and work ethic required to be in a choir, and to make the touring group, affected my approach to my job for the rest of my life.

My most meaningful memory was the day that I tried out for the choir. My lack of self confidence and fear almost reduced me mute. Frank McKinley's patience and kindness calmed my spirit and I could sound a note, then another note, making a dream come true. I was in the UNT A Cappella!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Sampy Wall  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Singing in choirs from Junior High School until now, led me to my main careers. Career No. 1 was teaching choir for 21 years. I taught Junior High School in Big Spring, McAllen, Edinburg, Lufkin and High School at Klein in Houston from 1982-1987. Two of my junior high choirs sang for TMEA and one performed at MENC in Colorado Springs. After working through some personal crises in 1987



and going to treatment in Arizona, I found my way into a 12 step recovery which had saved my life and my marriage. This led me to career No. 2 where I taught electronic and computer technicians how to market themselves for five years. It was one of those “What am I doing here”? kind of jobs. In the process I also learned to write resumes and in 1992 started my own company, A Better Resume, which continues to be a slow but steady source of income.

I don't remember the year, but I do remember getting the flu on choir tour in Des Moines, Iowa. Fortunately I was spending the night with a super nice family. My host was a doctor! How convenient! I felt really bad about being sick, but also that I would be left behind when the choir moved to the next city. It just happens that the concert for that night involved retracing our route and that they would be coming back through Des Moines the next day. That night I was running some fever but didn't feel really bad, so I went with my host's son to a basketball game, Bradley and Cincinnati, I think. Young and foolish was I! By the time the game was over I was very dizzy and had a fever of over 100. The night was long and dark, but by the next afternoon I rejoined the choir. I did get to enjoy the rest of the tour, and Chicago was great! I know a higher power must have been looking after me, then, and for all my life.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by James Franklin  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in choir is just like being on any other kind of team. It prepares you for life in regard to relationships, working together with people with different backgrounds and philosophies and being responsible for pulling your own weight. My most memorable experience was the European tour in 1964. The places we went and the people we met will always be remembered. I have a vivid memory of visiting a secret underground fraternity house in Gothenburg, Sweden where the Coke machine dispensed beer. Taking the midnight train to Paris, landing and taxiing off narrow strip of beach in Iceland are experiences I'll never forget.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Nelda (Reid) Foley  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being the first black to travel with the A Cappella Choir and Mr. Mac, was a fun

adventure with great people that engendered confidence and the broader perspective. Singing under Frank McKinley brought about an opera audition in North Louisiana; and singing soprano solos in the Brahms “Requiem”, Bach’s “Sleepers Awake”, Brahms “Alto Rhapsody”, Respighi’s “Laud to the Nativity”, Haydn’s “Lord Nelson Mass”, etc.. Singing in the A Cappella Choir causes one to dig deep and come up with all you can muster.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Pamela (Cooper) Thomas  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

I was a freshman in the fall of 1963. On that tragic Friday afternoon in November, we gathered around the radio in the student lounge to hear the news of President Kennedy’s death. We were, of course, stunned. A Grand Chorus rehearsal was scheduled for 4:00 p.m., but we thought it would be canceled. Mr. Mac sent word that we must rehearse, because we had a concert with the Dallas Symphony in a very short time and couldn’t afford to lose the rehearsal time.

As we gathered, Mr. Mac explain the necessity of the rehearsal and thanked us for our presence. We were performing at the Bach Christmas Oratorio, and the first chorus was one of the most joyous. As we began singing, our hearts weren’t into making joyful music, but as we continued to sing, the healing power of the music lent a calmness and serenity to us all. At the end of the rehearsal, Mr. Mac thanked us again for our presence, and I think most of us felt the benefit of the time spent with his great music on such a trial traumatic day.

I thought about that day as I experienced the power of musical scene on 9-11-01. I thank Mr. Mac for what he taught us that day: first of all that hard discipline and commitment to outstanding musical performance was necessary in our lives, and secondly, that music is one of the most powerful forces in our lives, in times of joy and tragedy. I tried to share these musical things with my students on that tragic day last year. Thank you, Mr. Mac, for all the lessons you taught, especially the one on that November day in 1963.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Edgar (Eddie) Moore  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Mr. Mac was a great champion of contemporary choral music of avant-garde, atonal etc. Having a fairly steady diet of these styles made one a world-class sight reader. I shall forever be grateful. It has been of great value to me in my 25 years as a professional singer and musician.

Some of my outstanding memories in singing in the choir were playing bridge on the bus. The couple fold out seats or briefcases in the aisle for chairs and a briefcase across seat and you have a game. We had a traveling game all week! I remember the '67 tour including Dorati's Missa Brevis with percussion parts. We had to improvise by using rear brake drums of a Ford or Chevy for one of the percussion parts. Seemed that when they were struck they sounded at the correct pitch!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Linda (Catt) Poetschke  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Choir has always been a big part of my musical experience, but to stand and to be surrounded by the voices in A Cappella Choir at UNT, created an incredible energy that I'll never forget.

We had wonderful fun times in choir. I always looked forward to rehearsals. Mr. Mac always brought out the best in us. He let us sing out; none of that straight tone singing! I still remember tours when we would only stop at Howard Johnson's to eat!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Robert E. (Bob) Seibold  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Mr. McKinley taught us the importance of discipline, precision, and attention to detail, in music and almost every aspect of life. These competencies have continued to serve me well in everything from flying fighter airplanes, to

programming computers, to financial planning and analysis, two leading large teams of people. Thank you, Mr. McKinley!

My most memorable musical experience with the A Cappella Choir was performing Dorati's Madrigal Suite and Brahms Schicksalslied with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Antal Dorati. Mr. McKinley had the choir extremely well-prepared, and the performances thrilling to be a part of.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by C. Michael Rogers  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

To say the least, being a member of the A Cappella Choir had a profound effect upon my personal life. Being a member of the University of North Texas A Cappella Choir was a life changing experience in more ways than one. I remember the first day that I came in an audition for Mr. Mac after warming up to a high "A" he said, "You're a tenor". I replied, "No, I'm a baritone". He said, "You're at tenor" and I said, "Mr. McKinley I made the All State Choir as a baritone and I sing baritone".

He said, "Well you've got a scholarship and we need tenors and you have the range of a tenor and you're going to sing tenor in the A Cappella". So I left the audition determine that I was going to keep my scholarship and that I would just have to learn how to sing tenor. It definitely broadened my horizons and forced me to learn much more about the vocal production of a male voice. Thanks to Vera Nielsen I held my own in the tenor section. However, it was not without its trepidations. Can you imagine what it was like to sing beside Barry Craft? When we sang on choir tour in New Orleans, Louisiana, our accommodations were at the dorms on the campus of Loyola University. I'll never forget waking up one morning to hear Barry singing octave high Cs in the common shower down the hallway. He was awesome, awful, and intimidating!

My senior year there was a good-looking chick who made the choir and sang second soprano. She was petite and had a magnificent voice. I was lucky enough to sit on the next row over from her in French Diction class. She had great legs! The best part took place one day when we were gathering for an A Cappella Choir rehearsal. I was sitting in the front of the auditorium and she came up and spoke to me and noted that I look tired. I told her my shoulder was killing me so she gave me a little shoulder rub and I thought to myself, "I think I'm in love". I spent the

rest of a semester and a half chasing her around and trying to capture her. Finally, Cheryl and I were engaged in March of her junior year. Fourteen months later we were married. Next May we will celebrate 32 years of marriage.

One of the best remembrances of singing in the North Texas State University A Cappella choir was the choir's obsession in showing Mr. Mac up at the spring concert. The concert always took place after choir tour. That year we sang a piece called the "The Pleiades". The piece ended quietly with a very distinct rhythm pattern sung by all four parts. Mr. Mac had worked with us incessantly all semester to make sure that it was correctly done. So, when we got back from the choir tour, as we prepared for the spring concert, all of us got together and quite purposely conjured up our plan, which was, of course, to sing the rhythm completely wrong at the end of the piece. Of course we all had to agree to do it. And so on the night of the performance, sure enough, at the very end of the Pleiades as Mr. Mac gave the down beat of the final phrase, no one came in and on the next beat we made up a new rhythmic ending. Mr. Mac's first reaction was to try to change his beat pattern the middle of the measure, but that didn't work so he resorted to raise eyebrows and darting eyes as he witnessed us in our perpetration. Then a slight smile came across his face and he realized what we had done. Another of those avant garde pieces had bit the dust, but he showed great composure and as the music died away he cut us off and turn to receive the appreciative ovation. Naturally, no one in the audience had a clue that anything was awry. He wasn't too hard on us. But, we did hear him later muttering something to the effect, "Well at least you got most of it right"!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Cheryl Rogers  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Being in A Cappella Choir changed my life completely, not from a musical standpoint, but from a personal one. Thanks to the A Cappella Choir, I met, fell in love, and married a man of my dreams. Almost 32 years later we are still happily married and making beautiful music together.

I think the idea of changing something on the final concert was handed down from choir to choir. I remember when Mr. McKinley had us premier a work by a Latin American composer. In addition to the musical notes, there were many instructions in singing or voicing various sounds as well as singing in Spanish. The last part of the piece was a whisper sound for the duration of five to ten seconds.

As usual, we choir members put our heads together and decided to change the ending. Mr. Mac cut us off, but we kept going and going and going. After repeated cutoffs and one minute later, we finally ended the piece.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Beryle Eileen Ponce  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

I learned team work and responsibility from Mr. McKinley. He taught me that no matter what one's individual challenge may be, one can succeed with determination and support from others who care. He taught me that those with learning disabilities can succeed.

At the time I was in A Cappella Choir, ADD and dyslexia were unknown. However, he accepted that while I did not process and learn music in the same manner as others, I could learn and memorize. He allowed me to be a part of the choir and trusted me to learn my music, even though he knew my learning disabilities prevented me from being able to sight read. Much of my career has been dedicated to helping students and teachers understand that learning disabilities and challenges do not need to result in failure. Instead they can open the door to a world of opportunity.

Without Frank McKinley my life would have been very different. I do faculty In Service presentations and provide mentoring and training for teachers in the area of teaching strategies, multi-sensory instruction, curriculum etc., for students with attention deficit disorders, dyslexia, and learning disabilities. I supervise a variety of programs at Brandon Hall. Again, because of the respect and support I received from Frank McKinley, I was inspired to help students with learning challenges.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Judith (Judy) Gans  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Frank McKinley was responsible (with some help from Grant Williams) for changing the course of my life. In the middle of my senior year at North Texas, I decided to leave the music field altogether and return to English, which I plan to major in while in high school. Prior to the Christmas break that semester, I

contacted a professor of mine in the English department to make arrangements for the change.

Christmas was less than happy time for me; I had invested the lot of time in my music courses, and I knew that the next year and a half would be particularly intense, with all the new course requirements.

Shortly after Christmas Day, the phone rang at my parents' home and Frank McKinley asked to speak to me. It seemed he had lost a couple of altos for the upcoming choir tour and Grant Williams had suggested he call me to see if I was interested in substituting. I clearly remember his voice: "Well nowwww, Judy, do you have a couple of long dresses and can you be here {date} to begin rehearsals?"

To say that the prospect of learning all the tour music in only three days was daunting is to understate the obvious! I replied that yes, I thought I could make arrangements, and hung up the phone, terrified at the idea of even getting the notes learned.

Those three days were intense beyond belief, but I managed to get everything learned, the appropriate pieces memorized, and was bolstered by the wonderful support I received from my many old and some new friends. The tour was exciting and challenging, but I did my best, in order to live up to the trust Mr. Mac had placed in me.

As we drew closer and closer to Denton on the return trip, my mind, not to mention my stomach, was in a dither. Class's were starting, and I still needed to be advised in the English department. But I also needed to thank Mr. Mac for his wonderful opportunity he had given me for that 10 days. As we drove up Avenue C, I slipped into the seat next to him and thanked him for believing that I was up to the task of filling in for the two weeks, and that I would never forget the experience.

Well now, here I am, 30 years later. I finished a degree in music, not English. I went on to get a master's in vocal performance, and have had a significant amount of doctoral work in performance back at North Texas. I spent 13 years on the voice faculty at TCU, and have sung throughout the United States Canada and in Europe.

There is a follow-up to the story that I treasure. One day, when I was working

on my doctorate, I was visiting with a senior between classes. Mr. Mac walked up to us and addressed the young lady, recounting to her the entire story above, and about how I became a member of the A Cappella Choir. Nearly two decades had passed at that point, and yet, Mr. Mac still loved telling the story.

I love telling the story. I love Mr. Mac and I can never thank him enough for keeping me where I needed to be. Mr. Mac, we are grateful throughout our lives for the musical discipline and expectations you required of us, for the rich and varied repertoire you introduced to us, for the fellowships you promoted among us, and for the love you shared with us.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Lynn Christi  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Mr. McKinley gave me the greatest musical experience of my life by choosing me to sing in a N T S U quartet which was part of a 40 voice America choir which sang in an International Choral Festival in New York City conducted by Robert Shaw, in the spring semester of 1972. Rehearsing with the American Choir, singing in the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., rehearsing with 15 international choirs, and singing with Robert Shaw in Lincoln Center were highlights of my musical education at in NTSU. Thank you, Mr. McKinley!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Sharon W. Grahquest  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Mr. McKinley made me feel like I could accomplish anything! The tour in the 1978, (England, Holland, Poland) was great! Driving across Poland on what seemed like a school bus, Mr. McKinley always appeared to be so neat and proper in his dress.

I remember Burr Phillips and myself awakening from long drive looking as we had been rolled up in a suitcase, while Mr. Mac always looked rested and ready to go! How did he do that? Mr. McKinley instilled in me tremendous self confidence in dealing with life's many journeys. I shall always love and appreciate him as a friend and mentor.



Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Bob (Robert) Austin  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Irreplaceable memories and irreplaceable friends. So many concerts, so much fun and work. A good discipline and model for achieving goals in life, working together, sharing the magic of great music.

I remember touring Washington D.C. and St. Louis one year, then a series of “Dust Bowls” in West Texas the next. I remember singing both the Beethoven 9th and the Verdi Requiem with the Dallas Symphony my freshman year, what a way to begin!

I remember that Frank McKinley could hear any note in any chord no matter how chromatic. He even corrected our tone clusters. I remember Frank McKinley waving his tie at the tenor section and instructing us to get that note “in our method” and ring it! I love Frank McKinley.

Frank McKinley chose me to sing and a quartet of singers from UNT to join with nine other university quartets from around the United States. These quartets formed the United States Choir and performed with Robert Shaw at an International Choral Festival in both Washington D.C. and New York City. (About 14 choirs from every continent.) Singing a solo to a packed house in Lincoln Center Philharmonic Hall in New York New York with Robert Shaw conducting, is one of my fondest, greatest memories of my life!

I remember a lot, of really strange but fascinating modern music. We premiered a lot of new music and often sang from manuscript. The Penderecki St. Luke Passion with the Dallas Symphony . . . Wow! Half the audience were Hippies in jeans who stood and cheered, the other half were dressed in tuxedos and furs. They stayed in their seats.

I remember the leadership and integrity of the man, Frank McKinley. Frank McKinley himself is my greatest memory.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Martha (Pampell) Smith  
(from UNT Choral Reunion book)

Well, when you have to audition to go on choir tour by singing the Schonberg "Friede auf Erden" in quartets, by memory, a cappella, you feel like you can do just about anything! Thank you Frank McKinley!

In the mid-70's, the choir went to Washington D.C. to sing at the Kennedy Center with the National Symphony. The day we were to return home, I woke up with something lodged in my ear. When I realized I had to pay cash at the hospital emergency room, I was upset. I didn't have that much cash left. Without hesitation Mr. McKinley pulled out his wallet and handed me a hundred dollar bill. What a generous man. Yes, I paid him back!

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Wesley Coffman  
(from 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

I particularly cherish the friendships I developed while a student at North Texas. Directing choirs is my major performance area, along with the administration of College/University Music Departments. I served ACDA as editor of "The Choral Journal" for five years.

I have numerous memorable experiences but I remember particularly our first performance of the Grand Chorus directed by Frank McKinley with the Dallas Symphony. Frank was getting us placed on the risers for rehearsal. He looked toward the second tenor section and said "Hey, you, Blondie, move over there". At first I thought he was talking to an alto. Then he said "I'm talking to you in the red sweater". I was embarrassed but moved quickly. He, of course, had not been there long enough to learn our names.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Hugh Ellison  
(from 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

The several performances of the grand chorus and Dallas Symphony Orchestra

under Antal Dorati, prepared by Frank McKinley, were lifetime high points for me and for hundreds of other students. I became a choir director and enjoyed a rewarding career of teaching and conducting in junior high schools, high school and college choirs , as well as a regular part-time work with church choirs of several denominations. Frank McKinley was very helpful throughout.

I changed majors and took a degree in business administration in 1950. I came back to 1955 to finish my music education degree, and married Marilyn Glass who graduated with me in August 1955. We taught in Littlefield, Texas for seven years, Midland, Texas for another seven years. I became Fine Arts Coordinator there. Then to Cal State Fullerton for me, while Marilyn taught Placentia I S D, and got her master's in elementary curriculum from Cal State. Then to San Benito Texas I SD. For six years and El Paso Ysleta until retirement in 1984.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Charles Nelson  
(From 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

Frank McKinley was an obvious influence in my early musical life. We met when I was 15 and he was about 26, young, energetic, ambitious and ready to take on the world. He taught me singing and invited me, a 15 year-old junior in high school, to join his college Chapel Choir. He encouraged me in every possible way.

Five years later, after World War II, he returned to Denton and resumed the task of mentor. He exposed me to a formidable choral literature, took me to spring U I L choral contests where he judged, I sat back and made notes. We discussed choirs and choral problems on the way home. He not only took me to musical events, but even allow me to go with him to some of the Fort Worth Cats baseball games.

After a bout with polio and a six month stay in the veterans' hospitals, even though I presented some problems getting up and down steps and on and off the risers, he never hesitated to allow me to continue singing and traveling with the choir. That he allowed me to pick up where I left off was a great contribution to my rehabilitation. I can't imagine what it would have done to my confidence if he had said "No Charles, you're not physically up to traveling with us on tour". I know of several times when he recommended me for jobs.

Though we have not seen each other daily, or even monthly, from 1941 to the

present (62 years) our lives have been, and will continue to be, significantly entwined. I want him to know how much his influence has meant to me and how I love him for it.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by John Lovelace  
(From 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

My father had sung in Wilfred C. Bain's first North Texas State Teachers College Choir the summer of 1938, so I had made it a goal to do likewise. Singing in the A Cappella and editing the 1952 Yucca year book were highlights of my college career.

The 1950-1951 A Cappella Choir was blessed with unusually mature singers like Lucille Mendenhall, Bob Kaebnick, Bill Fuller and Frank McKinley's brother George. Our tour into Illinois and our Dallas recording of "The Prodigal Son" were especially fulfilling. Tenors David Taylor and David Jones were also stalwarts.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Dale Peters  
(From 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

My most memorable experiences were in the Grand Chorus performances with the Dallas Symphony, Walter Hendl, conductor of Walton's Belshazzar's feast, Verdi's Requiem, and Prokofiev's Alexander Nevski.

The performance of Alexander Nevski took place in December 1950, during the beginning of the Korean War, when many guys in the choir were getting draft notices from the Army. The Chinese Communist Army had just crossed into Korea and were fighting the American Army, and in turn the National situation was very tense. It was at the height of anti-Communist feeling in the U.S. The text of Alexander Nevski was a hymn of praise to the Russian nation and people, celebrating a victory of the Russian Army in the 13th century. The choruses praised "our great Russian and fatherland". Some parents of choir members, and others, became disturbed when they learned of these words, and call the college president to complain about these treasonous words. Prior to the performance, we were instructed to strike out these words in the score referring to Russia, and

substitute a more generic phrases such as "our natives land". The music was exciting and the performance was wonderful.

Singing in the chorus was always a pleasure, for the joy of discovery of new music, the enjoyment of singing together with friends, and the thrill of performance. The great choral music I learned at North Texas has stayed with me all my life, and has given me lasting appreciation of choral singing and the choral repertoire.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Juanita (Teel) Peters  
(From 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

Singing in the Grand Chorus performances with the Dallas Symphony were some of my most memorable " experiences. I'll never forget the excitement of Kodaly's Psalmus Hungarius with soloist Gabor Corelli under Antal Dorati, Verdi's Requiem with soloist Francis Yeend and Walton's Belshazzar's feast under Walter Hendl.

My experience in the A Cappella Choir gave me a lifelong appreciation of choral music. I especially remember being introduced to contemporary choral music by Frank McKinley in the choir. Hearing the soloists in the Verdi Requiem and Prokofiev's Alexander Nevski with the Dallas Symphony inspired me to hope to be a soloist in those works with Symphony Orchestra, which I was later able to do.

Frank McKinley Remembered  
by Edgar Stone  
(From 2002 UNT Choral Reunion book)

We seldom appreciated the spectrum of our teachers' contributions to our professionalism until, in later years, we try to equal their provisions. I remember how much I missed Frank McKinley in my senior year (1951 and 1952) when he was on leave for doctoral studies. The interim director, we learned, in panic, expected each of us to pay for incidental meals on the tour. In past years under Mr. McKinley, gave us per diem funds passed out as we boarded the bus. It was then I learned choir tours were not just hosts, music, programs, and transportation but a myriad of details to care for each singers need. Thanks Mr. McKinley.

Being a small part of a performing whole, not just be "in step" with rhythmic and

dramatic import, but trying to balance my efforts with those around me in relation to what was being called for by the director, was a great lesson to learn. Being part of the team is a major life lesson.

## Frank McKinley Remembered by Ira Schantz

I appreciate the way in which Mr. McKinley, in taking the place of a personality as great as Dr. Bain, took over the position as the North Texas State Choral Director in a completely smooth and unassuming manner, thereby easing the shock (to the students) of our losing Dr. Bain so suddenly. Very few persons could have made the change as judiciously as Frank McKinley.

I appreciate the fact that Mr. McKinley continued the tradition of having the North Texas State choirs sing many of the great choral masterpieces. I particularly remember pieces such as the Bach motets which we sang. I had previously been completely unaware that such beautiful music existed.

I appreciate Mr. McKinley giving me a number of solos on our tours, which further enhanced my musical and personal confidence. I especially appreciated this when looking back and realizing that he could have easily given these solos to other tenors in the choir, who, it turns out, might have been as good, or, in some respects, better than I.