



MONTRÉ

Newsletter of the Sarasota-Manatee Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

NOVEMBER 2015

OFFICERS

- Carl Parks, Dean ■ Dwane Grace, Sub-Dean
- Barbara Roth-Donaldson, Secretary
- Susan Crumpler, Treasurer

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

- Fr. Frederick Robinson ■ Paul Adams
 - Mike Bayus ■ Janet Davis
 - Jim Johnston ■ Nancy Siebecker
 - Michael Trezise ■ Sharon Watson
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FROM THE DEAN

PHANTASMAGORIA OF THE 21st CENTURY: PowerPoint® in Today's Churches

In the mid-1600s, magic lanterns were invented by Athanasius Kircher and Christiaan Huygens. Such a device consisted of a lantern fitted with a candle and concave mirrors. Huygens' magic lantern has been described as the predecessor of the slide projector and the modern PowerPoint® projector of today.

Magic lanterns were used for phantasmagoria. This was a form of theatre that would often display frightening images such as skeletons, demons, and ghosts. These were projected onto walls, onto smoke, or semi-transparent screens. Often, they used rear projection. Some projectors were mobile, so that the projected image could move and change size. Multiple projecting devices allowed for quick switching of different images. Nowadays, that is all controlled by computer.

Shortly after the French Revolution, one phantasmagoria producer said "I am only satisfied if my spectators — shivering and shuddering — raise their hands or cover their eyes out of fear of ghosts

and devils dashing towards them." In fact, so many people were convinced of the reality of his shows that the gendarme temporarily halted the proceedings. Many believed that he had the power to bring Louis XVI back to life. I suppose that was one type of spiritualism.

Back in the 1980s we had multimedia presentations, but these were generally used for special occasions and not for the actual worship. However, there were exceptions. I recall how the ushers would drag out a couple of Carousel projectors and display a show of slides, while the PA system would repeat over and over the same tired Christmas carol, played on an electric organ with chimes, every verse exactly the same. On other occasions, an usher would drag out the 16mm projector, the priest would lower the screen up front, and the faithful were treated to a movie — about whatever — in lieu of a sermon.

Now, enter the 21st Century. It seems like PowerPoint, Keynote®, and similar apps are with us wherever we go. This is especially true of church. There is a debate over whether PowerPoint enhances one's religious experience, or if it has become a sideshow and a distraction to worship. I suppose that all depends on how this is being used.

Drive up to a church, walk inside, look at the screens, and there is a good chance that you will see a picture of the same building that you just saw as you were pulling into the parking lot. There may also be reminders about upcoming birthdays, bake sales, concerts, and other events. That is well and good. Once the service begins, however, is it really necessary to run the darn thing nonstop?

Is the organ prelude or a well-rehearsed choir

anthem enhanced by comical quarter and eighth notes dashing across an ever-changing spectrum of colors? Once the candles are lit, does there also need to be video of other candles burning? Should we cancel the traditional Palm Sunday procession because it would interfere with the PowerPoint presentation? Does the projection of just text encourage more vigorous congregational singing than a melody line showing people where the notes go up and down? Does "Follow-the-Bouncing-Ball" inspire? What should be the role of canned music,

1960s protest songs, and campfire songs? Do we even need a good singing congregation if somebody can simply crank up the PA system full bore to amplify one or two people slopping, sliding, and caterwauling like bad karaoke on a Saturday night?

In addition to being professional organists, we often take on other music ministerial roles as well. All too often, however, we shoulder the burden for things beyond our control. If we are presumed to be responsible for something, we should also be given the necessary authority.

Unfortunately, we will just have to soldier on and try to practice our art the best we can on whatever squawk-box or chest-of-whistles is placed at our fingertips — and toe-tips.

Soli Deo gloria. *Carl Parks, Dean*

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Join us in welcoming the following new members to our chapter ■

Irene Parker ■

Irene moved to Venice in September from Bowling Green, Kentucky. Currently she is Interim Organist at San Pedro Church in North Port. She holds an AGO Service Playing Certificate.

Phone: 919.812.1671

Dr. Charles Wolf ■

Dr. Wolf is a retired Chicago attorney who lives in Sarasota 75% of the year. He has 50 years experience in church music and would welcome substitute opportunities.

Phone: 841.371.6461

Phyllis O'Keef ■

Phyllis moved to Bradenton from North Carolina in 2014. She has a BA in Music Ed from NC Wesleyan College and she holds an AGO Service Playing Certificate. She plays in 'Ring Sarasota', the handbell choir based at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church and directed by Rick Holdsworth.

Phone: 919-812-1671

Many thanks to Peg Smith for her assistance with membership.

RECENT CHAPTER EVENTS

Chase Loomer Concert ■

Young organist Chase Loomer played a concert on October 11th on the Letourneau organ at Christ



Church, Bradenton as part of the prize for winning the Southeast Regional Competition for Young Organists that was held in Sarasota this past March. The concert

was sponsored by our Sarasota-Manatee chapter and was well attended by our members. His program included music by Bach, Locklair, Messiaen, Franck, Brahms and Widor. Loomer majors in organ performance at The Eastman School of Music where he studies with David Higgs. A reception followed the concert.

Choral Workshop with Dr. Joseph Holt A Smashing Success! ■

Attendees included sixty-five singers from the Sarasota-Manatee area and beyond. The personable and knowledgeable Dr. Joe Holt opened the workshop with vocal warmups and tips for singers and choral directors alike. After warmups, we explored four different anthems while practicing various choral techniques for promoting better listening habits, diction, balance and blend. We learned much while laughing frequently.



Attendees immediately asked us to have a choral workshop like this in the near future. What are your thoughts? Let us know via email to any board member.

Nancy Siebecker and Greg Chestnut, Event Chairs

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

David Cherwien Hymn Festival ■

Friday, January 29, 2016 at 7 p.m. Pine Shore Presbyterian Church, Sarasota.

This is another AGO-sponsored opportunity for you and your choir members to participate in making glorious music.

Nationally known conductor, composer, and organist David Cherwien will lead the service. Cherwien is music director of the National Lutheran Choir and Cantor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, a parish known for its passion for creative high quality liturgy and music.



Rehearsal, Thursday, January 28 at 7 p.m.
Hymn Festival, Friday, January 29 at 7 p.m.
(with a choir warm-up preceding it.)

Note —Singers will need to purchase the following music:

Love Divine All Loves Excelling, arr. Cherwien, Sacred Music Press (Lorenz), cat. AM2045

Prayer for Peace, arr. Cherwien, MorningStar, MSM-50-9209

All other music for this festival will come out of the hymnals that will be provided for all to use.

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

Sing We Now of Christmas ■

Sunday, December 6, 2015, at 4 p.m.. Neel Performing Arts Center, State College of Florida, 5840 26th Street West, Bradenton.
Tickets: \$10 at the door.

Featuring the Bay Chorale and Ring Sarasota.

Christmas Festival of Carols ■

Sunday, December 12, 2015, at 4 p.m.. First Presbyterian Church, 2050 Oak St., Sarasota.
Admission is free. A free will offering will be received.

Featuring the church choir and handbells. Come and sing your favorite carols and hear the Christmas story.

Advent Lessons and Carols ■

Sunday, December 13, 2015, at 10 a.m.. Worship service . Siesta Key Chapel Presbyterian Church. 4615 Gleason Avenue (at Ocean Blvd.), Sarasota,

Featuring the Chapel Choir and the Musicians-Out-of-the-Box strings.

FUTURE CHAPTER EVENTS

From the Sub-Dean: As Sub-Dean and Chair of the Events Committee of our Chapter, I am pleased to announce the lineup of programs for the 2015-2016 year. A few months ago many of you graciously responded to a survey about what you wanted in the way of programs. The Events Committee looked carefully at your suggestions and planned the upcoming season accordingly. Here's what is scheduled for you. We hope that you will mark your calendar and attend as many events as

possible. Additional details on these events will be forthcoming. **Dwayne Grace, Sub-Dean**

Chapter Dutch Lunch ■

Tuesday, February 23, 2016. Casual get-together for members, spouses, friends and colleagues.

Thomas Murray, Yale School of Music ■

Saturday, March 18, 2016. Lunch and conversation.
Sunday, March 19, 2016, Recital at Christ Church, Bradenton.

A Musical Visit to Boston: 1870-1910 ■

Tuesday, April 11, 2016. Presentation by James Johnston.

Chapter Annual Banquet ■

Tuesday, May 23, 2016. The speaker for our annual banquet on May 23 was incorrectly reported in the last issue of the Montre. The Very Rev. Fred Robinson, Rector of the Church of the Redeemer, Sarasota, will speak on "It's All in the Details."

ORGAN COMPETITIONS

Young Organist Competition 2016 ■

Saturday, March 12, 2016. Sponsored by the Greater Columbia AGO Chapter, Columbia, S.C. Open to Grades 8-12. First Prize \$1,000, Second Prize \$500, Third Prize \$300, Hymn Playing Award \$250. Best Bach Performance \$250. For rules and application see "Young Organist Competition 2016" at www.columbiaago.org.

MEMBER DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

An updated membership directory is now available. All 2015-16 member directories that were not picked up at either the Chase Loomer concert or the Holt choral workshop on November 14th will be mailed out before Thanksgiving by Nancy Siebecker.

PUBLISHING EVENTS

If you would like to publish an event on the website, please email our Community Events Chair, Dwane Grace, at least two weeks prior to the event. You may also leave a follow up-message at the chapter email below. Posting your event flyer

link is also available for a small charge. Note that all events posted on the website will automatically be included in the Montre.

Please refer to the Events section at the Chapter website: <http://agosm.org/community-events.html>

CHAPTER INFORMATION

Website ■ agosm.org

Here you'll find the full chapter calendar of events the Deans' message, as well as the other concerts and events of interest planned for the wider Manatee and Sarasota county areas.

I encourage you to take time to explore all it has to offer.

Dan Crumpler, Webmaster

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Montre ■

Michael Trezise, Editor (mw.trezise@verizon.net)