When I assumed the position of General Manager of the PSO, my daughter, Missy, was one year old. Now she's completing her freshman year at the University of Delaware. There are also those who will swear that when I arrived in Portland, the English were firing on the town. With this amount of history behind me, this final column is going to be difficult to limit to the space allotted me. But I'll try. I thought I would devote it to "highlights" of my time here—events and people.

My first day on the job was August 14, 1969. I was the only one in the office because, up to that time, the office wasn't open for business in the summer. My predecessor, Andy Holmes, had the symphony line ring at his father's camp in Fryeburg, where he doubled as a counselor and symphony manager. We've come a long way, baby.

My first highlight was a trip to Canada with the orchestra. This had been set in motion before my arrival, and I completed the plans. It was a weekend tour with a Northeast flight to Presque Isle and an Air Canada flight back from Prince Edward Island, and lots of bus travel in between. It was a great success, but I just found out an amazing fact: on looking over the roster of that tour, I noted that there are only five of us still active in the PSO who made that trip:

Jean Alvord, Katherine Graffam, Rebecca Garland, George Rubino and myself. Our face has certainly changed since 1969.

In the Classical Series, I can point to many highlights: Gina Bachauer's Rachmaninoff Third Piano Concerto in 1973; the appearance as an unknown mezzo in 1972—Frederica von Stade, now recognized world-wide; Richard Tucker in 1974 (When I introduced him to my 78-year-old father, visiting from Florida, Mr. Tucker virtually tore the program from my father's hand and asked, "Do you want my autograph?" and gave it to him); Itzhak Perlman in 1969; Eugene Fodor in 1976; the live telecast of Lorin Hollander with the PSO in 1978; Paul Vermel's farewell concert of Britten's "War Requiem" in 1975.

After Bruce Hangen's arrival, we had lots of Mahler, the best being the Mahler Second in 1978 with Hilda Harris and Susan Davenny-Wyner. After that final concert of the season, there was an unforgettable champagne reception on stage! Other Hangen highlights were his Verdi "Requiem" in 1981 for which we assembled a chorus of 240; Janos Starker's Walton Cello Concerto in 1979; the first Thaxter Fund music commission—Barbara Kolb's "Grisaille" in 1978; the concert version of "Carmen" in 1982; another commission in 1981 by David Amram, which included a tribute to his unborn child, who was born the very day of the premiere; Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" in 1980.

Pops concerts were begun as a series in my first season. I was pleased to institute the tradition of having Arthur Fiedler here on a yearly basis for seven straight seasons. Although he had a reputation for gruffness, I believed it to be a facade. He was kindly and polite, conscientious about quality in his music and free with his stories. I feel privileged to have known him and to have spent so much time with him.

Other favorite artists: George Shearing, Earl "Fatha" Hines, Peter Nero, Hoffnung Music Festival (cornball, but Annetta Hoffman was a delight!), Peter Schikele as P.D.Q. Bach, Canadian Brass, Lionel Hampton and Billy Taylor. We also had a great time with the Channel 6 news team at our 1982 Halloween concert. Last year's "Best of Gilbert Continued on page 62
and Sullivan” was a standout, and of course, all of Vicki Crandall’s productions were great fun, especially this last one of “Oklahoma.”

Probably one of my fondest pops memories is of Duke Ellington. While waiting for the stage to be set up in 1972, he passed the time in my office, quietly talking about this and that. On stage, he was a master entertainer. And after the concert, his son, Mercer, gave me one of their velvet bow ties, which I still wear today with my tux.

We had two standout special concerts: Jesus Christ Superstar in 1971 and an Isaac Stern recital in 1978, postponed twice and then played to a sold out house.

Summer concerts are relatively new, but already I can count several occasions as being unforgettable experiences. Although not officially a summer event, the second annual “Symphony by the Sea,” which drew 5,500 people to the Atlantic House, had to rank near the top of great outdoor events.

And finally the “Magic of Christmas.” This means the most to me because it’s a series that has grown phenomenally in its seven years, and the concerts—ten perform-

Russ and Arthur Fiedler
So these were the stars of the PSO. I can’t get into the backstage people because there are far too many of them. I can just say that I’ve enjoyed my association with some great PSO presidents and board members, Women’s Committee presidents and committee chairmen and a number of staff people. I will mention a few of the people who have meant a great deal to me: former ticket secretary (for more than 20 years!) Zane Sturtevant; the late Bea Wilfert (though hospitalized with cancer in 1979, she sent me a birthday card which arrived the day she died) who was “grandmother” to my children and to every small child who ever walked into our office; the late Dr. Philip Anderson, for many years our volunteer backstage manager; my first assistant manager who also handled all of the Portland Symphony String Quartet matters, Milly Vetterlein.

And still with me: our very effective Marketing Director and former Women’s Committee president Debby Hammond; and the person on my management team who, with me, forms a team within a team, the best assistant manager I could ever hope to have, Linda Bliss.

There are so many names I could list. But I hope you know who you are. And you, faithful subscriber, thank you for making up the other half of this orchestra’s success. All these concerts have to be played for someone, and you appear to be the most qualified.

Best wishes to you all, and especially to my successor.

Russell I. Burleigh
General Manager