

THE BIRMINGHAM CHIFF

...off the old blockflute

The Birmingham Chapter of
the American Guild of Organists

Summer 2019

A Word from the Dean

Greetings, friends and colleagues,

We ended our year on May 13th with a hymn festival entitled *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing* at **Episcopal Church of the Ascension** in Vestavia Hills. We were very fortunate to have the **adult choir of Baptist Church of the Covenant**, led by organist **Dan Lawhon** and assisted by pianist **Paul Mosteller** and soloist **Sherrie Lawhon**, join us to share a rousing rendition of one of their favorite gospel anthems, *Blessed Assurance*. Baritone **Paul Mosteller** soloed on the spiritual *There Is a Balm in Gilead*. **Charles Kennedy, Mike Sparks, and Scott Roberts** were organists for the event; **Cathy Shelton and Mike Burt** served as readers. The sanctuary was filled with glorious sound as all enthusiastically sang hymns representing various denominations! Many thanks to host **Mike Sparks** and to Ascension for sharing their beautiful facilities with us again.

We elected **Mark Hayes** and **Jeff McLelland** to fill the 2019-22 Class of the Executive Committee. We appreciate their willingness to contribute to the work of the chapter in this manner, and sincerely thank **Mimi Jackson** for her service on the outgoing 2016-19 Class. The new chapter year begins July 1.

While we have no scheduled activities until September, there will be chapter work underway. The main project of the summer is the **modernization of the chapter website**. We will keep

you posted on the progress of this effort and will do our best to keep website downtime at a minimum. Please send any news you'd like to share with the chapter to me at Brel513@bellsouth.net or by calling 205-664-1373.

Have an enjoyable summer!
Sherelyn

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to welcome Hoover resident **Marisa Pickard** as a Young Organist chapter member. **Chad Fothergill**, also a Hoover resident, transferred his membership to us in January from the Wilmington, Delaware chapter. We are glad to have both of these new members in our chapter!

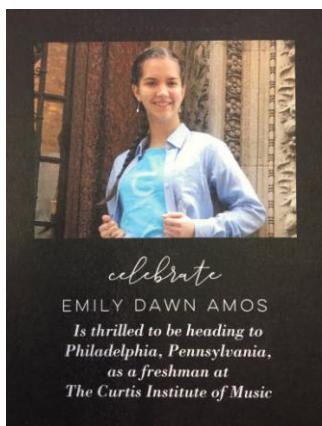
Comings and Goings

Congratulations to **Jamie McLemore** on becoming organist of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Mountain Brook. Jamie joins Phillip Copeland who was recently named Director of Music there. Previously, the two worked together for almost ten years at South Highland Presbyterian Church in Birmingham.

2013 Birmingham POE Remembrance and Update

by Gregory Roberson

Director, 2013 Birmingham POE



She was a petite young girl. Most of her peers towered over her, but that did not deter her from having a great week at the POE. On top of that, she was much younger than the rest of the group, not even high school age, but she adapted quickly and her peers accepted her without

hesitation.

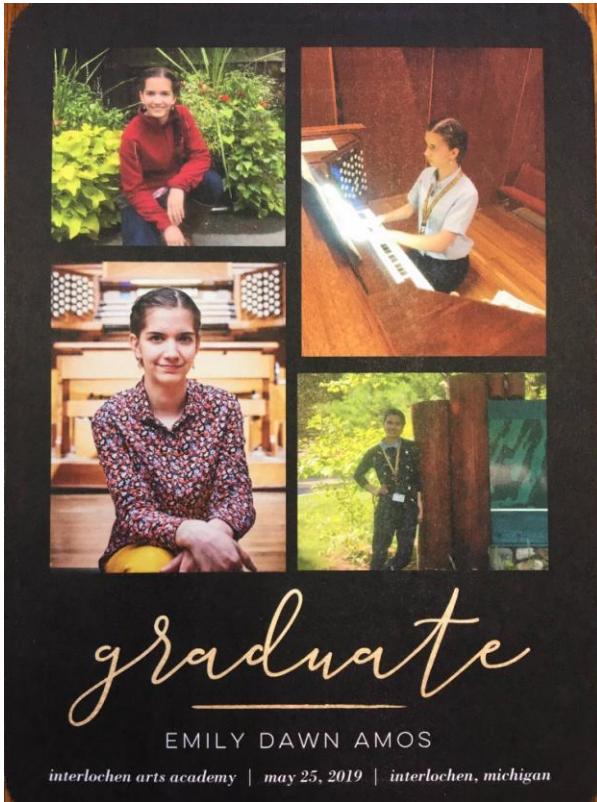
My first remembrance of Emily Dawn Amos came before the POE began. She applied to the Birmingham event, and when the committee reviewed her application they were somewhat reluctant to accept such a young student. After much debate and a few conversations with our then regional councilor we accepted her application, and I'm so very glad we did. After her arrival, Emily was truly one of the most eager students, always ready for anything, and she displayed such a contagious enthusiasm. One of my fondest recollections of her at the student recital was her donning those gold organ shoes. Such a bold statement for such a young talent. And what a talent!

Her mother relayed to me later that Emily had a marvelous time at the Birmingham POE; her teacher for the week, **Patricia Fitzsimmons**, was such a wonderful instructor and Emily had always enjoyed her lessons.

Of all the students that passed through the POE in 2011 and 2013, Emily was one that kept in touch. After the POE, I would receive occasional emails from Emily and her mother, keeping me informed of her studies and steady growth as a young organist. I would convey these communications to several of the faculty and staff from the POE and they always had such fond memories of the "tiny little thing" from Louisiana. Over the years, I always enjoyed reading about some of our POE students from 2011 and 2013 that have appeared in our TAO and in the Diapason magazines. Some of our POE students like Justin Durant, level 1 winner of the Rodgers 2013 North

American Classical competition; Carolyn Craig, who recently graduated from Indiana University and is now organ scholar at Truro Cathedral, Truro, England; Michael Legrand, recent graduate of Notre Dame University majoring in organ; and Emily Amos, 2018 Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival competition third prize winner and first prize of the David Spicer Hymn Playing competition and shared winner of the Audience prize.

So it was a mystery last week when I received an envelope from Michigan. The envelope enclosed a graduation announcement from the Interlochen Arts Academy. What a wonderful surprise! Enclosed was a picture card of Emily from her time at Interlochen and on the reverse was the best announcement of all – Emily Dawn Amos, the "petite little thing" from Alexandria, LA, will be wearing her gold organ shoes as she begins the next great adventure as a freshman at the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music. I got goose bumps reading the card! Our Birmingham POE events were a success after much hard work and some restless nights, but for Emily Dawn Amos and the other talented students, it was worth it!



Notes from the Treasurer

Greetings all,

Most of you will be receiving **renewal notices** from the national office soon, if you haven't already. Please promptly renew so as to avoid a lapse in membership.

A lapse means missing issues of *The American Organist* and temporarily losing a voice in the organization through suspended voting rights, among other privileges of membership. As treasurer, I'm aware that being more than two months late renewing triggers the lapse and sets a new cycle date for future renewals. The consequence for the chapter is that one or more months pass without the dues allocation that we depend on. These dues are never made up, and the accumulation of lost months from more members impacts the resources that we have to accomplish our goals.

ONCARD, the membership renewal function on the national website, **makes renewing easy**. Just go to this link <https://www.agohq.org/oncard-login/> to login, and then click on "Renew dues and subscriptions." I'll be happy to do whatever is necessary to expedite your renewal, including supplying a printed invoice for you to submit to your church if they pay your dues. **Please let me know if I can help or answer questions.** If your renewal cycle has previously shifted from the upcoming renewal cycle, please keep all of this in mind when your time to renew comes. Thanks!

At our May meeting, the chapter voted to **change our permanent address**. This decision was made after consideration of the low volume of mail and the increasing cost of maintaining a post office box. With the advent of ONCARD and the increasing use of email, printed mail flow has decreased dramatically. Some of the mail that we currently receive could be replaced by email, at our option. The post office box has become unnecessary. The Executive Committee had previously discussed the option of discontinuing the rental and looked at options for a permanent address. They considered using an existing church address, but the discussion led to some uncertainties. They considered using a

member's residential address or a third party mail provider, which was found to be uncompetitive with the U.S. Postal Service. Going forward, please use my home address shown below as the chapter mailing address as determined by the May meeting vote:

**Birmingham Chapter AGO
5629 8th Avenue South
Birmingham, AL 35212**

Have an enjoyable summer!

Mike
wmbdar@aol.com
205-201-3838

Elizabeth's Picks: Easy Summer Postludes

chosen by Elizabeth Smith, resource specialist at Lois Fyfe Music:

Charles Callahan / *Be Joyful! 12 Postludes on Familiar Hymn Tunes*. New collection from Morningstar, \$21. About 3 pages each.

Alfred Fedak / *Music for a Ceremony*. [Selah, \$9]. Written for Selah Publishing's daughter's wedding in 2012.

Raymond Haan / *Ceremonial Procession and Pastorale* [Morningstar, \$7]. Procession was written for his daughter's wedding – 4 pages.

Clifford Harker / *Three Easy Postludes* [Music Sales, \$12.50]. Harker was a student of Bainton, Ley, and Vaughan Williams. Very late Victorian in style!

Felix Mendelssohn / *Allegro Moderato Maestoso in C Major*. [Various publishers] 2 page festive piece from miscellaneous works for organ. My standard postlude when I was a sub.

Robert Powell / *6 Voluntaries*, set 2 [Morningstar, \$14]. Contains quiet and festive pieces, dedicated to some Southerners you probably know.



2019-20 Chapter Calendar of Events

Monday, Sept. 9

RCYO Recitalist

Presenter: TBD

Host: Ann Giambrone

Venue: St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands

Episcopal Church

Potluck Dinner 6:00 PM in church dining room or area restaurant

Business mtg 6:30 PM, Program 7:00 PM

Monday, Oct. 14

Organ to Piano Transcription Workshop

Presenters: Tony Pattin, Yakov & Dina Kasman

Hosts: Fred Teardo and Charles Kennedy

Venue: Cathedral Church of the Advent

Dinner 6:00 PM in Clingman Commons, catered

Business mtg 6:30 PM, Program 7:00 PM

Saturday, Nov. 9

Service Music that Connects with Your Congregation

Presenter: Charles Tompkins

Hosts: Jeff McLellan and Greg Roberson

Venue: Independent Presbyterian

11:00 am workshop; noon Dutch treat lunch at area restaurant

Friday, Jan. 10

Epiphany Party 6-8 PM

Venue: Home of Barry Norris

Dinner 6:00 PM, catered

Monday, Feb. 10

Continuo Playing and Instruments

Presenter: Fred Teardo

Hosts: Fred Teardo and Charles Kennedy

Venue: Cathedral Church of the Advent

Dinner 6:00 PM in Clingman Commons, catered

Business mtg 6:30 PM, Program 7:00 PM

Monday, March 9

Music and Technology

Presenters: Faythe Freese and panel

Host: Faythe Freese

Venue: Music Bldg, UA Tuscaloosa

Dinner 6:00 PM, catered

Business mtg 6:30 PM, Program 7:00 PM

Monday, April 20

Chapter Recital

Host: Fred Teardo

Venue: Reid Chapel, Samford University

Dinner 6:00 PM at venue using outside caterer

OR go to area restaurant

Business mtg 6:30 PM, Program 7:00 PM

Monday, May 11

Performance Practice: Leo Sowerby

Presenter: Faythe Freese

Host: Jeff McLellan

Venue: Independent Presbyterian Church

Dinner 6:00 PM in Great Hall, Pot Luck or catered

Business mtg 6:30 PM, Program 7:00 PM