

Golden Wedding Anniversary Celebrated



Mr. and Mrs. Herman Maynor

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Maynor of Pembroke celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at Sandy Plains

Church Aug. 17 at 2 p.m. The couple were married July 30, 1936 at Dillon Marriage Chapel.

The couple's children are: Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Britt, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Godwin and Mr. and Mrs. Homer Locklear, all of Fayetteville; Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Seymour of Courtland, VA; Mr. and Mrs. Herman Maynor, Jr. of Secor, IL; and Mr. and Mrs. Frankie Maynor, Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Maynor and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Atkisson, all of Pembroke.

The couple have 20 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Many family and friends were present for this special occasion. The couple was presented with a money tree from the guests.

ROBESON TECHNICAL COLLEGE

By Bob Denham

RTC's New Resident Artist Loves To Sing

For as long as she can remember, Mary Cook has been singing in church, at school, even on the farm where she grew up, where the spacious outdoors allowed her few distractions and lots of privacy.

"Being raised on a farm, I could make all the noise I wanted," she said. "Singing was like walking; I don't know when I got started."

Ms. Cook, 35, has been singing professionally since 1981 and recently joined Robeson Technical College

as the school's new artist-in-residence. She is a soprano singer. She sings opera, art songs, folk songs, spirituals and some Broadway.

"Opera is my favorite; it's what best suits my voice," Ms. Cook said. "I like the drama of it, of being on stage and it's more exciting, but it also can be more nerve racking. It takes a lot more concentration. It's like a drama with music."

Ms. Cook began studying music formally at UNC-Greensboro and earned a masters degree in music education. One year later,

after a brief stint in the public school system, Ms. Cook began taking private voice lessons and joined the Charlotte Opera Chorus.

"I wasn't a very good singer after I graduated from college," she said. "Then I began studying privately; that's when my voice began to develop."

In 1981, Ms. Cook, as a resident artist for the Charlotte Opera, performed her first professional roles in "Abelard and Heloise," a world premiere work by North Carolina composer Robert Ward, Puccini's "Madame Butterfly" and Gilbert and Sullivan's "Pirates of Penzance."

In 1982, she was a finalist in the San Francisco Opera Auditions. Ms. Cooke has also appeared as a concert soloist with the Charlotte Symphony and as an oratorio

solist with the Concord Choral Society. "I hope one day to be able to sing opera full-time on a professional level," Ms. Cook said.

At the moment, though, she is beginning her third year in the N.C. Community College Visiting Artist program. She spent her first two years at the College of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City and will spend the next two years at RTC.

"I haven't performed locally yet, but I do have a few appointments in September," she said. "I've been busy trying to get an accompanist. I would prefer, when I'm performing, to have a pianist because the audience enjoys it more."

"But I will have accompaniments on tape, so I can go out and sing in those places where a piano won't be available."

Ms. Cooke has found two local pianists to help her: Nancy Fountaine in Lumberton and Peggy Bullock in Fairmont.

"What I'll be doing here is mostly recital tape singing and I'll do a variety of things," she said. "I spend my mornings at the college and practice in the afternoon at the First Presbyterian Church."

Ms. Cook is currently working on a brochure to be distributed throughout the county to schools, civic groups, agencies and the like. Once the brochure is distributed, Ms. Cook can expect more calls to perform. At this point, she said, it's just a matter of getting the word out.

The best time to call Ms. Cook for an appointment is before noon. She can be reached at 738-7101, ext. 192.

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