

Special Projects Fund Assists Concert Series Up North

By Douglas Franks

Chair, SFAGO Special Projects Committee

One of the latest grants awarded by the Special Projects Committee was to the Christ Church Concert Series (CCCS) up in Eureka, California. The grant supported an organ recital by Dr. Carol Williams back in January of this year. Dr. Williams is Civic Organist of San Diego and Organist-in-Residence at St. Paul's Cathedral in San Diego. Her recital marked the beginning of the fifth year of CCCS. The series, sponsored by Christ Episcopal Church in Eureka and generously supported by the Sequoia Chapter of the AGO, has been successful at promoting the pipe organ in the Northcoast area. Turnouts for concerts have been excellent.

The new Charles Kegg Organ at Christ Church is a beautiful instrument, and it is fitting that the church in which the organ is housed be the venue for so popular and self-sustaining a concert series. The inception of the CCCS coincides with the completion of the organ in 2008. (For more information about the organ and the concert series, go to www.christchurcheureka.org and navigate your way to the appropriate pages.) With the beginning of their fifth season, organizers of the series "hope to renew and excite the community's interest in the pipe organ and its music and continue to introduce new listeners to the Kegg pipe organ."

CCCS offers "a variety of concerts, formal and informal, featuring internationally renowned artists, regional performers, and talented local musicians. The concert series promotes great music literature for the pipe organ, voice, and instrumental ensembles, and it also benefits the outreach ministries at Christ Episcopal Church." The concerts "aim to promote the organ and its music to the general public, as well as provide an educational component that informs the audience about the music and the instrument."

A portion of the SPF grant went towards some additional educational outreach programming planned by Christ Church. Organist Christoph Bull will present a special children's program next spring at Christ Church as part of its Music and Arts Ministry.

We are pleased and honored that our committee, on behalf of SFAGO, is able to help sustain so successful an organ series. How inspiring to see our chosen instrument be such a boon to and so genuinely valued by the local community. The fact that music outreach to school children is a key part of the organizers' vision is all the more laudable. Our very best wishes as well as gratitude go out to Christ Episcopal Church in Eureka and the Sequoia AGO. When it comes to discovering the secret for drawing the public to the organ and musical arts, they have indeed "found it!"

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