

UPEI's Recognition of Founders Ceremony

Schurman Market Square

Don and Marion McDougall Hall

Wednesday, October 7, 2026, 2:30 pm

Citation for the late Dr. Alan Reesor

Read by Alissa Cyrino

Good afternoon,

It is my honour to introduce the late Dr. Alan Reesor, renowned educator, scholar, musician, and a founding member of the UPEI Department of Music.

Dr. Reesor joined the UPEI Department of Music in 1970—just one year after the creation of the University. He retired in 1997.

During his 27 years at UPEI, he served as chair of the music department for 19 of those years. Under his leadership, the department grew and flourished, earning a well-deserved reputation for musical excellence across the country. An internationally renowned organist, choral director, and musicologist in his own right, he retired from UPEI in 1997 and was conferred the rank of Professor Emeritus at Convocation in 1998.

Dr. Reesor's enthusiasm—especially for music history—was infectious, and he inspired a number of music graduates to pursue post-graduate studies in various fields of music.

He was exemplary in his approach to integrating teaching, research, and service at the University and in the community, achieving excellent results in all three areas. Devoted to teaching and performance, he was awarded an honorary doctorate in canon law from the University of King's College in Halifax in 1981, and he was made an honorary fellow of the Royal Canadian College of Organists in 1996. He performed organ recitals across Canada, the US, and Europe; was featured on national and regional CBC broadcasts on many occasions; and in 1991 released a compact disc of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canadian organ music performed on historic pipe organs on PEI, for which he received a PEI Heritage Award in 1993.

Dr. Reesor's service and legacy to the community is widely recognized. He was a resource person and mentor to organists across the Island, and he was frequently consulted because of his wide knowledge about organ design and construction. He was consultant for the rebuilding of the organs in Trinity United Church in Summerside and in St. Simon and St. Jude Parish in Tignish, and the purchase of an organ for St. Dunstan's Basilica. And he designed the organ in Spring Park United Church. He was conductor of the PEI Symphony from 1970 to 1976, helping to establish it on a firm footing. He also organized a series of summer organ recitals that ran for 35 years, attracting nationally and internationally renowned performers to PEI.

Dr. Reesor passed away on March 9, 2022. He was integral in building a successful music program at UPEI and left a significant legacy at the University and in the community as an educator, scholar, and musician.

Today, we are proud to name the late Dr. Alan Reesor a Founder of the University of Prince Edward Island in recognition of his contributions to the University and to the field of music.

We ask his wife, Mrs. Sharon Reesor to step forward to receive his plaque.