
MEMORIAL LEGACIES

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Your Legacy, Your Stories, Our Future



Margot Rodgers, inaugural recipient of the Carla Furlong and Andreas Barban Bursary in Music.

Finding Harmony

From the darkness of the Second World War to a legacy of music and fellowship.

The 107-year-old handcrafted harp standing in Carla Furlong's living room continues to make beautiful music in the hands of its owner. The enduring grace of instrument and player represent the humanity at the heart of this story, one that began during the darkest period in modern times.

Peeling back the layers of history reveals how a Memorial scholarship first awarded in 2016 traces its origins to pre-Second World War Europe, and how the people connected to its background helped inspire the classical arts in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Carla Furlong and Andreas Barban Bursary in Music was created by Michael Grobin, through a gift left in his will to support young musicians at Memorial University. A lifelong friend of Ms. Furlong, Mr. Grobin passed away in 2015.

At the age of 95, Ms. Furlong continues to instruct harp students from her home. A Juilliard-trained concert musician, she has been teaching music in various capacities for almost 70 years. She recalls in vivid detail how the scholarship came to be. (*contd. p.2*)

"It's a story of friendship among three families in St. John's, but it really began in Europe," she said.

This story begins just before the Second World War, at a time when Jewish people were being systematically persecuted, imprisoned and murdered in various parts of Europe and the world. When Wulf Grobin, Michael's step-father, was studying medicine in Switzerland and returned to Latvia in 1938, he approached his home from the train station to witness Stalin's Red Army taking his parents away. Dr. Grobin escaped to England and, from there, found his way to a position as a community doctor in Brooklyn, Bonavista Bay, N.L.

Also in 1938, a young music student named Andreas Barban was studying piano at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music in Germany. He, too, had a close brush with death, taken by the Nazis to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. His father succeeded in having him released; from there, Mr. Barban fled to Shanghai, China. Along the way he met and married Betty Berljawsky, a young Jewish girl also escaping Nazi persecution in Europe.

By 1953, Dr. Grobin had moved his practice to St. John's, where he married and became the adoptive father of his wife's young son, Michael. The Barbans, at the urging of another family member living in Canada, also moved to St. John's in 1947 to fill a desperate need for music specialists in the city. Andreas Barban would eventually become a pillar of the classical music scene in St. John's, a contribution for which Memorial University recognized him with an honorary doctor of laws degree in 1985. During a long and successful career, he hosted a classical radio program, taught extensively, adjudicated and became one of the first conductors of what is now the Newfoundland Symphony Orchestra.

"I think (Michael) would be delighted to know this scholarship is already making a difference in the life of a young musician at Memorial."

- Carla Furlong

Ms. Furlong recalls that the Grobins, Barbans, and her family, the Emersons, became close while living near her family home on Winter Avenue in the 1950s. Her father, Frederick Emerson, a well-respected lawyer, was also an accomplished linguist and musician. He spoke Russian and German, the mother tongues of Dr. Grobin and Mr. Barban, but was also fluent in the universal language of music.



Ms. Furlong notes that the celebration and joy the families experienced when it came to playing and listening to music together added to the feeling of peace and belonging they experienced in St. John's. She believes that Michael Grobin's support of Memorial's School of Music stems from those memories.

"Michael appreciated the value of music, and a music education, because it was so pervasive in all our lives," she said. "I think he would be delighted to know this scholarship is already making a difference in the life of a young musician at Memorial."

Margot Rodgers is a voice student in her third year at Memorial's School of Music, and is the first recipient of the Carla Furlong and Andreas Barban Bursary in Music. She is appreciative of the difference the gift is making in her life.

"I'm extremely grateful," she said. "It's particularly important for music, because the degree is so worthwhile, but doesn't always translate immediately to a job. When people give to music education, it not only provides financial support, but it's also reassuring that others in the community believe in the program and in people like me."

In her lifetime, Carla Furlong has been witness to families torn apart by strife and cruelty. She has also seen fellowship restore humanity, often in notes of music shared among friends. Margot Rodgers continues that legacy – not only as a dedicated student with a goal to pursue medical school, but as a volunteer in the community.

"I do volunteer work with autistic adults once a week, and they are mostly non-verbal," she said. "One of the girls I visit really responds to music, so we just sing together and there isn't a Newfoundland song she doesn't know. Music is powerful that way. It gives us hope."

High-speed success

Planned gift helps Memorial engineer make a global impact.

Legacy gifts allow our students to reach new heights. Or in this case, a history-making, air-levitating speed of 101 km/hr.

Adam Keating is a new graduate of Memorial's Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science and he delivered the feature presentation at our recent Legacy Appreciation event on Oct. 23, 2017.

This event is held annually for donors who have included Memorial in their wills or estate plans. Mr. Keating told a compelling story about how a legacy gift enabled his success.

“Your contributions are making a difference, giving young people like me the ability to do new and creative things. Thank you, you are changing lives.”

- Adam Keating

“I applied for a number of scholarships at universities across Canada in my last year of high school and had no luck,” he said. “Then, I got a letter from MUN saying I had won the Warren and Catherine Ball Memorial Entrance Scholarship. Had I not received that scholarship I probably would have gone elsewhere. Coupled with the fact that I knew Memorial had a great engineering program, it's what made the decision for me.”

Since then, Mr. Keating has embarked on an incredible journey. He credits the support of that scholar-



ship with giving him the freedom to pursue other interests and opportunities – notably as co-founder and project lead of a Memorial University-led student engineering team that has gained international acclaim.

What started with Mr. Keating and another classmate as an interest, is now the Paradigm Hyperloop team – 40 highly innovative students from Memorial University, College of the North Atlantic, and Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts.

Together, they developed a working prototype of an air-levitating transport system and competed internationally against 1,200 teams, emerging as one of 24 finalists. The next stage of that competition took them to California this past August, this time held at SpaceX, a company founded by Elon Musk. They took second place with their air-bearing ground transport vehicle that reached a top speed of 101 km/hr.

They were the only North American team to earn the chance to test

their pod in the SpaceX Hyperloop tube and made history as the first team in the world to use an air-bearing system. The work they are doing is revolutionary in the area of high-speed ground transport, with cutting edge technology that could transform the way people and products move around the globe. Since graduation, Mr. Keating has remained connected to the team as a project advisor.

Despite being a newly-minted Memorial graduate in the spring of 2017, Mr. Keating is already making waves as an entrepreneur in Newfoundland and Labrador, leading two different ventures that hold great promise for the province's economic future. He reiterated that his success has been significantly influenced by the support he received five years ago as a student.

“That scholarship for me made all the difference,” said Mr. Keating. “My tuition was taken care of, and it unlocked incredible opportunities for me. On behalf of all students – your contributions are making a real difference, giving young people like me the ability to do new and creative things. Thank you, you are changing lives.”

DID YOU KNOW?

Scholarships, bursaries, and awards could be directed toward a specific faculty or program?

For more information, please call 709-864-2157 or email legacy@mun.ca.

We are grateful

In this issue of our *Memorial Legacies* newsletter, gratitude is clearly communicated through the words of two remarkable young people whose lives have been changed by a legacy gift. Passionate, motivated and deeply appreciative, they are both looking confidently to the future.

To those who have included Memorial University in your will or estate plans, please know that you are creating opportunities for future generations of students, just like Adam Keating and Margot Rodgers, young people who are focused on making a difference in our communities. I join them in extending my sincere appreciation to all our legacy donors.

If you would like to let us know about your gift, please reach out. We would love to directly convey our thanks, and to invite you to be part of our Memorial Legacy

Society. Our annual Legacy Appreciation event is another way we thank our donors, and demonstrate the power of their generosity.

I hope you enjoyed this issue of *Memorial Legacies*. We invite you to respond with your thoughts and ideas, and to share this newsletter with others who may be interested. If you would rather receive a digital copy or wish to unsubscribe from future mailings, please let us know.

I extend my best wishes to you for a safe, joyous festive season, and a very happy new year.

Sincerely,

Catherine Barrett



The gift of a lifetime

Legacy gifts come in different forms, such as gifts made through a bequest, proceeds of a life insurance, unused retirement plan assets or a charitable trust. Wise estate planning can reduce taxes payable and maximize the impact of your estate, allowing you to help your heirs and fulfill your charitable wishes.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help Memorial in this way, please complete the enclosed reply card, visit www.mun.ca/legacy or contact:

Ms. Catherine Barrett (B.Comm.'92), Development Officer, Planned Giving

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Please know that we respect the privacy of our donors at Memorial University. We treat all discussions with the strictest confidence and they entail no obligation. You may also ask your lawyer or estate planner to make inquiries on your behalf.

The gift, estate and financial planning information included in this publication is not a comprehensive review of the topics. We always recommend that you seek professional legal and financial advice when planning a charitable legacy gift.

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