

Special Feature on MARCUS ADENEY

(crediting The Canadian Encyclopedia)

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Marcus Adeney. Cellist, writer, teacher,
b London 1 Jul 1900, naturalized Canadian 1904,
d Toronto 2 Mar 1998.

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As a child he studied violin with his mother, Ethelwyn Davies Adeney, a music teacher and a cousin of (Sir) Walford Davies. He began cello studies in Hamilton with J. Bartmann 1912-14, continuing in Toronto with Leo Smith 1915-16 and Boris Hambourg 1919-22, in Detroit with Philip Abbas 1922-4, in London with Arnold Trowell 1924-5, in Vienna with Wilhelm Jeral in 1925, and in New York with Percy Such 1925-6.

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He worked 1919-24 in theatre orchestras in Richmond, Va, Toronto, and Detroit, and was a member of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for one season in 1922. He was a cellist 1928-49 with the TSO, founder and conductor 1947-50 of the Beaches Concert Orchestra in Toronto, and a member of the Solway String Quartet 1948-58 and the CBC Symphony Orchestra 1952-63.

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With Hyman Goodman, Berul Sugarman, and Eugene Hudson he formed the Marcus Adeney String Quartet, which performed in Toronto during the 1950s.

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He taught at the Hambourg Conservatory 1928-51 and the University of Toronto 1953-63, and was founder and director 1957-61 of the Inverness Music Camp in Muskoka, Ont. In 1957 he conducted a summer course for strings at the University of the West Indies. He began teaching at the TCM (RCMT) in 1944 and remained on staff until 1985. He established a scholarship fund there for string players.

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A Canada Council fellowship in 1962 allowed him to study teaching methods of master cellists and to work on "Tomorrow's Cellist : exploring the basis of artistry" (Oakville, Ont 1984), a book about Adeney's four-stage approach to mastering cello technique.

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Adeney's pupils are or have been members of the Toronto Symphony, the NACO, and other major orchestras in Canada and the USA.

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Adeney composed songs and cello pieces. He was music critic 1930-2 for Saturday Night, program annotator 1947-67 for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and a frequent contributor to Strad. He also wrote book reviews and features for Canadian Forum and The Canadian Bookman and poetry for US, English, and Canadian publications and The Book of Canadian Poetry (Chicago 1943).

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In 1944 he collaborated on a brief to the Canadian Parliament which led to the formation of the Canadian Arts Council (CCA) and the Canadian Music Council. He was poetry editor (1946) of the Canadian Review of Music and Art. His novel "New Babylon" won a national prize awarded by the Graphic Press of Ottawa in 1931, but was not published until 1991. Adeney deposited his papers at the National Library of Canada in 1989.

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The 1994 video documentary "The man who couldn't lose", by Cayle Chernin, explores Adeney's career. Adeney's wife, Jeanne, a daughter of organist and teacher Frank H. Burt, was chairman of the TSO committee which inaugurated the orchestra's public-school concerts and the first in-school CBC music broadcasts.

Selected Writings

"Music in post-war Canada," Canadian Forum, June 1945

Ernest MacMillan, ed. "Chamber music," Music in Canada (Toronto, 1955)

"The extreme situation in music study and performance," American String Teacher, Winter 1973

Selected Compositions

"The Gallant's Song." 1932. Vocal

"Three Irish Tunes." 1933. Cello and Piano

"From the Lake of Bays." 1948. Cello solo.

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