

Celebrating a century
of rich heritage and
colorful activity

# Georgía / Atlanta Chapter The American Guild of Organists



100<sup>th</sup>
Anniversary

Preliminary Meeting Municipal Auditorium-Armory September 29, 1914

Organizational Meeting
Atlanta Conservatory of Music
October 6, 1914

Chartered October 26, 1914

Re-chartered as Atlanta Chapter June 6, 1955

## Chapter Membership

During this hundredth anniversary, the Atlanta Chapter has attempted to identify those who have joined the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists fifty years ago or earlier. To the best of the research and the response of those contacted, the following are members of the **DIAMOND** and **GOLDEN CIRCLES**.

#### Diamond Circle

The following have been members for 60-plus years:

Elizabeth Blair Carter
Dr. Douglas Johnson
Dr. Raymond J. Martin
Adele Dieckmann McKee, FAGO
H. Hamilton Smith

## Golden Circle

The following have been members for 50-plus years:

Daisy Luckey Auckerman
Elizabeth J. Bamberg
Jerry L. Black
Dr. Michael Collier, SPC, CAGO
Sue W. Goddard, AAGO
Michael B. Kingsbury, SPC
Sarah L. Martin
K. Eugene Martin
Thomas L. McCook
Stan Powell
J. Dan Pruitt
Rev. Dr. John H. Roark
Lamar Savage
William C. Wells
Betty L. Williford

The following have been members of the AGO for 50-plus continuous years, having transferred into the Atlanta Chapter:

Madonna Brownlee Gregory M. Colson, ChM Sue Mitchell-Wallace, FAGO Wallace B. Zimmerman, LM

## Georgía/Atlanta Chapter Deans

1914-15	Edwin Arthur Kraft, FAGO	1958-60	Frances Spain
1915-17	Walter Peck Stanley, AAGO	1960-62	Willa B. Lowrance
1917-19	Cecil Poole	1962-64	William Weaver
1919-21	C. W. Dieckmann, FAGO	1964-66	Adele P. Dieckmann, AAGO
1921-23	Charles A. Sheldon, AAGO	1966-68	Michael A. McDowell
1923-24	Viola H. Aiken	1968-70	Jean Scaglion, AAGO
1924-26	Dora Duck Seidell	1970-72	Herbert S. Archer, Jr.
1926-27	Alton O'Steen	1972-74	Sue W. Goddard, AAGO
1927-28	Eda E. Bartholomew	1974-76	Gregory M. Colson, ChM
1928-29	C. W. Dieckmann, FAGO	1976-78	Adele D. McKee, FAGO
1929-30	George Lee Hamrick	1978-80	J. Daniel Pruitt
1930-31	Joseph Ragan, AAGO	1980-82	Porter Remington
1931-32	Bonita Crowe	1982-84	Wallace B. Zimmerman
1932-34	Charles A. Sheldon, AAGO	1984-86	Sarah L. Martin
1934-35	Wilbur Rowand, FAGO	1986-88	David Crawford Stills
1935-37	M. Ethel Beyer	1988-90	Maxine Pilcher, AAGO
1937-38	Emilie P. Spivey, AAGO	1990-92	Calvert Johnson
1938-39	Charles Johnson	1992-94	Timothy Wissler
1939-40	George Lee Hamrick	1994-96	Herbert R. Buffington
1940-42	Edith Howell Clark	1996-98	Marilyn M. González
1942-44	C. W. Dieckmann, FAGO	1998-00	John P. Brandt, SPC
1944-46	Frances S. Felder	2000-02	Sarah J. Hawbecker
1946-47	Edith Howell Clark	2002-04	Phillip K. Parkey
1948-49	Emilie P. Spivey, AAGO	2004-06	Joanne C. Brown, CAGO
1949-50	<b>Ruby Chalmers</b>	2006-08	J. Michael Morgan
1950-51	Joseph Ragan, FAGO	2008-10	James F. Mellichamp
1951-52	Edith Howell Clark	2010-12	Jeffrey W. Harbin
1952-54	Marie Bayne Smith	2012-14	Timothy A. Young, SPC
1954-56	Raymond J. Martin	2014-	Sue Mitchell-Wallace, FAGO
1956-58	Marcus Bartlett		

## Celebrating a century of rich heritage and colorful activity Atlanta Chapter American Guild of Organists Centennial Celebration 2014-2015





#### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2014 CATHEDRAL OF ST. PHILIP

The centennial celebration begins with Atlanta native Alan Morrison in recital on the magnificent Aeolian-Skinner organ at the Cathedral of St. Philip. Alan is Head of the Organ Department at the Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia), where he is honored to hold the Haas Charitable Trust Chair in Organ Studies. He is also Head of the Organ Department at the Westminster Choir College of Rider University (Princeton) and College Organist at Ursinus College (Collegeville, PA). Alan will premiere the Atlanta Chapter's centennial commission "Chorale and Gigue" by composer David Conte, San Francisco Conservatory of Music. The commission for organ solo is in memory of William Weaver, former dean of the Atlanta Chapter.



F. Swann

#### MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2014 ATLANTA FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Gala Centennial Banquet — The Atlanta Chapter will celebrate the centennial of the organization of the Georgia Chapter on the exact date, one hundred years later, at Atlanta First Presbyterian Church. The evening will begin with Evening Prayer led by Dr. Don Saliers, the AGO National Chaplain and the William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor of Theology and Worship, Emeritus, Emory University. The service will be followed by a lavish reception with special music on the grand piano by Gregory Colson, ChM, former dean of the Atlanta Chapter. A seated dinner with anniversary cake will follow. The highlight of the evening will be the keynote speaker, Frederick Swann, former National President of the AGO.



D. Saliers



#### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2014 SECOND-PONCE DE LEON BAPTIST CHURCH

Choral Guild of Atlanta: A Choral Celebration — The Choral Guild of Atlanta celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014. Formed in 1939, the Atlanta Choral Society prospered for two years but was disbanded after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1948, with the guidance of the Georgia Chapter of the AGO, Emilie Spivey, dean, and the Atlanta Music Club, the former choral group was restructured as the Choral Guild of Atlanta, with Haskell Boyter as the permanent director. This concert will also acknowledge Haskell and Mabel Boyter for their tireless efforts in the Atlanta music scene, including their joint service for many of Atlanta's major churches. In addition, a special tribute will be made to Don Robinson, Atlanta Chapter member and former director of the Choral Guild.



#### MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2014 ST. MARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Centennial of the First Georgia Chapter Recital — On December 15, 1914, Miss Eda E. Bartholomew, a charter member of the Georgia Chapter, gave the first recital by a chapter member. We will celebrate this occasion with an organ recital on the exact date and location one hundred years later. Atlanta Chapter deans will be the featured artists for this special program. The recital will be followed by a Christmas reception.



#### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2015 THE TEMPLE

Dr. Andrew Henderson, a native of Thorold, Ontario, will present a recital on the historic Aeolian-Skinner organ at The Temple. Andrew is Associate Organist of Temple Emanu-el, Director of Music and Organist of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, and organ instructor at Teacher's College, Columbia University, all in New York City. The program will pay tribute to the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter members who have served as organist for The Temple.



#### SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2015 TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Historic Atlanta Organs: Past and Present — The three-manual Austin organ at Trinity United Methodist Church is one of the last surviving organs still in existence from the year of the organization of the Georgia Chapter of the AGO in 1914. This Saturday morning event will begin with a mini-recital and Morning Prayer, followed by a multimedia presentation and panel discussion with several local organ builders about historic Atlanta organs through the past one hundred years.



#### TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015 GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

To close the Atlanta Chapter's centennial celebration, Atlanta native Dr. Jonathan Biggers will be presented in recital at Grace United Methodist Church on the 101-rank Schantz-Widener organ. Jonathan holds the prestigious Edward Link Endowed Professorship in Organ and Harpsichord at Binghamton University (State University of New York). This concert will acknowledge the contributions of the late John T. Widener, organ builder, curator, friend, and long-time member of the Atlanta Chapter.

#### **Atlanta Chapter Centennial Celebration Financial Supporters**



Sincere thanks to those who support the programs for the centennial celebration of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists with their financial gifts

#### Benefactors (\$200+)

Madonna Brownlee Ray and Beth Chenault Sarah J. Hawbecker Dr. Calvert Johnson **Dwight Jones** Warren T. Kennett

Jacqueline Larson (in memory of Don Larson)

Adele D. McKee Sue Mitchell-Wallace Alan Morrison Becky G. Ramsey **Robert Rylander** John Sabine

David Q. Tuck Alice G. Walker **Thomas Wigley** Warren Williams **Betty Williford** 

Wallace Zimmerman

Patrons (\$100+) Mary Archer **Nowell Briscoe and** Roland Farrar (in honor of Sue W. Goddard) Elizabeth Carter Ralph Daniel

John Gentry Robert L. Mays Connie Melgaard **Keith Nash** Mary Lou Rahn Charles Redmon **Larry Stokes** 

**David Stills** William C. Wells Tim Young

Sponsors (\$50+)

Kenneth Axelson John Brandt Joanne Brown Martha Clay **DeBron Delk** John Delk Samuel Dixon **Timothy Eastling** Vangie Hammer Heidi F. Hanz Stephen Honeychurch Pamela Ingram Dr. Joyce Johnson Dr. Raymond J. Martin

Lalla McGee Philip Newton **Marie Pettet** 

#### Friends (\$25+)

Phillip Allen **Bryan Anderson** Elizabeth Bamberg Jerry Black Joseph Cirou Dr. Michael Collier Elizabeth Johnston **David Kroll** Sheila Nicol Diana Opolka Julie Ryder Mary Solem **Larry Stokes** 

#### **Partners**

Diamond (\$4000+)

Dr. Douglas Johnson (in memory of William Weaver) Atlanta Chapter Endow-

ment Fund

Platinum (\$3000+)

Friends of Cathedral Music, Cathedral of St. Philip

**Dan Pruitt** 

Gold (\$2000+)

Karen and Rod Bunn A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Co. Silver (\$1000+)

Sue W. Goddard Thomas L. McCook Parkey OrganBuilders John Ruch and Charles Tighe (in memory of William Weaver) H. Hamilton Smith

Bronze (\$500+)

Herbert R. Buffington Robert H. Gunn Jr. Dr. James F. Mellichamp E. Fay Pearce G. Ernest Plunkett **Andrew Singletary** 

## The following contributions have been designated:

Dr. Douglas Johnson, John Ruch, and Charles Tighe for centennial commission in memory of William Weaver

Friends of Cathedral Music and Moore-Wikerson Fund for Alan Morrison recital at the Cathedral of St. Philip

Rod and Karen Bunn for Frederick Swann at Centennial Banquet

**Parkey OrganBuilders for Centennial Logo** 

A.E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Co. for Andrew Henderson recital at The Temple

Thomas L. McCook and Sue W. Goddard, AAGO, for Jonathan Biggers recital at Grace United **Methodist Church** 

Raymond and Elizabeth Chenault and Dan Pruitt for centennial banner

Centennial History Book and DVD: Herbert R. Buffington, Robert H. Gunn Jr., Dr. James Mellichamp, E. Fay Pearce Jr., G. Ernest Plunkett, J. Dan Pruitt, Andrew J. Singletary Jr., and H. Hamilton Smith

## Centenníal Commissions

## **Centennial Hymn**

#### Sing to the Lord, Lift High Your Voice

In Commemoration of Centennial Celebration of Atlanta Chapter

American Guild of Organists TEXT: Michael Morgan TUNE: MORGAN 2014-2015 Sue Mitchell-Wallace Lord, lift God's great high the your voice; glo 2.God calls, share and then gives us gifts times of joy 3.With true con vic - tion to in spire. tears of com - pass ion. 4.When through God praised, joice! breathe pipes sound, deep pair; teach, but cease learn faith tongues of the the fire, lead ful to Lord. raised, mu pass art, bonds of bound. cov and cern. deemed dored. and hon ored and lang uage of. heart. comes

#### **Centennial Organ Solo Commission**



With a generous donation from Dr. Douglas Johnson, along with the added financial support of Atlanta Chapter members, the Atlanta Chapter commissioned David Conte to compose an organ solo in memory of William Weaver for the chapter's centennial celebration.

Bill came to Atlanta in 1953 to serve as organist and choirmaster at Holy Trinity Parish (Episcopal) in Decatur. In 1960, he was appointed organist and choirmaster of the newly formed St. Anne's Episcopal Church, where he was responsible for the installation of the mechanical Flentrop pipe organ in 1966. He served as dean of the Atlanta Chapter from 1962 to 1964 and was chairman for the 1966 National

Convention held in Atlanta. Bill and his longtime partner of over 57 years, Dr. Douglas Johnson, a professor of Pharmacology at the University of Georgia and Atlanta Chapter treasurer for 30-plus years, were pillars of the Atlanta Chapter, not to mention The Atlanta Music Club, for which Bill also served as president. It's hard to imagine where our chapter would be today without the dedication of these two fine gentlemen. It is appropriate that Bill and Doug will be remembered through a special, published organ composition for the centennial of the Atlanta Chapter of the AGO, for which they dedicated many long hours.

#### **David Conte, composer**



Dr. David Conte is currently professor of composition and conductor of the Conservatory Chorus at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, San Francisco, California. He was one of the last students of Nadia Boulanger, renowned French composer and teacher at the American School at Fontainebleau, France. He has received commissions from several AGO Chapter Regional and National Conventions.

His organ composition, "Chorale and Gigue," was premiered by Atlanta native, Alan Morrison, at the Cathedral of St. Philip on September 9, 2014.

#### Alan Morrison, organist



Atlanta native Alan Morrison is recognized as one of America's premier concert organists. He maintains an active and versatile career as recitalist, chamber musician, orchestral soloist, adjudicator, teacher, and recording artist. His concert appearances in some of the most prestigious organ concert venues in North America emphasize his achievements as a performer and the respect Mr. Morrison has gained in the concert organ world.

At the age of 33, Mr. Morrison was appointed Head of the Organ Department at the world renowned conservatory the Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia), where he is honored to hold the Haas Charitable Trust Chair in Organ Studies. He is also Associate Professor and Head of the Organ Department at Westminster Choir

College of Rider University (Princeton, New Jersey) and College Organist at Ursinus College (Collegeville, Pennsylvania). Mr. Morrison is a graduate of both the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School of Music, receiving degrees in both organ and piano accompanying/chamber music.

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## Georgía/Atlanta Chapter AGO Hístory

One hundred years has long been considered a significant measure of age, and the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will reach this prestigious distinction in October 2014.



### First Houses of Worship for Marthasville—later Atlanta



In 1845, a public spirited citizen donated a tract of land on a triangular lot, surrounded by Peachtree, Pryor, and Houston Streets. Here, in 1848, a small log house was built that was used as a school during the week and a church on Sunday. An interdenominational Sunday school was organized, known as the Union Sabbath School. Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists held preaching services, each group alternating their Sundays to avoid conflicts.



After using the log cabin for some months, the Methodists decided to build their own house of worship in 1847. They were the first denomination in Atlanta to take this important step. A large frame building, outstanding for that day, was constructed. This new building was named Wesley Chapel to honor John Wesley,

the founder of Methodism, was dedicated on March 24, 1848.

A campaign to secure a bell was begun in 1850. When the bell arrived, its weight prevented installation on top of the building, so a separate bell tower was erected. The bell was used to call people of all denominations to worship and for civic purposes. In 1903, First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, built a new building at its current location on Peachtree Street. The bell was installed in the new bell tower and still rings out over Peachtree and other nearby streets.



St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church was established in 1846 with five communicants. The first church building was built on the corner of Washington and Hunter (now Martin Luther King Jr. Drive) Streets in 1848. The wings shown in the picture were added to the original center structure 20 years later.



The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is the oldest Roman Catholic Church in Atlanta. A founding date for the parish (originally called "The Catholic Church") has not been determined. The original structure was built in 1849 and was located on the same site as the present building.

## That "Recent Unpleasantness"

#### Father Thomas O'Reilly saves churches during General Sherman's march through Atlanta

To Father Thomas O'Reilly, pastor of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, goes full credit for saving from destruction not only his own church, but also Central Presbyterian, Second Baptist, Trinity Methodist Episcopal, St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Churches, City Hall, and the nearby residential section. Three of those churches remain active today in the same area.

After the siege of Atlanta, General William T. Sherman, commander of the Union Army, ordered Atlanta to be burned, including all homes and churches. During the entire period of the War Between the States, Father O'Reilly ministered unselfishly to



both Confederate and Union soldiers wounded and dying in Atlanta. He felt grievously offended, after serving both armies so faithfully, to learn that the city was to be destroyed.

Enraged, Father O'Reilly gained an audience with General Sherman at the Federal Headquarters (now the site of the Carter Center and Presidential Library) through General Slocum, who was familiar with the good works of the tireless priest. The confrontation was unpleasant. O'Reilly failed to persuade Sherman to spare the city and was told by Sherman that he was pondering whether to have the priest executed by firing squad. Undeterred, O'Reilly reminded Sherman that his army was substantially Irish Catholic conscripts who would likely mutiny before burning a Catholic church. O'Reilly also informed



**Union encampment around City Hall** 

Sherman that, in the event of the destruction of churches, he would take official measures to have every Irish Catholic soldier in Sherman's army excommunicated. Sherman relented, and the rest is history.

#### The Subject of Music

The subject of music was the primary focus of the organization of Second Baptist Church. In 1854, 19 members of First Baptist Church left and established Second Baptist Church. These "progressives" wanted a small reed organ for use in worship, but the membership of First Baptist overwhelmingly rejected their plea because "such a worldly thing as an organ would outrage all church tradition." Rebuffed, the "progressives" at Second Baptist Church installed their "Devil's box of whistles" and gave an "organ-fest." Why split over an organ? In 1911, *The Welder*, a magazine published by Second Baptist Church, reported that the church schism was rooted in the "indomitable Baptist spirit" that formed the historic Baptist principle of religious liberty. But is the story of the organ conflict factual? Although official church minutes do not record such an event, prominent members in the early years of the 20th century believed the story. At the diamond jubilee celebration of Second Baptist Church in 1914, Dr. John White, the pastor, attributed the story to two of the church's charter members.

— From C. Douglas Weaver, Second to None: A History of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, 2004, pp. 15-16.

## The Early 1900s

In the early 1900s, leading Atlanta churches typically employed five musicians: an organist-director and four singers (quartet). It was the era of the professional quartet-choir, a group for which no choral literature was considered unsuitable. The opportunities for music in the service were essentially the same as today. Some idea of the repertoire performed in Atlanta in the early 1900s is preserved in the Saturday pages of *The Atlanta Journal* of the period. Church news received substantial emphasis, and prominent Atlanta churches often supplied details of their service music for publication, even including the names of the members of the choir for the service.

Early Atlanta organists had recognizable individual tastes and programming habits. Miss Eda E. Bartholomew at St. Mark Methodist Episcopal Church produced the most elaborate musical programs. She favored loud preludes and postludes and choral music from the oratorios, all of which she listed in complete detail. At North Avenue Presbyterian Church, Joseph Ragan opted for quieter organ works for preludes. Mrs. W. H. L. Nelms at Second Baptist Church preferred simple melodious preludes and scheduled her favorites as frequently as once a month. At Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Charles A. Sheldon Jr. played a thirty-minute recital prelude before each Sunday evening service.

#### Atlanta Auditorium and Armory (original name)

Events leading to the establishment of the American Guild of Organists in Atlanta were set in motion early in the 20th century when a city auditorium housing a large pipe organ was conceived



for the city. The realization of this project required hiring a full-time city organist. The stories of the auditorium organ and of municipal organ music in Atlanta revealed a colorful musical environment common to many ambitious turn-of-the-century cities. It was from this environment that a small group of Atlanta musicians decided to join together in 1914 for mutual professional development.

#### Atlanta City Organists 1910-1952

Dr. Percy Starnes was brought to Atlanta by the Atlanta Music Festival Association in 1910. Prior to his arrival in Atlanta, he was organist of the Royal Opera in Covent Garden and Royal Albert Hall, London, and festival organist of the Brighton Sacred Harmonic Society. Dr. Starnes served as city organist for three years, providing free Sunday afternoon concerts of a high order and educational value.





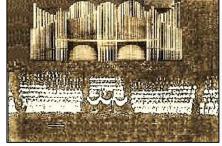
Charles Sheldon (I) Edwin Arthur Kraft (r)

Dr. Edwin Arthur Kraft, FAGO succeeded Dr. Starnes in 1913 as city organist and held the position for two years. In 1915, Dr. Charles Sheldon Jr. assumed the position, which he held until 1952.

The "Official Guide to the City of Atlanta" published by the Atlanta Convention and Tourist Bureau  $(25\phi)$  listed the Sunday afternoon recitals at the City Auditorium in its 1925 edition. Programming for municipal organ recitals was strongly oriented to orchestral transcriptions and light contemporary organ works.

#### Atlanta's Great Music Festival Association Chorus

In 1912, Dr. Percy Starnes began direction of the Atlanta Music Festival Chorus. He provided unusual ability and experience to bear upon the training of the chorus. Under his direction, the chorus, numbering between 400 and 900 voices, attained a position of pre-eminence in the music world and provided many free Sunday afternoon concerts at the City Auditorium.

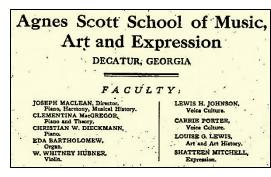




City Auditorium, with Dr. Percy Starnes, city organist, at the organ console (1913)

#### Early Schools of Music in Atlanta

These ads appeared frequently in *The Atlanta Constitution* describing some of the early schools of music in Atlanta. Several Georgia Chapter members were on the faculty of these schools.



## Washington Seminary

ITS MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Recognizing music as a valuable element in a libera education, Washington Seminary, Atlanta, maintains a first class conservatory of music—piano, voice, pipe organ, violin, theory and harmony.

A full course in music is allowed to count as three units of the sixteen units required for graduation in the literary courses, except in the college preparatory course. Students are thus able to devote ample time to their music, receive credit for it, and not forced to take it simply as an extra.

The music faculty for the coming year includes such well known teachers as:

Miss Marguerite Bartholomew, piano, harmony and musical literature; Mrs. Mary Craft Ward, piano; Miss Eda Bartholomew, piano and pipe-organ; Miss Clemen tinė Macgregor, piano; Miss Pearl Rivers, musical kin dergarten; Mrs. L. D. Scott, piano; Miss Mary W. Love lace, voice; Alexander von Skibinsky, violin.

#### The Atlanta Conservatory of Music

From ATLANTA: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow by John R. Hornady, American Cities Book Company, 1922:



The Atlanta Conservatory of Music, founded in 1907 and formally opened in 1908, is one of the most popular institutions of the kind in the South, and one which enjoys an enviable reputation throughout the country for its courses in all branches of music and oratory. Its enrollment is approximately 900 at this time, and the number is increasing from year to year. The director, German-born George F. Lindner, is a man of exceptional experience and ability. As a teacher, concert violinist, and composer, he enjoys a wide reputation. Lindner's coming to Atlanta several years ago has brought the conservatory to a position of preeminence among southern schools of music. An able faculty, plus the fact that students may hear the



G. F. Lindner

best of the world's artists in this city, has developed this institution into one that is a virile factor in the promotion of musical culture in the South.

The Atlanta Conservatory of Music was housed on the two upper floors of the five-story Cable Piano Building. A prospectus of the conservatory touted Miss Eda Bartholomew, head of the organ department, as "an outstanding figure in musical circles, and the greatest woman organist in America." According to her students, she was a vigorous, strong-minded, and stout-hearted German woman who left her stamp ineradicably on the minds of her students.

#### Atlanta's First Independent Organ School: Organ Lessons? Call IVY 3159

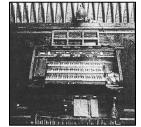
The following article appeared in *The Atlanta Constitution* on May 15, 1912, announcing the first session of Miss Eda E. Bartholomew's Organ School at the Harris Street Presbyterian Church.

.... Miss Bartholomew is well-known as an organist and teacher. Following a four-year course at the Royal Conservatory of Leipzig, Germany, graduating in organ and piano, she became director of the Organ Department at Brenau College Conservatory, Gainesville, Georgia, in addition to serving on the faculty at Agnes Scott College, Decatur, and organist/director of the First M. E. Church, Atlanta. At present, she is a member of the music faculty at Washington Seminary and organist/director of St. Mark M. E. Church. In addition to her current duties, this new venture will be entirely independent and the only school of its kind in the city.

A modern, up-to-date three-manual organ has been installed by the H. Hall & Co. Organ Builders of New Haven, Conn. The organ has electric-pneumatic action throughout and is equipped with all mechanical accessories and designed according to the standards of the American Guild of Organists. The location will be convenient to students from any part of the city, and the organ will be one more valuable acquisition to the collection of fine instruments already installed in Atlanta churches. The church will have use of the instrument for its religious services in return for Miss Bartholomew's use of the auditorium for the placing of the organ. Another interesting detail of the contract is that, while Miss Bartholomew will provide organists for church services from among her pupils, they will at the same time secure valuable experience in the conduct of church services and the gaining of self-confidence.



Harris Street Presbyterian



H. Hall Organ

Harris Street Presbyterian Church became the first of the downtown churches to sell their property. In 1924, the decision was made to move to quieter surroundings "far out of town, away beyond the creek." The proceeds went to build Covenant Presbyterian Church as it stands today. With the closing of Harris Street Presbyterian, Miss Bartholomew's pipe organ was moved to Westminster Presbyterian Church, where she continued her Organ School until her marriage and subsequent move to Florida in 1948. Following her retirement, she donated her organ to Westminster Presbyterian Church.

#### Dr. Edwin Arthur Kraft, FAGO, Founder of Georgia Chapter

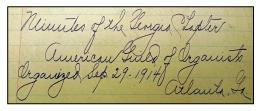
Edwin Arthur Kraft, born in New Haven, Connecticut, studied music at Yale University under Horatio Parker before becoming the organist at St. Thomas Church in Brooklyn, New York. He then went to Europe for three years, studying organ with Alexandre



E. A. Kraft

Guilmant and Charles-Marie Widor in Paris. In 1914, he moved to Atlanta as municipal organist and founded the Georgia Chapter of the AGO that year.

#### The First AGO Chapter in Georgia — 1914



The minutes of the Georgia Chapter refer to the preliminary meeting at the Atlanta Auditorium as having occurred on September 29, 1914. Miss Ethel Beyer, charter member of the Georgia Chapter, later described the meeting as having actually occurred on the auditorium steps. Either way, it was the beginning of the formation of an AGO chapter that would grow and thrive for one hundred years!

On October 6, 1914, an organizational meeting was held at the Atlanta Conservatory of Music for the purpose of forming the first AGO chapter in the state. There were 14 charter members. The chapter's charter was issued on October 26. With organization affairs behind, the new chapter got down to the business of planning programs on November 17. During the first year, the chapter had a total membership of 33, including one fellow and one associate. Annual AGO dues were \$3.00, and a church dinner cost 50¢.

Charter members and their affiliations at the time of the formation of the Georgia Chapter were:

- ➤ William E. Arnaud (All Saints' Protestant Episcopal Church)
- ➤ Miss Eda E. Bartholomew (St. Mark Methodist Episcopal Church, Agnes Scott College, Washington Seminary, Atlanta Institute of Music and Oratory, The Organ School)
- ➤ Miss Marguerite Bartholomew (Washington Seminary)
- ➤ Miss M. Ethel Beyer (Central Congregational Church)
- ➤ C. W Dieckmann (Agnes Scott College)
- ➤ Merrill Hutchinson (Washington Seminary, Christian Science Church)
- Edwin Arthur Kraft, FAGO (Atlanta City Organist)
- ➤ Joseph Maclean (Second Baptist Church, Agnes Scott College)
- ➤ Miss Clementine MacGregor (First Christian Church, Washington Seminary)
- ➤ Cecil P. Poole (St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church)
- ➤ Joseph Ragan Jr. (North Avenue Presbyterian Church)
- ➤ Charles A. Sheldon Jr. (Atlanta Conservatory of Music, Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, Hebrew Benevolent Congregation)
- ➤ Walter Peck Stanley, AAGO (Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, Atlanta Institute of Music and Oratory)
- ➤ Miss Adelaide Stephens (Morgan Stephens Music Studio)

Luesday Evering Och to the second weeting of the fluid row self at Cable by elected at the first meeting bile 29, did several new free by the first he will be such the object of the field for the first self of new new the list of range of series at the object of the field after the object of the field after the object of the field after the object of the field of the field after one of the series of the s

The following article appeared in *The Atlanta Constitution* on December 20, 1914, announcing the formation of the Georgia Chapter:

At the instigation and under the direction of Dr. Edwin Arthur Kraft organist of the City Auditorium, the Georgia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists has been organized in Atlanta, It has enrolled among its members the foremost organists of this city as well as prominent organists of Macon and Athens and numbers as honorary members some of Atlanta's leading clergymen and patrons of music.

Active membership under the American Guild of Organists, either as fellows or associates of the Guild, certifies that certain severe examinations have been passed, which prove the successful applicants to be competent organists and directors, as well as scholarly musicians of high theoretical and practical attainment.

The Georgia Chapter has been founded for the purpose of promoting a greater spirit of fellowship among Georgia organists, of raising the standards of their work, and arousing a greater interest in the calling among the members themselves as well as the public-at-large. The chapter has evolved as its program for the season of 1914-1915, a series of organ recitals to be given in the various churches of the city by different members of the chapter.

#### Early Chapter Recitals



During the first and second years, the Georgia Chapter scheduled monthly recitals by its members, which were the backbone of chapter activities for many years. The first recital was given by Miss Eda Bartholomew, a charter member, on December 15, 1914, at St. Mark M. E. Church. Miss Bartholomew was remembered as one of the chapter's finest performers.

IProgram  The recital will begin promptly at the hour announced and the doors will be closed during the performance of each composition. Please enter or leave during the intervals between numbers.	্বীrogram A collection will be taken at this position in the program. The amount realized will be applied to the expenses incurred for giving this recital.					
1. Prelude and Fugue in A minor J. S. Bach	6. Introduction Max Reger					
2. Sunrise, Op. 7, No. 1 Sigfrid Karg-Elert	7. Echo Bells John Hyatt Brewer					
3. Melodie in E S. Rachmaninoff	8. Ballet Claude Debussy					
4. Toccata E. d'Evry	9. 1st Movement, 5th Symphony Charles Marie Widor					
5. Reve Angelique, Op. 10, No. 22 A. Rubinstein	10. March from "Sigurd Jorsaliar" E. Greig					

December 15, 1914 recital program by Miss Eda Bartholomew at St. Mark's M. E. Church

The "serious music" of early Georgia Chapter recitals given by its members consisted of organ works still in the standard repertory, works by living organists whose compositions are now obscure, and transcriptions of popular orchestral scores. The satisfying surprise in examining early programs is the inclusion of a substantial number of major organ works.

#### Georgia Chapter's First International Artist

During the third season, the Georgia Chapter sponsored its first internationally known artist, French organist Joseph Bonnet. Bonnet studied organ with Guilmant, Tournemire, and Vierne and was organist at St-Eustache Church in Paris from 1905 until the beginning of World War I. Bonnet was a captain in the French Army and had been fighting in the trenches of the war until a few months before his recital tour, when he was given a furlough by the French Government of its own accord, in order that he might make an American concert tour.

He toured Europe often and visited North America for the first time in 1916. His recital at the Atlanta Auditorium on March 20, 1917, was such a great artistic and newsworthy event—and profitable!—that

the chapter invited him back the very next season. (It is noted that the second recital was delayed due to severe cold weather and a shortage of coal. It was rescheduled at a later date.)

#### The American Organist Volume 1, Number 1

T. SCOTT BUHBBAN

Che AMERICAN ORGANIST
JANUARY 1918

NUMBER 1

Fullest Director

Volume 1, Number 1 of the National AGO magazine,

The American Organist, was issued in January 1918. AGO chapters included in-depth chapter information in each issue. Walter Peck Stanley the Georgia Chapter sub-dean, entered the following program notes in the first issue:

- On November 13, the first public church service of this chapter was given at St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church, under the direction of Cecil P. Poole, organist and choirmaster of the church.
- The Music Festival Association, under whose auspices the Sunday organ recitals at the Auditorium-Armory have been given, has turned the organ over to the City of Atlanta. After much discussion as to whether an appropriation should be made to maintain a city organist and to keep the organ in repair, it was finally decided to make an appropriation for the salary of the city organist and also the upkeep of the organ.

#### Community Singing in the City

The Atlanta Constitution announced "Potter is here to Stimulate Community Singing in the City" in the following article, January 3, 1919.

Ben J. Potter, one of the well-known choirmasters of the country and a leader of choruses who has achieved recognition during the period of the War (WWI), has been sent to Atlanta by the War Camp Community Service to organize and stimulate community singing for the city. Mr. Potter, an Englishman, who has had experience as organist in English churches and numerous American cities, will succeed Mr. Charles A. Sheldon Jr. at Trinity (Methodist). Mr. Sheldon has accepted a position as organist and choir director at the First Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Potter is a graduate of the Royal College of Organists of London and a fellow of the Guild of St. Cecilia. He will devote his entire attention to a vigorous campaign for singing in the theatres, industrial plants, department stores, and similar places where there are large gatherings of people. Mr. Potter has been cordially greeted by musicians of Atlanta, who have extended to him numerous offers of cooperation.



Ben J. Potter

In addition to his work with community singers and Trinity M. E. Church, Mr. Potter was also a featured organist at many of Atlanta's fine theatres, where he was noted for his exceptional playing. In April 1919, he resigned his position with the War Camp Community Service and resumed his profession as a teacher of music. He stated that his duties at Trinity M. E. Church (and his theatre organ commitments) demanded all of his attention, leaving no time to the arduous work of community song leading.

#### Crisis and Survival

By 1917, musical activities competed for Atlanta church musicians' involvement, and the Georgia Chapter found itself with declining support. In 1919, the chapter even voted for a 25¢ fine for nonattendance—with little result. With only seven active members, there was talk of disbanding the Chapter in March 1921. On April 19, 1921, a renewal banquet was held at Second Baptist Church. Following a fine meal, Sub-Dean Walter Peck Stanley spoke on the objectives of the Guild to the members and the nine guests. As a result, the nine guests joined the chapter, thus providing the critical mass needed

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for survival. In the record book for 1917-1918, it was noted whether the chapter member was "a" absent or "p" present for each of the chapter meetings.

#### **1920**S

#### Georgia Chapter Members Play the "Palaces on Peachtree"





Dr. Ben Potter played at several of the theatres as well as the State Theatre in Gainesville, Georgia. Annie Mae Norton (*née* Taurman) played several of the theatres as well as Atlanta's First Methodist Church. George Lee Hamrick played the theatres as well as Atlanta First Baptist and Trinity Methodist Churches. He also wrote several articles that appeared in *The American* 

Hamrick

Norto

Organist on how to play for "photoplays." Back then, many Atlanta organists did play for both

church and the theatres. A good theatre organist could make considerably more money; however, it was very hard work, and the organist had better have a large amount of music in his or her head to improvise music for a film.



It is of historical note that several of the organs in Atlanta's theatres were relocated after their theatrical demise: from the Metropolitan Theatre, Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 1343.5, III/21, 1926, to Glenn Memorial Methodist Church, Atlanta; from the Criterion Theatre, Austin, Opus 850, III/19, 1919, to a church in Alabama; from the Paramount Theatre, Wurlitzer Organ, removed in the 1950s and now being restored by a private individual in Chicago.

#### The South's First Radio Broadcast of a Church Service







First Presbyterian Church

Samuel M. Inman Residence

In 1922, *The Atlanta Journal's* radio station, WSB, inaugurated the first regularly broadcast church service in the South when it put the service from First Presbyterian Church on the air. A year later, an assemblage of guests at a local residence listened in amazement to music that could not possibly originate in the home but was perfect for the wedding ceremony they

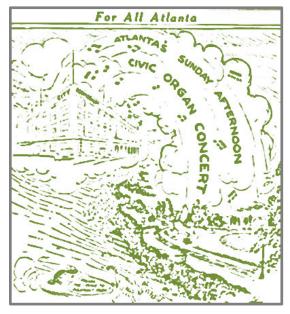
were about to witness. The music was relayed by WSB engineers from First Presbyterian Church, where Charles Sheldon, organist, was seated at the great Pilcher organ. The stringed orchestra at the home blended its music with the organ at the marriage ceremony.

#### Music in the Park

In 1923, no feature of entertainment furnished for park visitors was quite as popular as the Sunday afternoon recitals by Atlanta's noted city organist, Charles A. Sheldon. These recitals were performed regularly each Sunday from the Municipal Auditorium and broadcast in Piedmont and Grant Parks. Experts from radio station WGM were in charge of the broadcast. With the special apparatus and the huge horns, visitors to the city's recreation centers were afforded this unusual feature of entertainment each Sunday afternoon.

The following announcement appeared in *The Atlanta Constitution*, February 11, 1923.

One of the best organ recitals given by radio from the City Auditorium presenting City Organist Charles A. Sheldon Jr. on





Atlanta's big Austin organ, the only instrument of its size in the South, was heard yesterday afternoon when *The Atlanta Constitution* presented Mr. Sheldon's recital to a large audience at the Auditorium and to crowds in Piedmont Park. The program was especially arranged by Sheldon as the first organ recital to be broadcast from Station WGM since the inauguration of service with *The Atlanta Constitution's* new 500-watt broadcasting equipment. Many calls on the telephone came to the station reporting the clarity and the power with which they received the recital—it was a masterpiece.

#### 1930S

#### Church Music in the 1930s

The early 1930s was a period notable to the improvement of church music throughout the city. Charles Sheldon, organist at The Temple, became known for his traditional Jewish sacred music. Across the street at Peachtree Christian Church, Edith Howell Clark was the organist/director of the only Protestant antiphonal and chancel choir in the city; Joseph Ragan, organist and choir director at All Saints' Episcopal Church, attracted large crowds to his Easter choral celebrations; the choir of St. Luke's Episcopal Church became known especially for the coloratura solos of Minna Hecker; and Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church became widely celebrated for its mid-night Christmas Eve Mass.

— From Franklin M. Garrett, Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of Its People and Events, 1880-1930, pg. 890

#### Christmas at "Briarcliff"

Perhaps, one of the most outstanding meetings in the history of the Georgia Chapter was held on December 13, 1932, at "Briarcliff," the magnificent mansion of Asa G. Candler Jr. (Located on Briarcliff Road in Druid Hills) The opportunity of being guests of these splendid Atlantans brought a record attendance of Georgia Chapter members, their escorts, and some specially invited guests. After a short business meeting and Christmas dinner, the guests assembled in the music room for discussions about the Aeolian organ, followed by a recital given by several chapter members.



Music room

#### Three Georgia Chapter Members Receive AGO Certifications

In 1934, with respect to attaining AGO certification, particulars in *The Diapason*, the official AGO magazine, demonstrated that "not all who enter the race reach the finish line." Three Georgia Chapter members were successful: Joseph Ragan (All Saints' Episcopal Church) made the third-highest score in the nation on the examination for a fellow certification; Wilbur Rowand (Shorter College, Rome, Georgia) also became a fellow; and Emilie Parmalee (North Avenue Presbyterian Church) became an

associate. At the age of 26, Emilie was one of the youngest to receive the certificate.

— From Elizabeth Hulsey Marshall, A Unique Partnership: Walter and Emilie Spivey, pp. 55-56.

All three of these participants, especially Miss Parmalee and Mr. Ragan, attributed their success to their mentors: C. W. Dieckmann, and Miss Eda Bartholomew, both on the faculty at Agnes Scott College.





(I/r: Parmalee, Ragan, Rowand)

#### Twentieth Anniversary (1934)



One of the first acts by Dean Wilbur Rowand in 1935 was to have Emilie Parmalee organize an organ contest to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Georgia Chapter. Competing entrants in the advanced category, which Emilie entered, came from four states. The panel of judges, including Virgil Fox, concert organist, who was in

Atlanta for a performance, declared Emilie the winner. She received the forty-dollar prize offered by the Pilcher's Sons Organ Company of Louisville, Kentucky. Perhaps even more significant was the meeting of Emilie and Virgil. At the time, neither would recognize that the chemistry of their personalities would lead to a binding friendship, lasting throughout Virgil's life and thereafter coloring Emilie's memories.

— From: Elizabeth Hulsey Marshall, A Unique Partnership: Walter and Emilie Spivey, pp. 58-59

The 20th Anniversary Guild Service was held at Peachtree Christian Church, Edith Clark, organist and choir director, on February 11, 1935.

#### Virgil Fox at First Baptist (1935)



A young Virgil Fox, still in his twenties, had his first Atlanta recital at First Baptist Church on Monday evening, April 28, 1935. The occasion of this recital was featured as one of the highlights of the Georgia Chapter's 20th anniversary.

Following is the review of this recital in *The Atlanta Journal* the following evening.

Virgil Fox, 22 year-old organist, who is listed among America's greatest organists, played the most brilliant recital this reviewer (Mozelle Horton Young, music editor) has heard in this city last night at First Baptist Church. A large audience greeted each number with unlimited enthusiasm.

Virgil Fox coupled a brilliant virtuosity with a keen musicianship and an unfailing memory to produce a performance that was nothing short of marvelous. His technique is as fleet (pass quickly) and versatile as a virtuoso pianist, and still, he has the proper organ touch. His choice of stops and combinations was very interesting and artistic. His powers of keyboard and piston manipulation were deft beyond imagination. His complete control of the magnificent Pilcher at all times, quickened admiration. And he played the entire concert of most difficult organ literature from memory, an almost unheard—of feat among organists. His pedal technique would make a complete story in itself. Virgil opened an entirely new vista to all of us in organ playing appreciation. He proved that the organ is independently a concert instrument enjoyed as much as any concert. He made new revelations of color, of tone quality, use of combinations, of keyboard and pedal dexterity.

#### Virgil Fox returns to Atlanta (1936)

Virgil returned to Atlanta for a recital at First Presbyterian Church on May 2, 1936. According to the reviewer:

The youthful genius had no difficulty in maintaining the impression that was created at his appearance here last season. The large Pilcher organ at First Presbyterian Church, while noted for its beauty and quality, does not contain master pistons, and while the audience may not have been aware of this from the constant play of tone-color, the clever handling of the registrations was of keen interest to the organists who knew of the difficulty involved. Following the recital, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Sheldon entertained informally at "Briarcliff," the home of Mr. and Mrs. Asa G. Candler Jr., with the chapter and their friends as guests. Here Mr. Fox was heard at the console of the Aeolian organ, not the least attraction being *Dixie* played as a pedal solo.

#### A Memorable Georgia Chapter Evening

Members of the Georgia Chapter gathered for a social evening on February 17, 1936, at Black's Restaurant. Members were able to forget the arduous task of programing for the current season with a feast of good things, along with which were served fellowship, fun, and frivolity. About 30 members and their guests enjoyed the three-hour session that ended all too soon.



#### The "Ladies of the Chapter" take control!

Beginning in the late 1930s and continuing into the late 1950s, the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter flourished under the leadership of several notable, and sometimes notorious, ladies of the chapter. There was camaraderie among these ladies, who often met once a month for lunch to discuss chapter activities and to plan unique and diverse programs. Programs included not only noted artists for organ recitals—one year, a subscription series of three organists of national and international fame—but also annual chapter guild services, hymn festivals, including youth choir Festivals. For two years, the National Institute of Music

held sessions in Atlanta. The love and devotion of these ladies to the chapter, and among themselves, and to the betterment of music for Atlanta, has not been equaled since.

Probably one of their greatest legacies was the concise scrapbooks they kept that included meeting notices, newsletters, yearbooks, articles from The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution reviewing musical programs and recitals, and announcements of special programs given by local churches and schools of music. Also they included printed programs of practically every program given during that period. These scrapbooks contained most, if not nearly all, of the programs by the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter, the Atlanta Music Club, and other musical organizations and churches in and around the city. These scrapbooks are now maintained in the archives of the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History

Center.







Frances Felder Mabel Cunningham

Frances Felder, Marie Smith, and Edith Clark (1960)



Marie Smith (I) Frances Spain (r)



**Emilie P. Spivey** 





In addition to local activities, these ladies attended several National AGO Conventions as a group. One can only imagine how the rest of the country, witnessing these demure, not to mention fun-loving, southern ladies, did not realize the force with which they directed the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter. If they ever attended a program together, watch out! You never knew what their reaction and comments would be. At a chapter guild service, one of the ladies accidentally sat on the Holy Bible. When it was brought to the attention of the others, one quipped rather quickly, "Well, maybe now she will absorb something." This is just one instance of how well they worked together and the love they shared.



In the picture to the left, Emilie Spivey, immediate past-dean of the Georgia Chapter relinquishes the gavel to Ruby Chalmers, the newly elected dean in 1949. The mahogany, hand-carved gavel contained a plate bearing the names of the deans who had served throughout the Georgia Chapter's 34 years. In the picture to the right, Frances Spain, current dean, hands the "whip" over to Willa Lowrance, the newly elected dean, in 1960.



In a tribute to Marie Smith upon her death in 2003, Adele McKee, former dean, shared the following for current chapter members who were unaware of the long support role Marie played in the chapter's past. Marie was always sought after to do hospitality for our convention and chapter functions because she was so outwardly friendly and gracious and a real Southern Lady.

She was the last of the group of Frances Felder, Edith Clark, Mabel Cunningham, Mabel Boyter, Frances Spain, Ruby Chalmers, Emilie Spivey, Ethel Beyer, Joe Ragan, and C. W.



**Marie Smith** 

Dieckmann, who were the heart and soul of this chapter in the middle years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present. They sponsored two Regional Conventions, organized multiple hymn festivals, kept meetings going regularly, and enjoyed one another's fellowship, setting a tone to the very real friendships which have characterized this chapter for most of its history. Competition for jobs was never part of this scene, only warm support for fellow workers in church music. This is a legacy which we claim today for our chapter.

In the following pictures, are four chapter members who were instrumental in coaching many former, and current, chapter members in the successful completion of AGO certification, both in theory and performance. During the last month of Emilie Spivey's life (1987), she whispered, in reference to a biography of herself, "Be sure to remember—do not forget—Miss Eda." The picture of Miss Beyer and Mr. Dieckmann, the last two surviving charter members of the Georgia Chapter, was made in 1960 at a dinner of all former deans at the home of then dean, Frances Spain.



M. Ethel Beyer
C. W. Dieckmann



Joseph Ragan



Eda E. Bartholomew

#### 1940S

#### Agnes Scott College and the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter

Agnes Scott College has always had a close association with the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter. In fact, in 1914, four members of its faculty were charter members: C. W. Dieckmann, Miss Eda Bartholomew, Joseph Maclean, and Miss Marguerite Bartholomew. The first two became deans—Mr. Dieckmann serving three terms. More recently, additional faculty members of the college who were also active in the Atlanta/Georgia Chapter and served as dean were Dr. Raymond J. Martin, professor of organ, and Michael McDowell and Dr. Calvert Johnson, both serving as chair of the Music Department.



Dieckmann at the console

Gaines Chapel, named after ASC's first president, contains a four-manual, 40-rank organ built by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Connecticut. The official dedication of the organ was on December 10, 1940, with Virgil Fox as the guest recitalist. A special program note was the performance of Mr. Dieckmann's Chorale-Prelude on "Wer nur den lieben Gott last walten" dedicated to Virgil. Mr. Dieckmann often gave students a treat by playing for them in chapel or in recital on Friday evenings.



Mr. Dieckmann and Miss Bartholomew also presented duo-piano programs during the music appreciation programs for the community on Monday evenings. Many chapter members came to the Dieckmann home for coaching for the National AGO Certification Examinations.

In the picture to the right, Dr. Raymond J. Martin is shown with the ASC Student AGO Chapter at the Austin Organ console in Gaines Chapel (1952).

In the 1940s and 1950s, the Georgia Chapter presented many national and international organists in recital in Gaines Chapel. Agnes Scott has also hosted two Pipe Organ Encounters for the Atlanta Chapter.



#### 1940 Southeastern Regional Convention

In 1940, the Georgia Chapter hosted the first Southeastern Regional Convention of the AGO to be held in Atlanta. Headquarters were at the Biltmore Hotel. Registration for this convention was \$3.00—including luncheon and banquet! (Many documents state that the first Southeastern Regional Convention to be held in Atlanta was in 1957. To correct this, it should be stated that the Atlanta Chapter "hosted" the 1957 convention, not the Georgia Chapter.) Participating chapters in this convention were Georgia, Macon, Alabama, South Carolina, and Louisiana. The dean of the Georgia Chapter for this convention was Charles A. Sheldon Jr.; the sub-dean was Emilie Parmalee; the Program Committee was comprised of the dean and the executive committee. The convention began with a reception at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Asa G. Candler Jr. Recitals were held at First Presbyterian Church, Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, and The Temple, with performers from within the region. The closing recital at First Baptist Church was given by Russell Broughton, FAGO, professor of music at Converse College, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

#### Hymn Festivals

The coming together in corporate singing of many churches and individuals was an important activity in the late 1930s and 1940s. The closing of the hard times from the recession and the beginning of the war in Europe brought congregations together in the spirit of thanksgiving and hope. On Monday, November 17, 1941, 15 choirs with more than 300 voices presented the third annual Georgia Chapter Hymn Festival at

Glenn Memorial Methodist Church. The theme of this service was "Worship in Crisis." The hymns and readings used illustrated the challenge in the Christian Church to stand firm in its faith to make it a tower of strength to the world during the days of peril of the war. Ethel Beyer, director and organist of Druid Hills Methodist Church, was program chairman.

In the picture to the right, Dr. Nat G. Long and Miss Beyer (seated at the organ) with four singers, plan the upcoming hymn festival. Many of these hymn festivals continued to be an important part of chapter activities.

#### Atlanta Music Club Choral Society - Choral Guild of Atlanta

The Atlanta Music Club, in cooperation with local musicians, formed the Atlanta Music Club Choral Society in 1939 under the direction of Haskell Boyter. Over the next two years, the chorus grew rapidly. In 1941, two performances were given jointly with the Chattanooga Civic Chorus: on December 6, at Presser Hall, Agnes Scott College, and on December 8, at the Chattanooga Memorial Auditorium. At the Atlanta concert, the combined chorus of some 200 voices was accompanied by Mabel Boyter and Ruby Chalmers at the two pianos and C. W. Dieckmann at the organ. The success of the concerts was marred by the shock of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and the chorus was forced to disband until after the war.

In 1947, with the pre-war personnel as a nucleus, the Atlanta Music Club and the Georgia Chapter of the AGO, Emilie Spivey, dean, co-sponsored a revival of the organization, which was renamed The Atlanta Civic Chorus. Several prominent Atlanta musicians worked with Mrs. Spivey to make this a reality. Haskell Boyter was appointed permanent director. The first concert, a chorus of nearly 200 voices, was given at Glenn Memorial Methodist Church in February 1948, with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Henry Sopkin.

In the picture to the right: Emilie Spivey and Haskell Boyter (seated); Henry Sopkin, Anne Grace O'Callaghan, and Joseph Ragan (standing) plan for the 200-voice chorus to appear.

Soon after this concert, the organization was renamed Choral Guild of Atlanta, which continues to give the City of Atlanta and the surrounding metropolitan

areas a diversity of exemplary choral music and today is one of the oldest and most widely recognized independent choral groups in the United States.

#### Organists Sponsor Hymn Study Program

Under the direction of Frances Felder, dean, the Georgia Chapter based its activities for the 1944-1945 season upon a program of hymn study. Each section of the city, under the guidance of a choir director from one of the churches of the section, sponsored community song services to encourage the revival and use of good hymns. A study of organ preludes based on hymns was a feature of the monthly meetings.

#### Harvest Hymn Festival - 1944

In 1944, following her wedding to Walter Spivey, Emilie Parmalee Spivey noted in her wedding book that she had just been "made chairman of church music for [the Atlanta] Music Club and [the] Guild." As her first endeavor, she planned a mammoth undertaking that involved thousands of Atlantans—a Harvest Hymn Festival to give hope to war-weary spirits.

(Caption from *The Atlanta Journal*): Mrs. Walter Spivey (seated, left), chairman of the Harvest Hymn Festival; Mrs. John Felder (seated, right), dean of the Georgia Chapter; and Mrs. J. O'H. Sanders (standing), president of the Atlanta Music Club, plan the choice of hymns to be sung in the city-wide celebration of the Harvest Hymn Festival to be presented Monday night, November 13.



The system of organization called for churches to be zoned. Congregations and choirs within each area were to join together in the most centrally located church to sing hymns identically programmed for all of metropolitan Atlanta. *The Atlanta Journal* gave its lead editorial on Sunday, November 12, to the upcoming hymn festival, declaring that it was

... the most inspiring of the many fine things the churches have done since the war started. Their other war efforts have been more practical perhaps, but here is a simple act of worship with no other motive than just 'to make a joyful noise unto the Lord' .... In tense times like these, there is comfort in the mere emotional outlet of raising the voice and swelling the chest in song directed toward the omnipotent sky. But there is even more comfort in such immortal hymns as "Abide with Me" .... The municipal singing may possibly give spiritual strength to last out the war to many who are despairing.

#### "Modern Music for the Organ"

*The Atlanta Journal* on February 18, 1945, Helen Knox Spain, music editor, described this unique recital in the following article:

An organ recital of unusual interest was presented at First Baptist Church by members of the Georgia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists under the auspices of the Local Artists Division of the Atlanta Music Club.

The four-manual Pilcher organ at First Baptist Church is an exceptionally fine instrument. With a rich string section, beautiful solo stops, sonorous pedal section, and generally admirable balance and excellent tonal quality, it provided the performers wide scope for interesting combinations and brilliant effects. The well-chosen program offered an interesting cross-section of modern organ works by French and American composers with the individual style and approach of the three interpreters lending added interest. The organist, unlike the orchestral conductor, has no prescribed scoring. His effects, conditioned by the facilities of the instrument at his disposal, are determined by his own resourcefulness, imagination, and sense of instrumental color.

#### "The Abbey Hour" — 1945

The following article appeared in *The Diapason*, April 1, 1945.

DR. CHARLES A. SHELDON is engaged in an interesting activity—one of the many that demand his time—in the form of "half-hours of delightful and inspiring music" played on the large four-manual Aeolian organ in the home of Asa G. Candler, Atlanta, Ga., every Tuesday evening. These programs, called "The Abbey Hour," are broadcast by station WGST at 9:30 p.m. They are sponsored by the West View Abbey, a community mausoleum under construction in West View Cemetery. A male quartet and soprano and alto soloists supplement the organ music.



#### Georgia Chapter Founder Returns to Atlanta

Dr. Edwin Arthur Kraft, organist and choirmaster of the Trinity Cathedral of Cleveland, Ohio, was presented under the auspices of the Georgia Chapter on Tuesday, May 29, 1945, at the First Baptist Church of Atlanta. This was the first return visit of Dr. Kraft to Atlanta since he organized and founded the Georgia Chapter of the AGO in October 1914. Miss Marguerite Bartholomew stated in her review in *The Atlanta Constitution* that it was one of the most brilliant recitals of the season.



It must be admitted that the South lags behind other sections of the country in evaluation and appreciation of the organ as a concert instrument. Hence, it redounds greatly to the credit of the Georgia Chapter, that under the capable leadership of Dean Frances S. Felder, the chapter is making a determined effort to correct that lack of interest and understanding in Atlanta. MB

#### Organist Returns to Cathedral of St. Philip



After completing his service in the US Navy, Tom Brumby returned to his position as organist and choirmaster at the Cathedral of St. Philip to host the Georgia Chapter's guild service in October 1947. He was the force behind the installation of the four-manual Aeolian-Skinner Organ, which was installed in 1962. It is interesting to note that, when the organ was installed, not only was it the largest organ in Atlanta, but the installation was debtfree due primarily to his influence. He remained in this position, a



total of 32 years, until his retirement in 1966. In addition to his position at the cathedral, Tom was the prime builder of the School of Music at Georgia State University.

#### "Undertones"

In May 1948, an informal newsletter, *Undertones*, written with levity, but serious purpose, was introduced to notify chapter members of upcoming events. The newsletter was signed by an editor who called herself/himself (Dean Spivey?) "The Organ Grinder." The first issue highlighted the upcoming Institute of Church Music.



#### National Institute of Church Music

## NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHURCH MUSIC

OLIVER S. BELTZ, Director

TWO SESSIONS
Atlanta, Georgia

June 7 to 11, 1947, inclusive

Auspices of the Georgia Chapter, American Guild of Organists, Mrs. Walter Spivey, dean. At the Druid Hills Presbyterian Church (air conditioned), 1026 Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E. Every wide awake church musician seeks the opportunity periodically to make profitable contacts with other musicians in the same field who have had larger or more varied experience than themselves. In this way, one's outlook is widened, perspective is broadened, and enthusiasm and courage is revitalized. The need for such an opportunity was recognized by the officers of the 1947 Georgia Chapter, Edith Clark, dean. Knowing of the work of Dr. Oliver S. Beltz, of Washington, DC, as organizer and director of church music institutes, the chapter asked him to organize an institute for Atlanta.

In the picture to the right, Beltz conducts the institute attendees at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church. He was one of the most influential musicians in the 20th century—whose commitment to the best in sacred music led to significant achievement and national recognition during his lifetime. He also believed that developing choirs that could sing the great masterpieces of sacred music would promote higher standards in church music.



Morning classes consisted of service playing, open forum, and choir repertory. Afternoon classes consisted of a continuation of the morning classes, congregational singing, the oratorio, the cantata, and the small church choir. Evening sessions varied each day, with an organ recital and rehearsals in preparation for the Evensong and Choral Festival to be held at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. This service consisted of institute and civic choruses, soloists, cantors, choirs, and congregation. The conductor for this service was Dr. David McK. Williams, organist and choirmaster at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, and professor of organ and composition at the Juilliard School of Music, both in New York City.

The success of the institute in 1947 was such that the chapter members requested that Dr. Beltz organize another institute to be held in 1948. It would be a week of stimulating associations with fellow musicians and kindred spirits, an enlargement of repertoire, a re-evaluation of techniques, and a clarification of

purpose and objective. The notable staff included Clarence Dickinson, MusD, Brick Presbyterian Church, New York City, known to all church musicians as the dean of the church music profession (whether one viewed him as a teacher, composer, or artist); and Helen Snyder Dickinson, PhD, author and lecturer without equal in the domain of church music. Clarence Dickinson, who became professor of church music at the Union Theological Seminary in New Your City in 1912, and his wife, Helen, established the School of Sacred Music at the seminary in 1928.





C. Dickinson, H. Dickinson

#### Youth Choir Festival

The second city-wide Youth Choir Festival was held May 9, 1948, at Glenn Memorial Methodist Church. Some 300 young people of ages 9 through 15 sang under the direction of Mabel S. Boyter. The singers were members of youth choirs of 14 churches in the city. The festival was organized under the sponsorship of the Georgia Chapter, Emilie Spivey, dean. Marie Smith was chairman of the festival.



#### Series of Famous Organists

Three notable exponents of organ music were presented by the Georgia Chapter during the program year 1948- 1949 in Gaines Chapel on the Agnes College campus. This was a new project for the chapter in presenting more than one world-renowned organist on a season subscription basis. The season ticket price for all three performances was \$3.60 (tax included!). According to the financial records, profit from this subscription series enabled the chapter to establish a sizeable performance fund for future programs.



Marcel Dupré, the foremost French organ virtuoso of his time, heir to the great tradition of Romantic French organ playing and composing, was famed for his ability to improvise. He also composed substantial works and was a widely traveled recitalist and an influential teacher. In 1934, Widor retired from Saint-Sulpice at the age of 89, and after 28 years as assistant, Dupré became *Titulaire* in his own right—a post which he was to hold until the very day of his death on Whitsunday, 1971.



Mainly a recitalist, Claire Coci was a product of the virtuoso tradition and studied with Charles Courboin (Belgium) and Marcel Dupré (France). While she was best remembered for her virtuoso accoutrements, she also invested much effort in playing the works of contemporary composers. She was one of those organists who enjoyed a larger-than-life presence in the profession through the 1950s. In the later 1950s, she moved to Tenafly, New Jersey, where she established her own music school, the American Academy of Music



In 1929, at the age of 17, Virgil Fox won first prize in the National Federation of Music Clubs' Biennial Contest, held in Boston. He enrolled at the Peabody School of Music in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1931, where he studied organ with Louis Robert. He graduated one year later with an Artist Diploma, then traveled to France where he studied from 1931 until 1933 with Marcel Dupré. In 1938, Fox returned to Peabody as head of the Organ Department, a post he retained

until 1942, when he enlisted in the military service. As a member of the Army Air Force, Virgil gave numerous recitals during WWII to draw financial support for the Allied effort. He was discharged in 1946 and that year accepted the position as organist of New York City's Riverside Church, where he remained until 1965.



"To the Guild of Atlanta Souvenir of the concert of December 1st 1948

Marcel Dupré"

This autographed photo is in the archives of the Atlanta Chapter at the Atlanta History Center.

#### 1950S

#### The Georgia Chapter becomes The Atlanta Chapter

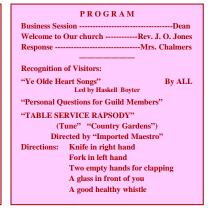


#### A Special Chapter Meeting

This is an example of the programming under the leadership of the "Ladies of the Atlanta Chapter"—what fun they had, and this spread to their programming. How would our chapter react to a program like this now? Sometimes, we take ourselves too seriously and miss out on all the fun!







#### Atlanta Chapter Hosts its first Southeastern Regional Convention – 1957



(The following description is rather lengthy due to the fact that only a handful of our current members will remember this convention, and the fact that the programming was rather unusual for its time. But could one expect any less from Emilie Spivey?)

In 1957, the Atlanta Chapter hosted its first Regional Convention. Emilie Spivey served as general chairman and Joseph Ragan served as program chairman. Convention headquarters was at the Atlanta Biltmore Hotel. A total of 169 registered for the convention from 11 states. At that time, the Southeastern Region was comprised of four states: Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Preconvention

activities included "Evening Bells Service" at Peachtree Christian Church and the dedication of the new Austin console. That evening, attendees were shown "The Seven Wonders of the World" at the Roxy Theatre, the only theatre in the southeast, at that time, equipped to show the multi-projected, multi-sound Cinerama productions.

The first day provided diverse program events. Monday morning provided a time for registration and a time for "inspection of displays and exhibits." The early afternoon, members of the Atlanta Chapter were available to drive attendees to various organs that would not be heard otherwise during the convention. It was suggested that the attendees take a complete tour of Davison's Department Store preceding the first scheduled convention event, which would be at their store—a choral program presented by the North Fulton Special Choir under the direction of Robert Lowrance, followed by tea and a fashion show. The final event for the first day of the convention was a musical service at The Temple featuring Ernest Bloch's *Sacred Service* under the leadership of Emilie Spivey, Temple organist, and the Choral Guild of Atlanta, Haskell Boyter, director.



Tuesday featured two major recitalists: George Markey at Druid Hills Methodist Church and Pierre Cochereau, pictured at left, at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Mr. Markey was on the faculties of the Peabody Conservatory and the Westminster Choir College and organist at Old First Church (Presbyterian), Newark, New Jersey. Mr. Cochereau was organist at Notre Dame Cathedral (Paris) and Director of the National Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Arts in Le Mans, France. The evening concluded at 11:30 pm with "Rendezvous with a Lady" (Fox Theatre). The convention brochure carried the following quote about this event:

To top off the evening, we have an invitation from an aging "Lady of Pleasure"—the theatre organ. Her make-up may be a bit faded, and she has lost a strategic pin or two, but she is ready and willing and there is just no telling what she will do if properly persuaded.



The final day of the convention began with the Four-State Recital at Morningside Presbyterian Church. This recital had become a traditional feature of the Southeastern Regional Conventions. In 1957, rather than having four miniature recitals, an artist from each state played compositions from one historical period in order to give a single, well-balanced program. Georgia's representative was William Weaver, organist-choirmaster at Holy Trinity Parish (Episcopal), Decatur, Georgia, whose selections were under the title "Early Music."

Later, the closing banquet was held at the Capitol City Club, with Marcus Bartlett, dean, organist at The Baptist Tabernacle, and manager of Station WSB-TV. The speaker was Ernest Rogers, a columnist for *The Atlanta Journal* and well-known, after-dinner speaker. After the banquet, everyone adjourned to First Methodist Church, where an overflow crowd was treated to an exceptional concert by Virgil Fox.

The following article, "Overflow Crowd Hails Virgil Fox at Organ" by Katherine Skogstad, appeared in *The Atlanta Journal*, Thursday, May 16, 1957.

Virgil Fox, one of America's greatest organists, closed a Regional Convention of the American Guild of Organists here Wednesday night at the First Methodist Church. An overflow crowd filled the balcony, stairs, aisles, and stairways in the church sanctuary to hear the artist display a musical prowess which has made him world famous. Renowned for his interpretations of Bach, Mr. Fox opened Wednesday's program with four of the master composer's organ compositions. The series was a challenge in styling met by the organist.

#### Sharing Atlanta's Expertise

In his review of the 1958 AGO National Convention in Houston, Texas, Jack Fisher, St. Paul, Minnesota, wrote:

There are many people these days that go about lecturing on children's choirs, who describe one system or another and who subscribe to one or another thesis of psychology, etc. Often at one of these lectures, we feel that we may have learned something of value to contribute to our own in order to make the new ideas work! Mabel Boyter does not affect one in this manner. She seems to have all the right ideas, all the right attitudes and all of the things she says are not only merely sound psychologically, but they reveal a sensitive insight into just why and how people do things—at all ages.

Mrs. Boyter has charm and grace of manner that quickly adapts itself to any age group she faces, even when there is an audience watching the whole event. She

does not talk down to children but instead, imparts the feeling that everyone present is on the same plane. She knows exactly what she wants and how to get it. Cheers to Mrs. Boyter for what I should consider to be one of the most delightful lecture-demonstrations I have ever attended, and I am sure there is no one from that audience who did not go away with plenty of logical ideas which will readily apply to whatever system he [or she] is already practicing.

#### First "Official" Atlanta Chapter Newsletter

In September 1958, the Atlanta Chapter published its first official monthly newsletter, *The Dulciana*. This name was aptly chosen, as the National AGO magazine, at that time, was called *The Diapason*. William Weaver started the newsletter and "cranked it out" monthly at Holy Trinity parish on a relic of a



printing system, which failed to work sometimes. In the first issue, it was noted that the newsletter was "for the amusement, amazement, edification, and information of its members." *The Dulciana* was not intended as a profound and august dispenser of musical information, but rather a means of keeping all chapter members in touch, one with another. The name of the chapter newsletter was changed in the late 1970's to *The Organizer*.

#### 1960S

#### Dr. Douglas Johnson, Chapter Treasurer

In 1960, Doug Johnson was elected chapter treasurer. Doug served in this position for over 30 years, also serving as treasurer for the National AGO Conventions in 1966 and 1992 and the Southeastern Regional Convention in 1975, both held in Atlanta. No one will ever forget his detailed treasurer's report at chapter meetings, and the chapter was always in the black! Doug, an accomplished organist and pianist, was also professor of pharmacology at the University of Georgia.



#### Fiftieth Anniversary – 1964

In 1964, the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter celebrated its 50th anniversary. At that time, there were 192 active members. Adele Dieckmann, director of music and organist at Trinity Presbyterian Church, was dean and Professor Michael McDowell, chairman of the music department at Agnes Scott College and director of music-organist at St. Mark Methodist Church, was sub-dean.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banquet was described in the following article from *The Atlanta Journal*.

National President Alec Wyton, Dean Adele Dieckmann and Sub-dean Michael McDowell, the toastmaster, are shown at the speakers table for the gala banquet honoring the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Atlanta Chapter October 19 in the Habersham Room of Yohannan's Restaurant. Following the invocation by the Rev. John C. Ball Jr. (rector, St. Anne's Episcopal Church), greetings from the City of Atlanta were extended to President Wyton by Ben Massell Jr., vice-mayor. An interlude of whimsical music by the Clef Dwellers, a folk trio from North Fulton High School Choir, directed by Robert Lowrance, followed dinner.

Dean Dieckmann, daughter of C. W. Dieckmann, charter member and three-time dean of the chapter, presided over the business meeting. Miss Beyer reminisced entertainingly about the founding of the Georgia Chapter at a meeting on the steps of the Municipal Auditorium where the first dean, the late Edwin Arthur Kraft, was city organist, about later adventures in sponsoring visiting recitalists, and the changes in programs over the half century.

A witty and informative talk, "Where Do We Go from Here?" by the national president, climaxed the evening, telling of plans being made to extend and expand the work of the Guild and to bring the national organization into closer touch with the local chapters and their members. This was capped by Mr. Wyton's announcement that the National Council had voted to accept the bid of the Atlanta Chapter for the 1966 AGO National Convention.







Alec Wyton, Adele Dieckmann, and Michael McDowell; Yohannan's; Viola Aiken and Ethel Beyer cut the anniversary cake

In November, Marilyn Mason was featured as guest artist at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Additional programs were a recital at Druid Hills Baptist Church, with Mary Frances Ross, organist, and a choral service at St. John's Lutheran Church. The last event of the anniversary celebration was a party held at WSB "White Columns on Peachtree Street."

As the Atlanta Chapter celebrates its centennial, the article written by Chappell White, music critic for *The Atlanta Journal*, challenges our chapter members to continue to raise the quality of church music.

Adele Dieckmann, dean, and Ethel Beyer, the sole surviving charter member of the Georgia Chapter, enjoy looking at a chapter scrapbook prior to the anniversary celebration.



## Organists Guild Raises Quality of Church Music

By CHAPPELL WHITE

The complaint has occasionally been raised in this column that musicians, although individually inclined to be gregarious, have been rather slow in some areas to organize themselves for strong action. But there are notable exceptions, and one is the American Guild of Organists.

The guild was founded in New York in 1886, and 14 years later a group of Atlanta church musicians established the Georgia Chapter. Since then the chapter has worked quietly and effectively, without assuming the unpleasant features of a narrow pressure group, toward improving the quality of church music.

The aims of the American

The aims of the American Guild of Organists were clearly stated at the founding. The primary and fundamental purpose is to "advance the cause of worthy religious music," and all activities contribute either directly or indirectly toward this goal. The guild is interested in raising the status of the profession, as are all professional sociaties; but significantly this aim is joined to another — that of increasing among church increasing among church musicians an "appreciation of

#### Music Notes

their responsibilities, duties and opportunities."

As in all professional societies, one of the functions of the guild is to promote communication and exchange of ideas among its members. This is especially important in church musican, more than most, is likely to work without daily contact with other professionals. He deals with his choir, his minister, and the lay leaders of his congregation, but he seldom works with his colleagues in the profession.

To promote high standards of performance, the guild is charlered by the Regents of New York State to give examinations and award certificates of achievement. These examinations, which are graded up to the highest title of Fellow, are indeed fearsome in their difficulty. They have done much, not only to reward ability, but to encourage hard work.

As the Atlanta Chapter begins the celebration of its 50th anniversary, its dean, fittingly enough, is Miss Adele Dieckmann, who is the daughter of the late C. W. Dieckmann, Follow of the guild, three times dean of the Atlanta Chapter, and one of the fine teachers who laid the foundation of music in Atlanta. To open its anniversary activities, the Guild will present Marilyn Mason, widely known American virtuoso, at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on November 9.

Miss Mason's recital will be part of the guild's continuing, altruistic support of high standards. The guild assumes that these standards are of value. Here, I think, is the major lesson. Because church music serves the specific purpose of worship, it is frequently thought to have no standards beyond the taste of the listeners. Against this fallacy the Guild places the strength of a great tradition, the tradition of church music as the finest and noblest expression of man's spirit.

#### 1966 Biennial National Convention



The Atlanta Chapter hosted the first Biennial National Convention of the AGO to be held in the South in June 1966. The success of this convention, under the leadership of William Weaver, general chairman and Adele Dieckmann, program chairman, set standards for all future AGO National Conventions. As the Atlanta Chapter celebrates its centennial in 2014, it is appropriate that we reflect on the hosting of our first National Convention nearly fifty years ago!

In the August 1966 issue of *The Diapason*, the official journal of the AGO, Frank Cunkle, editor, wrote:

The convention really put the Atlanta Chapter on the map of Atlanta and of Georgia (just as it put it on the AGO national map) in a way that will be lasting and cumulative. The strengthening effect within the chapter itself should be worth all the work, too. Nothing brings out hidden talents like discharging group responsibilities.

Appropriately, the cover of the convention brochure (at right), "Sing unto the Lord a New Song," an illuminated manuscript from the Windmill Psalter, English, late 13th century, turned out to be Gunther Schuller's choice as the text for his commissioned work (Psalm 98).

The convention got off to a memorable beginning, with two pre-convention recitals on Sunday, June 26: E. Power Biggs performing on the new Flentrop at St. Anne's Episcopal Church and Virgil Fox on the magnificent Aeolian-Skinner at The Temple. With this as a beginning, the rest of the convention had high expectations, which were met and exceeded by all accounts. Following are excerpts from Frank Cunkle's review.

#### **Atlanta Convention Supplement: Report of the AGO National Convention**

A near-miracle of clever planning, firm organization, and musical balance, combined with a characteristically southern feeling of relaxation and absence of the hectic, helped to create one of the most satisfactory and enjoyable National Conventions in the history of the American Guild of Organists.

At Atlanta, between June 25 and July 1, "General Bill Weaver" had everything under control, and all but one person in complete co-operation: How he slipped up on the weather man, we will never know. But that maverick kicked over the traces and augmented the 90-degree temperatures with a variety of thunderstorms and downpours. Not many of the latter caught delegates unaware, and a few of us received repeated drenching. It restored our faith in Boss Weaver's infallibility; though, we learned that similar weather had been general over the country that week.



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**General Weaver** 

The 1250 registration was exceeded only by those conventions in communities much larger than Atlanta. That so many people braved their personal prejudices as to what summer is like in the South (only to be surprised by Atlanta's fabulous progress and its charm as a place to live) is a tribute to good promotion and intelligent planning. This was the first AGO convention for which buses (air-conditioned) were provided to shuttle conventioneers between venues, which eliminated the frantic passage between venues. Only five of the 50 states were not represented in the official list distributed the last day. Canada sent seven delegates. National officers have never been so well represented, even at conventions much nearer headquarters. In addition to the national president, both vice-president elect and retiring vice-president, secretary, and registrar were present, as well as a record number of councilors.

Adele Dieckmann, dean of the Atlanta Chapter, gave the welcome. Her quiet gracious charm and her special kind of radiance seemed to us to pervade the whole convention. She was always on hand, always equal to and ready for any situation, and (especially life-saving to a reporter) always knew the precise answer to the most difficult questions. Denver (site of the next National Convention) will have a real problem providing an Adele Dieckmann.



Adele Dieckmann

It has been several conventions since we have had as many good opportunities to renew old acquaintances and make new ones, to swap an array of stories, and to just plain "chew the fat" with valued friends from just about everywhere. This is one of the most rewarding elements of any good convention, and Atlanta provided it in "spades."

#### **Boyter Lecture-Demonstration**



Mabel & Haskell Boyter

Mabel Boyter's session was one of the best planned and most skillfully presented events of the whole convention. Squeezed into a too-brief time slot, Mrs. Boyter distributed a detailed outline of her work plan and a packet of the anthems used. She demonstrated her "four learning processes:" hearing (pitch and intervals); feeling (rhythm); seeing (posters, church symbols, etc.); and doing, separately and together. Her purpose is educational—not just to build choirs but, more importantly, to build future musicians for the congregations of the future.

#### **Opening Recital**

"Robert Noehren (University of Michigan) was the perfect choice for the official opening recital on the recently installed M. P. Möller Organ Opus 9185, 1959, at Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church. His modest, unassuming personality, his breathtaking accuracy, and his inner glow of musicianship, left everyone in exactly the right frame of mind for the week to come. For students, a finer example of the way it's done could hardly have been provided." —FC

#### **Rotating Programs**

An interesting concept of programming occurred on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between the hours of 10:30 am and 3:00 pm Convention attendees were divided in to three groups—each group able to attend three organ recitals with boxed lunch provided. This provided for nine recitalists!

#### **Solutions to Technical Problems in Organ Playing**

The first of Mildred Andrews' series attracted a capacity audience. Miss Andrews' extraordinarily perceptive ear, her precise solution to flaws she detects so quickly, and her use of imagery and suggestion made her sessions the most discussed, and praised, single feature of the entire convention. Each day, different student competitors became the target of that sharp ear and keen mind, and both they and hundreds of spectators came away with tangible new tools as well as an affectionate respect for Miss Andrews which bordered on adulation.



#### The Atlanta Festival Chorus

On Tuesday, a fine evening was provided by the Atlanta Festival Chorus and members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra at Glenn Memorial Methodist Church. The firm and intensely musical hand of Thor Johnson was in evidence. The program was so dominated by one work, Bernstein's Chichester Psalms that the other two works were over shadowed. Thor Johnson achieved a marvelous dramatic peak in the Bernstein work; the performance as a unit far exceeded the premiere broadcast heard previously in intensity, shape, and impact. This was one convention performance many will always remember.





Convention delegates attend choral concert at Glenn Memorial Methodist Church

#### **Guild Service**

Works for organ and chorus commissioned by the Atlanta Chapter were Laudes Organi by Zoltan Kodály (his last major composition), Sacred Cantata (based on Psalm 98) by Gunther Schuller, and Lee Hoiby's reduced orchestration with organ for Samuel Barber's *Prayers of Kirkegaard*. Both the Kodály and Schuller works were premiered at the Guild Service at Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, with the Schola Cantorum of New York, Hugh Ross, conductor, and Fred Swann, organist.



Mr. Swann proved again that he has few peers as a service player. The Guild Service was much different from its predecessors, and we thought it a welcome departure. None of the set liturgies borrowed from denominational services were heard this time, and the service was dominated by music instead of speech. What church musician didn't utter a fervent prayer that just one Sunday he [sic] might have that kind of hymn playing! Mr. Swann had more than a little to do with this as well; his performance on the two commissioned works was equally good.

In his terse, appropriate sermonette, An Omer of Manna, Dr. Allison F. Williams, pastor of Trinity Presbyterian church, Atlanta, began: "Music, observes Alan Watts, is that which is no sooner sounded than it dies away . . . to be passing is to live, to remain and continue is to die. If there is a theme in these remarks, this is it: not so much a sermon as a gesture of gratitude from the stodgy clergy to the artist, to those who give breath and life through music."

Four new organ installations heard at this convention were: Cathedral of St. Philip, Aeolian-Skinner, IV/89, 1962; Central Presbyterian Church, Schantz, IV/52, 1966; St. Anne's Episcopal Church, Flentrop, II/33, 1966; and St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Austin, IV/70, 1962.

Alec Wyton, AGO National President, made the following comments in his "President's Column" in the August, 1966, issue of *The Diapason*.

The whole Guild owes an enormous debt of gratitude to the Atlanta Chapter for its historymaking convention .... It only remains for me to say that our Atlanta Chapter put the Guild squarely in the mainstream of mid-20th century music by its commissioning of the brilliant new work by Gunther Schuller, which was a highlight, not only of the Guild Service but the entire week. I have long lamented the fact that church music is generally so far behind the times. We, all of us, that refuge in the comfort of our ivory towers, both in the quality of the music with which we are content and the quality of the performance, if we allow it. Now and again, some of our all-enlightened and braver colleagues bring their churches in to line with contemporary thinking with exciting results. Now it has been done officially in the framework of a National Convention.



Alec Wyton

According to Adele McKee, convention planners had projected an attendance of 1,000 and had budgeted for that many. As a result of the increased attendance (1,250), the profit from the convention was put into a fund for Atlanta Chapter scholarships and has been the basis for much of the chapter's activities even up until the present time. The Atlanta convention marked the last AGO National Convention for which artists played for expenses rather than their regular fees. This allowed for the registration fee for Atlanta Chapter members to be \$25.00!

#### 1970S

#### Thirty-Year Collaboration



In 1968, Gregory Colson arrived in Atlanta after an impressive musical career in Nashville, Tennessee, to assume the position of organist and choirmaster at All Saints' Episcopal Church. While at All Saints', Greg provided two programs for the Atlanta Chapter. In 1974, Greg joined forces with Sue Goddard as accompanist and moved to Grace United Methodist Church. Greg and Sue both served as secretary, sub-dean, and dean of the Atlanta Chapter. Together, they provided eight concerts and Guild Services for the Atlanta Chapter, plus concerts for two Regional Conventions (Atlanta 1975 and

Nashville 1995) and one National Convention (Atlanta 1992). This remarkable collaboration spanned 30 years.

During Greg's active music career, he provided the Atlanta community and the Atlanta Chapter with special services and concerts of 30-plus major works and several Atlanta and U.S. premieres. In the vitae of his music career with Sue, he made the following statement,

Most of all, my heartfelt thanks go to Sue Goddard, my team-mate, who never met an organ or piano she couldn't make sound its best even on tour, who is always note-perfect before rehearsals begin, and whose innate musicality, technical mastery, and rhythm-sense gave us the security that contributed to our success through those three gratifying decades.

#### The Music of the Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II

On November 20, 1977, the Voices of Grace, the Georgia Tech Chorale, members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and Sue Goddard, organist, conducted by Greg Colson, presented the complete service music from the Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II at Grace United Methodist Church. After much research, it was determined that this was the first ever concert of the complete Coronation music in the U.S. Greg described this concert in the program:

The total effect of the combination of compositions by some of England's leading composers is one of exalted praise and thanksgiving. We are not presenting them in an effort to be compared to the splendid forces that performed at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, nor do we attempt to sing in the style of English men and boys' choirs. We simply wish to bring the glorious music to life for the greater glory of God and in honor of the Silver Jubilee of a noble and lovely lady.

Excerpts of this program were presented with the Voices of Grace, Sue Goddard, organist, and Greg Colson, conductor, for the Guild Service of the Atlanta Chapter on September 13, 1988.

#### An Evening of Concerti

On May 8, 1979, Greg and Sue, along with members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, William Noll, guest conductor, presented "An Evening of Concerti" at Grace United Methodist Church. The Atlanta Chapter was invited as special guests to this majestic concert.

The program included Francis Poulenc's *Concerto in G minor* for organ, strings, and timpani and *Concerto in D minor* for two pianos and orchestra; and Joseph Jongen's Symphonie *Concertante* for organ and orchestra.



#### Organ Students Mini-Convention – 1973

A mini-convention for organ students was held at Presser Hall, Agnes Scott College, April 27-28, 1973. The convention, co-sponsored by the Atlanta Chapter, Agnes Scott College, and Georgia College (Milledgeville), offered the following workshops:

- Choral Techniques − Gregory Colson, ChM
- Service Playing Sue W. Goddard, AAGO
- □ Organ Master Class Dr. Raymond J. Martin
- Church Music Administration Stephen J. Ortlip, AAGO
- Children's Choir Demonstration Eloise Wolfersteig
- Anthem and Oratorio Accompanying Dr. Robert Wolfersteig

In addition to the formal classes, organ crawls were arranged at St. Anne's Episcopal Church (Flentrop), All Saints' Episcopal Church (Schantz), and St. Luke's Episcopal Church (Austin). Raymond Harris, professor of organ and harpsichord, Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia, was the guest organist for the closing recital at First Presbyterian Church.

#### 1975 Southeastern Regional Convention



The first convention of Region IV since the combining of the previous Southern and Southeastern Regions was held in Atlanta, June 16-19, 1975, and drew in excess of 300 delegates from the nine-state area and beyond. With much advance publicity, delegates arrived prepared for a treat, and none could have been disappointed with the packed schedule. This convention was under the leadership of Gregory Colson, general chair; Sue

Goddard and Dan Pruitt, program co-chairs; and

Douglas Johnson, treasurer. An innovative concept introduced at this convention was that all meals, with the exception of the banquet, were provided at each location so that attendees did not have to search out eating establishments.



Gregory Colson, Dan Pruitt, Sue Goddard, Doug Johnson

Pre-convention programs on Sunday, June 15, included a recital by Joyce Jones on the newly installed Ruffatti organ at North Avenue Presbyterian Church; and later, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, under the direction of Robert Shaw, presented a fully-staged performance of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* at Symphony Hall. The convention opened with a Festival Service at St. Luke's Episcopal Church (pictured right), combining the "Three Hymn Preludes" of R. Vaughan Williams and their associated hymns, with an anthem, composed for the service by Lee Suitor, organist-choirmaster at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, and service music by McNeill Robinson.

A worship service was scheduled for each day of the convention—each one unique in its content and presentation. The second of these services, at First Presbyterian Church, was entitled "Worship Americana." The choir, garbed in authentic Pilgrim attire, sang a setting of "Psalm 81" from the Ainsworth Psalter and William Selby's anthem "O Be Joyful in the Lord." The homily was a series of anthems by William Billings, with heroic readings interspersed. The third service, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, featured J. S. Bach's *Cantata 106, Gottes Zeit ist die* 



allerbeste Zeit, ("God's time is the best of all times") and selections by a consort of ancient instruments. The fourth service was a Eucharist of the Holy Spirit at Grace United Methodist Church that included selections of Messiaen's *Messe de la Pentecôte* as an integral part of the Eucharist, with John Hooker, organist, and dancers interpreting each section.

The major choral program of the convention on Monday evening included Herbert Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi*, with the Colson Chorale joined by the choirs of Glenn Memorial and Grace United Methodist Churches and members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Greg Colson, with Sue Goddard, organist.

International Swiss recitalist Monica Henking made three appearances: a recital of romantic literature on the 1974 Schantz organ at First Baptist Church, an all-Bach program on the 1966 Flenthrop organ at St. Anne's Episcopal Church, and a master class discussing Mozart's compositions for mechanical organ at Georgia State University. Special programming effects included thunder and lightning—and loss of electricity—during Robert Glasgow's playing of Charles Tournemire's *Seven Chorales on the Seven Last Words of Christ* at the Cathedral of Christ the King (RC) and David Bowman's playing of William Bolcom's *The Black Host* on the 1975 Schantz organ at Northside Drive Baptist Church. The piano recital by Enid Katahn proved to be the "sleeper" of the events, as the audience quickly realized they were having a rare treat in hearing a piano recital at an organ convention. Miss Katahn studied at Juilliard and had a joint appointment with Blair Academy of Music and Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee.

#### 1980S

#### Seventieth Anniversary – 1984



The Atlanta Chapter celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with dinner followed by a Festival Service, with the joint choirs of Northwest Presbyterian Church (David Fishburn, director) and St. John United Methodist Church (Lee Orr, director) at St. John United Methodist Church on October 13, 1984.

Deans in attendance (left to right): Herb Archer, Wallace Zimmerman, Sarah Martin, Porter Remington, Frances Felder, Sue Goddard, Dan Pruitt, Marie Smith, William Weaver, Jean Scaglion, and Willa Lowrance.

#### Atlanta Chapter Celebrates the Tri-centennial of J. S. Bach

Johann Sebastian Bach, born March 21, 1685, holds a special place in the hearts of AGO members everywhere. In the history of western music, J. S. Bach is the world's best known church musician and its most revered composer for the organ.

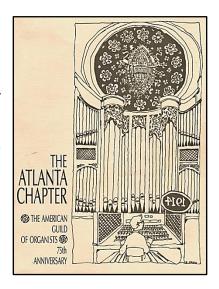
To celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> birthday of our distinguished predecessor, the Atlanta Chapter planned a series of Bach-oriented programs during the 1984-1985 season. Chapter members contributed to the Bach Anniversary Program Fund to provide special funding for this celebration. The celebration culminated in March 1985 with a festival week of Bach recitals and workshops by Swiss organist Lionel Rogg, who is recognized internationally for his outstanding organ performances and for his two complete recordings of the organs works of Bach.

#### Seventy-fifth Anniversary — 1989



As the Atlanta Chapter began its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the active membership had grown to approximately 325 members. Seventeen members were identified as having been members of the chapter for fifty years or longer. Viola H. Aiken, pictured at left with

Frances Felder, was the first female dean of the Georgia Chapter 1923-1924. Under the leadership of Maxine Pilcher, dean, and Raymond Chenault, sub-dean, the anniversary year got off to a memorable start with Hector Olivera in recital on the "Mighty Mo" at the Fox Theatre on Sunday afternoon, September 10. The recital was followed by a champagne reception in Ellis Hall at All Saints' Episcopal Church.



Two international concert organists were presented in recital as part of the year-long celebration. The anniversary celebration banquet was held at All Saints' Episcopal Church on Tuesday, October 10, 1989, with English organist, Thomas Trotter, in recital after the banquet. In November, Lynne Davis, winner of first prize at the prestigious St. Albans International Organ Competition in England, gave a recital of French Organ Music at Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church. Her unique living and working experience in France provides her the status of world authority in all French organ repertoires. The year ended with the world premiere of a four-movement choral composition on "healing texts" for organ, brass, and timpani by Steven Paulus, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra composer-in-residence, at the Cathedral of St. Philip.

#### 1990S

#### Atlanta Chapter's Second Biennial National Convention — 1992



The following article appeared in *The Atlanta Journal* on Sunday preceding the opening of the 1992 AGO National Convention in Atlanta.

At the second Biennial National Convention of the AGO to be held in Atlanta, the 1800-plus registrants were to reap rich rewards. The Atlanta Chapter had assembled an impressive array of public concerts, encompassing organ recitals, choral programs, and world premieres of works by more than 15 composers. The international lineup of organists included Marie-Claire Alain (France), Umberto Pineschi (Italy), Karel Paukert

(Czechoslovakia/Cleveland, Ohio), and Beth and Ray Chenault (Atlanta). Choral offerings featured the Tallis Scholars of London and the Robert Shaw Festival singers of Atlanta.

The Steering Committee, under the capable leadership of Sarah L. Martin, general convention coordinator, and Cal Johnson, dean of the Atlanta Chapter, adopted diverse and intriguing themes in the program planning: Hispanic activities in honor of the 500th anniversary of Columbus's voyage to America, African-American composers and performers in recognition of Atlanta's importance in the Civil Rights Movement, female composers and performers, choral music and organ with instruments, performance practices, and emerging artists—a continuation of the successful effort of the 1966 National Convention in Atlanta.

The New Music Committee, under the leadership of Adele Dieckmann McKee, worked diligently to coordinate a total of eleven commissions for the convention, including: choral, organ solo, organ duet, a processional hymn, and a special commission for theatre organ. Among the better-known composers commissioned to write works for the convention were Stephen Paulus, William Albright, Alice Parker, Judith Zaimont, and Charles Knox—all American. Some 80 workshops were offered, certainly "something for everyone"... and then some.

#### Opening Convocation: The Magnificat at Morehouse

Atlanta's civic pride rests in great extent on the gifts and attainments of its African-American population. Morehouse College, one of the nation's premiere traditional African-American colleges, with its 1981, IV/92 Wicks organ, was the site for the opening convocation in the college's Martin Luther King Jr. International Chapel. The convocation was outlined as a choral liturgical service of the word. Choral duties were assigned to ten area choirs, divided into two antiphonal bodies on the stage and in the balcony. New music played a major part in this celebration, with commissions comprising the opening voluntary, introit, processional



David Crawford Stills Resident organist

hymn, anthem, and choral blessing—all commissioned by the Atlanta Chapter for the 1992 National Convention.

The sung blessing cast the Rev. Dr. Don E. Saliers, in the role of singing cleric. The use of several dialogical works beckoned a particular drift in national worship style—the musical exchange between

leader and assembly. Vatican II meets the AGO, as homilist Saliers expounded on the broadcast insinuations of Mary's *Magnificat* as manifesto and torch for musicians.

#### **Festal Morning Prayer**

Psalm 89:15. Blessed are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face.

Festal Morning Prayer, with a combined choir from three Atlanta churches, was held at Peachtree Presbyterian Church, the largest Presbyterian Church in North America. The service included several works for two organs. Two of the commissioned works, one choral and one organ, were presented during this service. The commissioned choral work, funded by Adele Dieckmann McKee, was Alice



Parker's "The Wells of Salvation" for organ, hand bells, and choir, based on Isaiah 12:2-6. The commissioned organ work, "Offering of Love," was composed by Leslie Adams, composer in residence for a non-profit organization working for the expansion of opportunities for African-Americans in the Arts. The service also included William Mathias' "Let All the World in Every Corner Sing." Organists for this service were John and Margaret Mueller of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

#### An Evening of Organ Concertos: The Home Team Wins Big

A straw poll of convention goers would have easily voted this milestone the convention favorite and, with it, composer Stephen Paulus, the uncontested MVP. (See following commission) The home team took to its own turf: members of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and their resident conductor, George Hanson; Norman Mackenzie, the organist of Trinity Presbyterian Church and staff keyboardist for the orchestra; and Atlanta native, organist Jonathan Biggers.

The program, which included a trio of accompanying concertos, achieved a fascinating goal of reinstating worthy works of art about which audiences have heard, or read, or auditioned, in uncommon recordings, but have never heard: Langlais' "Piece in Free Form," Howard Hanson's *Concerto for Organ, Strings, and Harp*; and Charles-Marie Widor's *Sinfonia Sacra, op. 81*.

#### **Special Commissions**

The following explanation provides background for the world premiere of a major work commissioned for this convention.

Hildegaard of Bingen (1098-1179) was a remarkable woman, a "first" in many fields, and the first composer to have a biography. When few women were accorded respect, she was consulted by and advised bishops, popes, and kings. Music was extremely important to Hildegaard. She describes it as the means of recapturing the original joy and beauty of paradise. According to her, before the fall, Adam had a pure voice and joined angels in singing praises to God. After the fall, music was invented and musical instruments made in order to worship God appropriately. Perhaps this explains why her music most often sounds like what we imagine to be angels singing.



With this in mind, Stephen Paulus, artist-in-residence for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, was commissioned to compose Part I of *Visions from Hildegaard* for SATB chorus, winds, organ, and percussion. Dedicated to Robert Shaw, the Robert Shaw Festival Singers, under the direction of Anne Howard Jones and Norman Mackenzie, organist, presented the world premiere of this major work on June 28 at Wieuca Road Baptist Church.

Four other commissions had a special association with Atlanta Chapter members.

☐ Dan Locklair's "Voyage: A Fantasy for Organ" was premiered by Alan Morrison, a native of Atlanta. This organ solo was commissioned by Carl and Sally Gable in honor of Sarah L. Martin in recognition of her unique leadership in the study of organ within the Atlanta area. As a musician and teacher, Sarah has gained the respect, admiration, and love of her colleagues and of all who have had the privilege of being inspired and motivated by her teaching—especially Alan Morrison, a former student.



- Alice Parker's "The Wells of Salvation" for SATB choir with hand bells and organ was funded by Adele Dieckmann McKee in memory of her husband, Dean G. McKee, a clergyman who loved and supported church music.
- ☐ Elizabeth and Raymond Chenault presented the world premieres of two works for duo organists: "Rhapsody" by Naji Hakim, the Lebanese-French organist, composer, and improviser, who studied under Jean Langlais and succeeded Messiaen at the Église de la Sainte-Trinité (Paris); and "Sonata a Deux" by Gaston Litaize, considered one of the 20th century masters of the French organ, who studied and taught for most of his life at the National Institute of the Blind.
- The Atlanta Young Singers of Callanwolde commissioned "His Praises We'll Sing," an anthem composed by Dr. Charles Knox, an Atlanta composer and professor of music at Georgia State University.

#### Specialized Worship: Italian Mass and French Vespers

Two of the workshops culminated in two specialized services. Umberto Pineschi was the workshop leader for the Italian repertoire for the Italian Mass, which was a reconstruction of an Italian Mass with Gregorian chant and organ. The mass took place at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (RC) with participation from the students in the workshop. The workshop on French Classic literature, led by Marie-Claire Alain and Lenora McCloskey, dealt with performance practices of the period. The service, held at the Cathedral of Christ the King (RC), was a reconstruction of Christmas Vespers according to the liturgy from Guillaume (1686) and was intended to demonstrate the possibilities for *alternatum* practices in 17th-century France. The organ settings of the mass were played by participants from the workshop.

#### **Closing Concert**

The final concert featured Hector Olivera in the world premiere of William Albright's *Flight of Fancy: Ballet for Organ* on the "Mighty Mo" at the Fox Theatre, followed by a dessert and champagne reception in the Egyptian Ballroom. According to Hector, Atlanta is known for three things: Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, and the Fox Theatre. The last dance, "Alla Marcia—the AGO Fight Song" cries out for college fight songs, such as "I'm A-OK, I'm AGO."

#### Conclusion: A Beacon and a Hope

Haig Mardirosian, professor of music at American University in Washington, DC, provided the following conclusion in his review of the convention in *The American Organist*, August 1992.

No institutional agenda, no matter how broad-minded, can hope to satisfy every constituency, but one came away from Atlanta at week's end with a potent perception that important objectives had been met. The commissions at this convention weren't of any single class or purpose. Those who decry contemporary church music as simplified to moronic proportions ought to take cheer in something as complex as the choral works commissioned here, or as simple as the new (Richard) Dirksen hymn. Those who lament the death of the organ in the concert hall might thank Stephen Paulus for allotting symphony conductors new reason to program an organ concerto. Those who traditionally impugn the AGO for elitism, can reconsider, for the bids at inclusiveness in Atlanta were sincere and altogether past politically correct lip service. This National Convention, like the debonair, hospitable city which hosted it, was an authentic expression of the mosaic of people, traditions, notions, and inclinations of the times. That in itself makes reason for exhilaration and confidence.

#### Georgia Pipe Organ Catalog

The Atlanta Chapter was requested by AGO National Headquarters to assemble a list of all the organs in Metropolitan Atlanta. Since the chapter's geographical boundaries encompass all of North Georgia, and Metropolitan Atlanta continues to engulf ever more distant counties, the decision was made to catalog the entire state. The catalogue contains only organs in existence at the time of the convention and those for which contracts had been signed for installation in 1992 or 1993. Dr. Calvert Johnson, former chapter dean and professor of music at, Agnes Scott College, was general editor for the publication.

This catalogue serves as a reference for substitute and guest organists who wish to find out the resources available on an unfamiliar instrument in order to select appropriate repertoire. Scholars of organology will find this catalog useful to trace the history of specific builders in Georgia.

#### Organ Day 1993 and 1994

Organ Day—Opus I was held on January 9, 1993. The Atlanta Chapter and the Greater Atlanta Music Association (GAMA) co-sponsored a hands-on experience for middle school and high school piano students and their teachers. Students and teachers were shown a video tape about the organ, and students were given the opportunity to play a prepared piece, assisted by one of the clinicians. Organs at St. Anne's Episcopal Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church were used for the event.

Organ Day—Opus II was held on October 22, 1994. Over 50 students, teachers and parents participated. The day began at the Cathedral of St. Philip, with a demonstration of the large Aeolian-Skinner organ and several performances. Later in the morning, participants crossed Peachtree Road to Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, where students were treated to a history of the church, a demonstration of the Möller organ, a tour of the tone chambers, and a talk about the care of a pipe organ.



Organ Day—Opus II

#### 1992 National Young Artist Competition Winner Returns

On Tuesday, May 10, 1994, the Atlanta Chapter presented Martin Jean, winner of the National Young Artists Competition of the 1992 National AGO Convention, in recital at Northside Drive Baptist Church. Dr. Jean earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Organ Performance and Literature at the University of Michigan as a student of Robert Glasgow.



#### Eightieth Anniversary

First Presbyterian Church, Marietta, Georgia, hosted the Atlanta Chapter's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration on October 11, 1994. Past deans were honored and presented with certificates of gratitude for their years

of service to the chapter. Following the dinner, a concert was given in the Great Hall by the Chattanooga Boys Choir, conducted by Everett O'Neal.

Deans (Standing L-R): Jean Scaglion, Michael McDowell,
Herbert R. Buffington (present dean)
(Seated L-R): William Weaver, Porter Remington, Calvert Johnson, Timothy Wissler,
Marie Smith, and Wallace Zimmerman



#### Pipe Organ Encounters

The AGO with generous funding from the Mahadh Foundation, a silent philanthropic foundation, the American Institute of Organbuilders, and the Associated Pipe Organ Builders of America, sponsored five Pipe Organ Encounters (POEs) across the country in 1995. The purpose of the POEs was to introduce

teenagers and young adults to the organ through instruction in organ playing, repertoire, history, design, and construction.

The first POE to be held in Region IV, hosted by the Atlanta Chapter, was held June 25-30, 1995, headquartered on the campus of Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Georgia. Students had access to recreational facilities and Austin, Brombaugh, and Schlicker organs. Twenty-three young persons, ages 13 to 20, evenly assorted by gender and from seven states, participated along with guests and local teachers.

The week began with a special trip to the Fox Theatre, where participants were able to try the organ themselves, and some said with only 40 or so people in the deserted theatre, they were all "Phantoms of the Opera."

In the pictures (I to r): Dr. David Messineo, a staff organist for Radio City Music Hall, demonstrated Mighty Mo for the students; "Phantom Of the Fox" and curator of Mighty Mo, Joe Patton, at the console; students watching a demonstration.





Daytime presentations included: introduction to the organ, how to practice, overview of organ literature, organ registration and use of recordings to expand aural perspectives, creative service playing,



improvisation, organ maintenance, computer technology for music, introduction to the harpsichord, conducting, and liturgical dance.

In tours of churches, concert hall, and residence settings, participants examined instruments in the Atlanta area. At the final POE event, the 23 students played their end-of-the week show-and-tell recital. In the picture to the left, a POE participant plays the Flentrop tracker organ at the residence of Bill Weaver and Doug Johnson.

In 2000, the POE was held at Emory University, with 11 students. In 2004, the POE returned to Agnes Scott College, with 34 students.



**Parkey OrganBuilders** 



POE Students at Central Presbyterian Church 2004

### Atlanta Summer Organ Festival



The first Atlanta Summer Organ Festival took place in 1995, after a meeting between Timothy Wissler, organist at the Cathedral of Christ the King (RC), and Craig Cansler, Canon for Music at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip. Norman Mackenzie, choirmaster and organist at Trinity Presbyterian Church, was also invited to participate. The general lack of classical music performances during the summer served as the impetus to establish a Summer Organ Festival. The Cathedral of Christ the King had already begun the tradition with recitals over the previous two years in memory of their first music director, Helen Riley Smith.

The first festival consisted of recitals at the Cathedral of St. Philip, the Cathedral of Christ the King, and Trinity Presbyterian Church. These three churches were eventually joined by Peachtree Road United Methodist Church for the 8<sup>th</sup> Atlanta Summer Organ Festival in 2002. Trinity Presbyterian Church withdrew from the festival after 2006, and in 2012, All Saints' Episcopal Church joined the series. The list of organists who have

performed on the series comprises some of the most talented, and frequently fairly young, organists available over the years.

#### AGO Centennial Celebration Recital



The Centennial Celebration of the American Guild of Organists was Saturday, April 13, 1996. April 14 was designated as *Guild Sunday*. Each chapter was asked to present an organ recital on that day. The Atlanta Chapter presented two recitals: the Cathedral of St. Philip and St. Luke's Presbyterian Church. The focus of the recital at St. Luke's was titled "Back to the Future" to honor the past by presenting the hope of the future via the enthusiasm and inspiration of young talent. The performers on this recital included some of the students who participated in Atlanta's 1995 POE, as well as several local chapter members who assisted with the POE.

#### Christmas at an Italian Villa — 1996

Our host for the evening was Lamar Savage at his magnificent Italian Villa in Ansley Park. The host's three-manual organ, built by A.E. Schlueter, had a console that could be moved to various locations in the foyer so that people could see the performer playing the instrument.

The first performer of the evening was Atlanta native, Alan Morrison, who played a set of French variations on a famous Christmas hymn. Following that, Alan and his mother, Jeannine Morrison, played several piano duets on the two grand pianos which were rolled into the foyer from adjoining halls. The highlight of the



Duo pianists Alan and Jeannine Morrison

evening was a trio with Alan and Jeannine on the pianos and Wallace Zimmermann on the organ playing "Sleigh Ride." This was only the first of a succession of after-Christmas celebrations held in chapter members' homes, each one providing magnificent residence pipe organs.

#### Royal Bank Calgary International Organ Competition

The North American Round of the Royal Bank Calgary International Organ Festival and Competition was held at Spivey Hall on the Clayton College & State University campus in Morrow, Georgia, in 1998. The event was a great success that the quadrennial event returned to Spivey Hall in May 2002. Many Atlanta Chapter members were active in assisting to host this competition. Winners of these two competitions, as well as many of the competitors, have returned for solo performances at Spivey Hall.



#### A NEW MILLENNIUM

#### PIPES Spectacular!



On Sunday, October 15, 2000, the AGO in cooperation with the RCCO presented more than 2,000 performers in more than 225 concert venues throughout North America. A family audience of more than 100,000 attended these concerts. This one-day, nation-wide celebration of the pipe organ was designed to increase public awareness of the organ and to help raise funds for the AGO's education and professional development programs. These concerts featured the organ in its historic and evolving role as a solo, accompanying, and ensemble instrument. Twenty-five chapters, including the Atlanta Chapter, were selected for their exceptional creativity in

programming for this event. The Atlanta Chapter's concert, held at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, Dunwoody, was titled "Organ and Friends."

The flagship event was held on October 8, as a tribute to Virgil Fox at the Riverside Church in New York City. This event marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fox's death.

#### **Atlanta Chapter Commissions**

The Atlanta Chapter has commissioned four works by chapter members.

- ☐ In 2003, the chapter commissioned Bruce Neswick, FAGO, Canon for Music at the Cathedral of St. Philip, to compose a work for SATB choir with organ. The anthem, titled "The Days Are Surely Coming" was based on the scriptures for the Lectionary text for the fifth Sunday in Lent Year B: Psalm 51 and Jeremiah 31:31-34. Twenty-one local churches presented this anthem
- In 2004, the chapter commissioned William Krape, organist/choirmaster, the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to write an organ composition for the season of Easter. This composition was entitled "This Joyous Eastertide" based on the tune *VRUECHTEN*. Twenty-nine chapter members presented this composition at their churches during the season of Easter.
- "Reflections on Holy Week According to the Gospel of Saint Mark" by David Kocsis, was commissioned by the chapter in 2006. This impressionistic, introspective, and inspiring suite for organ was in four movements: Betrayal, Trial, Crucifixion, and Resurrection.
- In 2012, the chapter commissioned Dr. Arlan Sunnarborg, director of music, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, to compose a work for SATB choir with organ. The anthem titled "O Be Joyful" was based on Psalm 100: 1-3a (Jubilate Deo) and was premiered at the annual Chapter Guild Service at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

In addition to these commissions, Emory University organist, Timothy Albrecht, composed a set of five short pieces for the Atlanta Chapter to use during the month of March 2005. These compositions were based on familiar hymns used during Lent and Easter.

#### "Jesus Junction" Program

All knowledgeable Atlantans know that "Jesus Junction" is at the intersection of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip, Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, and the Cathedral of Christ the King (RC) on Peachtree Road, south of Buckhead. The finale for the 2002-2003 Atlanta Chapter program year, *It's a GRAND Night of Playing*, was held at Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church on Tuesday, May 13, 2003. Three talented Atlanta Chapter members from these three churches were on the program: Bruce Neswick,

Canon for Music at the Cathedral of St. Philip, Dr. Eric Nelson, minister of music for Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, and Dr. Timothy Wissler, organist at the Cathedral of Christ the King.

(I to r): Cathedral of St. Philip, Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church, Cathedral of Christ the King (RC)





#### Twins Obtain AAGO Certification



Alice Griffin Walker and Becky Griffin Ramsey (aka, "the twins") do almost everything together. They studied with the same piano teacher, Ethel Beyer, attended the same college, Agnes Scott, studied organ with the same teacher, Dr. Raymond J. Martin, gave their senior recital together at Peachtree Baptist Church, and now serve at churches and live in Covington, Georgia—Becky at First United Methodist Church and Alice at First Presbyterian Church. So, why should they not obtain the associate certification from the AGO at the same time? This they did in

June 2003. During their early piano study with "Miss Ethel," she instilled in the both of them the necessity to study for guild certification. They were coached for the certification examinations by Adele McKee, FAGO, and Don Larson, AAGO.

#### Ninetieth Anniversary Celebration — 2004

The Atlanta Chapter celebrated its 90th anniversary with a reception, dinner, and recital on October 12, 2004, at All Saints' Episcopal Church, with over 200 in attendance. The celebration began with a social reception, where there was a display of chapter archives maintained by the Atlanta History Center. There were 19 of 22 former deans in attendance. Three of these, Adele D. McKee, Dr. Raymond J. Martin, and William Weaver, plus John Widener of Widener & Company, Organ Builders, had been members of the Atlanta Chapter for over 50 years.





Left to Right: Former Deans, Herb Archer, Sarah Hawbecker, John Brandt, Sarah Martin, Dan Pruitt, Calvert Johnson, Micki Gonzalez, Maxine Pilcher, Joanne Brown (current dean), Adele McKee, Sue Goddard, Gregory Colson, Timothy Wissler, Wallace Zimmerman, Raymond Martin, David Stills, Herbert Buffington, Phil Parkey

After celebrating the anniversary with an appropriately decorated cake, Dan Pruitt, former dean and cochair of the anniversary committee, led a time of reflection that included four long-time members, who reflected on their memories of the chapter.











(L to R) Dan Pruitt, Raymond J. Martin, John Widener, Adele McKee, William Weaver

The chapter adjourned to the sanctuary for a magnificent recital by British organist, David Briggs. After an evening of fine wine, fine dining, and memories, the chapter departed in anticipation of the celebration of the chapter's centennial in 2014.



#### 2007 Region IV Convention

During four sun-filled days in June 2007, 240 registrants from the Southeastern Region and beyond were treated to world-class organists performing on world-class instruments, with an assortment of sermons, psalms, hymns, anthems, and spiritual songs in honor of creation and in praise and thanksgiving for the gift of music. Under the dedicated leadership of festival co-chairs Bruce Neswick and John Brandt, attendees were treated to "an affair to remember."



Our thanks to Dr. Douglas Murray, professor of English, Belmont University, Nashville, Tennessee, and a member of the Nashville AGO Chapter for allowing us to use excerpts from his review of the convention.

Unlike sermons, regional conventions of the AGO don't require scriptural texts. But had the 2007 Region IV meeting, held in Atlanta June 17-20, 2007, needed one, the following

passage would have worked very well: Jesus' familiar words from Revelation 21:5, "Behold, I make all things new." The motto of the convention was *New South! New Organs! New Music!* This convention came 15 years after a National AGO Convention in what many consider to be the Capital City of the Deep South, but there is so much excellent music-making in Atlanta—and there are so many new organs—that the 2007 Regional featured only one instrument intact from 1992. The rest were completely new, or in two cases, substantially rebuilt, revoiced, and enlarged.

#### **NEW SOUTH: Creativity**

#### Worship: uplifting worship held at three churches in the downtown Atlanta area

The opening service, a hymn festival entitled *Creation* struck the keynote. David Arcus, Duke University's highly-esteemed organist, improvisor, and composer served as organist. The service began with the world premiere of Arcus' "Creation Festival Prelude" for organ, brass quintet, and tympani—a piece based on themes from Haydn's *Creation*. Hymns and readings were chosen which aided the congregation to meditate on God's generous acts of creativity. In a memorable sermon, the Rev. Dr. Barbara Brown Taylor (Episcopal priest, professor of religion at Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia, and adjunct professor of Christian Spirituality at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia) spoke of the sounds of creation's fifth day—the music made before the creation of humankind.)

Creativity was also the subject of a second homily, given by Dr. William Porter (professor of organ, harpsichord, and improvisation at Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York) at a Service of Matins at the Cathedral of St. Philip. Porter encouraged church musicians to consider ways in which they are weekly, daily, hourly making new things, making things new, and adding to the beauty of the universe. David Conte's (professor of composition at San Francisco Conservatory of Music, San Francisco, California) *Three Mystical Hymns* received its premiere, with the combined choirs of the Cathedral of St. Philip and Peachtree Road United Methodist Church.

In the closing worship event at Grace United Methodist Church, the Rev. Dr. Don Saliers officiated and delivered the sermon at a Service of Evening Prayer with Sue W. Goddard as organist. Dr. Saliers' gifts as worship leader, musician, composer, and theologian were shared with attendees in the wonderfully, newly created worship space at Grace. The Rev. Dr. John Beyers, a former student of Dr. Saliers and pastor at Grace Church, also was a part of the service.

#### **NEW ORGANS: Concerts**

#### **A**mazing Artists, **G**rand Venues, **O**utstanding Organs

Featured artists included: Matt Curlee and NEOS (jazz-fusion quintet with organ) at Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church, Peter Marshall at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Elizabeth and Raymond Chenault at All Saints' Episcopal Church, Joan Lippincott at Spivey Hall, Roberta Gary at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Ahreum Han at Sacred Heart (RC), and Mary Preston at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church.

The following is a statement was overheard at the convention: "Prosperous and sophisticated, Atlanta is now an anthology of late 20<sup>th</sup>- and early 21<sup>st</sup> -century organ building. Conventioneers heard two sorts of organs, and numerous debates were overheard about the merits of each."

#### **NEW MUSIC: World Premieres**

There were five world premieres at the convention, all of which have been published.

→ "Four Short Journeys to *ABBOTS LEIGH*" (for solo organ): Prelude, Scherzo, Pastorale, Fughetta; Joel Martinson; made possible by a generous gift from the Atlanta Chapter of the AGO.

- Three Mystical Hymns (for mixed chorus and organ); David Conte; made possible by a generous gift from Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia, in celebration of the College's 110th Anniversary, 2007.
- "Variations on VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS" (for organ, two players); theme followed by eight contrasting variations; David Briggs; made possible by a generous gift from Elizabeth and Raymond Chenault.
- "Fantasia on the tune FINIAN (for solo organ); Craig Phillips; made possible by a generous gift from the Atlanta Chapter of the AGO.
- "Creation Festival Prelude" (for brass quintet, timpani, and organ); David Arcus; made possible by a generous gift from the Atlanta Chapter of the AGO.

#### 1966 National Young Artist Competition Winner Returns

On Tuesday, January 8, 2008, the Atlanta Chapter presented Thomas Murray, winner of the National Young Artists Competition of the 1966 National AGO Convention held in Atlanta, in recital on the recently restored Wicks-Coulter Opus 1 organ at Morningside Presbyterian Church. Dr. Murray, concert organist and recording artist, is university organist and professor of music at Yale University of Music, New Haven, Connecticut. In 1986, the AGO named him International Artist of the Year for 1986.



#### Organ Spectacular! — The World's Largest Organ Concert

The AGO, in cooperation with other organ organizations, including the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO) and the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) designated 2008-2009 as the *International Year of the Organ*. Churches and music organizations across the world offered special programs on or around Sunday, October 19, 2008, through the International Organ Spectacular.



#### An Interactive Concert for Kids of All Ages with Robin Hensley, organist, and Renato Lucatello, organ builder (Mander) Saturday, October 18, 2008

Organ Spectacular Concert
with performance by Atlanta Chapter members
and guest artist Gerre Hancock
Sunday, October 19, 2008

Sponsored by the Atlanta Chapter American Guild of Organists

This international event, celebrating the *King of Instruments*, brought singular focus upon the unique value the organ makes as a contribution of the art to the culture at large. This celebration was designed to increase appreciation for the enduring majesty of the instrument and its music in people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Atlanta Chapter sponsored two concerts: "An Interactive Concert for Kids of All Ages" at which concert goers were presented classic repertoire (Pachelbel, J. S. Bach, Franz Joseph Haydn, R. Vaughan Williams, and Vierne) along with "fun" music, "The Flight of the Bumble Bee" and selections from *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* and *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. The second concert "Organ Spectacular Concert" concert was held on Sunday afternoon, October 19, 2008. The featured performer on this concert was Gerre Hancock, organist and master of the choristers at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in New York City. The concert also featured a commissioned work for this day by Stephen Paulus, "Blithely Breezing Along" from *Baronian Suite*. Several Atlanta Chapter members were featured on the program, which was designed to appeal to all ages and backgrounds.

Performers on the program are pictured, (L to R): Nicholas Bowden, Scott Atchison, John Lemley, Sarah Hawbecker, John Brandt, Gerre Hancock, Joyce Johnson, Timothy Wissler, Randy Elkins, and Herbert Buffington.



#### A Halloween Pipe Organ Spooktacular



On Tuesday, October 11, 2011, the Atlanta chapters of the AGO and American Theatre Organ Society joined forces for a joint Halloween program at First United Methodist Church. Artists from both chapters, dressed in appropriate costumes (audience included), performed great pillars of classical organ literature, improvisation, sing-a-long, and fun theatre organ styling—all selected to get everyone into a Halloween spirit on the five-manual, 93-rank organ, built by the A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company.

#### Taylor Organ Competition

In October 2006, the Atlanta Chapter received a generous bequest from the estate of Elizabeth Abbott Taylor, a long-time member of the Atlanta Chapter. She specified in her will that her estate be divided between the Atlanta Chapter AGO and the Atlanta Music Club to create scholarship programs to benefit talented young musicians. An Atlanta native, Mrs. Taylor lived in a two-story Victorian house in the historic Grant Park area of the city from age 18 to the time of her death. She earned her music degree from Cox College in College Park, Georgia, and began teaching piano upon her graduation. She attracted students from all over



the city and taught well into her 80s. Mrs. Taylor also developed a career as an organist and choirmaster, serving several churches in the Atlanta area. She was a parishioner at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Atlanta.

The Executive Committee of the Atlanta Chapter appointed a committee to determine the best use of the bequest. This committee, after many meetings over a period of two years, recommended to the Executive Committee of the chapter that a national organ competition be established, the first competition to be held in April 2012. It is the belief of the Taylor Scholarship Committee that by opening the competition to students throughout the United States, this will become a national and lasting legacy to Elizabeth Abbott Taylor.

The final of the inauguration of the Taylor Organ Competition was held on Saturday, April 21, 2012, at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. The competition will be held every three years, the next being in 2015, during the year-long centennial celebration of the Atlanta Chapter.



Judges (I to r): Dr. David Cleveland, Dr. Wilma Jensen, and Dr. David Higgs.

Finalists (I to r): Benjamin Sheen, Justin Murphy-Mancini, Caroline Judith Robinson, Benjamin Blasingame (first-place winner), and Samuel Gaskin (second-place winner)

#### Wedding Music Gala Member's Recital

At an AGO gathering of concert organists and esteemed organ teachers, each was asked what event or person first sparked his or her interest in the organ. Over 60 percent replied, "Attending a wedding as a child, with my parents." Every time one sits down to the organ console to play for a wedding, he or she is sharing the *King of Instruments* with many people.

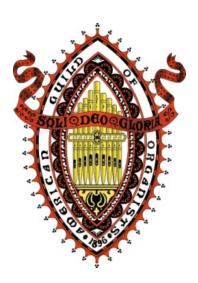
With that in mind, the Atlanta Chapter held a special *Wedding Music Concert*, with chapter members as the performing artists at Peachtree Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, September 11, 2012. The program included prelude and processional music, including two composed and played by the composers, both chapter members. As a part of the service, the chapter chaplain, a wedding coordinator, and a hymn writer held a panel discussion moderated by Sue Mitchell-Wallace, subdean. The second half began with "A Hymn in Praise of God's Love," with text by former dean, Michael Morgan, who wrote the text to the tune SLANE and also accompanied at the organ. The service closed with Charles Marie Widor's



"Toccata" from Symphony V (as many organists must endure), performed by Nicholas Bowden, principal organist of the host church. An additional special touch was the beautiful wedding cake, served at the dinner preceding the program.

# 2014 and Beyond

As the Atlanta Chapter embarks on its second century, chapter members can proudly reflect on the many pieces that make up the history of the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter. Because of the dedication of so many individuals in the past one hundred years, the chapter enjoys a healthy and fulfilling fellowship of organists and musicians of all genres today. As members of the Atlanta Chapter, we look to the future with great hope for our profession and with enthusiasm for that which brings us together in the American Guild of Organists!

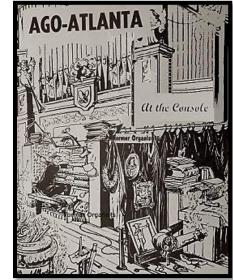


# At the Console: Sketches on Atlanta Organists 1942-1944

The following announcement of this series appeared in *The Diapason*, the AGO National Journal, on September 1, 1942.

In Atlanta, Georgia, the city's organists are receiving deserved recognition from the press, judging from the example set by *The Atlanta Journal*, which is publishing in its every Sunday edition a picture and sketch of one of Atlanta's organists. In addition to the biographical data for each organist, there is information about the current organ and previous organs. These sketches are serving to make Atlanta people aware of the importance of the music in the churches and familiar with the character of the musicians who provide that music. *The Atlanta Journal* and Mrs. (Helen Knox) Spain, the music editor, deserve the gratitude of the entire organ fraternity [sic], as well as their readers, for launching this series. (The series was repeated the next two years.)

Many of these organists were leaders of the Georgia Chapter during these years. Following is a brief synopsis from each of these articles (with exact wording). The complete articles can be found in the Georgia Chapter's 1940s scrapbooks located in the Atlanta Chapter archives at the Atlanta History Center. Our sincere



thanks go to the "Ladies of the Chapter" who, at that time, kept scrapbooks of all chapter activities.

#### **Edith Howell Clark**

#### **Peachtree Christian Church**





Edith Clark came to Atlanta in 1921 from her native city, Macon, Ga. One year later, she became the organist of the First Christian Church. In 1925, when the Peachtree Christian Church was organized, she allied herself as organist and choir director. The music for the services is unique in Atlanta, in that it is all done antiphonally. A mixed voice choir of 20 is used in the chancel and an antiphonal choir of 25 girls' voices in the balcony.

The organ, a gift of the Women's Council, was dedicated on October 8, 1928. Built by Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 1384, the organ has three manuals, 38 ranks, and a set of tower chimes consisting of 21 tubular chimes. Another feature of music in the church is the Sunday Evening Bell Service from October to Easter.

#### **Margie Griffith**

#### **First Church, Christ Scientist**





Margie Griffith moved to Atlanta in 1917 from Raleigh, where she was organist for the Tabernacle Baptist Church and pianist for several theatre orchestras. After moving to Atlanta, she held the post as organist in almost all the big theatres here.

The year after the organ was installed (1920) in First Church of Christ Scientist, she was appointed organist. The organ is a three-manual Henry Pilcher's Sons, with six divisions and 64 stops. An outstanding feature is

a grand piano stop for harp affect, said to be the only one of its kind in the city. The string section, three sets, of the organ in the Echo organ is very effective.

Mrs. Griffith was also harpist in the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. She made her first appearance as harpist on radio during the opening week of WSB, winning the distinction of being the first harp soloist in the South to be heard on the air. Because of her remarkable improvised phrases from one number to another on the programs, she has been given the station studio title of "Modulating Margie."

#### **Julian Barfield**

#### Co-Cathedral of Christ the King (RC)\*





\* Raised to Cathedral Status in 1956

Julian Barfield, pianist-organist, has presided at the console of the Co-Cathedral of Christ the King since July 1939. A native of Hahira, Ga., he moved to Atlanta, entered Emory University, and graduated in 1933. He has studied under the eminent southern teachers, Eda E. Bartholomew (organ) and Hugh Hodgson (organ). He has appeared in recitals here and held office in several musical organizations.

In 1944, Mr. Barfield was appointed as official organist for Emory University and assistant to the director of the Emory Glee Club.

The organ is a large, three manual built by the W. W. Kimball Company. It is designed especially as a fitting accompaniment for the liturgical music of the Roman Catholic Church. The console and case are appropriate Gothic design in oak with exposed pipes of natural metal, which blend with the interior masonry of the building.

#### **Mozelle Horton Young**

#### **Church of the Incarnation (West End)**





Mozelle Young has presided at the console of the organ at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, located in West End, since December 1940. Mrs. Young has won distinction not only as an organist, but also as a concert pianist and a teacher of piano. In addition, she is a music critic for *The Atlanta Constitution*.

The church has had three organs: in 1896, a reed organ with hand power to fill the bellows; in 1907, a John Brown organ. The present

organ at the church, installed in 1939, is a two-manual Pilcher's Son's, with 13 ranks and 28 stops. All the pipes from the previous Brown organ were used and a new console was added.

#### **Mabel Stewart Boyter**

#### **Druid Hills Presbyterian Church**





Mabel Boyter, who presides at the console of the organ at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church, is a pianist, organist, and teacher of note. She has the distinction of being the founder and director of The Children's School of Music, unique in its pattern of method and perhaps the only school of its kind in the Southeast. Mrs. Boyter did her graduate work at Eastman School of Music and studied organ with Catherine Crozier. She has been

with the church for ten years, playing the piano for all services before the new church and organ were dedicated in September 1940.

The organ was built by Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company of Boston, Opus 1004, under the supervision of G. Donald Harrison, internationally known designer of fine organs. The three-manual organ has four divisions, 36 ranks, and is located in side chambers at the front of the room, with visible façade pipes.

#### **Viola Harper Aiken**

#### Park Street Methodist Church (West End)





Viola Aiken has presided at the console of Park Street Methodist Church since 1920. Prior to that, she was assistant to Dr. Charles A. Sheldon Jr. at Trinity Methodist Church. As assistant city organist at the Municipal Auditorium, Mrs. Aiken played the large Austin organ on many occasions. Her organ study included lessons with two prominent Atlanta teachers, Miss Eda Bartholomew and Dr. Sheldon. Mrs. Aiken is

a member of the American Guild of Organists, having served as dean of the Georgia Chapter. She was the first woman in Georgia to hold such a post and was the youngest chapter dean in the entire organization.

The first organ at Park Street was a Brown organ, purchased in 1904. When the present building was erected in 1912, a new organ was installed. It is a two-manual Hall, with 19 ranks and 16 well-chosen stops. In 1940, the organ was completely renovated and elevated (enlarged).

#### C. W. Dieckmann, FAGO

#### **Lutheran Church of the Redeemer**





C. W. Dieckmann, who has presided at the console of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer for five and a half years, is a pianist, teacher, and composer of national fame. He came to Agnes Scott College in Decatur to teach piano and theoretical subjects in 1905 and was made director of music in 1918. A charter member of the Georgia Chapter of the AGO, he has served as dean for three terms

and became a fellow of the American Guild of Organists in 1918.

Mr. Dieckmann has also presided at the consoles of the organs of the Second Baptist Church (for several years); Ponce de Leon Avenue Baptist Church (1922-1931); First Baptist Church (1918-1922); Decatur Presbyterian Church (1926-1928); Jackson Hill Baptist Church; and St. Luke's Episcopal Church (1905-1906).

The two-manual organ at the Church of the Redeemer, built and installed in 1900 by Felgemaker, is one of the oldest organs in Atlanta. It was built to be pumped by hand, but an electrically-driven blower was installed many years ago. Its low pressure of blowing wind is considered to be favorable to the production of good Diapason tone. Its specification of stops is of a type towards which better modern organs are again inclining—this refers to the Diapason chorus.

#### **Emilie Parmalee Spivey, AAGO**

#### **North Avenue Presbyterian Church**





Emilie Spivey, has presided at the console of North Avenue Presbyterian Church since 1930, following her mentor Joseph Ragan. In addition, she directs the church's three singing units, the quartet adult choir for the morning service, a boys' choir and a girls' choir for the evening services and festive services. Emilie started her career at the age of 5 under the watchful eye of her mother. At 15, she became assistant organist at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. She won a

four-year scholarship at Washington Seminary and was voted the most intellectual girl in the senior class. At the seminary, she became the piano and organ pupil of Eda Bartholomew. She is also a graduate of the Atlanta Conservatory of Music.

Mrs. Spivey has studied organ and the theoretical subjects under the eminent C. W Dieckmann (Agnes Scott College), Norman Coke-Jephcott (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, NYC), Dr. David McK. Williams, and Joseph Bonnet. In 1934, she completed the requirements for the associate certificate of the American Guild of Organists. She won first place in the Henry Pilcher contest of organ playing, sponsored by the Georgia Chapter in 1935. In 1940, she played for the Southeastern Convention of the AGO in Atlanta

The original organ at North Avenue Presbyterian was installed in 1901. The present organ was rebuilt in 1939 by the Austin Organ Company, with the addition of a new three-manual console and contained 35 sets of pipes.

#### Mary Ethel Beyer

#### **Druid Hills Methodist Church**





Ethel Beyer has presided at the console of Druid Hills Methodist Church since December 1919 and is minister of music in the church, directing four choirs. She has won quite a reputation for choral blending and for the annual A Capella Christmas Carol Service. Prior to her current position at Druid Hills, which is one of longest in continuous service at the same position for Atlanta organists, she served St. Paul

Methodist Church for two and a half years and First Congregational Church for eight and a half years. A charter member of the Georgia Chapter of the AGO, she has served for two terms as the dean of the Georgia Chapter. A teacher of organ and piano, several of her pupils are serving as organists in prominent Atlanta churches.

The organ at Druid Hills, funded in part by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, is a two-manual Hall, built in 1912. A rather small instrument, it is fully adequate for the size of the church. Of particular loveliness is the string section of the organ, and the flute section is especially excellent.

#### Joseph Ragan, FAGO

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#### All Saints' Episcopal Church

Joseph Ragan, has presided at the console and directed the chorus at All Saints' Episcopal Church for the past 12 years. Mr. Ragan began his church music career at the age of 14, when he was appointed organist at the First Methodist Church in Dawson, Ga.

Upon graduation, he entered the Atlanta Conservatory of Music, studying organ under Charles A. Sheldon Jr. At the age of 19, he was appointed organist and director of music at North Avenue Presbyterian Church. A

charter member of the Georgia Chapter of the American Guild of Organist, he has served as its dean, treasurer, auditor, and chairman of several committees.

The organ at All Saints' is a three-manual Odell, with 32 sets of pipes, and is an instrument of outstanding quality, being one of the three Odell organs in the Southeast. The choir is vested and has personnel of four of Atlanta's outstanding soloists and the chorus of 30 men and women.

#### Wilhelmene Bixler Greene







Wilhelmene Greene presides at the console of the Cathedral of St. Philip as organist and choirmaster. Mrs. Greene accepted, nine months ago, the post at St. Philip to act as supply organist in the absence of Tom Brumby, the regular organist, who is away on naval duty. She did supply work under Edith Clark at Peachtree Christian, under whom she studied, and is a member of the Georgia Chapter of the AGO.

The organ, originally installed in 1921 at the Old Saint Philip Church, was moved in 1933 to the present location of the New Cathedral of St. Philip on Peachtree Road. At the time of the installation, the organ was considered one of the best voiced organs in the country. Built by M. P. Möller Organ Company of Hagerstown, Md., the organ has three manuals and 35 speaking stops. The organ, with its varied soft coloring and lovely soft strings, is particularly suited to the size of the building

#### Dr. Charles A. Sheldon Jr., AAGO

#### The Temple





Charles Sheldon, a native of Atlanta and charter member of the Georgia Chapter of the AGO, has been organist at The Temple for 30 years and organist and choir director at the First Presbyterian Church for 21 years. In 1914, he was elected city organist, taking over the large Austin organ at the Auditorium. These three important posts he now holds.

Sheldon has designed 78 organs, both large and small. As a teacher of organ, he proudly acclaims 24 pupils who are now presiding at consoles in churches throughout the Southeast. He is on the faculty at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur.

The four-manual organ, built by Henry Pilcher's Sons, was purchased new throughout when the present edifice was built in 1930. It contains 44 ranks, with a harp. Several internationally famous organists have played the organ informally at gatherings of organists and given the instrument much praise.

#### Willa Beckham Lowrance

#### **Covenant Presbyterian Church**





Willa Lowrance, a native of Dublin, Georgia and graduate of the Atlanta Conservatory of Music, has presided at the console of Covenant Presbyterian Church for over four years. Covenant Presbyterian Church, dedicated on November 7, 1926, is the former Harris Street Presbyterian Church. The organ was played formally for the first time at this service.

The organ, a three-manual M. P. Möller, built by funds from the church treasury, has 26 stops. The outstanding qualities are the Diapason

chorus, which is very complete for an organ of this size. The organ has a detached console which was installed when the church was remodeled in 1943.

#### **Donald Winters**

#### **First Baptist Church**





Donald Winters, organist and minister of music at the First Baptist Church, coming to Atlanta from Westminster Choir School at Princeton, New Jersey, played his first service at his new post on Sunday, June 15, 1941. Mr. Winters has charge of the entire musical program, which includes finding and developing the musical talent in the church. There are six choirs for all-age groups, ranging from pre-school to adult and totaling some 225 voices.

The organ, built by Henry Pilcher's Sons in 1929, has 80 stops and is played from a magnificently equipped four-manual console. A wealth of color is provided in the tonal apportionment, with an unusually large number of softer effects. The specifications were made by George Lee Hamrick, organist of the church at that time. The main organ is to the rear of the choir loft and immediately over the baptistry. The Echo division is located midway of the high ceiling in the sanctuary.

#### **Ruby Askew Chalmers**

#### Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church





Ruby Chalmers presides at the organ console at the Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church. Notable in Atlanta church history is the merger of three congregations, Ponce de Leon Baptist, Second Baptist, and Buckhead Baptist, voted by their committees and congregations to be known as the Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church.

The organ was originally built for the old Second Baptist Church and was dedicated on February 5, 1922 by George Hamrick. At the time, Mrs.

Chalmers was soprano soloist in the quartet-choir.

In March of 1937, the organ was moved to the present edifice. The rebuilding consisted of a number of changes and additions to the organ specifications. A new display pipe front was put

in to hide the organ parts and to fit with the general architecture of the church. The organ is a three-manual Austin, with 34 stops and chimes. The "new" organ was played for the first time on Sunday, September 12, 1937.

The internationally famous organist, Virgil Fox, after giving a recital on the organ, was enthusiastic in his praise of the instrument and likened it to an organ he had played in Paris.

#### Ione Gloer Wood

#### **Baptist Tabernacle**





Ione Wood, a native of Atlanta, has presided at the console of the organ at the Baptist Tabernacle for 25 years. She is a member of the Georgia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

The organ was dedicated in 1910 with Dr. Charles S. Sheldon Jr. playing the service. The four-manual instrument, which contains 50 registers, was constructed at the factory of

the Austin Organ Company in Hartford, Conn., and erected in Atlanta by Calvin Brown. It is admirably placed in a loft especially built for the instrument and completely fills the space.

#### **Frances Stovall Felder**

#### **Druid Hills Baptist Church**





Frances Felder, a native of Atlanta, has presided at the console of Druid Hills Baptist Church since 1928. She has grown up in Druid Hills Baptist and has the honor of being the only organist and choir director the church has ever had. Mrs. Felder also presides at the console of the organ at Spring Hill (H. M. Patterson and Son Funeral Home) and has distinguished herself as an accompanist for noted singers in Atlanta and on tour. The

organ, built by Hook and Hastings of Boston, has three manuals and 28 stops.

#### **George Lee Hamrick**





#### **Trinity Methodist Church**

George Hamrick, a native of Carrollton, Ga., who presides at the console at Trinity Methodist Church, is nationally known as an organ recitalist, a designer of organs, and a writer of technical articles on the instrument. He has been an esteemed worker in the field of church music in Atlanta since 1910.

In 1942, he was appointed organist-choirmaster at Trinity Methodist Church. As a writer, many of his technical articles pertaining to the

organ and choir problems have been published in numerous music publications. As a musician, he is somewhat an individualist, seeking to have his music beautiful and pleasing whether classical or "popular," sacred or secular, for those whom he would serve, even if it means that he must forsake the standards of his contemporaries in doing so.

The organ at Trinity Church, installed in 1913, was designed by Charles Sheldon Jr., the organist of the church at that time. It is a three-manual Austin, controlled by 47 stops. Notable is the commanding case-work of the organ which incorporates display pipe work instead of the grille so much in use in churches today.

#### **Frances Sanders Spain**

#### **Morningside Presbyterian Church**



Frances Spain presides at the console of the most recently constructed organ in Atlanta at the Morningside Presbyterian Church. She also directs the choir and is in charge of the general music of the church.

The organ, a two-manual Möller, designed by Dr. Charles A. Sheldon Jr. was installed in March 1942. Dr. Sheldon played the dedicatory recital. The pipes are placed in a class room above the auditorium with the sound grille in the ceiling immediately over the organ console. The organ is so planned and constructed that, when the church proper is built, the organ also

will be enlarged. Its present outstanding feature is the extra pipework which is provided in the upper register so that the two-foot coupler is effective to the top note.

#### Pfc Richard E. Felder

#### **Glenn Memorial Methodist Church**





Pfc Richard Felder has presided at the console at Glenn Memorial Methodist Church since 1936. He entered Emory University to study medicine at the age of 18. Immediately, he was appointed the organist at Glenn for the Emory Glee Club and Little Symphony orchestra.

The Glenn Memorial organ, originally in the Old Metropolitan Theatre, was bought and installed in its present location around

1931. It is a three-manual Pilcher's Sons, with 54 stops. When the organ was brought to Emory University, several important additions were made. Each of the five divisions of the instrument has outstanding qualifications greatly admired by the listener and of the greatest satisfaction to the organist.

#### **Rolland Tomlinson**

#### St. Mark Methodist Church





Rolland Tomlinson, a native of Atlanta, has presided at the console of St. Mark Methodist Church since June 1943. Before his present post at St. Mark, he was organist at the Church of the Immaculate Conception (RC), the first organist at the Cathedral of Christ the King, and for five years, the organist and choir director of West End Presbyterian Church.

The organ at St. Mark is one of the early electric actions built by the Austin Organ Company around 1916. In 1941, the church auditorium was

entirely renovated and the organ modernized. The organ is a three-manual instrument with the main organ located directly back of the pulpit, and the echo organ located in the opposite end of the church.

#### **Hugh Hodgson**

#### St. Luke's Episcopal Church





Dr. Hugh Hodgson, a native of Athens, Ga., concert-pianist and organist, has held the post as organist and choirmaster at St. Luke's Episcopal Church continuously since 1928. He has presided at the console of the organs at Second Baptist Church and the Baptist Tabernacle in Atlanta before his present post. He began his piano lessons at the young age of four and went to Berlin to study at the age of 14. After four years in Europe, he returned to his native Georgia, where he received his B. S. degree in 1915. In 1915, he made

his New York City debut (Carnegie Hall) as concert pianist, receiving much favorable comment from the critics of the press.

Dr. Hodgson heads the Fine Arts Department at the University of Georgia at Athens (since 1935), directs the music of the University System of Georgia, teaches a large class of piano students at the University of Georgia, is Chairman of Education on the board of the Georgia Federation of Music Clubs, and gives innumerable recitals under the auspices of clubs and civic organizations each year. In addition to his duties at the university, he was director of the Atlanta Conservatory of Music 1934-1936.

The organ at St. Luke's has a most interesting history. A few weeks ago (June 1944) work was started to enlarge the organ. Originally, the organ was a Roosevelt (1886) when St. Luke's was the cathedral on Houston and Pryor Streets. It was overhauled and became a John Brown organ. When the present St. Luke's building was erected on Peachtree Street in 1906, the organ was rebuilt and changed to an Estey. Later, materials from all three builders were refashioned, and the organ is now a three-manual Austin.

#### **Claribel Clark Taylor**

#### **Central Presbyterian Church**





Claire Taylor, a native of Nebraska, has presided at the console of Central Presbyterian Church since 1941. Her husband, Hubert Taylor, is director of music and the Young People's work at the same church.

The congregation of Central Presbyterian Church is proud of the bit of history connected with their church organ. The original instrument, bought in 1864 and shipped from New York City, was in the last lot of freight brought in to Atlanta over the Central of Georgia Railway before

the road was destroyed by the soldiers during the War Between the States. The present organ is a two-manual instrument, with 24 stops built by the Estey Organ Company, Brattleboro, Vt. Some of the pipes of the original organ are still in use.

#### **Bradford W. Bradley**

#### **Calvary Methodist Church (West End)**





Bradford Bradley, organist and organ builder, presides at the console of the Calvary Methodist Church in West End. He built the organ and played the premiere recital. The brass plate on the organ has the dedicatory inscription: "To all Calvary members who are in the armed services." The Kimball organ is of unified type, with three manuals. A special feature is its string section. At the completion of the building of the organ, Mr. Bradley was given the appointment of minister of music of the church.

#### **Margaret Lewis Hilbers**

#### **Peachtree Road Presbyterian Church**





Margaret Hilbers, a native of Nashville, Tenn., has presided at the console of the organ at Peachtree Road Presbyterian Church since May 1943. Under her direction, the choir has expanded to a chorus of 23 mixed voices. She is a member of the Georgia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

The two-manual, nine-rank Estey organ was purchased in 1929 from the Central Congregational Church when it was moved from

Carnegie Way to its present location on Ponce de Leon Avenue (former Ponce de Leon Baptist Church). The organ was originally purchased in 1904 with funds raised by the Women's Society of the Congregational Church and installed by James B. Reynolds.

#### **Eda E. Bartholomew**

#### **Westminster Presbyterian Church**







Miss Eda Bartholomew, organist, pianist, and teacher has the rare distinction of possessing a church organ, all her own. Miss Bartholomew was prompted to purchase the organ to meet her needs as a teacher of the instrument and to

afford her a regular place for her pupils to practice. She personally drew up the specification of the organ, giving the contract to the H. Hall Company of New Haven, Conn.

In 1912, the organ was installed in Harris Street Presbyterian Church. With the changes in the business section on Spring and Harris Street and the razing of the church and subsequent move (Covenant Presbyterian Church on Peachtree Road), Miss Bartholomew offered the loan of the organ to the Westminster Presbyterian Church. (She gave the organ to Westminster Church following her retirement and marriage in 1948.)

In 1901, she became a faculty member of LaGrange College in LaGrange, Ga., and later joined the music faculty at Brenau College Conservatory of Music in Gainesville, Georgia. In 1907, she became a teacher of piano at Agnes Scott College, where she is still a member of the faculty

Miss Bartholomew presided at the consoles of the First Methodist Church for four years, St. Mark Methodist Church for 25 years, and Rock Spring Presbyterian Church for only a brief time. She is now acting organist at the Druid Hills Presbyterian Church during the prolonged absence of the regular organist, Mabel Boyter.

#### Wilbur H. Rowand, FAGO

#### First Baptist Church, Rome, Georgia



Wilbur Rowand, presides at the console of the Mark McDonald Memorial organ at the First Baptist Church of Rome, Ga. He also holds the post of the director of the music department at Shorter College, also in Rome.

Dr. Rowand's educational background includes studies at Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, the University of Michigan, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and the American Conservatory of Music of Fontainebleau, France. Last year (1946), the degree of Doctor of Music was conferred upon him by the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. He became a fellow of the

American Guild of Organists in 1934 and served as the dean of the Georgia Chapter in 1934-1935. His teachers included Palmer Christian, Charles Widor, Marcel Dupré, Parvin Titus, and Arthur Poister.

The organ is a three-annual Wick, installed in 1925. Miss Eda Bartholomew, Atlanta organist, played the dedicatory recital. The organ is conventional in tonal design, with 24 stops and chimes.

(Dr. Rowand subsequently moved to Macon, Georgia, where he served as professor of organ and theory at Wesleyan Conservatory of Music and organized and served as dean of the Macon Chapter of the AGO.)

#### Cora B. Mathews

#### **Central Congregational Church**





Cora Mathews has presided at the console of the organ at Central Congregational Church since October 1943. She also directs the chorus choir of women's voices. For 15 years, she was organist and choir director at the Peachtree Road Presbyterian Church.

When the Central Congregational Church bought the present edifice from the Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in 1929, the organ was included in the sale. The instrument, a tubular-pneumatic, has three manuals, all under

expression and 25 stops. It was originally purchased from the famous factory of Lyon and Healy at Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1906. Upon leaving its old site on Carnegie Way, the Central Congregational Church sold its organ, an Estey, to the Peachtree Road Presbyterian Church.



# Georgía/Atlanta Chapter AGO Hístoric Pipe Organs: Past and Present





#### Saint James' Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia

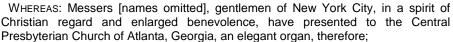


This historic mechanical-action instrument is located in Lawrence Chapel, the oldest extant part of St. James' Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia. The E. & G. G. Hook, Opus 277, was installed in 1860. It has one manual and seven ranks. The instrument is located in a free-standing Gothic-style oak case, with non-speaking façade pipes. With the exception of the 16' Bourdon pipes for the one-octave Pedal rank, the entire instrument is behind the horizontal Swell shades that are controlled by a hitch-down pedal. Many organ historians argue that instruments built by E. & G. G. Hook during the 1860s were among the finest instruments ever built in the United States.

#### Central Presbyterian Church

The congregation of Central Presbyterian Church is proud of the bit of history connected with their church organ. According to documentation in *Atlanta and Its Builders: A Comprehensive History of the Gate City of the South* by Thomas H. Martin, 1902, Volume Two:

At a meeting of this church [Central Presbyterian], held on Wednesday evening, March 28, 1860, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:



hich it has been bestowed

RESOLVED: That this magnificent liberality is highly appreciated by those upon which it has been bestowed and will continue to be cherished and held in grateful recollection.

The original instrument (unknown maker), bought in 1864 and shipped from New York City, was in the last lot of freight brought into Atlanta over the Central of Georgia Railway before the road was destroyed by the soldiers during the War Between the States. The organ was later replaced by a two-manual Estey organ, rebuilt in 1949 with the addition of a third (Choir) manual.

#### Lutheran Church of the Redeemer — A. B. Felgemaker Co., ca. 1900



C. W. Dieckmann is shown in 1942 at the console of the Felgemaker organ in the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. The two-manual organ was originally built to be pumped by hand, but an electrically-driven blower was installed in later years. Its low pressure of blowing wind was considered to be favorable to the production of good Diapason tone.

#### Atlanta Auditorium-Armory

#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 262, 1910, IV/60



Of historical interest in 1910, was the installation of a concert organ in the Atlanta Auditorium-Armory. The instrument was said to be, at that time, the fourth largest pipe organ in the United States. Notable features were two 32' Pedal ranks, a 64' Resultant, and the Tuba Magna, stated to have been on 50 inches of wind pressure. There is doubt from some individuals that the wind pressure was this high; however, all documents, including *The Atlanta Constitution*, describing the organ at the time it was installed, state this as a fact.

On the occasion of a brief recital by Charles A. Sheldon (organist, Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church) for Major Cheney (Austin Organ Co.) and a select group of people, the success or failure of such a monumental instrument would mean much even to an established firm like the Austin Organ Co. Major Cheney professed himself delighted at the results. Being built for the specific place, the power of the organ was made proportional both to the size and to the acoustics of the building, and its full strength was about as much as the building would stand. Major Cheney so stated, as did Mr. Sheldon, and the

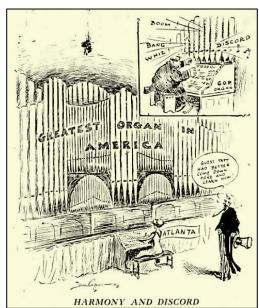


force of the remarks was born home to the audience when Mr. Sheldon "let the organ out to its limits."

The wonder of the instrument in every way was limitless, and Atlanta concert goers would have before them a great revelation in the first concert recital scheduled later that month by the English organist Edwin H. Lemare on May 31, 1910 ("... in the presence of one of the largest audiences ever assembled in Atlanta"). Atlanta's response to the new "people's organ" was genuinely enthusiastic.

The following excerpt is from *The Atlanta Constitution* following the concert.

Tickets for the Atlanta concert were fifty cents on the main floor and twenty-five cents in the gallery, and over 7,000 people jammed the hall. One critic liked the program except for a few numbers, among them Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in D Major*, which "could not possibly be popular as music." It was "lugged in by the ears" just to show the "mechanical possibilities of the organ," and it was "brilliant, bewildering, but cold as the Aurora Borealis." During Lemare's improvisation, the organ ciphered, and the audience laughed at the "stuck stop."

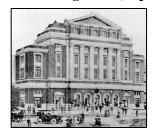


On the day of the concert, *The Atlanta Journal* carried a cartoon depicting the "Greatest Organ in America" with "lady Atlanta," a slim blonde at its console. The last AGO-sponsored recital at the Municipal Auditorium was given by William Weaver on January 4, 1959. After the last public recital, the organ was only used for various graduation ceremonies and fell into

almost complete disrepair. It became no longer extant in 1978, with many of the pipes "relocated" to other organs.

#### The Baptist Tabernacle — Atlanta's First Mega Church

#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 315, 1913, IV/33



Ground-breaking ceremonies for the Baptist Tabernacle were held on August 17, 1909. *The Atlanta Constitution* reported that it was "one of the most important real estate and church transactions ever made in Atlanta" and described an auditorium "eight or ten stories in height." The auditorium, which seated 4,000, resembled the main-line evangelical churches and boasted a "gigantic organ" with the pipes and choir loft framed by a proscenium arch.

The following article was obtained from the archives of the Baptist Tabernacle.

Desiring only the best, we early desired to put in the very best organ that we could secure, a description of which is here given and is written by our much esteemed friend, Professor Charles A. Sheldon Jr., professor at the Atlanta Conservatory of Music and organist/director at Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, of this city.

This organ belongs to the class of great church organs, and it outranks any church organ in the South for size and capacity. In describing this "mammoth" instrument, it will be compared with the great Atlanta Auditorium-Armory organ, which was also constructed by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Connecticut.

The organ is most admirably placed in a loft built for this special instrument and completely fills the space, 56' x 22' x 12'. The console, which is most attractive, with four sloping key boards and radiating concave pedals, is placed on a platform by the side of the pulpit and in front of the choir gallery, several feet in advance of the organ, thereby



giving the organist a full view of the choir and the effect of the instrument. The attractive case was built by home talent and is of weathered oak, as is the woodwork of the entire building. The front pipes are of French gold bronze leaf and are not only ornamental, but register in the bass of Diapasons. The tones of the rich Diapasons, which are ten in number, are smooth, majestic, and dignified; the reeds, which number fifteen, are unusually bright; the flutes, of which there are fourteen in number, are characteristically correct, flashing and glistening and glimmering. The Resultant gives foundation and power to the entire instrument. It will be interesting to note that about ten miles of different kinds of wire are used in the instrument, and that the pipes range from 32' pitch to ½ inch in length, and that materials from every part of the globe were used in the construction.

On Sunday, November 14, 1914, members met to save the Tabernacle from its creditors. The Tabernacle had offered its handsome pipe organ as collateral for a loan of \$2,600, the amount needed to pay off the interest on the church debt, or the church would be sold. This crisis was averted as the Tabernacle continued to thrive and present monumental oratorios such as Mendelssohn's *Elijah* complete with a fireball from heaven plummeting to the stage from the second balcony as Elijah sang "Lord God of Abraham – Let the fire descend!" The majestic Harmonic Tuba Chorus on the Solo division and on 25 inches of wind pressure was used during many scenes in these oratorios. It was said that the Tuba Chorus could be heard outside on the sidewalk.

In the picture at left is Mrs. Ione Wood, organist for 25 years, at the console. It was once remarked that the Baptist Tabernacle was definitely a place of legends in the heyday of church music. Many current Atlanta Chapter members remember with fondness the many recitals given on the historic organ by local chapter members and noted national artists.

The building's history as a church ended in 1994, when it was sold and reopened as the House of Blues for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. An amusing antidote is that some notable musicians have declined to perform in "The Tabernacle" because of its former existence as a house of worship. The façade from the organ is still in place today.

#### Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church

#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 362, 1912, III/39

In August 1911, the Austin Organ Company contracted with Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to build an organ for its new building—the instrument to be installed behind a large pipe façade in the chancel of the church. Some ranks from an older organ in the previous location were reused, with the curious stipulation that the organist, Charles A. Sheldon Jr., was to remove the ranks and set them onto the newly built chests. The contract also called for a second two-manual console to be placed in the Sunday school assembly room directly behind the sanctuary to control the stops of the Swell division, speaking through a separate set of Swell shades into that room.



The following article in *The Atlanta Constitution* on October 27, 1912, announced the dedication of the new Trinity Church—referred to as "probably the most impressive house of worship in the South." The dedication also included the inaugural recital of the new Austin organ.

As the organ notes swell forth from the choir loft, answered by the far-away strains of the Echo organ in the extreme corner of the church, the pervading atmosphere is probably the most restful of any church in the South. At the evening

service, Dr. Charles A. Sheldon Jr., Trinity organist-director, will give the inaugural recital on Trinity's new organ. He will be assisted by the choir [quartet] of the church .... The organ is of beautiful workmanship and excellent materials; the parts having come from the four corners of the globe .... The action of the organ is electropneumatic throughout, and all the contacts are made of gold and platinum .... A feature of the organ, very rare, is the harp effect .... The pipes are finished in Oriental bronze, in harmony with the brick facings and interior of the church.



The last renovation was by A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Co. of Lithonia, Georgia, in 1995. The current three-manual console in the sanctuary (picture at right with George Hamrick, organist, in 1942), which dates from 1916, was rebuilt in 1995 to accommodate a solid-state memory system. The large façade contains 31 non-speaking pipes all of which are about 22 feet in length and nine to ten inches in scale.



#### Criterion Theatre

#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 850, 1919, III/19



On July 3, 1916, theatre promoter Sig Samuels opened the Criterion Theatre on Peachtree Street to the public. The exterior of the theatre was in granite terra cotta with a green Spanish tile roof; the ticket booth was of Italian Pavonazzo (white) marble with a copper roof. The theatre seated 900 and a balcony for 300. A typhoon cooling system assured that the air in the theatre would be changed every few minutes (in the summer that meant that hot stale air would be replaced with hot fresh air). The theatre was also equipped with a seat indicator, a system to show at the entrance exactly where the empty seats were located, intercommunicating telephone system, and indirect lighting systems with fixtures in harmony with the decorations.

In July 1919, a contract was signed with the Austin Organ Co. for a three-manual, 17-rank organ. In June 1920, a contract was signed to add two more ranks, change some ranks out, and extend the pedal Open Diapason to play in the Great division. The expression boxes were arranged to reflect the tone through openings above the proscenium arch, well over the heads of the audience, to avoid becoming too oppressive at one spot and too soft in another. The Criterion was the second theatre to advertise that someone was actually playing the organ. Ben Potter, concert organist, "Unquestionably the South's

Greatest Theatre Organist," accompanied the Criterion Orchestra under the direction of Dave Love and played solos at the 10:45 am, 12:30 pm, and 5:45 pm shows.



The life of the Criterion would be short lived. In July 1921, Samuels opened the much larger Metropolitan Theatre just two blocks north. 1922, the property was released to other businesses, and by December of 1922, the Criterion theatre was gone. The Austin organ went to a church in Alabama.

Interior of the Criterion Theatre - Austin organ in lower left

#### First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta: Evolution of the Sanctuary Organ (1919, 1969, 1992)

#### Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 1005, 1919 and Opus 1047, 1920, IV/50



Details of the first organ of First Presbyterian Church of Atlanta on Marietta Street are not known. It is known that the first pastor was an accomplished organist who would play a melodeon while the congregation sang psalms. In the present location at Peachtree and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets, there have been three "generations" of organs in both the sanctuary (Pilcher, Möller, and Zimmer) and in Winship Chapel (Pilcher, second [unknown], and Klop).

The contract for the "original" Pilcher organ was signed July 27, 1918. The organ, which contained seven divisions, Great, Swell, Choir, Solo, Echo, Stentor, and Pedal, was installed by April 1919. The new organ was first used at the dedication of the new sanctuary on April 6, 1919, by the newly appointed organist, Charles A. Sheldon

Jr. According to the records, "The church now goes forward in its work with financial obligations fully liquidated, and the final subscription which freed it from debt being added to the list of other donations last Sunday." The organ was completed in 1920 to a total of 50 ranks, with the addition of the Solo and Echo divisions plus one Pedal rank extension. A "Dedication of Organ Service" for the completed organ, Opus 1047, was held on September 19, 1920.

The dedication of the organ was described in the following article "Magnificent Church Organ to be Dedicated Tonight" in *The Atlanta Constitution*.

One of the handsomest and most superb organs in the South will be dedicated at the First Presbyterian Church on Sunday evening, September 19, at 8 o'clock. Charles A. Sheldon Jr., designer of the four-manual organ for Henry Pilcher's Sons, of Louisville, Kentucky, assisted by the choir, will give the dedication recital. Mr. Sheldon became the organist and choir director in March 1919, leaving a similar post at Trinity Methodist Church.

In building the gigantic organ, every country has supplied something toward its construction, and almost every known building material has been used. The organ consists of seven organs (divisions), and action throughout is pneumatic. The Great organ is built out in the open, including the front ornamental pipes in the façade. The Stentor



Edith H. Clark at the Pilcher console (1950s)

division, placed in the south alcove in the front of the building, consists of pipes of contrasting color. This division is under swell blinds that are three inches thick and produce a most wonderful effect. The Echo organ, placed in the opposite alcove on the north side of the building, contains the ethereal effects.

#### M. P. Möller Pipe Organ Co., Opus 10527, 1969, IV/69

In 1969, the 1920 Pilcher organ was replaced with an instrument built by M. P. Möller Pipe Organ Co. of Hagerstown, Maryland. The Rev. Herbert S. Archer Jr., organist and choir director, 1964-1988, provided the following description of the new organ in the program for the Inaugural Organ Recital on Tuesday, January 6,

1970, with Dr. Robert S. Baker, dean, the School of Music, Union Theological Seminary, New York City, as the recitalist.

The organ has been designed and constructed to support and enrich the worship of God. There are approximately 4,000 individual pipes that are incorporated in 65 ranks, each having its own distinctive tonal quality and dynamic level. The various ensembles and tonal colors make the organ suitable for accompanying hymns, anthems, solos, and oratorios, as well as for the authentic re-creation of organ literature from all periods: baroque, classic, romantic, and modern. One of the most useful features of the new organ is the Antiphonal division, divided on either side of the window depicting Christ's second coming. From its position high on the back wall of the sanctuary, this division pours sound into the room, greatly assisting in the support of

congregational singing and making possible antiphonal uses of the organ. Probably the most distinctive feature of the entire organ is the Trompette-en-Chamade. The powerful and thrilling sounds of this rank lend a sense of exhilaration to festive occasions and a feeling of triumphant rejoicing to match this characteristic of our faith.

#### W. Zimmer & Sons, Inc., Opus 461, 1992, IV/105



The organist involved in the design and installation of this organ was Charles Whittaker, director of music, 1989-2010. The four-manual,

Herb Archer at the Möller console

105-rank instrument has nine divisions and contains elements of both previous organs. Charles provided the following description at the dedication on the organ on June 14, 1992.

The instrument represents the work of three organ builders. Several ranks of the original Pilcher organ (1919) were moved from the former Echo division and placed in the Chancel Swell division. All of the Möller pipe work has

been retained and revoiced by Zimmer. In many respects, we are celebrating the completion of an instrument begun in 1919.

In addition to a new four-manual console in the chancel, a two-manual movable console was added to the gallery. The addition of a console in the gallery provides flexibility for the various choirs and instrumental ensembles Jens Körndorfer at the Zimmer of the church.



console

#### The Candler's and their Aeolian Organs

Asa Griggs Candler Sr. and his two sons, Charles Howard Candler and Asa Griggs Candler Jr. were great organ enthusiasts. Candler family members were good customers of the Aeolian Organ Company, commissioning and buying four different residence organs over the years. The first two belonged to Asa Candler Sr. in his homes in Inman Park and on Ponce de Leon Avenue. In 1910, Asa, Jr. moved from the fashionable Inman Park neighborhood to a "ramshackle" farmhouse, Briarcliff Farm, on Williams Mill Road in what is now the Druid Hills neighborhood. Williams Mill Road was renamed Briarcliff Road in the 1920s after the estate that Asa, Jr. built there. Howard was the first brother to install an organ in his mansion. Not to be outdone by his father, and brother, Asa, Jr. followed suit with the largest of them all.

#### Callanwolde Mansion - "Callan," Ireland (Ancestor's home) in the woods "wolde"

#### Aeolian, Opus 1484, 1919, III/59

"Callanwolde," the magnificent Gothic-Tudor style former home of the Charles Howard Candler family, located on Briarcliff Road, was completed in 1920. Both Mr. Candler and his wife, Flora Glenn Candler, were ardent supporters of all genres of music in Atlanta. Callanwolde's Great Hall features an Aeolian organ console. The organ, which was specially designed for the house and installed during its construction, was purchased from the Aeolian



Pipe Organ Company of New York. The organ is a remarkable example of the design, engineering, and craftsmanship that developed during the era of the Romantic orchestral organ. The instrument is controlled by a three-manual console with built-in roll player. It's seven divisions, 57 ranks, and 3,742 pipes are contained in four separately constructed chambers strategically located throughout the house. Decorative ornamentation in the ceiling and walls of the mansion conceals these chambers. The most spectacular of these ornamentations, a system of rib vaults elaborated with an intricately designed pierced tracery constructed of pre-cast masonry grillwork, is located in the ceiling above the grand staircase.

In the years during which the Candlers lived at Callanwolde, recitals were given by some of the world's finest organists, including Marcel Dupré (Paris) and Charles Courboin (Belgium). The complete restoration of the Aeolian organ, a result of the



dedication and perseverance of the members of the Callanwolde Guild, extended over two decades, beginning in 1972. During Christmas every year, majestic sounds still ring throughout the magnificent home as numerous Atlanta Chapter organists and other organists play seasonal music on a daily basis.

In the early 1970s, Elizabeth Elder was asked to become Callanwolde's first in-house organist. Elizabeth knew such an organ existed, as she had previously served across the street as temporary organist for the First Christian Church of Atlanta, which, at that time, owned the Callanwolde estate.

#### **Briarcliff Mansion**

#### Aeolian, Opus 1452, 1925, IV/88

In 1916, Asa Candler Jr. hired architects to design a grand new home, "Briarcliff," for his family. In 1925, Candler had the mansion enlarged, adding a three-story music room with its vaulted Tudor interior, limestone fireplace, painted walls, and an 88-rank, Aeolian organ. It was the largest privately owned organ in Georgia at the time and the eighth largest that Aeolian had ever built for a private residence.



Music Room



Charles Sheldon at the Aeolian

The Candlers sold their estate to the General Services Administration in 1948. In 1952, Mr. Candler gave the organ to Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, in honor of his wife. In 1958, the 1925 Aeolian organ

was renovated by M. P. Möller Organ Company, and a new four-manual console was added. The 74-rank organ, with six divisions, was installed in the auditorium of the Porter Fine Arts Building. In 2008, the organ was renovated by the Schantz Organ Company of Orville, Ohio, under the supervision of Widener and Company, Schantz representatives located in

Atlanta. It is now known as the Goodwyn-Candler-Panoz organ. The organ is the largest in middle Georgia, with four manuals, six divisions, and 89 ranks.

#### A Third "Mammoth" Austin Organ for Atlanta: Wesley Memorial Methodist Church (1922)

#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 1072, 1922, IV/40

On September 1, 1922, a third four-manual Austin pipe organ for Atlanta was installed in Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, location on the corner of Auburn Avenue and Ivy Street. The organ was so installed that it was out of view of the audience, with the exception of the keys upon which the organist played. The following announcement, "Pipe Organ Recital at Wesley Memorial," appeared in *The Atlanta Constitution* on October 4, 1922.



The great, three-unit Austin pipe organ recently installed at Wesley Memorial Methodist Church will be formally dedicated with a special recital by city organist, Charles A. Sheldon Jr. .... The purchase of the organ was made possible by the ladies of the church, who operated a lunch room to make the initial payment of \$3,000.

In 1962, the Board of Trustees of the North Georgia Conference voted to sell the Wesley Memorial property and apply the proceeds of the sale toward the construction of a new building to house the offices of the conference. The Austin organ was relocated to Young Harris College in Young Harris, Georgia.

The installation was never adequately completed, and it became impossible to keep the organ tuned and working adequately at a minimum. Sadly, the organ was abandoned and "dumped."

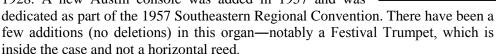
#### Peachtree Christian Church

#### Chancel Organ: Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 138, 1928, III/38



Edith Clark at the Pilcher console

The music at Peachtree Christian Church has always used antiphonal music in its services. This tradition began in the 1920s under the direction of Edith Howell Clark, organist and choir director, with a mixed choir in the chancel and a choir of girl's voices in the gallery. The first organ to be installed in the current sanctuary on Peachtree Street was dedicated in 1928. A new Austin console was added in 1957 and was



#### Gallery Organ: Fratelli Ruffatti, 1974, IV/57



In 1974, a four-manual organ, with five division and 57 ranks, built by Fratelli Rufffatti of Padua, Italy, was installed in the gallery. In 1991, a new four-manual console was installed by Guzowski & Steppe Organ Builders of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. With revisions and digital additions, the new console controlled both the three-manual Pilcher and the four-manual Ruffatti organs.

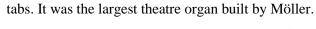
In 2003, William Zeller of Los Angeles, California, replaced the internal gallery console and added digital voices to both instruments. A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company, Lithonia,

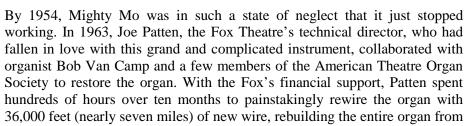
Georgia, added a new three-manual console, built in the previous Austin console case, with modifications, to operate both the Pilcher and Ruffatti organs. Both organs were rewired after lightning damage, and repairs were made to crumbling plaster walls in the chambers.



#### Fox Theatre — "Mighty Mo"

"Mighty Mo" was custom-made for the Fox Theatre in 1929 for the then astronomical price of \$42,000 by M. P. Möller, Inc. of Hagerstown, Maryland. It is the second largest theatre organ in the world—behind the Wurlitzer at Radio City Music Hall in New York City—with four manuals, 42 ranks, and 376 stop





the inside out.

The organ has been entertaining audiences since its reintroduction to the public on Thanksgiving Day 1963. Patten maintained the Mighty Mo until his retirement and continues to oversee its care as a volunteer. His documented records and technical wizardry guarantee the instrument will be singing loud and clear for future generations of theatre organ enthusiasts.

Robert C. "Bob" Van Camp (pictured right) graduated from Duke University and served as an officer in the Army Air Force during WWII. Van Camp was a very accomplished pianist and organist. Through his

association with the American Theatre Organ Society enthusiasts, he became the staff organist for the Fox Theatre, beginning in 1963 and continuing until his retirement in 1987. In the 1960s, Bob played the Mighty Mo several times a day for movies on the weekends. After the Fox was bestowed to Atlanta Landmarks, Van Camp was a regular feature that preceded the feature films during the annual Summer Film Festival. He would play the organ and then accompany sing-alongs prior to the main film presentation. Interestingly, he



never used sheet music and had well over 1000 pieces committed to memory. After his death in January 1990, his cremated remains were distributed atop the Fox Theatre organ chambers—a fitting tribute and memorial!

#### First Baptist Church—Three sanctuaries: Four organs (1869, 1906, 1930, 1970)

#### The Second Sanctuary (1869)



The rapid growth of the city following the cessation of hostilities of the War Between the States quickly rendered the first edifice of First Baptist Church obsolete. In 1866, at a meeting called by the pastor of the church, the basic decision that had to be resolved was to either build a new building in the midst of all of their problems, or to disband the church. The result of the meeting was the decision to build a new building



and to find a means to provide the money before it was needed! It was also decided to install an organ in the proposed new church and to engage someone to "direct the music."

On July 7, 1869, the following entry was noted in the minutes of a Special Conference:

It was the unanimous wish of the church that an organ be procured. A committee of three ladies and two gentlemen was instructed to canvass the city for subscriptions to assist us in making the first payment on the organ.

Existing records on the first pipe organ do not reveal the maker of the instrument or its size. It was probably a two-manual instrument from one of several organ builders active in America during this point in history—Felgemaker, Roosevelt, or Hook & Hastings; and more than likely, was a tracker instrument as well as having wind supplied by "pumpers."

#### The Third Sanctuary—Austin Organ Co., Opus 152, ca. 1905, III/23



The design and specification of this new pipe organ was performed by Dr. Charles A. Sheldon Jr., who assisted many Atlanta area churches in the design and implementation of new pipe organs for their facilities. Several Georgia Chapter members served as organist for First Baptist during this time period, including C.W. Dieckmann and George L. Hamrick. In 1930, Opus 152



was moved to Deadrick Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee and was incorporated into Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 1516.5

#### The Fourth Sanctuary—Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 1497, 1930, IV/44

The week of April 20, 1930, marked the opening of the new fourth sanctuary for Atlanta's First Baptist Church on Peachtree Street. Interest centered on the new four-manual pipe organ, built by Henry Pilcher's Sons of Louisville, Kentucky. On Easter Sunday, George Lee Hamrick was at the organ, and the chorus of 40 voices was under the direction of John D. Hoffman. On Monday night, Charles A. Sheldon, was the guest organist, Edith Clark on Tuesday,



Joseph Ragan on Wednesday, and Eda Bartholomew on Thursday—each having his or her choir in attendance.



Pilcher console

The specification of the organ had been published in *The Diapason* in September, 1929.

.... It is of 80 registers, with 2,692 pipes, harp, and chimes. A feature of the instrument is the Echo organ, installed mid-way in the ceiling. The organ is entirely enclosed. By being entirely enclosed and the shutters installed to remain closed when the wind is off, the electric heaters through thermostatic control maintain the proper temperature, and the organ remains in tune—not to mention the matter of expression! And further precaution is taken in that the supply of air to the blower is filtered. Clean air and a steady temperature are none too good for any organ, and in the present case, they add the finishing touch to an almost ideal installation.

Mr. Hamrick expressed his requirements for the organ as follows:

I felt that I should have an organ with every purpose provided for: first, the provision for a dignified ensemble, with enough brilliance and color for recital work; then a range of medium-toned registers for a varied choir accompaniment; and lastly, something more that an Aeoline and a Dulciana.

It should be noted that several world-famous organists gave concerts on the Pilcher organ: the famous French composer/organist, Marcel Dupré; noted organist/composer/arranger, Dr. Albert Schweitzer; Alexander McCurdy (whose fame became widespread in the 1930s after he was diagnosed with polio and then learned to play the organ and recovered full use of his legs with which to play the pedals); and last, but certainly not least, Virgil Fox, who loved coming to Atlanta to perform on the fine instrument at First Baptist Church.

#### Schantz Organ Co., Opus 1192, 1973, IV/86

In 1971, one of the first major projects that the new pastor and minister of music tackled together was the need for a new pipe organ. The Schantz Organ Co. of Orrville, Ohio, joined the historic list of former pipe organ builders to be contracted for the new instrument. The original celestial Echo division was retained, as well as the chimes and celestal/Harp. Provisions were made for the future addition of a gallery organ. The new instrument was installed in 1973 and maintained by the firm of Widener & Associates.



Schantz console

Plans for the future of pipe organs at First Baptist Church when the church relocated from downtown were for general repairs, as well as the addition of a new solid-state system. Other changes were to include the addition of a new five-manual console with space for future pipe additions and expansion. However, due to a change in worship trends at the new location, the organ was never installed. It has now been parceled out to other instruments.

#### Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Georgia

#### Austin Organs, Inc., Opus 2035, 1940, IV/40



Presser Hall

Presser Hall, built in 1940, houses the college's music department. The three-story building was named for Theodore Presser of Philadelphia, who established the Presser Foundation, which contributed toward the building. The original design called for the construction of a separate chapel in memory of Frank H. Gaines, Agnes Scott's first president, but in the



**Gaines Chapel** 

final plans the chapel and music facility were combined.

Presser Hall was dedicated on November 1, 1940, and the Gaines Chapel dedication occurred in January 1941. One of the most important features of the chapel was the four-manual pipe organ built by Austin Organs, Inc.—the first four-manual organ built by Austin Organs, Inc. (Austin Organ Co. basically ended in 1937 and was reorganized as Austin Organs, Inc. later that year.)

The specification for the organ was drawn up by C. W. Dieckmann, head of the Music Department. Most of the tonal aspects of the organ had some influences of James Jamison, Austin's Pacific Coast sales representative, who at the time had been pushing Austin during this period to "clarify" their ensembles, especially with the Principal and Flute chorus of the organ divisions and was leaning toward an English version of the ensembles. According to Dr. Raymond J. Martin, former professor of organ and college organist at Agnes Scott, the physical layout of Gaines Chapel made it ideal for



concerts. However, some chapter members complained of having to drive "way out to Decatur." Since that time, both national and international organists have been presented in recital, many of who have been sponsored by the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter.

#### Druid Hills Presbyterian Church

#### Atlanta's First Aeolian-Skinner Organ: Opus 1004, 1940, III/37

The following article in *The Atlanta Journal* on August 2, 1942, describes the newly installed Aeolian-Skinner organ at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church.

Atlanta's first Aeolian-Skinner organ built by the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company of Boston, Massachusetts, was installed in Druid Hills Presbyterian Church in 1940. The building and installation of the three-manual, 37-rank organ, was under the direct supervision of G. Donald Harrison, internationally known designer of fine organs. Wilbur Rowand, FAGO, dean of music of Shorter College, Rome, Georgia, was technical consultant for the organ committee of the church and also played the dedicatory recital on October 6, 1940. The tonal design and voicing of the instrument is in accord with the finest quality of the classic organ, as developed from Bach's day to the present time. The noble ideals involved in the scheme of the organ are in true keeping with the entire plan of the church building, designed along plans of true Gothic design.



Mabel S. Boyter at the console

In 2006, a phased restoration was begun by Robert I. Coulter Organ Builders of Atlanta, to return the organ to its original condition, with no changes to be made to this historic instrument.

#### St. Luke's Episcopal Church

#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 887, III/29, 1920s

The organs at St. Luke's Episcopal Church have a most interesting history. Originally, the organ was a Henry Pilcher (Jr.), Opus 122, ca. 1870. Then records show that the organ was a Roosevelt organ (1886) when St. Luke's was the cathedral on Houston and Pryor Streets. The instrument was later overhauled and became a John Brown organ. When the present St. Luke's building was erected on Peachtree Street in 1906, the organ was rebuilt again and changed to an Estey organ, Opus 400. In the 1920s, materials from all three makers were "refashioned" and the organ became a three-manual, 29-rank Austin organ Opus 887.

#### Dedication of the Completed Organ: Austin, Opus 887A, 1944, III/41

On October 16, 1944, the Georgia Chapter presented Dr. Hugh Hodgson, organist and master of the choirs of St. Luke's Episcopal Church (1928-1969), in a program of organ and choral music for the dedication of the completed organ, which had been expanded to include the addition of 12 ranks of pipes. The numbers on the program were specially selected to display the color and quality of the new stops in solo and combination effects. The program included Purcell's "Trumpet Tune" (Trumpet stops); Scriabin's "Prelude" (Gemshorn and Flute); Wachs' "Pastorale" (Clarinet and Concert Flute); Debussy's "Pastorale" (Oboe, Gemshorn, Concert Flute); Bastiste's



Dr. Hugh Hodgson

"Communion" (Dolce Cornet); Stebbins' "Summer" (Clarinet and Echo ensemble); and concluding with Widor's "Toccata" from *Symphony V*. The following statement appeared in the dedication program:

"Additional material installed and entire organ revoiced. Original material of organs from Roosevelt, Estey, and finally, from Austin Co., with their console, chests, and action."

In 1962, Opus 887A was relocated to Clairmont Presbyterian Church, Decatur, Georgia. In 1982, the organ was rebuilt and replaced by Opus 2639, III/37. The organ still contains some of the original pipework from the previous organs of St. Luke's.

#### Alston Memorial Organ, Austin, Opus 2382, 1962, IV/74



Austin organ, Opus 887A, was replaced in 1962 by Opus 2382. The Alston Memorial Organ was dedicated St. Luke's Day, October 18, 1963, and was featured at the AGO National Convention in Atlanta in June 1966.

In 1992, some stops from the 1886 Roosevelt were retained and the organ was rebuilt and enlarged as Opus 2382A. The

organ was completely revoiced, and stops were added to the main and antiphonal organs. The crown jewel of this project was the new Trompette-en-Chamade

mounted high on the gallery wall. Work was completed in time for the final round of the Organ Playing Competition for the AGO National Convention held in Atlanta in 1966.

#### Cornell Zimmer Organbuilders, Opus 44, 2001, V/89

In 2000, extensive rebuilding and revoicing was performed by Cornell Zimmer Organ Builders. The organ was enlarged to eight divisions with 90 ranks. A new five-manual console was also added.

#### The Temple: Historic Pilcher evolves to Historic Aeolian-Skinner

#### Henry Pilcher's Sons, Opus 1519, 1931, IV/44

The Temple's current Aeolian-Skinner organ began its life as an instrument built by Henry Pilcher's Sons, purchased new throughout when the present edifice on Peachtree Street was built in 1930. Such internationally famous organists as Palmer Christian (University of Michigan) and Virgil Fox (New York City) played the organ at gatherings of organists under the auspices of the Georgia Chapter. Charles Sheldon, organist at The Temple (1912-1952), is shown at the console in the 1940s.

#### Aeolian-Skinner, Opus 1265, IV/46, 1953

The stature and prominence of this important instrument was cemented when Emilie Parmalee Spivey, AAGO, organist and director of music, engaged Virgil Fox and G. Donald Harrison to tonally redesign the organ. Under the direction of



Charles Sheldon at the Pilcher console

these two luminaries, the Æolian-Skinner firm rebuilt the organ, using 22 ranks from the Pilcher organ along with significant additions and tonal restructuring.

When rebuilding the organ, Mr. Harrison considered the architectural and acoustical qualities of The Temple's awe-inspiring sanctuary and crafted a one-of-a-kind instrument that brilliantly supported the



rich legacy of The Temple's Jewish liturgical music tradition. The organ is one of the last of only 12 throughout the United States that bears Mr. Harrison's signature plate.

An article in the *Metropolitan Herald* of October 26, 1955, which was headed "Music Lovers Invited to Dedicatory Service on New Temple Organ," contains a description of this instrument.

The organ, a four-manual Aeolian-Skinner of 60 ranks of pipes, was primarily designed for the music of The Temple service, but is capable of playing music of all periods.... The English draw-knob style console is a true example of the American classic organ of which Mr. Henry Harrison is founder (Harrison and Harrison Organ Builders, UK).

Emilie Spivey is shown at the console with Robert Harrison, violinist, and Rabbi Jacob Rothschild as they prepare for the dedication service for the organ on



Sunday, October 30, 1955. The dedicatory program included three Mozart sonatas for organ and strings; "Baal Shem (Jewish Life of a Chassidic Rabbi)" by Ernest Bloch, performed by Robert Harrison, concertmaster of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, with organ; and *Concerto in G minor* for organ, strings, and tympani by the French composer, Francis Poulenc. Emilie Spivey was organist for all of these compositions.

Rabbi Rothschild epitomized the meaning of the service with his words: "We are here to dedicate the organ to the service of God and to become, through the medium of music, a part of the works of beauty which He created." The *Metropolitan Herald* threw the following light on the nature of the service:

Here was an opportunity to hear music rarely played, since orchestras do not habitually frequent temples, nor are good organs found in concert halls. Good, solo music for organ was well known, but the long tradition of organ used in concerted music with other instruments was less familiar.

#### **Restoration of the Organ**



The latest organ restoration began in August 2010 by the A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company of Lithonia, Georgia. There was exquisite attention to detail to

make sure to preserve the tonal integrity as per the specifications prescribed by Mr. Harrison in 1955. For the rededication service of the restoration, Ernest Bloch's *Sacred Service* was performed with the William Baker Festival Singers (September 2012) the Lynn Swanson



Festival Singers, and Sue W. Goddard, at the organ, with William Baker conducting. (Sue was Emilie Spivey's assistant for 19 years.)

#### Atlanta First United Methodist: a Large Organ in a Small Space

#### M. P. Möller, Opus 2490, 1919, III/?

The original two-manual Roosevelt Organ (1885), moved from the current site of the Candler Building to the current location on Peachtree Street in 1903, was rebuilt and enlarged in 1918 to a three-manual organ by M. P. Möller.

#### Reuter Organ Co., Opus 1098, 1954, IV/46



On Sunday, January 23, 1955, Annie Mae Norton, organist, presided at the console of the new organ. According to Mrs. Norton, it was the largest organ in the city. (Editor's note: In fact, the Pilcher organ at First Presbyterian had 50 ranks.) It might be more correct to state that the organ was "the largest organ in the smallest amount of space known." Mrs. Norton is shown at the



console for her first recital on February 8 for the Georgia Chapter. The Reuter organ was refurbished and console updated in 1991 by A. E. Schlueter Organ Co.

#### A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Co., 2007, V/93

The organ was massively rebuilt and enlarged in 2007. The current organ includes pipes from the previous Roosevelt and Reuter organs. The Antiphonal organ also includes pipes from the 1922 E. M. Skinner organ, formerly in Sacred Heart Church, Atlanta, Georgia. Since the E. M. Skinner was a rebuild of a Hook and Hastings instrument, the current instrument may also contain some pipes from that builder.



#### Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

#### Pilcher Brothers, 1873, III/31

When the citizens of Atlanta who had fled from the siege of Atlanta during the War Between the States returned at the war's end, they found their city almost totally destroyed by fire. Rather than starting to

repair their damaged church home, Atlanta Roman Catholics decided to build a new church building. The cornerstone was placed on September 1. The inscription read: "Erected and blessed September 1, 1869. Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church. Matt. XVII 8".



New Church 1873

The new Gothic-style church was ready to use in 1873 and was to finally receive a name other than Atlanta Catholic Church. On Wednesday, December 10, 1873, the Church of the Immaculate Conception was dedicated on the feast of the Immaculate

Conception of the Virgin Mary. A historic three-manual, mechanical key and stop action organ was installed. The 31-rank instrument was notable in that it contained a fully-developed Great division unlike any other organ in the area at the time (16', 8' 4' 2-2/3', 2', IV). The organ sat in the middle of the gallery and mostly obscured the typically Victorian west window of green and black fleur-de-lis.



Original Pilcher façade

#### Schantz Oran Co. Opus 230, 1952, III/36

In 1950, Pope Pius XII declared that 1954 would be a "Marian Year" and churches around the world would give special reverence to the Virgin Mary, especially those parishes named after her. Immaculate Conception is the mother church of Catholicism in North Georgia and was therefore re-designated as the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The diocese gave funds for renovation of parts of the church, and included in these upgrades was a new west window from Italy—a beautiful, colorful depiction of the Assumption. In order to see this work of art from inside the church,



the parish realized that the Pilcher organ would have to be moved, even though it was still fully playable after nearly 80 years. The shrine accepted John Widener's 1952 plan to keep all of the pipes and add additional stops (five ranks) according to the times by re-arranging them on new electro-pneumatic wind chests in positions which would allow the new window to be seen. A new three-manual console and a new electric blower were also added. It was a wonderful sound in a reverberant acoustical setting.



Sadly, the shrine was engulfed in a fire in 1982 that almost destroyed the entire building; it had to be rebuilt. The main altar was restored. Both side altars survived intact, though burn marks in the marble are still visible. The statue of the *Pièta*, carved in Italy, also survived and stands in its original place. The original artwork was restored, and all the windows were replaced. The stained glass window in the front of the church and located in the choir loft is a copy of Murillo's oil painting "The Immaculate Conception," the same work of art that hung behind the altar of the 1848 church.

#### Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church

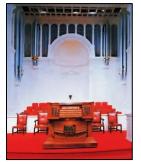
#### Austin Organ Co., Opus 1029, 1920, III/29

In 1920, a three-manual organ was installed by the Austin Organ Co. in Atlanta's Second Baptist Church. The use of an organ in worship was one of the primary reasons for the organization of this historic church in 1854 by a small group of "progressives" who wanted a small reed organ for use in worship.

In 1937, the Austin organ from Second Baptist Church was moved to the newly merged Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist church and placed in the middle of the choir loft. The picture to the right shows Ruby Chalmers, the new church's first organist/director of music, with the professional octet in 1953. When the Austin organ was replaced in 1958, it was relocated to Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Cullman, Alabama, and is still incorporated into one of the largest pipe organs in northern Alabama.



#### M. P. Möller Opus 9185, 1958, IV/52; Möller-Miller Opus 9185A, 2002, IV/50



The Austin organ was replaced by the new Brookes Memorial M.P. Möller pipe organ in 1958. The new organ retained the 16' Violone pedal rank of 32 pipes from the Austin. The new console was placed on a hydraulic lift in the middle of the choir loft. Dr. David Craighead, head of the Organ Department, Eastman School of Music, dedicated the new organ on January 28, 1959. The organ was used twice during the National AGO Convention held in Atlanta in June 1966. In 1973, the sanctuary was renovated and the organ console was moved up on the pulpit to the right of the choir loft.

In the picture, Marcus Bartlett, organist (1960-1980), is shown at the console on the "infamous hydraulic lift."

No mention will be made of the young organists who would spend time lifting and lowering the console while their teachers were not present!

In 1993, the Pipe Organ Renovation Fund was established. With a major financial gift from a donor in 2000, a contract was signed with Miller Pipe Organ Services, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia. Beginning in 2001, the sanctuary was



closed for renovation; the console and façade pipes were removed, major pipe work was performed, and a new façade the movable console were installed. Dedication recitals were held in September and November 2002 and February 2003.

#### Cathedral of Saint Philip

#### M. P. Möller, Opus 2956, 1919, III/35

The following announcement appeared in *The Atlanta Journal* announcing the dedication of the new M. P. Möller Organ on April 7, 1919.

St. Philip's Cathedral will receive a new organ Sunday morning at the 11 o'clock service as the present of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Austin, in memory of their late mothers, who in the past were prominently identified with the religious and musical life of the church .... There will be a musical program rendered by Walter P. Stanley, organist and choir master, of the Ponce de Leon Avenue Baptist Church and the church quartet.

The organ was installed in center chambers at the front of the room with visible façade pipes on the case front. The combination action was a 'Hold and Set' pneumatic/mechanical system. In 1933, the organ was moved to the present location of the Cathedral on Peachtree Road. Tom Brumby, organist/choirmaster, supervised the move of the organ. A 16' Dulciana and 8' Trumpet were added to the organ by M. P. Möller. The organ, with its varied soft coloring and lovely soft strings, was particularly suited to the size of the new building. In the picture to the right, Whilelmene Green,



interim organist for Tom Brumby, who was on leave serving in the U.S. Navy, is shown at the console of the organ in 1943.

#### Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co., Opus 1399, 1960, IV/89; 52 years of growth and enhancement!

While the contract was signed in 1960, the organ was not installed until the new Cathedral building was completed in 1962. Tom Brumby, organist/choirmaster, was instrumental in the design of this large four-manual organ and acquired sufficient donations that allowed the organ to be debt-free at installation.



The organ was built and installed under the direction of Joseph S. Whiteford, president of Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co. Mr. Whiteford had distinguished himself through research in the field of musical acoustics as it relates to church music. His love for vocal music led him to emphasize the role of the organ in accompanying singing. He had a charismatic personality that was well suited to the prestige of the Aeolian-Skinner name. In fact, his personal involvement secured many major contracts that



were directly commissioned without competing bids.

The organ was dedicated Shrove Tuesday 1963, with recitalist Dr. David Craighead, professor of organ and chair of the organ division of the Keyboard Department at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

In 1965, Aeolian-Skinner added the prepared-for Solo division, with the exception of the strings. In 1974, M. P. Möller was contracted to make and install the two Solo division string stops, which were personally voiced by Don Gillette, Aeolian-Skinner tonal director, who had done the original tonal finishing of the organ.

#### Aeolian-Skinner, Opus 1399-B, IV/96, 1991

At the time of the original installation, the acoustics of the cathedral nave were not the best, with the ceiling having acoustic tiles in place. While the room in an empty state could furnish a passable reverberation (2+ seconds), when full, there was minimal reverberation. This was corrected in 1991, with the applications of six coats of clear latex acrylic, which made for a stunning improvement.

Beginning in 1992, there have been multiple revisions. Austin Organs, Inc. added an 8' Tuba to the Solo division and some ranks were relocated from their 1962 location. The gallery division was dismantled and incorporated into the chancel organ after being damaged by a water leak.

Since that time the cathedral organ SOUNDS like a cathedral organ, and it has truly come in to its own—a truly wonderful instrument ... OHS Pipe Organ Database, Database Manager. 2009-07-08.

#### 2011: 96 ranks, nine divisions, new console

In 2011, a new console was added by Schoenstein & Co. The original console was literally played out and needed to retire. The new console contains sufficient blank stop knobs for a future two-manual and pedal gallery organ.

The organ at the Cathedral of St. Philip was featured at the 1966 and 1992 AGO National Conventions held in Atlanta and the 2007 Southeastern Organ Festival, also in Atlanta. In the word of James A. (Bud) Taylor, a communicant of the Cathedral, who grew up with the organ and is now an organ service technician:



This organ is still incredibly thrilling to listen to. Full organ is downright TERRIFYING at the console. The Swell strings (Viole-de-Gambe & Celeste) are very bold, almost caustic at the console, but create a golden shimmer in the room that can't be described. The 32' Bourdon is the PRESENCE, and the reeds are some of Oscar Pearson's (Aeolian-Skinner) finest work. Even after all these years, this instrument is still my favorite.

## St. Anne's Episcopal Church — Atlanta's First 20th Century Mechanical Organ

The two-manual, 33-rank, Flentrop tracker organ, with slider chests, mechanical key action, and mechanical stop action, was installed when St. Anne's Episcopal Church was completed in the spring of 1966. The live acoustical setting, boasting four seconds reverberation when empty, little altered by a moderate-size recital audience, is reduced when the church is full. When Bill Weaver, Atlanta's first "Simple Village Organist," was determining exactly what organ he wanted for the new church, he asked E. Power Biggs for his recommendation. Mr. Biggs asked him "had he even



Bill Weaver at the console of the Flentrop

heard an 8 foot Principal on a Flentrop?" The closest Flentrop organ was at Salem College in North Carolina. So, Bill and Doug took the long drive (no expressways) to take a look. Upon inspection of the organ, there was not an 8 foot Principal, but there was a 4 foot on the Swell. Bill played a selection an octave lower and was instantly satisfied!

The organ was dedicated by E. Power Biggs on the Friday evening preceding the 1966 AGO National Convention in Atlanta. Mr. Biggs also presented another recital the following Sunday afternoon for the attendees for the upcoming convention.

#### **Grace United Methodist Church**

#### Schantz Organ Co., Opus 684, 1969, IV/60

After the enlargement of the sanctuary at Grace United Methodist Church by the addition of the east and west transepts in 1954, it became apparent that the Hall organ, which had served well since 1923, would no longer be adequate, as it was inadequate in size and past the point of repair. In the early 1960s, an Organ Memorial Fund was established to receive gifts and memorials designed toward the purchase of a new organ. A committee studied organs in Atlanta as well as in Augusta and Birmingham. In 1963, the decision was made to sign with the Schantz Organ Co. of Orville, Ohio, who was represented in Atlanta by John Widener and Company. Following several years of building delays, the organ was installed in 1969. The inaugural recital was given by Sue W.



Sue W. Goddard
Organist since 1956

Goddard, organist of the church, on Sunday, June 22, 1969. Special guest recitalists during the Summer Organ Festival were two leading artists in the country at the time—Virgil Fox and E. Power Biggs.

A major renovation and expansion occurred in 1991. The console was rebuilt, replacing pneumatics with all-electric, solid-state combination action, and draw knobs were added to accommodate more ranks of pipes. Some ranks were relocated and additional ranks were added to give different tonal colors and more versatility in accompanying choral works—in essence, to become a "symphonic" organ.

#### Schantz-Widener, 2006, IV/101

The completion of dreams for the organ occurred in 2006: the addition of three ranks in the Great and Pedal division to fill out the tonal design; the thrilling creation of a south gallery balcony division to assist in congregational singing and provide special effects; and most glorious of all, the majestic Trompette-en-Chamade 8',





any organ's crowning glory, extending from the south gallery rail. Because of the new division in the south gallery balcony, the vertical Festival Trumpet 8' needed to be moved once again and has been strikingly placed in the chancel flanking the Ascension Window.

Many individuals have been involved in the development of this majestic organ over a period of 37 years, including Widener and Company, Inc., who has been the sole curator. The original specifications were

drawn up in 1963 by John Widener and his associate, Breck Camp. The significant expansion into the realm of a "symphonic organ" in 1991 was largely due to Gregory Colson's (director of music) knowledge of what sounds were needed to provide the tone colors for more effective accompanying. The last expansions into the east and south galleries and the majestic Trompette-en-Chamade 8' were dreamed of and encouraged by the Rev. Dr. John Beyers, senior minister at the time. Most important of all is the fact that the Schantz-

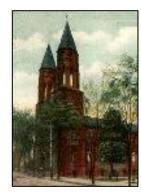


L to R: John Widener, Thomas McCook, Gregory Colson, Sue Goddard, Dr. John Beyers

Widener organ truly belongs to the people of Grace United Methodist Church for it has been given by the entire congregation.

#### Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

The first Catholic Church in Atlanta was what is currently named the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The first daughter parish of this church was founded in 1880 as Saints Peter and Paul Parish, located at the southwest corner of Marietta and Alexander Streets. When the area became too commercial, parishioners made plans to purchase a new site and build a church "at some distance from the business district." In July of 1987, the fathers chose a new church site on the Hill property at the intersection of Ivy and Peachtree Streets. The church, pictured at left, was completed and dedicated on May 1, 1898. On this day, the name of the church was changed from that of Saints Peter and Paul to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.





On May 13, 1976, the Church of the Sacred Heart was entered in the National Register of Historic Places, in recognition of its "artistically significant architecture." On February 22, 2010, Sacred Heart was elevated to the dignity of minor basilica by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and is now known as The Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

#### Hook and Hastings, 1901

The first organ for Sacred Heart was built by Hook and Hastings Co. of Weston, Massachusetts—America's foremost builder of the 1880s. Details of this organ are undocumented; however the original façade has been restored to its original beauty in 2002.

#### Skinner Organ Co., Opus 359, III/29, 1922

Sacred Heart's second organ was installed behind the original façade from the Hook and Hastings organ in the gallery at the rear of the room. The traditional style three-manual, roll top console was located in a fixed position in the gallery.

#### Sacred Heart's Third Pipe Organ, 1974, III/42

By 1972, erosive mechanical problem made necessary the undertaking of considerable repairs and alterations. This basic work tonally integrated the 1922 Skinner Swell, Choir, and Pedal divisions along with a new Great-to-Mixture division of pipes from the Ruffatti Company of Padua, Italy. Included also in the integration were ranks from Sacred Heart's original Hook and Hastings organ. The organ contained 21 former ranks and 21 new ranks, supplemented by 8 equivalent electronic ranks. A new Rodgers' console, a marvel of up-to-date controls for the time, was also added.

#### Casavant Frères Organ, Opus 3823, 2002, III/46

Two links with the former pipe organs at Sacred Heart Church have been incorporated in to the current organ, the most obvious being the original instrument's façade woodwork and stenciled pipes that have been restored to their original beauty. In 1922, the façade was retained, but the organ behind it was replaced with the Skinner Opus 359 organ. While most of this instrument was discarded or significantly altered in a 1972 combination pipe-electric organ project, the delicate, ethereal sounding Flute Douce and Flute Céleste were rescued from years of silence to sound once again in the new organ.



#### Spivey Hall - Albert Schweitzer Memorial Organ



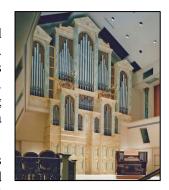
Spivey Hall, located on the campus of Clayton State University, is a 400-seat, acoustically-superior performing arts venue that has presented the best in all genres of music to the metro Atlanta area since 1991. The story of Spivey Hall begins with one woman's love of music and a couple's desire to give back to their community.

Emilie Spivey, a doyenne of the Georgia/Atlanta Chapter of the AGO, serving twice as dean, was an organist, chamber music aficionado, and patron of the arts. Emilie's husband Walter, a prominent Atlanta dentist, approached a real estate developer with the idea of building a small, elegant concert hall as a fitting legacy for his wife. But this was not to be just any concert hall. Emilie ensured the creation of a jewel of acoustic perfection ... a hall that would allow music lovers to hear

music in the best possible way ... so clear and crystalline that it was like hearing music for the first time ... a hall elegant and luxurious, yet small enough to create an intimate connection with the artist while allowing every patron an excellent view ... and a hall with a world-class pipe organ. Yes—not just any concert hall—Spivey Hall.

#### Fratelli Ruffatti, 1992, III/79

The focal point of Spivey Hall, with its elegant touches of marble and gold leaf, is the Albert Schweitzer Memorial Organ, honoring the memory of Dr. Albert Schweitzer. The organ, built by Fratelli Ruffatti of Padua, Italy, was installed in 1992 and dedicated in May of that year by Dame Gillian Weir. With a total of 4,413 pipes, 79 ranks, two electric ranks, and 88 speaking stops, the instrument reflects the vision of the organ's benefactress—a versatile instrument, capable of performing music from all periods and styles.



Neither Walter nor Emilie lived to see the ground breaking, but their kindness and generosity manifests itself in the beauty of Spivey Hall. Emilie passed away one month after completing the formal plans in 1988, yet every detail

was followed faithfully through the project construction. The Spiveys' financial gift lives on as well through the Walter and Emilie Spivey Foundation Board of Trustees, who administer a generous endowment.

#### Emilie Spivey's Home Organ

#### **Rodgers/Ruffatti, Opus 1, III/15, 1968, 1978**

When Emilie Spivey purchased her first residence organ in 1968, she might have envisioned that this was only the beginning. This original Rodgers/Ruffatti *Opus 1* combined eight ranks of Rufatti pipes and wind chests with Rodgers electronics and the first Rodgers three-manual console to have movable draw knobs. Ten years later, when she desired to have more concerts in her home, seven more ranks of pipes were added and a larger, moveable console was purchased for the additional electronic and pipe stops.





**Richard Morris** 

Upon her death, Mrs. Spivey generously bequeathed this instrument to Clayton State to enhance its music program and to allow future

generations to study and enjoy the instrument she loved. In 1993, Widener and Company of Grayson, Georgia, was commissioned to move this organ to the college and re-structure it to fit in a large rehearsal room on the campus. This organ today serves not only as a teaching and recital instrument, but also as the equivalent of a 75-rank practice organ. Richard Morris, an Atlanta Chapter member and organist in residence at Spivey Hall and head of the Organ Department at Clayton State, played the rededication concert of this instrument in its new home on Sunday, May 15, 1994.

#### Peachtree Road United Methodist Church

Chancel Organ: Mander Organ, 2002, IV/90 Gallery Organ: Mander Organ, 2008, II/42

Not many churches have more than one organ these days. However, in the past, it was by no means so unusual for large churches to have two or even more organs in the one space. In France, large churches often had a main organ, usually sited on a west gallery and a smaller instrument in the chancel. In Spain, South Germany, and elsewhere, it was not unusual to have two identical looking instruments on either side of the chancel and possibly a third one elsewhere. The purpose was to lead singing of congregations and choirs in the different parts of the building for different liturgies. Even today, one occasionally finds a large organ in a gallery at the rear of the church with a smaller one in the chancel. At Peachtree Road United Methodist Church (PRUMC), things are reversed. The larger organ is in the chancel and the smaller one in the gallery. The style of the gallery organ is based loosely on the French Romantic style in contrast to the decidedly English slant of the chancel organ. The chancel organ ranks as one of the largest mechanical action pipe organs ever built by a British company in an unusual double case.



**Chancel Organ** 



**Gallery Organ** 

Although both organs at are mechanical, they are connected electrically. The gallery organ can be played from the main console with all the stops available on the console and transfers which can assign the gallery organ to a variety of manuals of the main console. This was planned from the inception of the main organ. However, it was also felt that it would be useful to control the main organ from the new gallery organ console, so a system was devised whereby the general pistons of the main console could be called up and operated from the gallery console. This allows pistons set on the chancel organ console to

be used as "blind" combinations on the gallery organ console to play either or both organs.

The chancel organ console is detached and located the choir stalls on the left-hand side. This has given rise to one of the longest tracker runs ever. The manual trackers run horizontally 18 feet before they reach the organ chambers, and the Choir division trackers then rise from 9 to almost 30 feet to the Choir soundboard. The Pedal trackers run horizontally 33 feet before reaching the Pedal case. The couplers are mechanical, although optional electric coupling is provided for use when required, the mechanical coupling remaining the default option.



Scott Atchison at the console of the gallery organ



**Olivier Latry and Scott Atchison** 

The chancel organ was dedicated on January 12, 2003, with Olivier Latry, *titular* organist of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris. (Pictured at left with Scott Atchison, PRUMC organist and choirmaster) The gallery organ was opened in a wide ranging concert on January 25, 2009. The main soloist was David Higgs, head of the Organ Department at Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York. The PRUMC Chancel Choir also took part, conducted by Stephen Kennedy, with Scott Atchison on the chancel organ and Nicole Marane on the gallery organ.

