



THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF ...off the old blockflute

The Birmingham Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

September 2017

A Word from the Dean

Dear friends,

I hope this finds you well rested from the summer and ready to take on a new year full of making beautiful music. If you are like me, you are ready to get back to a routine.

We had a wonderful time at the Birmingham AGO-sponsored Pipe Organ Encounter Advanced 2017 with 15 outstanding students and a fabulous faculty, who were encouraging, congenial and so talented. It was good to see many of you at the various recitals. Birmingham and Tuscaloosa churches, as well as the University of Alabama, were extremely gracious in allowing us to use their facilities and making us feel welcomed. I could go on and on about the churches who provided lunches, transportation, etc. Randall Dyer of Dyer Organ & Associates, Inc. even came down and brought his company van to help with transportation. It was obvious by the end of the week how many institutions were involved, and how much energy had to go into coordinating this event. Many thanks to Faythe Freese, Camp Director, and the steering committee: Alex Benford, Sherelyn Breland, Mike Burt, Tyler Canonico, Matthew Edwards, Christopher Henley and Nathan Smock for a magnificent week.

Lest I go on and on, let me just say that we have an exciting and varied program year ahead. We will kick-off the year with a Service of Remembrance on Monday, September 11, at Highland United Methodist Church. Patrick Scott will be our guest artist leading us in a program of hymn singing, improvisation and some of the greats of organ literature. I hope you will plan to attend and invite your choirs to come sing. We will not have a choir in

the loft, rather we, the congregation, will serve as the choir. Invite your friends to come sing with us. There are plenty of wonderful restaurants in the area where they can grab something to eat before the service. There will be a catered dinner for our AGO chapter at Highlands UMC at 6 PM with a short business meeting to follow.

We look forward to seeing you and catching up on your summer adventures.

Sincerely,
Dan

SEPTEMBER 11 CHAPTER EVENT: SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

The first meeting of the 2017-18 year of the Birmingham Chapter of the AGO will commemorate a day of great importance to our country—September 11. Organist **Patrick Scott**, a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College (and student of Birmingham chapter member Jim Cook) and winner of both the First Prize and Audience Prize in the 2014 AGO National Competition in Organ Improvisation, will lead a **Service of Remembrance on Monday, September 11, 2017, at 7:00 PM at Highlands United Methodist Church**. The service will be in memory of those who lost their lives on that tragic day.

This uplifting service will feature works by Copland, Franck, and Elgar, as well as the singing of many hymns from different traditions. There will also be a

thrilling, large-scale organ improvisation by Dr. Scott bringing together various themes from the September 11 anniversary.

Dr. Scott is the Associate Organist-Choirmaster at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta, Georgia, and is a native of Picayune, Mississippi. We are thankful to **Rick Phillips**, Organist and Director of Music at Highlands UMC, for hosting us.

Prior to the service, **the chapter will gather at 6 PM for a catered dinner and brief chapter meeting at 6:30 PM.** This month's menu is Greek Chicken, Greek Lemon Potatoes, Lemon Asparagus, Mixed Berry Salad, Fruit Salad, Roll, and Greek Honey Cake. **Please log in to www.birminghamago.org to make your reservation online by midnight, Thursday, September 7. The price is \$15 per meal.** You may also make your reservation by contacting treasurer Mike Burt at wmbdar@aol.com or 205-201-3838.

Please join us for this moving service, offering tribute to those who died and prayers for our country. The hymn-singing portion of the evening will be greatly improved by a large turnout, so please invite your friends, family, colleagues, choir members, and parishioners/congregants to join us. See you soon!

Welcome New Members

Whether long-time area residents or recent arrivals from other parts of the country, we are pleased to welcome these new members to the chapter.

- Althea Thomas** – Dual member with Montgomery chapter
- Marilyn Oakes** – DMA student at University of Alabama
- Victor Merriam** – Organ major at University of Alabama
- Nathan Peace** – Dual member with Atlanta chapter
- Adam King** – Area music teacher and accompanist
- Walt Rogers** – Organist, Riverchase United Methodist Church
- Dr. Scott Roberts** – Organist/Assistant Music Director, Christ Episcopal Church, Tuscaloosa, AL

From the Executive Committee

During the last couple of years, as part of an effort to promote chapter membership, we provided free meals to guests and potential members invited by chapter members to attend chapter events. Unfortunately, we had the same results as did other chapters who tried this: no membership increase. After evaluating the effectiveness vs. the cost, the Executive Committee has concluded that we must return to our previous practice of providing only each month's program presenter(s) and host(s) with a meal at chapter expense.

The committee is considering other ways to share the benefits of AGO membership with potential members – possibly with a potluck dinner – and would appreciate your ideas and efforts in this area.

If you would like to bring a guest to a chapter function, you are most welcome to do so, but it must be at your personal expense. Just make a reservation for your guest(s) and include their name(s) in the notes section of the online dinner reservation form. Thanks for your understanding and cooperation!

Comings and Goings

Tyler Canonico has accepted the position of Minister of Music and Organist at Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg, PA. We will miss you, Tyler!

Dr. Joshua Coble, former chapter member and now of the Montgomery chapter, is the new Alabama AGO District Convener. Josh is full-time Organist and Assistant Director of Music at Montgomery's First United Methodist Church. Congratulations and welcome back to Alabama, Josh!

Dr. Scott Roberts assumed responsibilities as Organist and Assistant Director of Music at Christ Episcopal Church in Tuscaloosa. In addition, he is the Collaborative Pianist for the Alabama Choir School housed at the church. He comes to Alabama from St. Peter's Episcopal in Ladue, MO, where he was assistant organist and music director and was a member of the St. Louis AGO chapter. We look forward to having Scott join our ranks.

2017-20 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CLASS

Congratulations to these members who were elected in May to serve as the 2017-20 Executive Committee Class: **Faythe Freese, Paul Mosteller, and Cathy Shelton**. They are already at work on this year’s activities.

Many thanks to the Nominating Committee **Stephen Schaeffer, Pat Fitzsimmons** and **Mark Hayes** for preparing the slate of nominees and to the outgoing 2014-17 Executive Committee Class members **Tyler Canonico, Charles Kennedy, and Bruce Ludwick**.

POEA 2017 Appreciation

There is no way POEA 2017 would have been as successful as it was without the assistance and support of so many chapter members! **Debby Holmes, Cathy Shelton, Karen Krekelberg, Natalie Tally, Jamie McLemore, and Sherelyn Breland** loaned blankets for the students and faculty to use in the dorms. **Dan and Sherrie Lawhon** went way above and beyond any call of duty by opening their home for overnight accommodations and meals, and providing transportation to and from the airport and Tuscaloosa before, during, and after the POEA for several faculty members and recitalists for more than a week (ask Dan about the lost keys!).

Alex and Jen Benford did an amazing job providing snacks for all, even arranging them in boxes for the appropriate vans or venues as we traveled throughout the day, and also in transporting students and teachers from place to place. **Nathan Smock** did his usual excellent job of ensuring all were well fed with delicious meals that were delivered on time (and well under budget!) and took care of UA parking tags all week. **Tyler Canonico** chaperoned in the dorm, shuffled faculty to practice

at the various venues, and also played an incredible Rising Star recital. **Matthew Edwards** answered every question and solved every problem that came up and made sure everyone could access the organs for lessons and practice. **Mike Burt** and **Christopher Henley** drove students and teachers to and from their lesson and workshop/recital locations while keeping an eye on things in general to be sure all ran smoothly. **Katy Loudermilk** chaperoned in the dorm and led untold numbers of groups about campus for lessons, workshops and practice sessions. In addition, **Katy, Christopher, and Matthew** monitored the halls in the School of Music to be sure all students got their practice time in on all the instruments they needed.

This doesn’t begin to cover everything these volunteers and others did from set-up on Saturday before the POEA began on Sunday through clean-up Friday afternoon once all students and faculty were on their way home. Many, many thanks to **Faythe Freese** for her work over two years to put the POEA together, for assembling the absolutely incredible faculty, and for leading and encouraging the POEA Steering Committee in their work. It was a fabulous, extremely rewarding and successful week for all!

THIS AND THAT

Need a new music bag or t-shirt?

There are 12 lovely, sturdy, red and black POEA music bags and several POEA t-shirts (maroon in color – the event was held at UA!) of various sizes left from the POEA. They will be available for purchase at a cost of \$10.00 each at the September meeting. The music bags are of the same quality as those issued at National conventions. There are also some large mesh-style APOBA music bags that will be available at no charge. If you’d like any of these, come a bit early to dinner and make your purchase. Mike Burt will be accepting payment by cash or check.

2017-18 Chapter Calendar of Events is on the next page.



2017-18 Chapter Calendar of Events

Monday, Sept. 11 Service of Remembrance

Guest Artist: Dr. Patrick Scott

Host: Rick Phillips

Venue: Highlands United Methodist Church

Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM;

Program 7:00 PM

Monday, Oct. 16 Change Ringing & Carillon Demo

Change Ringers: St. Paul's Cathedral Ringers

Carillon: Robin Vines

Hosts: Bruce Ludwick, Tim Thomas

Venues: St. Paul's Cathedral, First Presbyterian Church

Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM;

Program 7:00 PM

Saturday, Nov. 18 Dinner with Jens Korndörfer

Dinner Guest: IPC Recitalist

Venue: Home of Jeff Johnson & Sonny Williams

6:00 PM

Friday, Jan. 12 Epiphany Party

Venue: Home of Stephen Schaeffer

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Monday, Feb. 5 Organ with Instrument & Voice

Host: Paul Mosteller

Venue: Temple Emanu-el

Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM;

Program 7:00 PM

Monday, March 12 Choral Techniques

Clinician: Melinda Doyle

Host: Nathan Smock

Venue: Avondale United Methodist Church

Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM;

Program 7:00 PM

Monday, April 9 Student Recital

Host: Dan Lawhon

Venue: Baptist Church of Covenant

Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM;

Program 7:00 PM

Saturday, May 14 Birmingham Chapter

Retrospective

Speakers: Pat Fitzsimmons and Jim Cook

Host: Jamie McLemore

Venue: South Highland Presbyterian Church

Dinner 6:00 PM; Business meeting 6:30 PM;

Program 7:00 PM