

# **THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF ...off the old blockflute**

## **The Birmingham Chapter of the American Guild of Organists**

**November 2015**

### **A Word from the Dean**

Dear Friends,

It was good to see many of you at the chapter meeting and Thomas Murray masterclass on Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to Tyler Canonico, Matthew Edwards, Christopher Henley, and Katie Loudermilk, who all played beautifully. Dr. Murray was impressed with the excellent preparation of each candidate. He was an encouraging instructor who provided ideas for consideration regarding registrations, articulations and overall interpretation. Faythe Freese is to be commended for her fine instruction of these students. I also want to thank Fred Teardo and Charles Kennedy for bringing Dr. Murray to town. The masterclass would not have been possible otherwise.

As I listened to these young organists play, I was reminded that they, and those who will follow them, are the future of the Birmingham AGO. I am thankful that somewhere along the way these young people were drawn to this wonderful instrument, so much so that they desired to learn to play on a level that will allow them to earn a living in this field. I am constantly reminded of the sad reality that the vast majority of our children and youth do not have the opportunity to hear an organ on a regular basis. Many of you know that I am an avid runner. As I was running with a group of guys in Huntsville a few years ago, I learned that one of them was a member of one of the largest churches in town. Upon discovering that I was a full-time organist, he exclaimed: "WOW! We only bring our organ out for "Baseball Sunday!" I don't know which is a more disturbing "state of the church," the fact that they

never use the organ or that they actually have a "Baseball Sunday." Since my return to Birmingham, I am happy to say that most of my running friends are members of Independent Presbyterian, Mountain Brook Baptist and the Cathedral Church of the Advent where they have heard what I do for a living. That being said, I think it is important that we work diligently to expose young people to the organ while encouraging and supporting their music education. In response to that charge, I am happy to report that our chapter will be supporting two "Pedals, Pipes and Pizza" programs in the spring. One of the events will take place in February in Tuscaloosa and the other in April in Anniston.

The chapter has also approved the application for a POEA (Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced) to be held in Tuscaloosa in June of 2017. This application will need to be approved by National, since they only allow one POEA nationally per year. If approved, it will require a lot of people power to accomplish. We have hosted two very successful POEs at Samford, and I am confident that this event will be equally successful. One of the major reasons to host a POEA instead of a POE is that the percentage of students from POEA who go on to be organ majors is higher than with the POE. Our goal is to help bring awareness to the organ programs available in our Alabama colleges and universities. If you can help in anyway, please contact either Faythe Freese or me.

I wish you the best as you prepare for the upcoming holiday season and look forward to seeing you at the Teardo's in a few weeks as we have the opportunity to spend time with Scott Dettra, who will be presenting a recital at Independent Presbyterian on

Sunday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4 PM. Thank you to Jeff McLelland for once again allowing us this partnership, but most of all for bringing such fine players to our city.

Sincerely,  
Dan

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## October Event: Murray Masterclass

On Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 AM – noon, **Thomas Murray**, Professor of Organ and University Organist of Yale University, conducted a masterclass with four UA student chapter members playing. At the end of the masterclass, someone asked Mr. Murray to speak about the organs at Yale University. He gave a very brief, but insightful, talk about the various performance organs, when they were built, and how the current trends in organ music influenced the choice of builder and design of each instrument. The primary instruments he discussed were the 1951 Holtkamp in Battell Chapel, 3 manual—71 rank; the 1971 von Beckerath in Dwight Chapel, 3 manual—54 rank; and the Taylor and Boody organ in Marquand Chapel, 3 manuals—48 rank. One of the most interesting comments was that the Taylor and Boody is sometimes referred to as the “New York skyline” organ because of the use of double accidentals necessitated by the mean tone tuning. Yale University also has a 4 manual—195 rank E. M. Skinner in Woolsey Hall which was originally built by Hutchings & Votey in 1902.



*Masterclass participants: Christopher Henley, Katie Loudermilk, Thomas Murray, Tyler Canonico, and Matthew Edwards*

Murray has a two-part series on “Preparing and Registering Hymns” produced with the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. He demonstrates registration, tempo, introduction, and phrasing considerations for accompanying congregational hymn singing. Using the Lively-Fulcher organ of Christ Church in New Haven, CT where Murray is Principal Organist and Artist-in-Residence, the videos conclude with the choir and congregation singing the two hymns featured in the series. The approximately 25-minute series can be viewed here:

<http://ismreview.yale.edu/article/video-preparing-a-hymn/>.

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## From Our Members

### **Dr. Wilma Jensen Visits UA**

On October 17th The University of Alabama organ department hosted Wilma Jensen for a masterclass on her workshop entitled “Organizing Notes in Space: Developing Organ Technique and Musicality” to six members of Dr. Faythe Freese’s organ studio at the University in the Recital Hall of Moody Music Building.



*Wilma Jensen and Tyler Canonico*

Topics discussed included the varieties of touch at the organ, “How to be Musical,” various practice techniques, and how to develop and maintain a natural technique at the keyboard. The workshop was perfect for the University setting and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

- Catherine Heemann

### **New Organ at First Presbyterian, Tuscaloosa**

Installation is underway of the Létorneau organ at First Presbyterian. Mary Ann Croft helped unload a truck of organ parts that were dismantled and sent to the factory in Quebec last February for

incorporation in the new organ. Installation should be completed by December with final tuning scheduled for January.



*The process begins: various organ parts in the sanctuary*  
-Mary Ann Croft

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### THIS AND THAT

**National Convention in Houston, June 19 – 23, 2016**  
Online registration is now available at the convention website <http://agohouston2016.com/>. Links to details of all aspects of the event are also available on the site.

**Reminder: Our Chapter Scholarship Competitions**  
This year's *Minnie McNeil Carr* (for high school age students) and *Myrtle Jones Steele* (for students of college thru age 23 as of August 1, 2016) *Scholarship Competitions* will be held on Saturday, April 2nd, 2016, at The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia. Applications for either competition should be received by March 15th, 2016. See <http://www.birminghamago.org/Scholarships.html> for guidelines and application forms. You may also contact Ms. Natalie Tally, chair of the Competition and Scholarship Awards Committee, at [ntally@me.com](mailto:ntally@me.com).

Please spread the word to teachers and encourage qualified applicants to apply for these scholarships.

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### Comings and Goings

**Dr. Paul Mosteller** has accepted the position of Organist at Mountain Brook Baptist Church, succeeding Dr. Josh Coble who recently accepted another position in Nashville. He continues as Organist and Choirmaster at Temple Emanu-El and as Associate Chairman of UAB's Music Department.

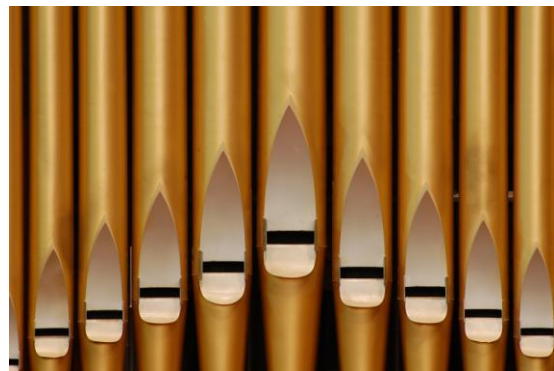
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### NOVEMBER CHAPTER EVENT

This year's dinner-with-a-guest-recitalist features Scott Dettra, Director of Music at the Church of the Incarnation in Dallas. This popular event begins at 6 PM on Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at the home of Fred and Leslie Teardo.

Online dinner reservations will be available on the chapter website's home page. Notice of the menu and other details will be sent to the chapter via email soon, but please mark your calendar now and plan to attend for an evening of conversation and fabulous dining.

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### Young Organist Competition 2016

sponsored by the  
Greater Columbia AGO Chapter

Saturday, March 12, 2016  
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](http://www.columbiaago.org)

Winners have continued their study at Indiana University, Eastman, Yale, and Curtis Institute

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## November Opportunities

See Online Calendar of Events for Complete Listing

### November 1, 2015: 2:30 PM

*All Saints Concert: Morten Lauridsen's Lux Aeterna*  
First UMC, Downtown Birmingham  
Jim Cook, Mark Hayes, Chancel Choir and Orchestra  
Info: [music@firstchurcharts.org](mailto:music@firstchurcharts.org)

### November 1, 2015: 2:30 PM

*Solemn Worship for All Saints* - Anniston FUMC  
Chancel Choir - Kathy Murphy, conductor;  
Christopher Henley, organ  
Info:  
<http://annistonfirst.info>, [chris@annistonfirst.info](mailto:chris@annistonfirst.info)

### November 1, 2015: 4:00 PM

*November Organ Recital Series: Eric Plutz* - IPC  
Organist from Princeton University Chapel  
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org> [jmclelland@ipc-usa.org](mailto:jmclelland@ipc-usa.org)

### November 3, 2015: 7:30 PM

*Cathedral Concert Series* – Cathedral Church of the Advent  
Birmingham's newly formed Renaissance choral ensemble Highland Consort, founded and directed by Advent's Director of Music Frederick Teardo, will perform at the Advent Tuesday, November 3rd at 7:30 PM. The concert will feature works of remembrance from the Renaissance and Restoration periods by Byrd, Lobo, Tallis, Tomkins, Victoria, as well as the Burial Sentences from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer set to music by William Croft, and the sublime yet rarely performed *Missa pro Defunctis* by the French Renaissance composer Eustache du Caurroy. Several members of Highland Consort are also members of our Cathedral Choir. Admission to the concert is free; please do not miss this opportunity to hear one of Birmingham's finest choral ensembles  
Info: <http://www.adventbirmingham.org/>  
[kennedy@cathedraladvent.com](mailto:kennedy@cathedraladvent.com)

### November 8, 2015: 3:00 PM

*Choral Evensong* - Cathedral Church of the Advent  
The Cathedral Choir; Frederick Teardo, Director of Music and Organist  
Info: <http://www.adventbirmingham.org/>  
[kennedy@cathedraladvent.com](mailto:kennedy@cathedraladvent.com)

### November 8, 2015: 4:00 PM

*November Organ Recital Series: Simon Johnson* - IPC  
Organist of St. Paul  
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org> [jmclelland@ipc-usa.org](mailto:jmclelland@ipc-usa.org)

### November 15, 2015: 4:00 PM

*November Organ Recital Series: Maxine Thevenot* – IPC  
Organist of Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque  
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org> [jmclelland@ipc-usa.org](mailto:jmclelland@ipc-usa.org)

### November 19, 2015: 11:00 AM

*Common Hour Performance* - Birmingham Southern College  
BSC Concert Choir, Lester Seigel, conductor  
BSC's Hill Recital Hall, 900 Arkadelphia Rd., B  
Info: [lseigel@bsc.edu](mailto:lseigel@bsc.edu)

### November 20, 2015: 12:30 PM

*Mid-Day Music Series* – Cathedral Church of the Advent  
The Mid-Day Music Series continues with a free, 30-minute concert in the Cathedral Nave by soprano Kristine Hurst, Associate Professor of Voice and Opera at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Under her direction, UAB Opera has grown into a nationally award-winning program. Hurst debuted with the Boulder Bach Festival in 2004, and with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra in 2011. Her concert repertoire ranges from Bach to Barber and beyond, operatic roles from Monteverdi to Stravinsky. Her program will include sacred works by Bach, Purcell, Vivaldi and Handel. Joining her will be Charles Kennedy, Advent's Associate Director of Music and Organist  
Info: <http://www.adventbirmingham.org/>  
[kennedy@cathedraladvent.com](mailto:kennedy@cathedraladvent.com)

### November 22, 2015: 3:00 PM

*Choral Evensong: Service of Christ the King* – IPC  
IPC Camerata  
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org> [jmclelland@ipc-usa.org](mailto:jmclelland@ipc-usa.org)

### November 22, 2015: 4:00 PM

*November Organ Recital Series: Scott Dettra* – IPC  
Director of Music, Church of the Incarnation, Dallas  
Info: <http://www.ipc-usa.org> [jmclelland@ipc-usa.org](mailto:jmclelland@ipc-usa.org)

### November 29, 2015: 2:30 PM

*Christopher Henley, Organ Recital* – Anniston FUMC  
Info:  
<http://annistonfirst.info>, [chris@annistonfirst.info](mailto:chris@annistonfirst.info)

## Scheduled Chapter Events 2015-2016

### November

#### Dinner with Scott Dettra

Saturday, November 21, 2015  
Home of Fred and Leslie Teardo  
Dinner 6:00 PM

### January

#### Epiphany Party

Friday, January 8, 2016  
Home of Sherrie and Dan Lawhon  
6:00 – 8:00 PM

### February

#### Choral Accompanying in the Anglican Tradition

Monday, February 8, 2016  
Cathedral Church of the Advent  
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program  
7:00 PM

#### Pedals, Pipes & Pizza

Saturday, February 20, 2016  
University of Alabama  
Time to be announced

### March

#### Workshop with Huntsville Trinity Handbell Quartet

Monday, March 14, 2016  
Trinity United Methodist Church, Homewood  
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program  
7:00 PM

### April

#### Student Recital

Monday, April 11, 2016  
Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church  
Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM; Program  
7:00 PM

#### Pedals, Pipes & Pizza

Saturday, April 16, 2016  
Anniston First United Methodist Church  
Time to be announced  
Lunch will be provided  
Info: [http://www.adventbirmingham.org/  
kennedy@cathedraladvent.com](http://www.adventbirmingham.org/kennedy@cathedraladvent.com)

### May

#### Literature Sharing

Monday, May 9, 2016  
The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia  
Dinner at 6:00 PM at area restaurant; Business  
meeting and program following dinner