

October 2014

The American Guild of Organists

San Francisco Chapter Newsletter

Dean's Column

by Simon Berry

Dear Colleagues:

Our first guest organist recital of the year is Saturday and Sunday, October 18 and 19, at St Mary's College, Moraga. We're very grateful to Br Martin Yribarren FSC and the college authorities for permission to use the chapel and its wonderful Austin organ. If you've not visited St Mary's College before, then I encourage you to enjoy this bucolic setting in the peaceful rolling hills of the East Bay. Parking is easy, and the campus is easy to find.

St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94575.

St Mary's College Museum of art is where William Keith, California's most famous landscape painter, meets Andy Warhol and where the two of them meet Don Quixote and Toulouse-Lautrec (as quoted from their website). Why not come to an interesting masterclass and enjoy some world class fine art as well?

On Saturday October 18 (9:30 am – 12:30 pm) masterclass teacher and recitalist Jean-Baptiste Robin will present ideas about registration and performance of movements from one of the French classical suites, such as the Couperin Masses. Hardly one of us is able to play a real classical French organ with any regularity, so at this masterclass you can learn how to register effectively on the type of organ that we play week by week, be it a Schoenstein, an Austin, a Rodgers or Allen, a Brombaugh or hybrid mutt from our garage and EBay!

In his Sunday (10/19) recital (4:30 pm) he will play a range of mostly French music, including the movements studied at the masterclass.

Refreshments will be served following both events.

Please also reserve the dates of our November workshop programs, at St John, Ross, on Saturday, November 22. We will have an opportunity to learn about new organ repertoire; new choral repertoire; skills such as transposition and Wedding & Funeral repertoire.

► **Dean's Column**, page 3

Special Projects Committee: A New Season of Helping Others

by Douglas Franks, SPC Chair

As SFAGO begins a new program season, the Special Projects Committee begins a new season of grant-giving to organizations and individuals who come to us seeking financial assistance for organ-related projects. Our committee is pleased to welcome two new elected members, Lenore Alford and Donald Mulliken. They will share their time and unique perceptions and insights with us for the next three years and help keep our committee functioning in top form and fulfilling its mission. We also look forward to working with the new chapter treasurer, William Visscher. Our committee depends a great deal on information that only the treasurer can supply.

I would like to thank SFAGO chapter members who donated to the Special Projects Fund when they renewed their membership dues last spring and throughout the summer via the new national ONCARD dues-renewal system. We invite members who have yet to renew their dues to do likewise. All donations go directly towards funding organ-related projects approved by our committee and are not added to the principal of the Special Projects Fund.

SFAGO member Steve Wallace, as he has done in the past, gave a particularly sizable donation to our committee when he renewed his chapter dues. We thank him very much for his extraordinary generosity.

Our committee would also like to express its gratitude to Oscar Burdick who again generously donated to the Special Projects Fund on behalf of his wife Dora's estate.

► **Special Projects**, page 3

Inside this issue

Safety in Teaching Situations	2
Chapter Program 2014–2015	4
Obituary: John P. DeCamp	5
Classified Ads & Information Box	5
Events Calendar & Looking Ahead	6

Submission deadline for the **November** issue is **October 10**

Safety in Teaching Situations

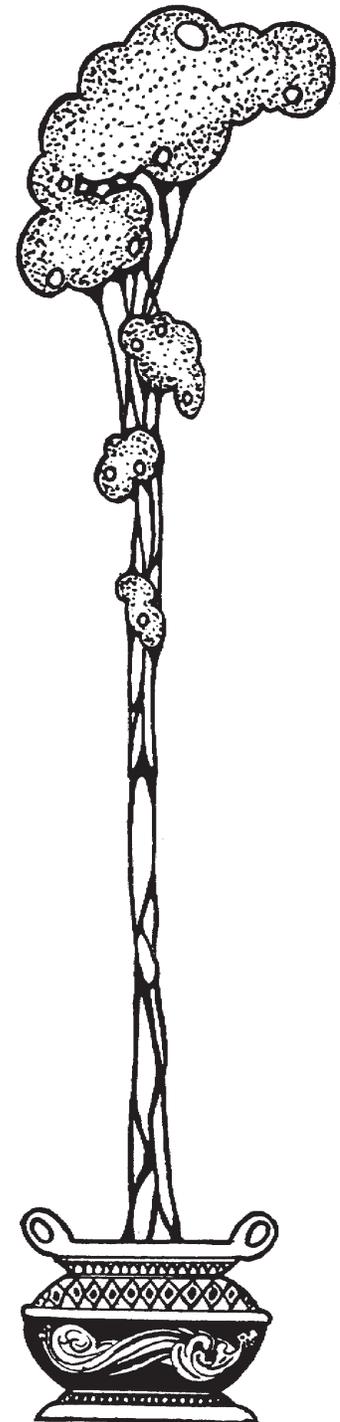
from Simon Berry

Safety for the Student, Safety for the Teacher

Many of our members are re-starting their teaching studios after the summer break. Here are some ideas to help keep everyone safe.

1. Be in a room with a clear glass panel in the door, or leave the door ajar, so that passers-by can see that all is well in your teaching room.
2. Keep attendance registers, noting tardiness.
3. Stick to agreed lesson times. Never run-over or start late.
4. Keep progress records.
5. Check the liability insurance of the place where you are teaching. If it's at home you may need to take out a policy or use one provided by a professional teachers' organization.
6. Check that your church/temple authorities know that you are teaching on the premises. Even if it is a right given in your contract, they should know.
7. Check your denomination's rules about safety in working with youth. Most organizations run courses for teachers and like to check backgrounds and take fingerprints. If these things are in place you must do it!
8. Make sure at all times that other people know about your teaching schedule: the parents/guardians of the student; the administrator of your organization; and someone in your family/home.
9. Know where the first aid kit is. Check that your room itself is safe, especially carpets, rugs and extension cords.

If you have other ideas, please write in! 



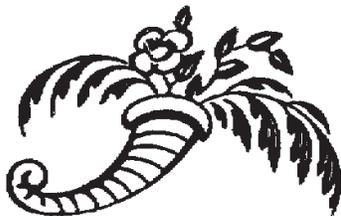
Special Projects, from front page

His gift substantially boosts our committee's ability to offer support in the form of grant awards to worthy projects.

At our committee's meeting back in June, we approved the following grant applications:

- \$2000 to Bynum Petty (Archivist for the American Organ Archives of the Organ Historical Society, Talbott Library, Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey) to help him write and publish a history of Henry Pilcher's Sons Organ Company. The grant will cover research and associated travel expenses.
- \$2200 to Dr. Christopher Marks to help fund the recording of lesser-known and previously unrecorded works of Seth Bingham at First-Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. His will become the third CD of Bingham's organ music in a set of three.
- \$1500 to the First Presbyterian Church, Oakland to help pay for an organ and organ-plus recital series at First Presbyterian, Oakland as part of a 100th-year anniversary celebration of their neo-Gothic church building. The concert series will feature their mammoth Rosales organ and aims to reintroduce this instrument to a wider public audience.

The Special Projects Committee met again in September to consider a new round of grant applications. More about those in a future article. It is a delight to be firsthand witnesses to the creative powers of our colleagues all across the country. Our committee and our chapter are truly privileged to be able to partner with them and offer them our valuable support. The next grant application deadline is December 15, 2014. ~



Dean's Column, from front page

Organ debates II. So how do we make a Clérambault Basse-de-trompette sound best on a failing direct electric organ in a dead and damp sanctuary? After all, it's a far leap from the organs we play every day to those ideal instruments we dream about in the Boulevards of Paris as we walk alongside the rising mists of the Seine.

For the same token, how does one make the music of George Thalben Ball sounds palatable on a 1970s neo instrument where the swell box went so far out of fashion that it was omitted and the best stop on the organ is not 'The Room' as The Room is still carpeted in orange from a 1976 bequest, and the pew cushions almost take the ache out of the most lengthy sermon?

The real questions here for me are not the polemics about which organ is best but how to make a range of music sound at its best and, thereby, to make the organ serve in its ministerial role best (see last month for the start of these thoughts).

There's an organ in the Bay Area which I find really unpleasant to play; it sounds raw and unblending, loud and uncompromising and a good proportion of the console controls do not work. It's easy to write off this instrument as a ... (fill in the hyphenated phrase of your choice). Until one hears it from the nave. Hear it from the nave of the church and I'll bet you change that hyphenated phrase!

So often our artistry and our profession takes place in less than ideal conditions and we have to make the best of it. The test for us as organists of the future is how we manage these discomforts and whether the outcome is a reward for our listeners or some kind of negative.

When my father was a teenage organist he cycled twelve miles each way to his first organist's position and then had to pay someone to hand-pump the organ. There was no heating—and no bathroom!

The collegiality we offer in this chapter is one of the best ways of learning to overcome discomforts and personal doubts. Come to a program and talk to me and allow me to link you with a colleague who may be able to share your burden and heal your wounds – and yes, have a good time also!

Simon C Berry, Dean. ~

SFAGO Program for 2014–2015

Saturday, September 20, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

“Our Souls Inspire...”

An Act of Worship for AGO members and friends
with music for Organ, Brass and Choir
Inspirational Address from Dean Alan Jones & Installation of Officers
Followed by a reception
Christ the Light Cathedral, Oakland

Saturday, October 18, 2014, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Masterclass Workshop on movements from a Couperin Mass
Jean-Baptiste Robin
St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga

Sunday, October 19, 2014, 4:30 p.m.

Celebrity Recital
Jean-Baptiste Robin
Followed by a reception
St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga

Saturday, November 22, 2014, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

St. Cecilia's Day Hone Your Skills Workshops
New Music for Organ • New Music for Voices • Wedding and Funeral Music
Transposition for AGO exams • Improvisation Masterclass
With refreshments and lunch
St John's Episcopal Church, Ross

Monday, January 12, 2015, 7:30 p.m.

Dean's Roundtable Discussion of Professional Issues
Followed by a reception
St Dominic's Church, San Francisco

Saturday, February 7, 2015, 7:00 p.m.

Choral Evensong and Presentation on RSCM Voices for Life scheme
Susan Jane Matthew, The St Paul's Choir,
including Choir School boys and girls
St Paul's Episcopal Church, Burlingame

Saturday, March 15, 2015, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Workshop with San Francisco Girls' Chorus & Short Concert
Chorissima Hall, Hayes Street, San Francisco

Sunday, April 26, 2015, 4:00 p.m.

Celebrity Recital
Nigel Potts, organ & Sarah Taylor, mezzo soprano
Elgar's Sea Pictures
Followed by a reception
Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

Tuesday, May 26, 2015, 6:15 p.m.

Dinner, Annual Meeting and Members' Recital
First Congregational Church, Berkeley

IN MEMORIAM

JOHN P. DeCAMP, JR.
AUGUST 15, 2014

John Philip DeCamp, Jr., a person of faith, prayer, and commitment, died August 15, 2014 in his 80th year. He was the son of Frances (Lever) and John P. DeCamp and is survived by his beloved sister Jane DeCamp Stanton, Emily, a niece, John, a nephew, their families, and many friends.

He was born and grew up in Cincinnati and graduated from Wooster College, Wooster, Ohio. As a conscientious objector John served with the Mennonites in their Pax program set up to address the problem of housing refugees in Germany after W.W.II. He served from 1956 to 1958, working first in Germany building houses, then in Vienna, Austria, where he helped settle refugees from the Hungarian Revolution who were driven out of Hungary by Russia. He was transferred to Berlin to be the liaison between the refugees and the agencies placing them.

Thereafter he apprenticed in Buffalo at the Schlicker Organ Company and became a voicer of their instruments. He moved to San Francisco in 1964 and

represented the firm there. In San Francisco he was a member of the Episcopal Church of St John the Evangelist where he redesigned and rebuilt an early 20th century organ, and was a regular helper at St Martin de Porres Catholic Worker House. He was a longtime member of the Organ Historical Society and of the American Guild of Organists.

John retired and moved to Saratoga Springs, New York, in 1995 where he served as a Literacy Volunteer and where he could be found regularly opposing the war in Iraq. In life and death he was a generous supporter of humanitarian causes, including the National Resources Defense Council, Wooster College, The Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of California. It is in this spirit that he has donated his body for medical purposes.

Services to celebrate John are to be planned. He will be memorialized at Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, with his parents. May he rest in Peace.

Classified Ads

Collected by Robert J Kerman

SFAGO JOBS & CLASSIFIED ADS BLOG: Visit our blog at <http://sfagojobs.blogspot.com/> often to see the latest listings.

SFAGO Newsletter is published monthly, August thru May, with a Summer issue for June/July, by the San Francisco Chapter, American Guild of Organists. Opinions stated herein are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect official policies of this Chapter. The deadline for receipt of all newsletter items is the 10th of the month preceding publication.

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2014-2015
Last updated 07/14/2014

Bay Area Concert Calendar

Collected by Brian Swager

October ²⁰¹⁴

Events, dates, times, and locations are subject to change without notice. Compiled from flyers, press releases, and listings submitted by members and organizations. SFAGO is not responsible for errors, although every effort is made to be accurate. Submission deadline for the **November** issue is **October 10**. Send event listings to sfagocal@gmail.com. For the most up-to-date calendar, visit www.sfago.org, click on **SFAGO Bay Area Concert Calendar**.

Recurring Venues

Churches and institutions offering programs on a regular basis have been assigned abbreviations so as to save space in our listings. Abbreviations are listed below with the full name of the venue. When no city is stated, San Francisco is assumed.

CPLH: Calif. Palace of the Legion of Honor

CSMA: Cath. of St Mary of the Assumption

RLC-O: Resurrection Lutheran Ch, Oakland

SME-B: St Mark's Episcopal Ch, Berkeley

Current October

4 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

5 Sunday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Cappella SF, Ragnar Bohlin, Director. Music of Bach, Rheingergger, and Schnittke. \$35 & \$55. CSMA

11 Saturday

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

12 Sunday

4pm. Jerome Lenk, Organ. Free admission/\$10 suggested donation. Mission Dolores Basilica

4pm. Jonathan Dimmock, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Diana Stork & Portia Diwa, Harp. "Music from the Labyrinth" Freewill offering. CSMA

5:30pm. Choral Evensong. St Francis Choir; Robert Kerman, Director; Dan Levitan, Harp; Rodney Gehrke, Organ. Music of Dyson, Fauré, Phillips, and Grandjany. Freewill offering. Reception follows. St Francis Episcopal Church

6:05pm. Malcolm Matthews, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

18 Saturday

9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. **SFAGO Event.**

Masterclass Workshop on movements from a Couperin Mass with Jean-Baptiste Robin. St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

19 Sunday

3pm. Teed Rockwell, Veena; Peter van Gelder, Sitar; Samrat Kakkeri, Tabla. Traditional and new Indian Music. RLC-O

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Thomas Dahl, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4:30 p.m. **SFAGO Event.** Celebrity Recital by Jean-Baptiste Robin, followed by a reception. St Mary's College Chapel, Moraga

26 Sunday

4pm. Ulrike Theresia Wegele-Kefer, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

Looking Ahead November

1 Saturday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

2 Sunday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Cathedral Choir & Orchestra. Fauré: *Requiem*. Freewill offering. CSMA

8 Saturday

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. CPLH

9 Sunday

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Christoph Tietze, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

4pm. Stephen Boniface, Organ. Free admission/\$10 suggested donation. Mission Dolores Basilica

6:05pm. Rodney Gehrke, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

11 Tuesday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

15 Saturday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

16 Sunday

3pm. Ken Cowan, Organ. Tickets: sfsymphony.org. Davies Symphony Hall

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Angela Kraft Cross, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

22 Saturday

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. **SFAGO Event.**

St. Cecilia's Day Hone Your Skills Workshops, with refreshments and lunch. St John's Episcopal Church, Ross

23 Sunday

4pm. Jacob Reed, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

26 Wednesday

5:30pm. Choral Evensong. St Francis Choir; Robert Kerman, Director; Kathy Conner, Oboe; Rodney Gehrke, Organ. Music of Shephard, Moore, Powell, Phillips. Freewill offering. Reception follows. St Francis Episcopal Church

29 Saturday

4pm. Brian Swager, Organ. CPLH

30 Sunday

4pm. Brian Swager, Organ. CPLH

4pm. Christoph Tietze, Organ. Freewill offering. CSMA

December

6–7 Saturday & Sunday

4pm. David Hegarty, Organ. CPLH

13 Saturday

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

14 Sunday

3pm. German Advent Service. Lessons & Carols in German. RLC-O

4pm. Robert Gurney, Organ. CPLH

6:05pm. Elizabeth Forsyth, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

20–21 Saturday & Sunday

4pm. John Karl Hirten, Organ. CPLH

January 2015

11 Sunday

6:05pm. Ryan Enright, Organ. Preceded by 5:30 Evensong. Reception follows. SME-B

12 Monday

7:30 p.m. **SFAGO Event.** Dean's Roundtable Discussion of Professional Issues, followed by a reception. St Dominic's Church, San Francisco

