

Stop & Reed

75th Anniversary edition-part two

June 2021
San Joaquin Valley Chapter American Guild of Organists

San Joaquin Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

THE AGO SJV 75th ANNIVERSARY.

*75 years is a mighty long time -
Who keeps track but God sublime.
Services, concerts, lessons, practice -
Playing wrong notes is malpractice!
Christmas, Easter, in between -
All is sacred - always been.
Music poured from hearts galore -
Lifting souls past heaven's door.
Glorious sounds fill ev'ry soul -
As our earth life takes its toll.
Dishing out God's gift to us -
Filling blessings with no fuss
Now to future is our role -
What traditions is the goal?
Past cannot imprint the new -
Stay connected by God's glue!*

Helga F. Lutke Medd,

April 7, 2021

SJVAGO

October 16, 1945-October 16, 2020

sjvago.org

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From the Dean

75th Anniversary Celebration SJVAGO

Dean's Message

Are we feeling the heat yet? Summer is here and I hope you all are staying cool! As our program year comes to an end, I want to thank everyone who participated in or watched any of our virtual events. It was a season unlike any other, and I am excited to get back to in-person concerts and events.

For those of you who were unable to attend our 75th Anniversary Virtual Happy Hour, it was a wonderful time to connect and celebrate our chapter's legacy. We were graced by the presence of some national officers including; Executive Director, James Thomashower, National President, Michael Bedford, West Regional Councillor, Skye Hart, Director of Member Engagement & Chapter Development, Elizabeth George. SJVAGO Members in attendance included; Cactus Harris, Mike Varlas, Hannah Zentner, Matt Rye, Michal Hembd, Faye DeLong, Jean Hayes, Laurell Huber, Helga Medd, Tony Imperatrice, David Boldt, Andrea Belau, Susan Berg, Marguerite Crownover, Scott Horton, and Peggy Copp. The chapter was presented with a certificate of congratulations from the AGO Headquarters as well as a letter marking the occasion. The opportunity to see so many faces and hear stories from the past definitely refueled some excitement about the future.

This coming year, the National AGO is celebrating the Year of the Young Organist. With that, there will be many programs directed towards young people, including free memberships. If you have a student, or someone you know (under 30) who would be interested in the guild, please send them to <https://www.agohq.org/free-membership/> where they can join our chapter for FREE!

To wrap things up and lead into the Year of the Young Organist, I wanted to share a recital by AGOYO (AGO Young Organists) members that one of our own, Grant Smith, participated in. Every Friday in May the AGOYO have put together fabulous virtual recitals with young members from all over the country. In this recital, you will find SJVAGO member Grant Smith, performing Max Reger's "Introduction and Passacaglia in D minor" at the 38:10 minute mark. Enjoy! - <https://youtu.be/xwtRNj9wpks?t=2290>

Dean Cactus Sam Harris

Bringing the organ to our community

Organ Artist Series concerts (1946-1980)

Throughout our 75 years the chapter has presented many outstanding organ artists in concerts for our community. In looking over the list it is apparent that some of the great organists of the 20th and 21st century have performed in the San Joaquin Valley. One concert of particular interest is the David Higgs concert 1995 which was the Inaugural concert of the Martin Ott Organ at CSU Fresno. It is our desire to see this legacy continue well into the future.

- 1946-47 - Clarence Mader - St. James Cathedral
 Alexander Schreiner - St. James Cathedral
 Richard Ellsasser - First Methodist Church
- 1947-48 - Flor Peeters - St. James Cathedral
 Leslie P. Spelman - First Presbyterian, Fowler
 The Westminster Choir - Memorial Auditorium
- 1948-49 - David Craighead - St. James Cathedral
 Marcel Dupre - St. James Cathedral
- 1949-50 - Fernando Germani (Vatican Organist) St. James Cathedral
 Geraint Jones -St. James Cathedral
 Leslie Spelman - St. James Cathedral
- 1950-51 - Fritz Heitmann- First Presbyterian, Fowler
 Richard Purvis - Pilgrim Congregational
 Marilyn Mason - St. James Cathedral
- 1951-52 - Bruce Prince-Joseph - First Presbyterian
 Allan Bacon - First Methodist
 Virgil Fox - St. James Cathedral
 Claire Coci and the Hungarian Quartet - Calvary Presbyterian
- 1952-53 - Claire Coci - First Presbyterian
- 1953-54 - E. Power Biggs - First Presbyterian
 Marilyn Mason - St. James Cathedral
- 1954-55 -
- 1955-56 - Jean Langlais - St. Ann's Chapel, Ryan Seminary
- 1956-57 - Arden Whitacre - St James Cathedral
 Hugh Giles - St. James Cathedral
 Catharine Crozier - Church of the Brethren
 John Hamilton - First Presbyterian

Bringing the organ to our community

Organ Artist Series concerts

- 1958-59 - Bob Whitley - First Presbyterian, Fowler
 George Markey - Shrine of St. Therese
 Carl Wienrich - First Presbyterian
- 1959-60-
- 1960-61 -
- 1961-62 - Piet Kee - Shrine of St. Therese
 David Craighead - Church of the Brethren
 Donald McDonald - First Presbyterian Church
- 1962-63 - Robert Baker - Shrine of St. Therese
 Jerald Hamilton - Church of the Brethren
 Claire Coci - First Presbyterian
- 1963-64 - Robert Anderson - Shrine of St. Therese
 Marie-Claire Alain - Church of the Brethren
 Frederick Swann - Church of the Brethren
- 1964-65- William Teague - Shrine of St. Therese
 John Weaver - Church of the Brethren
 Robert Prichard - Church of the Brethren
- 1965-66 - Ray Ferguson - Church of the Brethren
- 1966-67 - William MacGowan - Church of the Brethren
 William Whitehead - Shrine of St. Therese
 Clyde Holloway - Church of the Brethren
- 1967-68 - Gillian Weir - Church of the Brethren
 Kamiel D'Hooghe - St. Ann's Chapel, Ryan Seminary
 Lionel Rogg - Shrine of St. Therese
- 1968-69 - Thomas Murray - Shrine of St. Therese
 Gerre Hancock - First Congregational
 Joyce Jones - Church of the Brethren
- 1969-70 - Roger Nyquist - St. Luke's United Methodist
 Phillip Manwell - St. Luke's United Methodist
 Ray Ferguson - First Congregational

Bringing the organ to our community

Organ Artist Series concerts

- 1970-71 - John Hamilton - First Congregational
 William C. Beck - St. Luke's United Methodist
 M. Searle Wright - Pilgrim Armenian Congregational
- 1971-72 - John Rose - St. Luke's United Methodist
 Frank Brownstead - Pilgrim Armenian Congregational
 Guy Bovet - First Congregational
- 1972-73 - Robert Noehren - First Congregational
 Richard Purvis - St. Luke's United Methodist
 Kamiel D'Hooghe - Pilgrim Armenian Congregational
 Raymond Boese - First Congregational
- 1973-74 - John Fenstermaker - First Congregational
 Marie-Louise Jaquet - First Congregational
 James Moeser - First Congregational
- 1974-75-
- 1975-76- Arno Schoenstedt - First Congregational
 Keith E. Thompson - Church of the Brethren
 Kristin Sundquist - Pilgrim Armenian Congregational
 John Walker - First Church of Christ Scientist
 David Britton - St. Luke's Methodist
- 1976-77 - Ronald Arnatt - First Congregational
 Frank Herand - Pilgrim Armenian Congregational
 Marion Anderson - First Armenian Presbyterian
 Odile Pierre - First Congregational
 David Bruce-Payne - United Presbyterian, Fowler
- 1977-78- Marilyn Keiser - First Congregational
 Sandra Soderlund - St. Luke's United Methodist
 Nicolas Kynaston - First Armenian Presbyterian
 David Christensen - United Presbyterian, Fowler
- 1978-79 - John Longhurst - First Armenian Presbyterian
 McNeil Robinson - First Mennonite, Reedley
 Roberta Gary - First Congregational
 Aran Vartanian - First Congregational
- 1979-80 - Mary Lou Robinson - First Congregational
 Charles Schaffer - First Armenian Presbyterian
 David Rothe - First Mennonite, Reedley
 Leona Burtner - First Congregational

Hymn Festivals

One of our most treasured events has been our annual Hymn Festival held in the spring. This Hymn Sing has become a community favorite, bringing participants in from anywhere between Bakersfield and Stockton. The event begins with the formation of a committee who chooses a theme, hymns to sing, and organists to play. Much thought goes into the choosing of hymns, so that they coincide well with the festival's theme, as well as provide some standard favorites, and newer hymns. The location of the festival would sometimes vary, giving opportunity to hear



different instruments and experience new spaces. The festival has been held at University Presbyterian Church (Fresno), First Presbyterian Church (Fresno), Fowler Presbyterian Church (Fowler), First Presbyterian Church (Hanford), and Pilgrim Armenian Church (Fresno), to name a few. Of course, a favorite organist of many, Richard Cencibaugh would often play and give the organs some exercise in various styles (some great gospel!).

One of the highlights of the program has been a guest director and festival choir to lead the singing. For many years we have been privileged to have Dr. Roy L. Klassen, professor emeritus from Fresno Pacific University. Oftentimes he would bring his university choir to lead the festival. Other directors have included Allan Petker, Dr. Julie Carter, Dr. Woody Hurst, and David Hensley, to name a few. In recent years, the festival choir has been made up of members from surrounding central valley churches who come and learn special music during a Choral Workshop presented the day before the Hymn Festival. This has been well received and a great way for singers from many churches to get together.

Aside from the organ and piano, many other instrumentalists have added to the festival over the years, including Handbells, Strings, Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion. For many years, Wayne Huber would bring the Pacific Brass ensemble from Fresno Pacific University.



Hymn Festivals



Some of the past festival themes include: “Hymns Through the Centuries” (2014), “Lift Up Your Voice and Sing” (2005), “Hymns of Grace and Glory” (2010), “Hymns of Joyful Praise” (2012), “Hymns for All Seasons” (2013). Each festival has also included wonderful anecdotes and histories about the hymns being sung. These have usually been written and read by member Sharon Massingill, who has helped bring continuity and context to the hymn sings.

Soli Deo Gloria

Chapter Election

Proposed Board Member Slate of the San Joaquin Valley AGO Chapter for 2021 Election.

First Posting of the Proposed Slate of Member-At-Large Board Members:

Term expiring 2024:
 Matthew Rye
 Scott Horton

A second posting of this slate will be published in the July 2021 edition of the Stop & Reed. If there are no additional nominations the slate as it stands will be elected.

Procedures for making additional nominations are:

- The nominee must agree in advance of the nomination.
- The nomination must be signed by five (5) chapter voting members in good standing.

- The nomination must be submitted in writing to Michael Varlas, 1701 Riverview Drive, Madera, CA 93637 no later than August 1, 2021.

If there are additional nominations a ballot will be prepared and voting members will vote for their choice.

