

LAFF

THE LAFF SOCIETY

For the men and women engaged in Life After The Ford Foundation

Winter 2008 / No. 53

The LAFFing Parade

Lowell Hardin, “Mr. Green Revolution” at the Ford Foundation from 1965 to 1981, was honored by a special symposium and luncheon at Purdue University in December to mark his 90th birthday and to celebrate his life and work. Hardin was a professor of agronomy at Purdue before and after his service as a senior program officer in Ford’s International Division, and he is still active in support of the Green Revolution as professor emeritus and assistant director, international programs in agriculture.

The symposium featured four prominent speakers, all friends and “mentees” of Lowell, speaking on some aspect of the Green Revolution. They included **Werner Kiene**, head of the inspection panel at the World Bank and a LAFF member, who worked under Lowell at Ford. The chair was Gbisa Ejeta, once a student of Lowell’s and now distinguished professor of agronomy at Purdue. The session ended with Lowell’s closing remarks summarizing the achievements of the Green Revolution to date and the challenges remaining to feed the world’s hungry.

David Bonbright, who worked for the Ford Foundation in South Africa in the 1980s and was declared *persona non grata* by the apartheid government, is the founder and managing partner of a new organization, Keystone, based in London with a branch in Cape Town.

Keystone’s mission is to strengthen the operations of non-governmental organizations working in the fields of social investing and sustainable development in the developing countries. It provides a constellation of technical assistance and educational services to introduce new and more effective systems for performance management and accountability.

Emmett Carson, former president of LAFF, and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation of which he is CEO and President, were the subjects of a spread in the November 1 issue of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. With assets of \$1.9 billion, the foundation

continued on page 2



Overview of Cairo anniversary dinner

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CAIRO OFFICE

Last September the Cairo Office observed its 50th anniversary. To mark the occasion, here are a report on the celebration by Lily Takla, staff member from 1978 to 2005; an early history of the office by Frank Sutton, a Foundation staffer for the 50-year period; and a summary of the office’s recent and current programs by Emma Playfair, the present representative, and her staff.

A Gala Celebration

By Lily Takla

This year I was given an exciting and challenging assignment to make the 50th anniversary of the Cairo office. First, I was asked to contact former program staff and consultants to develop a historical record with emphasis on important program achievements and initiatives. Second, I was asked to coordinate an appropriate celebration in September.

I found it easy to get the names and contacts of all the Representatives, Program Officers and Project Specialists who worked in the Middle East and North Africa during the 28 years I was at the Cairo office. But I needed to work hard to find those in the earlier period since the opening of the Beirut office in

1952 and the Cairo office in 1957. The total came to around 120, plus between 50 and 70 consultants and local staff of at least 80.

The experience was indeed terrific.... I introduced myself as a former FF staff member who worked for 28 years. Most of them were initially somehow shocked, some sounding as if they had been asleep for a long time and were suddenly woken up by a voice saying “I’m calling from Cairo, on behalf of the Ford Foundation, to invite you to the FF Cairo Office 50th Anniversary this September.” Often the response I got was: “*Oh the Ford Foundation... What? Does the FF remember us?*” Many felt that they had spent the best years of their lives with FF. Most said “*it was a great experience—we love*

continued on page 2

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The LAFFing Parade

continued from page 1

resulted from the merger in 2006 of the Peninsula Community Foundation and Community Foundation Silicon Valley. Emmett, then president and CEO of the Minneapolis Foundation, became its first CEO.

Lisa Messersmith, former program officer in the Ford Foundation's Hanoi office, has become associate professor, Department of Public Health, Boston University School of Public Health. She remains actively involved in the work of HIV/AIDs in Vietnam.

Paul H. Feinberg, Assistant General Council at the Foundation in the 1970s, has retired as a partner at the Cleveland law firm Baker & Hostetler. He continues as adjunct professor at the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Case Western Reserve University, and as a consultant to the Cleveland Jewish Community Federation. ■

WANTED: COPY

The LAFF Newsletter attracted *The New York Times* (see p. 8) because of the quality of its contents. So **keep the copy coming**—current news, remembrances of things past, or comments on the state of the world. Good pix welcomed. For the next issue, send copy to Dick Magat at rimagat@gmail.com.

NEW DIRECTORY

Some LAFFers have not yet responded to Peter Geithner's request a few months ago for changes in the new LAFF membership directory now in preparation. Please send changes **ASAP** to **Dorothy Nixon** at 201 Adelaide Street, Belleville, NJ 07909 or at dnixon@comcast.net.

50th Anniversary of the Cairo Office

continued from page 1

Egypt and the Ford Foundation."

We received a wonderful range of memories from many colleagues detailing significant initiatives at different periods and reflections on the various programs, which were informative, interesting and sometimes funny, as well as photographs. This rich history of personal reflections was captured in a short brochure entitled *50 Years of the Ford Foundation in the Middle East and North Africa Offices as Seen Through the Eyes of its Former Program Staff*.

To mark the 50th anniversary, a weekend of activities was planned, with Susan Berresford, President of the Foundation, attending from New York.

On September 7, Yousreya Sawiris, who served as the Finance Officer during the early 1970's to the early 1980's, hosted a dinner for all FF former staff from the region at her residence. Program staff who attended included Chuck & Dee Robarts, Piero & Polly Bronzi, Tom Wolf, Cynthia Myntti, Barbara Ibrahim, Ann Lesch, Judy Barsalou, Emma Playfair, Abdullahi An-Na'im (Resident Scholar in 1992-3), Kristina Nelson, Fateh Azzam, Maha El Adawy, and Basma El Husseiny.

Local staff present included Samiha Hanna, Grants Administrator from the mid 60's to the early 70's; Salwa Hanna, Senior Grants Administrator from the mid 70's to mid 90's; Aleya Helmy, Senior Financial Officer from the mid 70's to mid 2006; and Lily Takla, Senior Administrative Assistant.

Special guests included Alison Bernstein, Vice President; Barry and Joan Gaberman; David Arnold, now President of the American University in Cairo, and his wife Sherry, and the American Ambassador and his wife.

On September 9, the Cairo Office hosted a Dinner in the Gardens of the Manial Palace (a royal Palace recently renovated by the Ministry of Culture). An All Africa staff meeting scheduled for the following week meant that all program staff from the four Africa Offices were with us for the celebration, as well as almost all the Vice-Presidents and other colleagues from New York and from the Brazil, India, Mexico and China offices, and yet more former staff including Lilith Haynes and Sandra Lane.

Susan and Emma welcomed the guests with brief speeches, but left most time for entertainment which included dancing horses, trumpeters, a recitation of a Sufi love poem, a Sudanese wedding band and some contemporary Egyptian Jazz fusion.

The Early History

By Frank Sutton

It was the sanguine and idealistic leadership of Paul Hoffman that took the Ford Foundation to the Middle East soon after he became president in 1950. He had come from leading America's Marshall Plan in Europe, and he believed that a comparable effort could lift other parts of the world to new hopes and progress.

Not everybody in Ford's counsels agreed with Hoffman that such ventures in development were critical to world peace; George

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Belated best wishes to you and yours for a peaceful and productive Year of the Rat!

I am pleased to report that our membership reached a high of 342 as of December 31. That helped us end the year still in the black financially, although with a reduced surplus due to the increased number of newsletters in 2007. (Each issue costs us approximately \$1500, which is why we appreciate your keeping your dues current. You can also help us reduce costs by letting us send the newsletters to you by email.)

Our chapters also continue to increase in number and activities. A report on the December meeting in New York is covered in this newsletter as is the 50th anniversary of the Middle East and Africa office in Cairo, where we have a chapter in formation. The Boston chapter will be meeting on January 16 and the Washington chapter probably later in the month.

If all goes well, 2008 should see additional chapters abroad in Beijing, Jakarta, Mexico City, and Rio, to add to those in Bangkok, Delhi and Manila. We also hope to find sufficient clusters of alumni in cities in the US so we can add to the chapters in Boston, New York and Washington. Suggestions welcomed.

Be on the lookout: the 2008 Membership Directory with both alphabetic and geographic listings should be on its way to you shortly.

Peter F. Geithner

Kennan was a notable doubter. But Hoffman prevailed, and by the summer of 1951 he set off himself for Asia with a considerable entourage in a search of places to promote economic development. The first stop was a brief one in Beirut where the principal object of attention was the American University.

Hoffman and company left a commitment of \$1 million there for an agriculture faculty. It was the only stop in what we then called the Near East.

Hoffman's principal objective was the Indian sub-continent where he met with the leaders of India and Pakistan and began the Foundation's overseas development programs with their respective governments. By the fall of 1951, Hoffman thought he had the trustees' agreement to spend a third of the Foundation's budget overseas, and he was planning expeditions to explore what to do in other parts of the world. Two expeditions were mounted—one went to Indonesia and Burma, where development programs were begun with Sukarno and U Nu, and the other went to the Near East in June, 1952.

The mission to the Near East had four members: Raymond Moyer, whom Hoffman had brought from aid experience in China and Taiwan to the Foundation's staff; an oil company executive, Harley Stevens; a Berkeley economist, John Condliffe; and Kenneth Iverson, who had been in the State Department. They visited all the principal countries in the region with the exception of Israel (which the Foundation dealt with separately).

Unlike their predecessors in Asia, the mission members did not come back recommending development programs with the host governments. Except for Turkey, they found these governments weak and corrupt. For Egypt, moreover, they had a gloomy assessment of its hopeless economic prospects, its population pressure, and its precarious revolutionary government under Naguib and Nasser.

In the hopeful spirit of the times, however, the Foundation persisted in mounting a Near East program, but with efforts directed less to governmental programs and more to

private institutions, particularly American-based ones. So it was in Egypt, where a series of projects were mounted with missionary institutions, only one of which had lasting consequences. That was a grant to the American University in Cairo for a social research center; AUC was smaller and newer

that its counterpart in Beirut, but the Foundation's link to it was to flourish and grow impressively over the decades.

At the time, the American University of Beirut was about as prominent an American outpost in the Middle East as then existed there. Beirut not surprisingly became the center of the Foundation's activity in the Near East and the first home of a Foundation office and representative. It was not until 1958, when F. Champion Ward became regional director and broke the initial pattern of working with missionary and private organizations in favor of more active relations with governments, that Foundation activity grew in Egypt.

Attitudes toward Gamal

Abdel Nasser and his government differed within the Foundation as they did among Americans and Westerners generally. But with Ward coming from India where the Foundation had from the first worked closely with the Indian government, and with the Foundation heavily engaged with national governments and planning in Pakistan and Iran, it was disposed to work with Nasser's government.

John Hilliard, who had done manpower planning in the U.S. government and in India, was set up in Cairo as consultant-representative in 1959. He was quickly consulting with the Egyptian government and promoting interests in administration and planning.

Hilliard came to know the efforts of a remarkable Egyptian, Ibrahim Hilmi Abdel Rahman, to build up national planning for the country. Abdel Rahman became secretary of the cabinet in Nasser's government after the revolution, and in the spirit of the time sought to find talent and resources for economic planning for Egypt. Similarly, Hilliard

was naturally engaged in efforts to improve management, particularly in the public enterprises that were multiplying in the country. These were the years when Egypt was moving to Socialist policies and engaging with the Soviet Union, but the Foundation was not put off.

By 1966, when the trustees came to review its Middle East and Africa program, the Cairo office had 18 project specialists, in addition to Jim Lipscomb as representative, Don Stewart as assistant representative and an administrative assistant.

Total Foundation commitments to Egypt through fiscal 1958 had amounted only to about \$1.2 million. After 1958 Egypt came to be treated as a key country, and from then through 1966, it made \$7.1 millions in commitments, outstripping any other country in the region. Major grants helped train professionals and build institutions in such fields as public administration, economic planning, agriculture and family planning and higher education.

There were difficulties, typically after promising starts under strong and effective leaders, among the major projects we undertook in Nasser's United Arab Republic. But the ties to Egypt were strong enough that we stayed through the disruption of diplomatic ties that followed the 1967 war. The anti-American sentiment was little directed at the Foundation, and we were ready to go on to a new array of activities in Anwar Sadat's Egypt of the seventies.

Recent and Current Programs

By Emma Playfair, Representative, and Her Staff

With the closure of the Beirut office in 1975, the Cairo office became the regional office for the Arab Middle East and North Africa. The staff is now composed largely of professionals and administrators from the Arab world. Over the last five decades, the foundation has awarded more than \$200 million in grants to more than 350 organizations in the region.

In Egypt, recent moves to lift tariffs and encourage global trade are bringing rapid social and economic changes in Egypt. For many, the nature and pace of these changes is a source of concern that liberalization and globalization will exacerbate poverty and religious and ethnic differences. At the same

continued on page 4



Many (alumni) felt that they had spent the best years of their lives with FF. Most said "it was a great experience—we love Egypt and the Ford Foundation."

—Lily Takla

50th Anniversary of the Cairo Office

continued from page 3

time, this dynamic period presents opportunities to improve livelihoods and imbue civic life with new energy. The Foundation is continuing its historic efforts to support Egyptian organizations that advance these goals.

In addition, recognizing Egypt's role as a major cultural and political center in the Arab world, the Cairo office makes grants to organizations in Palestine and other countries in the region, for initiatives of regional benefit and occasionally to organizations working in Turkey and Iran. In general, the regional initiatives promote the sharing of knowledge and experience and bring to scale work that could not feasibly be done on a country basis. Working with the foundation's offices in Nairobi, Lagos and Johannesburg, the Cairo office also supports Africa-wide initiatives.

In 1975, the Cairo office began funding efforts to strengthen the rule of law and ensure the protection of human rights. The initial focus was on researching customary law and providing legal assistance in Egypt, Sudan and the Occupied Territories. A series of grants enabled Al-Haq, a Palestinian human rights organization founded in 1979, to monitor human rights abuses, conduct legal research and to offer legal aid to Palestinians. More recently, the foundation has augmented this work by funding efforts to promote human rights education and safeguard the rights of women.

In the last decade, the office has both renewed its support for reproductive health and human rights and launched new programs in media, arts and culture and higher education. To build civic institutions, promote good governance and strengthen democratic participation, it has also helped establish a new group of policy research institutes—including two at Cairo University, two in Palestine and one at the University of Jordan—which are analyzing elections, conducting opinion polls, evaluating economic reforms and assessing the performance of public agencies.

The office has also sought opportunities to help scholars and researchers engage in regional dialogue. For example, through a set of grants to institutes in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Palestine, it supports joint research and publication projects, regional seminars, common Web sites and other efforts to attain greater visibility and sustainability by pooling resources. ■

HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY

by Will Hertz

LAFFers who were at the Foundation in January, 1978, may recall a bizarre concert in the Foundation auditorium before an audience of leading musicians, music critics and interested staff. Arranged by our late colleague **Richard Kapp**, it was a concert of piano music but without a live pianist. Instead, the audience sat rapt for more than an hour to hear amplified tapes.

Considerable light on that concert and its aftermath is shed by a new book by Kevin Bazzana entitled *Lost Genius: The Curious and Tragic Story of an Extraordinary Musical Prodigy*. The book tells the rags-to-riches-and-back-to-rags story of an eccentric Hungarian pianist, Erwin Nyiregyhazi, including the role played by the Ford Foundation and particularly Dick Kapp at a critical point late in the pianist's career.

According to Bazzana, Nyiregyhazi was born in 1903 in a modest apartment in Budapest, the son of a meagerly paid tenor in the chorus of the Royal Hungarian Opera. Starting with these beginnings, the book covers the pianist's childhood years as a prodigy in Europe, his successful American debut in 1920 at the age of 17 in Carnegie Hall, his decline into poverty and neglect, and the short-lived recovery of his career with Kapp's resourceful assistance.

Nyiregyhazi was initially heralded as a remarkable, even unique, keyboard artist—a throwback to the great 19th century Hungarian pianist Franz Liszt, to whom he often compared himself. But he was a difficult person—self-centered, demanding, alcoholic and subject to fits of aggressive paranoia. As a result, he antagonized concert managers and concert organizations, and his promising career in America quickly evaporated.

In 1928, frustrated and embittered, he moved from New York City to Los Angeles where he was welcomed by the Hungarian community led by the movie actor Bela Lugosi, the original Hollywood "Dracula." After a few successful concerts, he was soon reduced to playing catch-as-catch-can concerts in churches, concert halls and private homes for \$15 fees. For the next 45 years, he lived in seedy hotels mostly on hand-outs from friends.

Occasionally he was able to pick up a few dollars in the Hollywood studios by playing bit piano parts in the movies. Remember *A Song to Remember*, a filmed biography of Chopin? The hands pho-

tographed at the keyboard belonged to Nyiregyhazi, but the studio hired the far better known Jose Iturbi to play the sound track. When the sound track came out on records, it sold a million copies, but it was Iturbi who received the royalties.

Not even a friendship with composer Arnold Schoenberg, who settled in Los Angeles in 1934, a refugee from Nazi Germany, paid off. In a long and gushy letter, Schoenberg tried to persuade Otto Klemperer, the great conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to give Nyiregyhazi an audition. A stickler for the composer's score, Klemperer objected strongly and conclusively to the pianist's over-the-top interpretive liberties.

In 1973, Nyiregyhazi's fortunes changed for the better with a concert in a San Francisco church. The small audience included a young man with a tape recorder; he was so astounded by what he heard that he shared the tape with Gregor Benko of the International Piano Archives (IPA), a non-profit organization that collected and disseminated historic materials relating to the performance of keyboard classical music.

"Nyiregyhazi's playing came as a revelation," Benko later wrote. "Although the tape was a miserable recording, it had captured enough to suggest that Nyiregyhazi possessed a bigger tone than Horowitz. I had read dozens of accounts of how Liszt had played, but never before had I heard a living pianist who played entirely with that 19th century sense of rhetoric which the old writers had described as the true 'Romantic Style.'"

Benko arranged a few more concerts for Nyiregyhazi and then contracted with a small label, Desmar, to clean up the church tape, record Nyiregyhazi's playing under studio conditions, and issue an all-Liszt album. However, it took Desmar two years to produce the album, given the poor condition of the church tape and the pianist's huge dynamic range.

Enter the Ford Foundation, with Baz-zana's account drawing heavily on Kapp's files, his four cassettes of conversations with Nyiregyhazi, and the Foundation's archives. Ford's involvement began when Kapp spotted a glowing review of the Desmar recording by Richard Dyer of the *Boston Globe*. Curious, Dick obtained a copy of the album from Desmar by messenger.

"What I heard on that disc was totally unlike any other music-making in my experience," he recalled. "The impact of Nyiregyhazi's playing upon me was immediately and overwhelmingly emotional. I played the disc for colleagues, superiors, musician friends and anybody else I could cajole into my office."

At the time, the Foundation was interested in the preservation of music of various traditions, and Nyiregyhazi's playing seemed a throwback to 19th century piano performance. Accordingly, Kapp recommended, and Mac Bundy enthusiastically approved, a grant of \$38,000 to IPA to subsidize new recordings and provide "a modest but comfortable environment where the pianist can live." The latter stipend was budgeted at \$500 per month for 20 months—Nyiregyhazi still lived in a modest hotel in Los Angeles and had no desire to move.

In January, 1978, four recording sessions were held in San Francisco's Scottish Rite Temple with the focus on Liszt but with smatterings of Grieg, Rachmaninov, Schumann, and Debussy.

Kapp then invited Nyiregyhazi to New York to play at the Foundation for an invited audience, but the self-conscious artist declined. Instead Kapp rented amplification equipment and played the recording tapes for an audience that included pianists Alice de La Rocha and Emanuel Ax and *The New York Times* chief music critic, Harold Schonberg.

In two articles in the *Times*, Schonberg welcomed "an authentic 19th century pianist." "His playing was like nobody else's. He orchestrated at the piano, with tremendous surges of tone color. His tempos, his conception, his free attitude toward the printed note, his Romantic musical mannerisms—all these set him apart."

The *Christian Science Monitor* and *Billboard* magazine also ran articles on the event, Nyiregyhazi was interviewed on the CBS Morning News, and NBC and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation ran documentaries on him. With this and other publicity, the concert invitations for Nyiregyhazi

began to flow in, and four additional recording sessions were set for March.

In February, Nyiregyhazi visited the Foundation office in New York, meeting Bundy and Roger Kennedy. As his chaperone, Kapp then showed the pianist around town, with the schedule including trying out the pianos in the Baldwin showroom, posing for pictures at Carnegie Hall, enjoying a luncheon at the Russian Tea Room, and spending an afternoon at Schonberg's home "for drinks, conversation and chess."

And Nyiregyhazi's visit enabled the Foundation to become familiar with another aspect of his personality—his attraction to and for women. (His poverty and prickly personality notwithstanding, he married ten times and had affairs with countless other women including movie star Gloria Swanson.)

"The impact of Nyiregyhazi's playing upon me was immediately and overwhelmingly emotional. I played the disc for colleagues, superiors, musician friends and anybody else I could cajole into my office."

According to Bazzana's book, the 75-year-old pianist struck up a brief romance with a woman who worked at the Foundation and aspired to a career as a soprano. She had written to him after being moved by his recording and, following their meeting, he commended her beauty, speech and "impeccable taste and breeding." After returning to California, he proposed marriage, but she, intent on her career, broke off the relationship.

Meanwhile IBA contracted with CBS Masterworks to manufacture and release the new recordings. First, however, a dispute broke out between Benko and Nyiregyhazi over the division of the Foundation grant and of the recording royalties, with Nyiregyhazi claiming he had received only \$4,000 of the grant instead of the intended \$10,000. Howard Dressner, as general counsel, and Kapp intervened, with the Foundation approving a supplemental grant of \$7,000 for Nyiregyhazi's living expenses and CBS giving the pianist a \$10,000 advance.

The first CBS release, *Nyiregyhazi Plays Liszt*, appeared in August, 1978, and within a week 15,000 sets were sold. In a few weeks, the album made *Billboard's* top 40

classical releases, rising from No 27 to No. 3 (topped only by two Luciano Pavarotti albums.)

In the liner notes, Schonberg called Nyiregyhazi "Liszt incarnate."

Some of the reviews were laudatory. Said Harris Goldsmith in *High Fidelity*: "A towering figure in the annals of Romantic pianism, a precious and wonderful interpretive voice." Said James Goodfriend in *Stereo Review*: "Horowitz sounds like he is playing a toy piano."

But there were negative reviews, too. Said Dean Elder in *Clavier*: "The technique is incredibly slip shod, the memory poor, the soft playing pulled out of musical flow, the loud ridiculously amateurish." Others questioned the alleged 19th century authenticity of Nyiregyhazi's idiosyncratic pianism.

Two more CBS albums were issued in

1979, but the hype was over, sales were more modest, and a fourth album was cancelled. Nyiregyhazi received two more royalty payments totaling \$17,600, but returns outnumbered sales to such an extent that by the end of 1982 he owed CBS about \$3,600. Eventually, CBS retired all three albums.

Even Schonberg had second thoughts. In the fall of 1981, while professing "full admiration of this unique personality," the critic addressed the faults as well as the virtues of Nyiregyhazi's playing, referring to him "as a kind of fossil, valuable more as a historical document than as a model." Moreover, in the second edition of Schonberg's best-selling book, *The Great Pianists*, published in 1981, Nyiregyhazi gets no mention. Notwithstanding a late burst of popularity in Japan in the early 1980s.

By his death in April, 1987, Nyiregyhazi (for once happily married) was again living in modest circumstances in Los Angeles. Friends paid for his funeral, and his estate was estimated at \$2,000.

How good a pianist was Nyiregyhazi? Judge for yourself. You can still find two albums of his performances on a small off-beat label, Audio CD. ■

NEW YORKERS RECONVENE

By Sheila Gordon

The New York branch of the LAFF Society convened for its second gathering December 5 at Marymount Manhattan College, thanks again to **Radhika Balakrishnan**, professor of economics and international studies and former program officer in the Foundation's Asia program. Unlike other recent New York meetings, where the topics have ranged from Iran to hot issues at the ACLU, the focus was on the Ford Foundation itself: "The Foundation Over Time: Views from Past and Present/From Within and Without."

The meeting featured reflections by **Mary McClymont**, one of a few LAFF members who have left the Foundation—and returned. A civil rights lawyer, her first stint at Ford was from 1988 to 2000 as program officer and senior director in Peace & Social Justice. In 2000, she left Ford to become the President and CEO of InterAction (a coalition of more than 150 humanitarian organizations providing disaster relief, refugee assistance and sustainable development programs worldwide). She returned to Ford last year to serve as vice president of the Peace & Social Justice program.

Having had lives *before* and *after...and again at* the Foundation, Mary brought special insights and perspectives. She reflected on changes in the two decades between 1988 and 2007. During her first term, the Foundation had 12 fields of interest. When she returned last year, there were five programs. Collaboration between foreign and domestic programs had greatly increased. So had diversity, evidenced by the fact that a majority of the staffs of overseas offices were now nationals of those countries. Interest in refugees and migration had also increased, she observed.

She said that pressures, both global and domestic, had become more complex and more difficult to address than in previous decades. Mary spoke about changes in practice that she had observed over the years. She stressed the emergence of "communities of practice" spanning grantees as well as Ford staff, the increasing reality of "one foundation," greater collaboration between and among programs, as well as internationally. She emphasized, especially from her perspective of having been a Ford grantee at InterAction, Ford's distinctive commitment

to long-term commitment to institutions.

Mary was introduced by **Barry Gaberman**, recently retired as senior vice president of the Foundation after three decades of service. Formal responses to Mary's talk were given by **Robert Edwards**, who served Ford from 1965 to 1977 in Pakistan and as head of the Middle East and Africa office, and **Frank Sutton**, former Ford vice president of the International Division. In addition, **Shepard Forman** (Mary's first supervisor at the Foundation) and others provided a host of interesting observations from different generations.

The evening provided a lively and nuanced discussion of changing pressures on, and institutional responses within, the Foundation over half a century.

Though an expected overflow crowd of nearly 50 had reserved, nasty weather kept some away. Reception, refreshments and logistics were provided by **Victoria Dawson**, **Nellie Toma**, **Ruth Mayleas**, **Mary Camper-Titsingh**, and **Sheila Gordon**. Sheila closed the evening with a request for volunteers to help LAFF continue to develop and deliver good programs.

Following the program, 15 LAFFers extended the conversation over dinner at nearby Café Greco. ■

In Memoriam

Danny Newman, a legendary Chicago publicist in the arts and consultant to the Ford Arts program for a 20-year period starting in 1962, died in December at his home in Lincolnwood, Illinois. Newman was an expert on building audiences for the performing arts, and he advised the Foundation and its grantees in this specialized field. Said Mac Lowry, vice president of the Ford Arts Program, "Danny has done more for the performing arts in this country than 10 foundations." A more detailed account of Newman's FF role is planned for a future issue.

Norman Reynolds, program officer for rural development in India from July, 1974, through June, 1978, died in December while hiking in the Drakensburg mountains of South Africa. A native of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) with a Ph.D. from the University of Cape Town, he worked first in India for the World Bank. After completing his Ford

assignment, he returned to Southern Africa as chief economist in the first post-liberation Zimbabwean cabinet. More recently, he oversaw development plans for Cape Town and Johannesburg and a relief and recovery plan for Zimbabwe, and founded the People's Agenda, a South African organization that advocates for economic reform in rural communities.

Helen Cuoco, who worked for the Foundation from December, 1965 until her retirement in December 1989, died in October. She joined the Foundation as a secretary in the Humanities & the Arts program, transferred in 1979 to the Education and Public Policy program, and in 1982, became a word processor/secretary in the Office of the Vice President, U.S. and International Affairs programs.

Marie Byrnes, a filing specialist for the Foundation for 25 years starting in September, 1954, died in December. She joined the

Foundation as a file clerk in General Services, Central Filing Unit, and received several promotions in the Central Filing Unit, which later become known as the Information Resources or IR unit. In 1971, she was named IR Unit supervisor. Retiring from a full-time position in March, 1979, she continued to work as a part-time IR specialist until 1979.

Eleanor Epstein, who worked in the Treasurer's and Comptroller's offices from 1953 to 1977, died in New York City in November. She began at the Foundation as a statistical typist in the Treasurer's office, then served in various capacities in that office, and was accounting assistant-securities in the Comptroller's office at her retirement.

Arline Fraser McPherson, telephone operator at the Foundation from February, 1974 until her retirement in January, 1995, died in December at her home in the Bronx.

In the closing months of her presidency, Susan Berresford found two occasions to reflect about her 34 years of experience at the Ford Foundation. The first occasion, in October, was her receiving the John W. Gardner Leadership Award from Independent Sector. The second, in December, was an "exit interview" she gave to The Chronicle of Philanthropy. Here are excerpts from her remarks:

"I see three particular challenges I hope our sector's leaders will address," she told Independent Sector's Annual Conference.

"First, we must ensure that economic opportunity is open to all in societies around the world. In the next decade, the majority of the world's population will, for the first time, live in cities. Huge urban conglomerations already exist. Beyond their delights, they include vast, miserable and dangerous slum areas. Unless we generate far greater earning and living opportunities than our economies now provide, tragedy is surely in store.

"In the United States, we already see growing proportions of our working-age populations in low-reward jobs.

"Now is the time to consider dramatic public investments that will have significant intergenerational skill-building payoffs. Over the last decades, people in this room have incubated ideas on which new ambitious and generation-boosting investments could be based. For example, Ford and other foundations' grantees have tested children's savings accounts, individual development accounts, college accounts, life-long learning accounts. These programs could be knit together into a national system of publicly and privately supported, individually earned Asset Accounts.

"A second and closely related challenge is to show the ways that our organizations support the worth and dignity of every human being. We can ensure that differences based on gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, disability, religion, geography or other qualities do not marginalize 'the other.'

"In the United States, this means intentionally including marginalized groups in our hiring pools, our boards and decision-making bodies. It means examining what may be out-of-date concepts of qualifications. It involves seeing that formerly under-represented people are welcomed and effective where they can earn and learn.

"I believe we still need affirmative action. For one thing, we have clear evidence of prejudice from paired studies of black and white job applicants, health care and housing seekers. So declaring that we want to be a 'color-

SUSAN'S SWAN SONGS

blind' society doesn't get us there. We have to take differences into account to ensure equal opportunity. And when we do so, we must embrace our full diversity.

"The third challenge I see is ensuring that our sector's organizations are effective and accountable. Our sector is making progress, particularly in standard-setting. Civil society organizations in many states have now framed standards of proper governance and operation.

"But, will we vigorously promote our various standards? We need to make them so widely understood and part of the public's understanding that everyone feels pressure to meet them. We can't do this on the cheap. I hope each person here tonight will make a significant contribution to this public education effort—in time and money.

"In that connection, I am disappointed by the lack of a broad commitment to our field's common good. For example, too few foundations support research and analysis about philanthropy. We should all work together to support creation of accurate data on our field. We need to ensure that it is disaggregated in ways that make it useful for policy makers.

"Finally, as we put standards to work, we need to be willing to critique and repair organizations that fall short. Let's not gossip about them, let's engage with them. And we have a corresponding obligation to support those who are unfairly criticized, not just feel relieved that someone else is in the cross-hairs."

In her interview with *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, Susan responded to a series of specific questions about her tenure at Ford:

What are the most pressing issues facing philanthropy today?

"One problem that nonprofits are going to face, including foundations, is economic instability. If you take the time I've been president of the foundation as an example, our assets went from \$7-billion to \$15-billion to \$9-billion to \$13-billion. That's a real rollercoaster.

"The other challenge for us is to communicate the value we represent to society. People in every community depend on their church, their museum, their school, their community center, but not too many think of it as the nonprofit sector. More people need

to think that way because more and more policy issues will arise about the role of our sector. And we need to do a much better job than we have done so far talking about what our sector does, what its shape and size is, what its issues are, and what its value is."

Warren Buffett told lawmakers last month that foundations should award more than the 5 percent of their assets a year required by law. How do you react to that?

"I don't agree with those sentiments. At the end of the day, the question of payout really comes out to the question of perpetuity.

"If you believe in the value of very long-term institutions, which I do, then you have to set the payout level at something like 5 percent to enable an institution to exist over a long period of time.

"Our society values enduring institutions. We treasure our museums, our religious institutions, our universities, our community centers. We treasure them because they express and reinforce our values. We should force only the dissolution of organizations that represent a clear social danger."

Do you have any regrets?

"I wish I had gotten to some things earlier, like making some very large grants. It took a couple of years from the time I became president for us to really get rolling with that. I think that was because I kept talking about, Why aren't we making some larger grants. But I don't think I managed that as well as I could have." ■



Now is the time to consider dramatic public investments that will have significant inter-generational skill-building payoffs.

DELINQUENCY ALARM

Some 100 LAFF Society members are behind in their dues, some as far back as the year 2000. This shortfall makes it difficult, to say the least, to continue running our organization and issuing this newsletter, so please pay your arrears, or as much of them as you can.

Dues are \$10 for one year, \$25 for three years, \$50 for 10 years, \$100 for life. You can tell how far behind you are by checking the year on the newsletter mailing label.

Send checks to Mary Camper-Titsingh, Secretary-Treasurer, at 531 Main St, Apartment 1110, New York, NY 10044.

TAKE BOW, LAFFERS

Many of us have been receiving mail from all over the country—from relatives, friends, and people we haven't heard from in years—about *The New York Times* story on The LAFF Society, its history and its activities.

The story was published in *The Times* November 26 issue, under the heading "Starting a New Chapter After Foundation Jobs End." It also appeared in digest form in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy's Philanthropy Today* newsletter under the heading "Ford Foundation's Alumni Group Spreads Around the World."

The Times editors knew an important story—they included it in their day's News Summary along with less inspiring stuff about the world's ills.

If you missed *The Times* story—and particularly if you missed the poetic photo of "Peter Geither on the Beach" that went with it—you can download it by Googling "The LAFF Society" and clicking on the first entry. Or you can get it through *The Times* home page by inserting "The LAFF Society" in the search engine.

PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL REPORT (12/21/07)

Savings and Checking Accounts balance on 12/31/2006	\$8,414.99
Income total so far in 2007	4,497.19
Total	\$12,912.18

Expenses so far in 2007	\$6,760.21
Balance on 12/21/07	\$6,151.97

Income includes dues, life memberships, interest on savings account and donations

Expenses include printing, shipping, postage, secretarial services and refreshments at LAFF meetings, etc.

It costs us about \$1,500 for each newsletter.

-Mary Camper-Titsingh

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