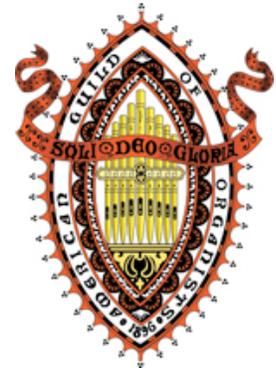


Soli Deo Gloria

November/December
2007

Chiff Chat

Springfield, MA Chapter
American Guild of Organists



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN...

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Thank you to our members who joined us for our Friday, October 12th organ recital. Young organist Raymond Nagem performed a wonderful program on the 3 manual Casavant at St. Paul the Apostle in Springfield. Raymond played flawlessly, performing Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C major*, Froberger's *Toccata da sonarsi alla Levatione*, *Sonata II* by Hindemith, and *Six Canons, Op. 56* by Robert Schuman. He is currently a double major in music and psychology at Yale, where he studies with Thomas Murray.

In an effort to keep you up to date with chapter business, please check out the new "Your Chapter At Work" column in *Chiff Chat*. This column will highlight important topics and discussion items from the most recent Springfield AGO Board Meeting. If you ever have questions, please feel free to ask or board member!

In early January 2008, a small group from the executive board will be gathering to begin planning the 2008-2009 Chapter Program Season. I invite any suggestions or ideas for the coming year. I would like to see new events that draw more of our membership. Please feel free to email me at rtrunzo@comcast.net. In the meantime, stay tuned for our upcoming Choral Sing/Anthem Read in the New Year on January 27, 2008!

As we approach another busy holiday season, I wish you all the happiest of holidays, with joyous music!

Take care,

♫ RON TRUNZO

Leadership

Dean: Ronald Trunzo

Sub-Dean: Martha Sienkiewicz

Treasurer: Michael-Thomas Gilman

Secretary: Mary-Jeanne Tash

Chaplain: Rev. Fr. William H. Wallis

Executive Board (terms ending)

2008: James Barnes, Nicholas Russotto

2009: Don Hooton, John Karalekas

2010: Karen Banta, The Rev. Jerry True

Membership: Charles Page

Chiff Chat Editor: Nicholas Russotto

Webmaster: Allan Taylor

Pioneervalleyorganists.com: John Anderson

Regional Councilor: E. Lary Grossman, PhD

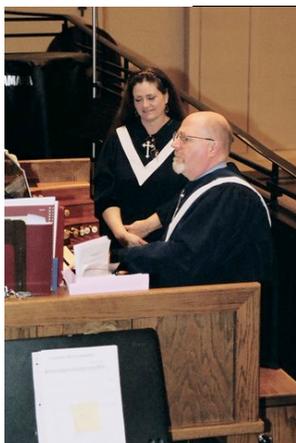
District Convener: Frank Corbin, DMA

News from the Springfield AGO...

Dear Members,

May you have a very happy holiday season! Please look for, elsewhere in this issue, the first column of in the series "Your Chapter At Work!". This will serve to keep our membership informed about what goes on at the Executive Board meetings. As most of you may know, the historic Old First Church at Court Square in Springfield, where Charles Page served for many years as Director of Music, has announced it will be closing its doors. The final service will be on December 9th at 3:30, and will include much special music from Charles Page, Richard Matteson, Debbi Salli, and the New England Brass. I hope to see some of you there! I hope, too, that you will enjoy some of the following pictures from our very fine chapter photographer and secretary, Mary-Jeanne Tash. Also find her very lovely and amusing article on the following column.

Very Sincerely Yours,



Former chapter member Michael Dulac at his new post in Minnesota.



Marguerite Brooks, E. Lary Grossman, Tom Murray, Bill Czelusniak pose at the Yale Camerata concert.

Captured Moments

Mary Jeanne Tash

As an amateur photographer, I enjoy photographing people. I have had the pleasure of photographing Diane Bish when she came to New Hampshire many years ago. She was very gracious. This September Ian Watson gave the opening performance of our AGO program year at South Congregational in Springfield on what seemed to be the hottest, muggiest September day I can remember. Before I could photograph him, he had to sit in an air-conditioned office after his practice session because he was soaked with sweat. He said he was British: he must dress with his tie and jacket on to perform even if it was well over 90 degrees in the sanctuary. Then halfway through the program he announced he could take off his jacket but never the tie. Those oh so proper Brits!

At United Congregational Church in Holyoke, Thomas Murray, organist from Yale did not mind being photographed with his jacket off, but our Chiff Chat Editor Nick Russotto did. He was Tom's page turner and put his jacket on for the photo of them together. Later at the reception I asked Tom to tell me something I could write about that was not in his official bio. He told me that when he was 15 he came up to UCC with his parents. He asked the then secretary Lucille Day to let him play the Skinner. She let him play even though she was not supposed to let anyone use it. He said it was a treasured moment and proclaimed himself a "teenage organ nut". He has been back several times to play professionally. Taking photos is one my greatest pleasures, but every now & then I like to be in one. So on that day with Diane Bish, I asked another organist to photograph us.

That person was a better organist than photographer because the photo of Ms. Bish and I came out a bit blurred. I still framed it. I was upset at first but my former pastor reminded me "you are a better photographer than organist". Now that was a captured moment I am glad no one got on film.

*AGO Announces 2007–2008
Member Challenge*

NEW YORK CITY—The American Guild of Organists (AGO) and its Committee on Membership Development and Chapter Support announce the third and final year of the "Each One—Reach One" membership campaign. The 2007–2008 challenge is designed to stimulate membership retention and recruitment activities at all levels of the Guild—from the local to the national level—and to award those who excel at recruitment.

Each One—Reach One is designed to be a grass-roots effort to strengthen Guild membership nationwide by inspiring and empowering local chapter members and officers to focus on membership recruitment and retention. Leading membership recruiters will be awarded expense-paid registrations to the 2008 AGO National Convention in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn. Expenses include convention registration with the transportation package, and five nights in the convention hotel—a \$1,400 value. Up to five prizes will be awarded. Some restrictions apply. Complete information, guidelines, and forms are available online at <www.agohq.org/eachone-reachone>.

The Committee on Membership Development and Chapter Support was established as a task force in 1994. In 1999, the task force became an AGO national standing committee. Chaired by Herbert R. Buffington (Atlanta, Ga.), the current committee consists of David Lincoln (Willowbrook, Ill.), Sharron Lyon (Brentwood, Tenn.), and Stephen Park (El Segundo, Calif.). Geographical diversity is intentional so that committee members have experience with AGO membership issues in various regions.

For further information about Each One—Reach One, please contact Jennifer Madden at 212-870-2311 (ext. 4304) or e-mail <jem@agohq.org>.



*Frederick Swann to be Honored in Los Angeles
Celebration To Benefit the AGO Endowment Fund*

NEW YORK CITY — The American Guild of Organists (AGO) will sponsor a Recital and Gala Benefit Reception honoring organist Frederick Swann on Sunday, April 13, 2008, at 4 p.m., at the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles. Founded in 1867, First Congregational Church is the oldest protestant church in Los Angeles. The Recital will feature Mr. Swann performing on the church's Great Organ, which is celebrated as one of the largest, most complete church organs in the world. The Gala Benefit Reception will follow. The gala is sponsored by the AGO National Council and its Development Committee, Bruce P. Bengtson, aago, director. All proceeds will go to the AGO Endowment Fund in Fred Swann's honor.

For Recital only, \$20 (by April 11) \$25 (at the door)
Contact: 213-385-1345 or e-mail <musicadministrator@fccla.org>

For Recital with Gala Benefit Reception, \$100 (\$75 tax deductible, space is limited) To advertise in the souvenir program book or to make a tax-deductible contribution in honor of Mr. Swann, contact F. Anthony Thurman by March 14: 212-870-2311 ext. 4308; e-mail <gala@agohq.org> or online <www.agohq.org>

Nunc Dimittis

Esther B. Holway
(1918-2007)

The Board is sad to announce the death of longtime Guild and Chapter member Esther Holway. The Memorial Service was on October 10th at Esther's home church in Florence, Mass. Anyone wishing to remember Esther may, in lieu of flowers, make a donation to the Esther Strong Holway Music Scholarship Fund, c/o Florence Savings Bank, 85 Main Street, Florence, MA, 01062.

*"Come, sweet death,
Come, blessed rest,
Take my hand,
And gently lead me on."*

~Virgil Fox

Your Chapter At Work
Springfield AGO

At the most recent Executive Board Meeting, we discussed this years successful Organ Crawl to Eastern New York, as well as the fantastic recital by Raymond Nagem. Tabled at this time was the board's discussion to host a Region I Convention in the future.

In addition, the Board discussed programming events for next year's "International Year of the Organ", which will involve a variety of events, sure to please everyone!

Also, in an effort to defray printing expenses, the Board voted to implement paid advertisements in Chiff Chat issues. The price list follows, please email your editor at nrussotto@gmail.com if you would like to place an ad to support your chapter!

Full-Page Ad (8 1/2X11):

1 issue ~ \$40/issue 3 issues ~ \$20/issue
6 issues ~ \$12/issue 9 issues (whole season) ~ \$10/issue

Half-Page Ad (4 1/4X5 1/2):

1 issue: \$20/issue 3 issues: \$10/issue
6 issues: \$7/issue 9 issues: \$5/issue

Quarter Page (2X2 1/4):

1 issue: \$10/issue 3 issues: \$5/issue 9 issues: \$3/issue



Your Executive Board.

(rear, L to R): Rev. Jerry True, John Karalekas, Jim Barnes, Charles Page, Ron Trunzo.

(front L to R): Mike Gilman, Jackie Johnson, Karen Banta, Mary-Jeanne Tash, Nicholas Russotto.

Temperament: A Beginner's Guide

Stephen Bicknell

(1957-2007)

Temperament is one of those subjects that attracts a) buffs and b) incomprehensible jargon. The usual explanations start with an analysis of the dreaded **comma** — whether Pythagorean or Syntonic — and most of us never really get past the problem of trying to work out what on earth such a thing might be.

I hope, kind readers, that you will allow me to come to your rescue, and attempt to explain in simple terms what the temperament enthusiasts are on about.

There is a problem to be solved in tuning any musical instrument: the notes cannot be made to fit into the octave, and some have to be de-tuned to make sense. If you tune a circle of pure fifths —

c - g - d - a - e - b - f# - c# - g# - d# - a# - f - c

— the c you end up at is *not* exactly in tune with the one you started with — a mathematical anomaly known as a comma.

In equal temperament all the notes in the scale are shifted by the *same* amount in order to resolve the problem. In all other temperaments the notes in the scale are shifted by *differing* amounts, giving each temperament a certain character. These can be arranged in more or less chronological order:

The earliest is **Pythagorean** temperament, which seems to have been in use up to the end of the 16th century. Almost all the fourths and fifths are dead in tune, and the entire comma is 'dumped' on one interval (according to Arnaut de Zwolle between F and Bb), which is therefore unusable. This temperament is easy to explain and to tune, but it leaves a lot of the notes of the scale in quite odd positions. It is quite satisfactory for music written in the old 'modes' that preceded the major and minor scales, provided there is no modulation whatever.

By the early 17th century **meantone** temperament was the norm. In this temperament the major thirds are perfectly in tune and the fourths and fifths slightly compromised — except for one hideously catastrophic fifth, usually between G# and Eb, the famous 'wolf.' However, this is now a 'regular' temperament, for in keys with less than four accidentals the notes of the major scale are in the same relative positions, the thirds all pure.

This, for the first time, allows the composer freedom to include harmonic modulation in one direction or another, and to choose a key that mirrors his thoughts. However, during the course of modulatory passages there will be an audible 'shift' of tonality, rather like changing gear. The appearance of a black note that is technically 'unavailable' in music of the 17th century (they are A flat, A sharp, D flat, D sharp and G flat) is a sure indication that a sudden clash was intended — rather like the deliberate use of false relations. The more extreme accidentals (C flat and onwards) barely ever appear. The occasional appearance in the mean-tone era of keys like F minor suggests the dawning of an awareness of the possibilities of key-colour: with four flats it has a very strange minor third (G sharp, not A flat) and if the G flat is called for there is further trouble in store. Mean-tone (Also known as **quarter-comma meantone**)

The wolf in meantone tuning is so horrible and such an obstacle that, by the later seventeenth century, it was being modified substantially in practice. **Modified meantone** is probably the most appropriate temperament for most of the 'early' organ music we now hear — even though Buxtehude and Bach were clearly among those exploring new tuning systems, their compositional technique remains informed by the meantone system. Simply put, the pure thirds of meantone are de-tuned a little bit in order to try and lessen the wolf. Modified meantone temperament was still being used by English organ builders, including Willis, as late as the 1850s.(includes **fifth-comma meantone** and **sixth-comma meantone**, the latter sometimes also known as **Silbermann temperament**). Naturally it allows the composer to modulate a little more freely and frequently, perhaps permitting an occasional excursion into five sharps or flats before returning to a more reasonable home key.

Late in the seventeenth century theorists started to experiment with various **well-tempered** systems, or **circulating temperaments**. The object was to finally hide the wolf, making all keys usable. It is perfectly obvious that this could be done by distributing the intervals equally across the scale, but this was *not* the path they took (except as an academic exercise). Why? The answer lies in the fact that these circulating (i.e. no-wolf) temperaments are those which allow the widest exploration of *key colour*. There is every indication that musicians of the 18th century were very happy with the expressive possibilities offered by writing in different keys, and sought to exploit the quite different character of each in their writing. Temperaments of this type include the various tunings by **Werckmeister** (organ expert, 1691), **Kirnberger** (Bach pupil, early 18thC), **Neidhardt** (1724) and **Vallotti** (c1730). Of these systems, Werckmeister III is notable for its purity in the best keys and its suitability for organs with large quint mixtures (many of the fourths and fifths are in tune); but it is irregular and bumpy in the way it deals with modulation and key colour.

Vallotti is smooth and regular, but the key colour is generally rather mild. In all these systems it is possible to play in any key, though the more remote keys may sound unpleasant, and enharmonic modulation is not always happy. Other circulating temperaments have been devised in modern times, almost all of them suffering from the grave defect that they are difficult to commit to memory and therefore difficult to use in practice (you can't tune an organ with a book in one hand). Finally, **equal temperament**. This very obvious solution has been known since 350 BC (!), but did not become widespread until the late 18th century (50-100 years later in the English speaking world). The advantages are obvious — all keys are usable without fear or favour, and full enharmonic modulation is possible. The disadvantages are also clear: not one interval is dead in tune (indeed in any major scale the thirds and leading notes are extremely sharp), and there is no key-colour whatever. In organs, reeds sound grittier and tierce mixtures begin to scream.

A few words on **Bach** and **temperament**. Bach did not at any time advocate the use of equal temperament. He wrote two sets of pieces called 'Das Wohltemperierte Klavier' ('The Well-tempered Keyboard'), avoiding the German term for equal temperament, which is 'Gleich-Schwebende Temperatur.' These 48 pieces are designed to exhibit the full range of key-colour available from a circulating temperament, and careful examination of the texts shows that Bach varied his compositional technique according to the key he was writing in. All the rest of Bach's music falls into the more conventional patterns of the day, most of it being quite well suited to modified mean-tone temperament (even if it continually pushes at the boundaries of this system). It is particularly noticeable in the organ music that Bach uses modulation as an expressive device, and dares to use the highly coloured remote keys for periods of tension. Today we often wonder how 17th and 18th century players could stand playing long pieces without changing the stops from time to time. The answer is that the modulation from one key to another during the course of the music was an audible 'event', a noticeable *change* — and is one of the factors that renders registrational changes unnecessary. When Bach plunges from a passage in the home key into a section of wild dissonance peppered with suspensions and discords, he is *deliberately* invoking the colourful effects obtainable *only* from unequal temperament.

Why, then, did Bach write such works as the Mass in B minor, in four sharps? In this instance it is possible that the instrumentalists were playing instruments tuned to chamber pitch, a whole tone flatter than organ pitch. The organ continuo would be transposed by the player, who would be playing in serene, no-accidentals, A minor. A quick check of the score will show that, if this transposition is assumed to have taken place, then the continuo player will have been able to avoid the G# — Eb wolf at all times.

Today's instrument makers and theorists have always erred on the side of caution and have avoided large scale use of meantone or modified meantone, preferring to offer us more 'usable' and 'versatile' circulating temperaments. My own feeling is that this is a great shame, for, despite Bach's famous jokes at Silbermann's expense (he is supposed to have played Gottfried Silbermann's organs in outlandish keys, until the builder was forced to retire, 'his wolf howling in his ears'), his music is surely centered round the meantone tradition and the many colourful possibilities it offers. Those who wish to hear large scale demonstrations of major works — Bach and others — played on old unequally tempered organs, are recommended to try Harald Vogel's recordings of the Schnitger at Norden and Ton Koopman's recordings of Bach, especially on the G. Silbermann at Freiberg. Amongst instrumental recordings I would recommend those of the music of Monteverdi (Vespers et al.) made by Andrew Parot and the Taverner Choir and Consort (for which I tuned the Mander continuo organ in quarter-comma meantone).

Mention of Italian music brings us naturally to the question of **chromaticism** in early music. This is an area in which the Italians excelled, but there are examples from many other countries, especially in the seventeenth century, where the chromatic scale is used for special effect. On equal temperament this is uniformly dull, and music of this type fails dismally to engage the listener. However, in meantone tuning a quite different picture emerges. The half-steps of the scale are all of differing sizes, and the chromatic scale, far from being smooth and oily, becomes a bumpy, eccentric and challenging affair. The harmony it brings with it displays rapid, even kaleidoscopic, changes of key colour through constant modulation, and the repeated build-up and release of harmonic tension is characteristic and fascinating.

I would also mention one other genre especially suited to meantone — the English Trumpet Voluntary. The acid whining of thirds and sixths in equal temperament makes these pieces less than harmonious to the modern ear. Even in a circulating temperament they fail to 'come across.' In meantone they present a quite different picture.

I hope that this introduction will encourage some of you to listen out for the many positive features of unequal temperament, even though the wide range of the modern repertoire means that most new organs will (and probably should) be tuned to equal temperament.

Stephen Bicknell is the author of the critically-acclaimed [The History of the English Organ](#). He has worked for N. P. Mander and J.W. Walker & Sons, designing many well-known instruments for both firms. He retired in 1993 and pursued work as a consultant; he passed away in August of this year.

Upcoming Events

December 2007

December 2, 2007 3:00 PM

Paul Jacobs in recital on the Gress-Miles Organ in Mead Chapel, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT.

December 9, 2007 3:30 PM

Final Service at Old First Church, Springfield MA. Special Music from Charles Page, Richard Matteson, Debbi Salli, and the New England Brass.

December 9, 2007 4:00 PM & 7:00 PM

The Festival Service of the Lessons & Carols will be presented in the Trinity College Chapel, 300 Summit Street in Hartford. For further information call 860-297-2012. Free admission.

December 15, 2007 7:30 PM

Lessons and Carols at The Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel, State Street Springfield, MA. Music will be provided by the boys and adults of the cathedral choir, strings, bells, trumpet, and organ. Reception to follow. For more information call the Office of Worship at 413.452.0839.

December 16, 2007 3:00 PM

The Arcadia Players will be performing Georg Freidrich Händel's *Messiah*, at Old First Church, Springfield MA. Information, 413-534-8888.

December 19, 2007 7:00 PM

Elisabeth von Trapp, noted soprano, in concert at St. Peter's Church, New Britain CT.

January 2008

January 27, 2008 3:00

Anthem Read, All Saint's Church, South Hadley MA.

February 2008

February 16, 2008 7:45 PM

A-capella group Ensemble Armacord in concert in Welte Hall, at Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT.

March 2007

March 7, 2008 7:30 PM

Oliver Vernet in concert on the Austin Organ at Trinity College Chapel in Hartford, CT.

March 30, 2008 4:00 PM

Paul Jacobs in concert on the Austin/McManis organ at St. John's Church in Waterbury, CT.

Positions Available...

Organist/Director of Music: Sacred Heart RC Church, Suffield, CT. Director is responsible for three weekend liturgies, seasonal celebrations, weddings and funerals, if desired. Applicant must have experience directing and training adult choir, cantors and occasional instrumentalists; excellent keyboard and pedalboard skills; knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgy as well as a genuine willingness to grow program, continuing momentum established by the outgoing Director. Immense potential and tremendous resources in the parish of 1800 families. AGO, NPM and Archdiocesan guidelines form the basis of our compensation package. Position is open immediately as the current Director needs to relocate in conjunction with his primary, non-church related employment. Contact: Fr. Michael DeVito fatherdevito@sbcglobal.net.

Organist, First Congregational Church of Chicopee, 306 Chicopee Street. Hammond Organ (1946), \$100.00 weekly, (August vacation). Please contact: Peggy McKinstry 413-562-8873 or 413-568-0555 for more information.

Organist & Music Director: The Catholic Community of Adams in Adams, Massachusetts announces an immediate opening for a part-time (15-20 hours per week) Director of Music & Organist who will plan and lead the music for weekly worship. The Catholic Community of Adams (in the Springfield, Mass. Diocese) comprises two parishes, three church buildings (Notre Dame/St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Stanislaus Kostka) and a school in the beautiful Northern Berkshires. There are three weekend Masses with music. In addition to the salary, the Director has additional income from funerals (avg. 90-100/year) and weddings (avg. 12- 15/year). The organs in Notre Dame and St. Thomas are both older model Allen Organs that have been repaired and upgraded (summer 2007). Notre Dame is contemplating the restoration of its 1902 three manual Casavant. Saint Stanislaus Kostka houses a beautiful two manual Casavant (installed in 1979). Successful candidates will have complete familiarity with the work of a Roman Catholic Parish Director of Music. This includes the Rites and Liturgies of the Church Year, and the liturgical planning ability and knowledge of resources necessary for a congregation and adult choir utilizing a mix of traditional and contemporary music. The minimum proficiency of organ and piano playing shall be at the B.Mus. (organ performance) or AGO Service Playing Certificate level, with a more advanced level desirable. The candidate will also have the skills necessary to rehearse the adult choir (SATB, 25-30 members) weekly. There is also a funeral choir (SSA) of approx. 15 people who sing at each liturgy of Christian Burial. The annual salary of \$20,000 includes two weeks vacation. Professional development and a book & music allowances are negotiable. Interested applicants should send their resume (including at least three professional references) and any other supporting material such as CDs, programs and reviews to Rev. Daniel Boyle, Pastor, Adams Catholic Community, Maple St., Adams, MA 01220. Please contact Fr. Boyle for any further information or questions at 413-743-0577.

Organist/Director of Music, St. Luke's Church, Bolton Street Hartford CT. Responsible for playing at 3 weekend masses, plus funerals and weddings and other liturgical celebrations. An additional duty includes directing the adult choir. At least 3 years of experience is preferred. References from previous employers are required. Contact Fr. Aniello at 860-296-8681.

Organist/Director of Music, Stowe Community Church, Stowe VT. The Stowe Community Church, a non-denominational Protestant church, seeks a Music Director and Organist to provide a meaningful ministry of music that is an integral part of the worship experience. This church is located in the village of Stowe and is a well-respected partner in the community, with an active and growing congregation. In addition to a traditional service calendar, the Church also hosts many musical performances throughout the year. The Church has recently restored its 1864 Simmons Tracker Pipe Organ (ed. Restored and enlarged to II/30 by Bob Newton and Andover Organ Co.) and also owns a restored 1898 Steinway Grand Piano. The Director of Music / Church Organist will oversee all areas of the music programs, including the music library, guest musicians for services, and adult and children's choirs. He or She will work with the pastor and the Music Committee in selecting music for services and special occasions, and will play for two weekly services during the September to June months, one service weekly in the summer and additional services for the Easter and Christmas seasons. Adult Choir 15-20 Possibility of a Children's Choir. Complete organ details available at www.andoverorgan.com under Instruments, Restored. Ed. Contact your editor about this position.

*Springfield, MA
Chapter, American
Guild of Organists*



Chiff Chat Newsletter

To submit information regarding positions, upcoming concerts, recitals, or area events, please email newsletter@springfieldago.org. Submissions for the January issue are due December 20, 2007.

If you prefer to receive an electronic copy of Chiff Chat newsletters, please let us know! Visit us on the web at www.springfieldago.org

Celebrating 61 Years as a Chapter!

Chiff Chat

American Guild of Organists

Springfield, MA Chapter

Nicholas F. Russotto, Editor

24 White Birch Circle

Somers, CT 06071-1007