



The Organizer

Monthly Newsletter
The Atlanta Chapter
AMERICAN GUILD
of ORGANISTS
DECEMBER 2007

**Holiday Greetings
from your
Atlanta
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Mission Statement

"The purpose of the American Guild of Organists is to promote the organ in its historical and evolving roles, to encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music, and to provide forum for mutual support, inspiration, education, and certification of Guild members."

CHAPTER HOLIDAY PARTY!

**Sunday, December 30, 2007
5 to 8 PM**

Callanwolde Fine Arts Center
980 Briarcliff Road NE ♦ Atlanta
404.872.5338

**Join us for heavy hors d'oeuvres,
festive libations, and holiday music
featuring the historic mansion's
Aeolian pipe organ**

Hosted by the Chapter



Reservations \$22 per person. RSVP required by December 21st.

Contact David Barber at d_barber@bellsouth.net

-OR-

Karen Bunn at 770.446-2084

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Dr. John Beyers Named Chapter Chaplain

Dr. John Beyers, a member of our Chapter and pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Conyers, has cheerfully agreed to serve as our Chaplain. Previously John served at Grace United Methodist Church and it was through his enthusiastic support that the wonderful renovation of the sanctuary and enhancement of the organ became a reality.

The Chaplain provides a strong link between ordained ministers and church musicians, and is available as a resource for Chapter members who find themselves in need of pastoral care in their personal and professional lives.

John brings with him a broad experience in ministry, a deep appreciation of the integration of music and the spoken Word in the worship of the church, and a pastoral sensitivity both as a minister and a musician which will make him an invaluable resource and support for the mission of the Guild.

Lisa Handman
Professional Harpist



call 770.442.9172
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www.harpnotes.com
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John Widener Memorial Scholarship

A new and unique scholarship has been established by Atlanta Chapter member Robert Coulter in memory of John Widener, respected organ builder and long-time member of our Chapter. (Please see insert .) This annual scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 will enable a young organ student (ages 16 to 26) to serve as an apprentice to an organ builder or service technician, in order to learn first-hand the technical, acoustical, and design concepts and practices beyond performance preparation.

A committee is being formed, including Robert Coulter and Tommy McCook, along with several other Chapter members, to establish the guidelines and application process for the award.

Come, join us at the CATHEDRAL OF ST. PHILIP

2744 Peachtree Rd. NW
Atlanta, GA 30305-2920

Call 404.365.1050 for more information.

Sunday, 2 December

4 PM / AN ADVENT PROCESSION

Cathedral Choir

*music by Neswick, Phillips, Distler, Manz, Guerrero
Guest, Beaudrot, Bullock and McKie*

Sunday, 16 December

3:15 PM / CONCERT

Cathedral Choristers

with Susan Brady, *harp*

music by Rutter

4 PM / EVENSONG

Cathedral Schola

music by Harris

Sunday, 23 December

4 PM / CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS

Cathedral Schola

*music by Rorem, Mawby, Poston, Weir, Head, Schelat,
Poulenc, Willcocks, Willan and Joubert*

Sunday, 6 January

4 PM / AN EPIPHANY PROCESSION

Choir of Girls, Boys and Adults

music by Rutter

Sunday, 13 January

3:15 PM / RECITAL

Craig Campbell (First UMC, Johnson City, TN), *organ*

music by Coe, Campbell, Vierre and Roth

4 PM / EVENSONG

Cathedral Schola

music by Neswick

Sunday, 20 January

3:15 PM / RECITAL

Gail Archer (Barnard College, New York City), *organ*

music by Messiaen

4 PM / EVENSONG

Cathedral Schola

music by Morley

Sunday, 27 January

3:15 PM / RECITAL

Emanuele Cardi (Italy), *organ*

music by Bossi, Cappoci and Widor

4 PM / EVENSONG

Cathedral Schola

music by Clucas and Howells

A Message from The DEAN

Michael Morgan

Even though I was raised a Baptist and have served a Presbyterian congregation for most of my professional life, there is a warm place in my heart for English cathedral music. It has something to do with the richness of all those Diapasons, the clarity of the choral sound, and the resonance of the naves, which all comes together to convince me that this must be the song of heaven! (Well, at least *one* of the songs, for I firmly believe that whatever we sing in our hearts will make “heaven” for us.)

As Elgar spoke to us through the sensitive playing of Nigel Potts that memorable November evening in St. Philip’s Cathedral, I found myself, with ears open and eyes closed, giving thanks for the gift of music.

In preparing a devotional for our recent Session retreat at Central Presbyterian Church, I came across a wonderful quote by Martin Luther, in which he, in his inimitable and colorful way, testifies to the power of music:

“When our natural musical ability is whetted and polished to the extent that it becomes an art, then do we note with great surprise the great and perfect wisdom of God in music, which is, after all, His product and His gift; we marvel when we hear music in which one voice sings a simple melody, while three, four, or five other voices play and trip lustily around the voice that sings its simple melody and adorn this simple melody wonderfully with artistic musical effects, thus reminding us of a heavenly dance, where all meet in a spirit of friendliness, caress, and embrace. A person who gives this some thought and yet does not regard music as a marvelous creation of God, must be

a clodhopper indeed and does not deserve to be called a human being; he should be permitted to hear nothing but the braying of asses and the grunting of hogs.”

That’s pretty rough company for those who have never experienced the voice of creation through the music of worship, and I was impressed all over again by the vital role we play in providing that voice to them, week after week.

I closed the devotional with a prayer I uncovered on the Internet which was written for an AGO worship service several years ago, and I share it with you here:

*Grant unto us, O Lord, nerves of steel
that we may dare to sing a new song –
and teach others to sing it, too.*

*Grant unto us, O Lord, iron hands that we might
grasp the nettle of new music;
yet, grant unto us, O Lord, velvet fingers
that we may touch tenderly the sensibilities of
your people.*

*Grant unto us, O Lord, feet light as feathers
that we may tread softly on the eggshells placed in
our path; yet, grant unto us, O Lord, firm footsteps
that we might follow where you would have us go*

*Grant unto us, O Lord, occasional failing memory
that we may forget the harsh criticisms of our taste
in music; yet, grant unto us, O Lord, memory clear
as crystal that we may remember the joy – and
comfort – that our words and music bring.*

*Grant unto us, O Lord, the tongues of angels that we
may create harmony of discord.*

*Grant unto us, O Lord, shoulders of Teflon that the mud
that shall be cast shall not stick.*

*And above all else, dear Lord, grant unto us space and
time in our busy-ness that our souls may touch your
soul – and that we may learn to sing the songs
that our souls shall sing forever. Amen.*



January 18 & 19 (Friday & Saturday)

Roswell United Methodist Church, Roswell, Georgia

Featuring Nationally Recognized Clinicians!

Adult Choirs & Organ - *John Ferguson*

Children’s Choirs - *John Horman*

Adult Choirs - *Eric Nelson*

Preschool Choirs - *Pamela Vandewalker*

Youth Choirs - *Ken Berg*

Handbell Choirs - *David M. Harris*

For more information about the workshop or to register on-line visit:

www.cgatlanta.org



Music at St. Dunstan's

A Series of Sacred Music Events
for the 2007-2008 Season

Celebrating Ten Years of the
DELAWARE-PARKEY ORGAN, OPUS 2 (1997)

AN ADVENT PROCESSION WITH CAROLS Sunday, 9 December 2007 - 4:00 PM

Traditional Anglican candlelight service with music by the St. Dunstan Choir. Scriptural Lessons from the Prophets and Gospels alternate with carols and hymns in a moving and dramatic portrayal of the world awaiting the Savior. Carols by *Philip Ledger, Peter Warlock, George Guest, Charles Wood, Patrick Hadley, Herbert Howells, Morten Lauridsen*, and others.

ST. DUNSTAN'S VISITING CHOIR SERIES

COMPLINE with The Schola of St. Bartholomew's Church, Atlanta Sunday, 20 January 2008 - 4:00 PM

Known as the "bedtime" service, Compline is the simplest of the monastic offices and offers a meditative and peaceful way to begin the work week. A vital part of the worshipping community of St. Bartholomew's since 1986, the Schola of unaccompanied voices (**John Whitt, Director**) sings the entire service in a candlelit church with incense, offering a varied repertoire of a *capella* music from chant to 20th-century. St. Dunstan's welcomes the Schola and warmly invites you to explore this beautiful service as part of your own spiritual practice. Preceded by an organ recital with **Brad Hughley, Organist-Choirmaster** of Saint Bartholomew's Episcopal Church.

SORROW, PEACE, JOY...

A LENTEN MEDITATION WITH CAROLS Sunday, 24 February 2008 - 4:00 PM

The Great Forty Days of Lent, with all of their inherent spiritual drama and profound implications, have provided artists for centuries with sources of inspiration. Please join the St. Dunstan Choir and Mary & Martha's Place for this liturgical sequence of prayers, readings, carols, and anthems arranged to amplify the various themes observed by the Christian world at this time. Featuring music of *Orlando Gibbons, John Rutter, Johannes Brahms, Healey Willan*, and *James Stephenson*.

A co-production with **Mary & Martha's Place,**
Center for Women's Spirituality

JAMES STEPHENSON III, *trumpet* with **Stephen Furches, organ** Sunday, 20 April 2008 - 4:00 PM

The King of Instruments meets the Instrument of Kings in a concert of works both traditional and exotic. Naples Philharmonic trumpeter and composer James Stephenson and St. Dunstan organist Stephen Furches - recognized for their exploration of the unfamiliar in trumpet and organ repertoire - will perform works of *André Fleury, Georg-Philipp Telemann, Giambattista Martini, Remo Giazotto, Franklin Ashdown, Alan Hovhaness*, and *James Stephenson*.

All events are free and open to the public.
An offering will be collected. (Suggested donation: \$5)
Childcare Provided.

ST. DUNSTAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
4393 Garmon Road NW
Atlanta, GA 30327
404.266.1018 ♦ www.stdunstan.net

A Change for Operating Guidelines

On recommendation from the Executive Board, and with the support of the National Office and the Regional Councilor, the Chapter members gathered at St. Philip's Cathedral in November unanimously approved the following motion:

"That the Operating Guidelines be amended to include the Webmaster as an official member of the Executive Board of the Atlanta Chapter, American Guild of Organists."

For several years, the Webmaster has served as an *ex-officio* member of the Board. As the website has become increasingly the primary vehicle for transmitting the newsletter to our membership, and providing information about our Chapter to all who access the website. Tim Shepard, our Webmaster, has done a wonderful job of coordinating and updating the website, and this action will insure continued involvement with the Board.

ListServ Recommendations

The ListServ, by which we have instant communication through email access with all of our members, is one of our most valuable resources. It was designed to share items of common interest and concern among our members - recital & concert listings; workshops of interest to organists and church musicians; Chapter announcements and updates; and emergency notices. Other items, such as job listings, political and personal agendas, should not be posted. To date, there has not been enough abuse to warrant guidelines, but members need to be sure that the messages they post are appropriate. Two important suggestions have been made, which we should respect:

- (1) be sure to include "AGO" in the subject line,
and
- (2) avoid sending messages with attachments.

Much gratitude is due to David Barber and Bill Coscarelli for their time and talent in monitoring and maintaining our ListServ capability.

For Sale

Lowrey Organ
Director Model LC/35

Five years old in mint condition.
Owner's Manual and lots of music. Best offer.
Contact" Nora Herrin jaydasmimi@yahoo.com



Positions Available

Further details on these and other positions may be found at the Chapter's web-site: www.agoatlanta.org - then click on "employment."

Bascomb United Methodist Church 2295 Bascomb Carmel Rd., Woodstock GA., is searching for an organist to start immediately. The church's website is www.bascombumc.org. If interested, please send resume to: pvjohns@alltel.net.

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany 2089 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE, Atlanta, GA 30307, 404/373-8338 (phone), 404/373-5405 (fax) is seeking a dynamic, full-time organist/choirmaster to start in early 2008. The ideal candidate will have a thorough background in Anglican music; a willingness to partner with the clergy in making each service spiritually fulfilling; a knowledge and love of liturgy; and the ability to musically inspire and challenge both adults and children. Applicants should have a degree in sacred music, organ, choral conducting, and/or extensive comparable experience, with preference given to those with graduate degrees. The job requires a total of 40 hours per week. Applicants should be prepared to send upon request a recording on physical media (compact disk or cassette tape). Please send all materials to the church at the above address to the attention of Shea McNutt, Parish Administrator (email: parishadmin@epiphany.org)

Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross 2005 South Columbia Place, Decatur, GA 30032. Organist/Choir Leader (choir of 15 members). Traditional (Anglican) worship, with fifth Sunday contemporary worship. For details, contact Rev. Brian Jemmott, Rector, at rector5@bellsouth.net, jemmott@bellsouth.net, or at 404-284-1211.

Pilgrimage Presbyterian Church 4225 Wynne Russell Drive, Lilburn, GA 30047 seeks an organist/accompanist for PPC's music program. Average six hours per week. Interested candidates should contact Greg McMinn at 770.717.9834.

North Decatur Presbyterian Church 611 Medlock Road, Decatur, GA 30033, www.ndpc.org, 404-636-1429, 404-636-6605 (fax), seeks a full-time Minister of Music/Organist. The position will require 40 hours per week providing creative and dynamic leadership for all aspects of music ministry at NDPC. The organ was built by Cornell Zimmer in 2005 and has 20 pipe ranks, 40 digital ranks, 65 stops, and 3 manuals. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with education, skills, and experience. Send resume to music@ndpc.org.

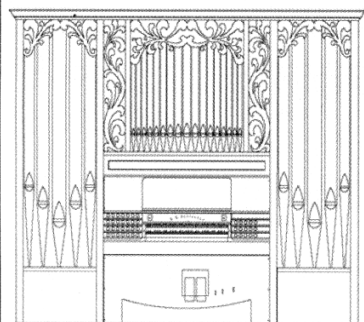
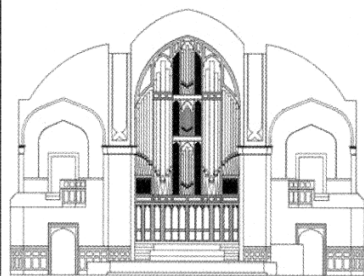
Simpsonwood UMC 4500 Jones Bridge Circle, Norcross, GA 30092 (the Peachtree Corners area of Norcross) is seeking an Organist/Accompanist for one weekly worship service. Interested candidates may send a resume to Organist Search, Simpsonwood UMC at church address above, or via email to rhamrick@simpsonwoodumc.org.

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church a new Episcopal church to be located in the New Vinings/Smyrna area, is looking for a part-time organist/choir director to help begin a music program. Please send your resume and/or contact: Ms. Patty Jones, 400 Interstate North Parkway, Suite 420, Atlanta, GA 30339, 678-279-4300; Patty@MySaintB.org.

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church 2833 Flat Shoals Rd., Decatur, GA 30034; 404-241-7711 seeks an Organist/Director of Music for Sunday [10:00am] worship service, major feast days and special occasions. interested candidates need to apply to: The Rev. Harold Lockett, D. Min., or Fax Resume and Cover letter to: 404-241-5259 or attach to email: sttimoth@bellsouth.net



A.E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company



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We are pleased to be the pipe organ company of choice for many exciting and noteworthy projects. Photographs and specifications of some of our current projects as well as recent new instruments, consoles and rebuilt organs are featured on our website (www.pipe-organ.com). We are available to assist you with:

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- Rebuilding
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- Additions
- Maintenance
- Consultation with architects and church designers
- Insurance claims

At A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company, function does follow form.

December 2007 Calendar of Area Events

Weekday	Date	Time	Event	Location	\$
Saturday	1	8:00 pm	“Christmas Atlanta” presented by The William Baker Festival Singers, The Georgia Young Singers and The Voices of Grace	Grace United Methodist	
	1	8:00 pm	Atlanta Schola Cantorum concert, John Whitt, director	St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal	\$
Sunday	2	3:00 pm	“Christmas Atlanta” presented by The William Baker Festival Singers, The Georgia Young Singers and The Voices of Grace	Grace United Methodist	
	2	3:00 pm	Saint Mark Chapel Organ Recital: John Richardson	Saint Mark UMC	
	2	4:00 pm	An Advent Procession featuring the Cathedral Choir	Cathedral of St. Philip	
	2	5:00 pm	Lessons & Carols for Advent	St. Luke’s Episcopal	
	2	7:00 pm	Candlelight Lessons and Carols for Advent featuring The Jubilate Choir and the King’s Men	Lutheran Church of the Redeemer	
	2	7:00 pm	Slide by Slide Trombone Chorus leads the Saint Mark Annual Festival of Holiday Carols	Saint Mark UMC	
Saturday	9	3:00 pm	“Tell Me The Story of Jesus” Advent Concert	Underwood United Methodist	
	9	3:00 pm	Antonio Vivaldi’s “Gloria” and “Beatus Vir” presented by The Voices of Grace and Johann Sebastian Back’s “Wachet Auf” presented by Grace A Cappella	Grace United Methodist	
	9	3:00 pm	Festival Singers of Atlanta with Saint Mark Brass	Saint Mark UMC	
	9	4:00 pm	An Advent Procession with Carols	St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church	
	9	4:00 pm	<i>Prophets and Angels: An Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols</i> (music of Aaron David Miller) featuring Deborah Workman, ASO Oboist	Lutheran Church of the Messiah	
	9	6:00 pm	Advent Lessons & Carols using the “O” Antiphons featuring The Canterbury Choir, Brad Hughley, director	St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal	
	9	8:15 pm	The Atlanta Singers Christmas Concert	Spivey Hall	\$
Sunday	16	11:15 am	Saint Mark Brass and Sanctuary Choir present Antonio Vivaldi’s <i>Gloria</i> and Saint Mark Ringers	Saint Mark UMC	
	16	3:00 pm	Hector Olivera, internationally acclaimed organist	Grace United Methodist	
	16	3:15 pm	Rutter’s <i>Dancing Day</i> featuring the Cathedral Choristers & Susan Brady, harp	Cathedral of St. Philip	
	16	4:00 pm	Evensong featuring the Cathedral Schola	Cathedral of St. Philip	
Monday	17	7:30 pm	Saint Mark Sanctuary Choir present Antonio Vivaldi’s <i>Gloria</i> and Music for the Holidays	Saint Mark UMC	
Saturday	22	8:00 pm	New Trinity Baroque: German Candlelight Christmas, Predrag Gosta, director	St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal	
Sunday	23	11:15 am	Saint Mark Brass and Sanctuary Choir Christmas Celebration	Saint Mark UMC	
Monday	24	7:00 pm	Candlelight Communion Service	Saint Mark UMC	
		11:00 pm	Lessons and Carols with Saint Mark Brass and Sanctuary Choir	Saint Mark UMC	
Sunday	30	8:15 am	Lessons and Carols for Christmas	Lutheran Church of the Redeemer	
		11:00 am	Lessons and Carols for Christmas	Lutheran Church of the Redeemer	

AGO Atlanta 2007-2008 Season at a Glance

December 30	Chapter Holiday Party Callanwolde Fine Arts Center
January 8	Thomas Murray Morningside Presbyterian
February 12	Ann Labounsky "Life and Music of Jean Langlais" Peachtree Christian Church
April 12	Young Organist Concert St. Mark's United Methodist
May 13	Guild Service with Sue Goddard & The Baker Festival Singers Grace United Methodist Church

The Organizer & Other News You Need

Charles Redmon, <i>Editor</i>	404.931.8668 chazredmon@aol.com
Patty Conley, <i>Events Calendar</i>	770.482.4845 agoatlanta.events@yahoo.com

DEADLINE for JANUARY '07 issue: Dec. 15th

Advertising space available:
Per issue: \$60 half page; \$30 quarter page; \$15 business card size

Chapter Web site	www.agoatlanta.org
National Web site	www.AGOHQ.org
Chapter Listserve	AGOAtlanta-L@listserve.uga.edu

Executive Board Meeting
Saturday, January 5, 2008 • 10 a.m.
at Grace United Methodist Church

About the 2007-2008 Yearbook

2007-08 AGO Atlanta Yearbooks will again be available at the January 8th meeting. We appreciate those of you who renewed your membership by the June 30th deadline - and those who picked up their books at our recent meetings. If you need to have your copy mailed, please contact Michael Morris, Registrar.

Every effort has been made to insure accuracy and completeness of the information contained within the 2007-2008 Yearbook. All information was taken directly from your new or renewal application. If there are errors, additions or changes, please notify the Registrar at your earliest convenience. Updates will be presented in the monthly issue of *The Organizer*.

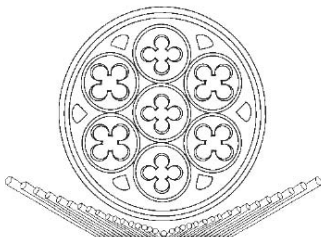
Dinner Notes

Dinner Reservations	David Barber, <i>Chair</i> by email: d_barber@bellsouth.net
	Karen Bunn, <i>Chair</i> by phone: (h) 770.446.2084 (cell) 404.502.6292

Reservations for monthly meeting dinners are a **MUST** and should be made no later than the Thursday before the next weeks meeting. **CHECKS** are to be made payable to AGO Atlanta at the dinner check-in desk. If you pay by **CASH**, please bring exact change. If you make a reservation and are unable to keep it, you are responsible for canceling the reservation in advance on the Thursday prior to the dinner or luncheon date - **OR**- you will be expected to pay for it regardless of your attendance. *Thank you in advance for honoring these requests.*

For security reasons and when at all possible,
we prefer that you always pay your reservations with
a **PERSONAL CHECK**
-or-
CASH (with exact change)

To pay for a reservation that you didn't keep, mail a check to Charlene Ponder, *Treasurer*. (see Yearbook Page ML-39)



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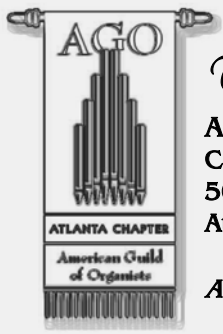


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The Organizer

Atlanta Chapter A.G.O.
Charles Redmon, *Editor*
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Fa, la, la, la, la!

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This instrument is being built for
Sam Jones Memorial United Methodist Church in Cartersville, Georgia.

When completed in late 2007, this instrument will be thirty ranks
over three manuals and pedal and will include many of our
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and a smooth 8' Tromba on high pressure.

***“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy;
they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”***

- Marcel Proust

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JOHN THOMAS WIDENER, JR. - ORGANBUILDER (1922 - 2004)

EXCERPTS from A Reminiscence Given by Thomas L. McCook at the Memorial Concert February 4, 2005, Grace United Methodist Church, Atlanta, Georgia

John Thomas Widener, Jr., was born in Atlanta, Georgia, October 16, 1922, the only child of John Thomas Widener, a Baptist preacher and Railway Express Agency employee, and Jesse Henry, one of the first female graduates of what is now the State University of West Georgia in Carrollton. He was raised in the 800 block of Boulevard (now Monroe Dr.), attended Inman Elementary School, O'Keefe Middle School and Tech High where his favorite classes were shop and drafting. In his youth, he built crystal radios and many models of airplanes and ships from scratch and took them apart again - and according to his cousins sometimes very unceremoniously. During and after high school, he was a late night engineer for WSB radio, when it was in the Biltmore Hotel, and knew all the personalities of that era. In the mid-1930's, he learned to play brass instruments and joined the Atlanta Philharmonic conducted by Enrico Leide. His trumpet stand-mate at one time was none other than Beverly Wolff, who later became the leading mezzo-soprano for the New York City Opera Co. He entered Georgia Tech in early 1941 but left in 1942 to enlist in the Army. As a member of the Signal Corps he never went overseas, but non-commissioned officer Widener taught Engineering Drawing to commissioned officers at St. Louis University. While in St. Louis, he happened to meet Mario Salvador, the virtuoso organist of the Catholic Cathedral. This really began his interest in pipe organs with the sound of a very large instrument in a basilica with nine seconds reverberation.

After leaving the Army in 1946, he married his childhood sweetheart, Mary Louise Browne, and they had two daughters, Janet and Patricia. During this time, he was employed by AT&T and was involved in not only laying out the route of their first long-line cables from Atlanta to Jacksonville, Florida, but also in physically tromping through the south Georgia swamps to install them. John and his family had been longtime members of First Baptist Church on Peachtree Street (where Ray Smathers was choir director for so many years). When their old Pilcher organ began having action problems, Mr. Smathers, knowing of John's mechanical abilities and his interest in pipe organs, asked John to see if he could do some repair work on it. Ray was so impressed with the outcome, he introduced John to Chester Raymond, who had a well-known organ company in Princeton, NJ. Mr. Raymond offered John an apprenticeship which involved a residency in Princeton. One of their maintenance contracts was the large Skinner organ in the chapel of Princeton University. Many afternoons John would see Albert Einstein walking alone on campus.

Because he was a quick learner, John returned to Atlanta in the late 1940's as representative of Chester Raymond's company. In 1950, he decided to form his own business naming it Widener and Co., Ltd., with Mary as the "and Co." In the early years of the new business, living was difficult, what with trying to get work and then doing all the work, raising two small children and literally living in a log cabin (with outhouse) on Osborne Road. From 1952-1954, he almost singlehandedly restored the 3-manual, 1873 Pilcher organ at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Atlanta. Sadly, there are no remnants of this landmark instrument, except for a couple of mono recordings, as it was destroyed by a freak electrical fire in 1983. But business progressed with John's reputation for good work and he hired his first full-time employee, Breck Camp, who became his partner when the company was incorporated in the early '60's as Widener and Company, Inc. In the late '50's, John and Breck began the first restoration work on the Moller organ in the Fox Theatre spending many late hours in the pit after the last show of the day. The cableing system they devised under the console is the same type used today.

In the late 1940's, John had met Paul, Bruce and John Schantz, third generation principals in America's oldest pipe organ building family. This began a long association with Schantz Organ Co. of Orrville, Ohio, with installation and maintenance of their instruments just becoming known in the South. To honor this long relationship, the entire management team of Schantz Organ Company was present at John's Memorial Concert.

The Atlanta area did not have as many pipe organs or the number of large organs it has now, so when I joined the firm as a go-fer in 1967, maintenance and installation contracts stretched from Cape Hatteras to Midland, Texas, to Miami, FL. This meant lots of work in some very interesting places including the restoration of the 1916 Welte organ with automatic pneumatic player at Vizcaya, James Deering's 75-room palazzo (now Dade County Art Museum) in Miami. (Deering was the major stockholder of International Harvester in the early years of the 20th century.)

John was a hard worker all his life. In 1984, while recuperating from prostate surgery and still not even supposed to leave his house, his work ethic would not let him be still. He had his living room cleared and brought all the parts for a portable instrument he had designed to him and he assembled this one-manual, 4-stop organ right there. Again, mainly because of John's reputation, Widener and Company was chosen to install and become the curator of the magnificent Fratelli Ruffatti concert organ in Spivey Hall. This was the last new organ he completely supervised and probably the crowning achievement of his career, even though he oversaw maintenance contracts at such prestigious churches as the Catholic Cathedral of Christ the King, the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip, the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, First Presbyterian, Peachtree Road United Methodist, Northside Drive Baptist and Grace United Methodist. But his legacy is not limited to the instruments alone. He designed many of the tools we use in our work. And he was a great teacher. In the last 50 years, he trained several young organbuilders who now have their own businesses or are in management at other major companies. And his co-workers always knew where they stood with him. The anomaly that he did not play organ was balanced by the most remarkable pair of ears one could have for listening and tuning.

Mary Widener passed away from cancer in 1985 and in the last few years, John suffered from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, probably brought on by many years of smoking, but was in his shop every day until the last. It was from complications of this disease that he passed away peacefully the evening of November 4, 2004.