

**American Guild of Organists, Boston Chapter**  
**Minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting**  
**June 29, 2020**  
**Held online using Zoom**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm.

Dean Louise Mundinger gave her greetings, offered these opening remarks.

*Welcome to the annual meeting in a year that none of us imagined. We're meeting via Zoom, a technology that many of us didn't know about when we held the opening service.*

*Here's the good news: We're meeting! When we get together again we can have a lot to talk about. We have all had different experiences: some of us broadcast from churches, some of us stayed home and made things work, some of us made video after video. Hopefully the Enlow recital and meeting at All Saints, Ashmont with the gallery and chancel organs can happen in the near future.*

*In place of a recital tonight, we will have a short discussion about what you would like to see for programs for next year. We can't promise that all the ideas will happen, but we want to know what you would like to see. Recitals may be virtual, but workshops may be possible. You'll have your chance to share your ideas today. The meeting will be recorded as well as the chat. You can type your ideas into the chat bar where they will be saved.*

*Three members of the Executive Committee will be rotating off: Claire DeCusati, Jonathan Ortloff and Joe Scolastico. Thank you for your great work in helping to guide our chapter to new places. Thank you, thank you, thank you.*

*Christine Hogan has resigned her position with the Youth Organist Initiative. Her work in promoting and inspiring our young organists has been impressive throughout. Thank you, Christine.*

*Tish Kilgore has resigned as Election Coordinator. Thank you for your work in bringing our elections to our members over many years.*

*We remember four people from among our guild who have died in the past year: Richard Hill, Charles Kriegbaum, Joe Policelli and Ed Sampson. Robert Barney, Mark Dwyer, Richard Bunbury and Rosaline Mohnsen will share their memories of these men.*

*Here is the schedule for tonight:*

*Welcome from Louise Mundinger and Jeremy Bruns*

*Reports*

*Question: What sorts of programs would you like to see in this unusual time? Please type your thoughts into the chat bar and we will save those thoughts for our future programming.*

*Breakout rooms to discuss*

*Thank yous*

*Remembrances*

*Dean's message*

Louise then introduced the next dean, Jeremy Bruns, to give his greetings. Jeremy also presented the following Program Committee report at this time.

### **A Look Back at 2019-2020**

*On Wednesday, September 18 we had our opening service, Choral Evensong at Trinity Church Copley Square. Richard Webster, Colin Lynch, the Trinity Choristers and Schola led us in a beautiful service, and we heard Trinity's nave organ as it was nearing completion of a tonal reconstruction project (a collaboration between Foley-Baker and Jonathan Ambrosino, the project returned the nave organ closer to its 1926 Skinner roots, using vintage Skinner and Aeolian-Skinner pipework almost exclusively). Following the service, we were treated to a glorious reception at Old South Church thanks to our host Mitchell Crawford, and delicious food prepared by Daryl Bichel's Persimmon Catering.*

*On Friday evening, November 22, we heard Caroline Robinson in recital at The Memorial Church of Harvard University. Caroline, a doctoral candidate at the Eastman School of Music, offered us a stunningly beautiful program using both instruments to full advantage. An annual and favorite event was the First Night Organ Recital at The First Church of Christ, Scientist (The Mother Church) on Tuesday, December 31. Local organists Steven Loher, Douglas Major and George Sargeant were featured in this extremely well-attended event. Speaking of popular events, Dean Louise Mundinger once again hosted the Annual Potluck Gathering in her beautiful Medford home, this year a Twelfth Night celebration on January 5. There was a wide variation in both the food offered and the personalities in attendance! The event included an impromptu sing-along.*

*On Friday, January 31, we heard Arvid Gast (Lübeck Conservatory and St. Jakobi Church in Lübeck) in recital at The Church of the Advent. This event was kindly donated to BAGO, and a reception followed in the Library hosted by Mark Dwyer and Jeremy Bruns. Just one week later was WimFest 2020, the 5th Annual Women In Music Festival, co-hosted by The Cathedral Church of Saint Paul on Friday, February 7. Sophie Michaux (mezzo-soprano), Benjamin Katz (harpsichord), and Paul Holmes Morton (theorbo) presented an amazing and informative program including works by Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677).*

*On Saturday, March 7, Jonathan Ortloff and Jonathan Ambrosino led a workshop titled "Organbuilding 101" at the Ortloff Organ Company workshop in Needham. This 5-hour event allowed the hosts (and participants) to discuss and demonstrate design, construction, and mechanism, and dispel some of the myths and misconceptions of scaling and voicing, using Ortloff Opus 2, which was set up on the shop floor as a guide.*

### **A Brief Look Ahead at 2020-2021**

*Unfortunately, the remaining in-person events scheduled for 2019-20 were canceled or postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Bach Birthday 335 at First Lutheran Church, originally scheduled for Saturday, March 21, was canceled; Bach Birthday 336 is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 20, 2021. Organist David Enlow at The Church of the Advent, originally scheduled for Friday, April 24, will be rescheduled in 2021 if in-person concerts are allowed to resume. The Annual Meeting and Members' Recital, originally scheduled for Tuesday, May 19 at The Parish of All Saints-Ashmont, was canceled; the meeting will take place 'virtually' on Zoom at 6:30pm Monday, June 29. Both of the Young Organist Initiative recitals (originally scheduled for Saturday, May 16 and Tuesday, June 30) were canceled; in place of these, scholarship winners will prepare and submit video recordings which will be made public in the early fall.*

*These times are unprecedented, at least in recent memory, and also remain unpredictable. This next season is likely to be planned in short blocks of time as we both inch forward and, perhaps, take steps back with regard to phases of opening up society, social distancing, etc. With so many unknowns, it would be impossible and impractical to attempt planning and confirming an entire season at this time. In some form or fashion, whether in person or through virtual means (or both), we will have a 2020-21 season! The Young Organist Initiative program should be able to continue, even if delayed and/or altered for the current situation. The 2021 local and regional AGO organ competitions seem to have a green light, at least at present, and I am pleased and thrilled (and relieved!) that our own Jack Russell has agreed to, once again, chair the Boston Chapter organ competition.*

*Both at the Zoom Annual Meeting, and likely following that in the form of a survey, members will be asked what types of offerings might be most meaningful and useful to them during the upcoming months, as we begin to plan the initial season events. Please, put your thinking caps on, and be creative! Though none of us would have “wished” for this current situation, it does more than just force us out of our comfort zones; it presents an opportunity to think outside of the box, and to find new ways to help, comfort, and inspire our fellow colleagues and friends. We look forward to receiving your input and suggestions, and to seeing how the upcoming season eventually takes shape!*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jeremy Bruns, Chair  
Program Committee*

The minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting were next considered. Jeffrey Mills moved to accept the minutes. Fr. David Michael seconded; the motion was unanimously approved.

Claire DeCusati then presented the Communications Report.

*Several new forms of communications were implemented this year to increase outreach and hospitality to our members. In addition to the regular editions of our newsletter “Pipings” (officially published from September through May), we have created new member welcome communications, and friendly reminders about AGO dues renewal. Our new members are welcomed individually in a separate communication, and then mentioned by name in “Pipings”. For membership renewals, AGO HQ has implemented a 3 month ‘grace’ period to assist members during the pandemic. It’s easy to lose that email reminder from AGOHQ, so our Chapter sends out reminders one month before a member would be removed from AGO membership and no longer receive “The American Organist” Magazine.*

*The Chapter has begun a trial period of Advertising in Pipings, on Facebook, and on our webpage. The rates and policies are described at <http://www.bostonago.org/advertise>. We have had success with this trial, which will be reviewed by the Executive Committee again in the Fall. Sponsored content is clearly marked on all platforms, and includes a note that “The advertising is not an endorsement by the Boston Chapter of the American Guild of Organists of the event or the performers, and the Boston Chapter disclaims any responsibility whatsoever for the content of the advertising or of the event itself.”*

*Our “Pipings” Newsletter was upgraded to a new look this year. The new template allows for a more attractive layout, and easy linking to other content. The new platform also allows for future growth, such as support for electronic voting and reservations for events, when required. As many people know, I am digitizing H. Winthrop Martin’s “History of the American Guild of Organists in Massachusetts 1905-1954”. This rather large document will soon be complete on our website. It contains information about*

*Deans of the Chapter during this time period, as well as recital, convention, and regional programs. As a corollary to this project, I created a “Deans of our Chapter” page on our website which contains the photos and short biographies of all the Deans.*

*Special Thanks to Barbara Owen, Carson Cooman, Carl Klein, Leo Abbott, and Louise Munding of our Chapter, Todd Sisley, editor of The American Organist magazine, Gail Dow from the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, and John Bishop Executive Director of the Organ Clearing House for their help in researching these Deans. (PS – if you are a past Dean, please submit your biography to me please. I’m sure you want a verified placed by your name!) To view the Deans (and see photos of our founders) go to <http://www.bostonago.org/deans> The final project for this year is to archive all Pippings newsletters. We have electronic versions of the newsletter from 2003 onward. This history will be available soon. For a work-in-process view, go to <http://www.bostonago.org/pippingsarchive>.*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Claire DeCusati*

Louise thanked Claire for all her hard work.

Louise then commended the Special Projects Advisory Committee, and summarized their report, given here.

*The Special Projects Advisory Committee (SPAC) is tasked to make recommendations to the Executive committee regarding the use of invested Chapter funds derived from National Conventions held in Boston. Special projects are considered to augment the normal Chapter activities. There were 5 recipients as listed below. Some of the projects were postponed because of COVID-19 and the money withheld until the project is rescheduled.*

*\$2,200 for the Cape Cod and Islands Chapter, AGO, Pipe Organ Encounter in July 2019.*

*\$1,000 for a grant to Steven Young for his project on the life and career of French organist and composer, Marthe Bracquemond. The goal is to complete a scholarly article about her career as a concert organist and analyze her organ compositions.*

*A \$1,200 grant to The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown, PA for enabling live streaming of a concert by Ken Cowan. This was for a celebration of the 100th year anniversary of the largest church organ in the Philadelphia area.*

*\$1,000 (or more) to support a conference: “Diversity and Belonging: Unsung Keyboard Stories” which will take place at the University of Michigan in 2022. This will address the underrepresentation of people of color and women in the keyboard world. Presenters will tell the stories of these notable musicians who have been left out of most music history books and performance venues.*

*The five SPAC members this year were: Colin Lynch (2020), Lee Ridgway (2021), Scot Huntington (2022), Margaret Angelini (2023), and Robert Barney (2024)*

*Applications for Special Project consideration will next be due in early September. Additional information will be on the chapter website.*

*Respectfully submitted, Martin Steinmetz,  
SPAC Coordinator and Assistant Treasurer of Library/ SPAC funds*

Louise then commended Carl Klein and the Library committee for all their hard work. Their report follows.

*The Organ Library has had a year of relatively smooth operations with some major accomplishments.*

*In the Fall of 2019, I rented a large van and took 47 large file boxes of archival material to the Organ Historical Society archival storage facility in Warminster, PA. These materials are on long-term loan to the OHS for the purpose of digitization. Although the initial grant that the OHS applied for was not successful, they are reapplying. In any event, their storage facility is better than our storage, so it gave us some room, and keeps the materials in better shape.*

*Part of the hoped-for NEH grant was for preservation of digitization of recordings. A subset of the recordings are tapes (7" reel-to-reel format) made by the late E. Power Biggs for his well-known broadcasts from the Adolphus Busch Museum at Harvard. The National AGO had already given a grant of approximately \$38,000 to the OHS for the preservation and digitization of these particular tapes, so this work is still able to proceed. Just a few weeks ago, a representative (her name is Bryce) from the New England Document Conservation Center came to the Organ Library and collected the tapes and took them to NEDCC. In Bryce's lab, they will undergo some low-heat baking, and a state-of-the-art attempt will be made to play them and digitized them. The project is the culmination of at least 4 years of planning and collaboration between the Nation Office of the AGO, The OHS, and the Organ Library. We very much hope that the recordings can be saved, and should have a progress report soon.*

*Speaking of recordings, the Organ Library has 50 years-worth of our Chapter weekly radio broadcasts as well. These are in many different formats made over the many years. The most recent are on CDs, and we have been able to get about 75 of them up on the Library website [www.organlibrary.org](http://www.organlibrary.org). The latest additions are some interviews of Biggs, done by Doug Cooper, as well as a narration by Biggs talking about the organs in Adolphus Busch Hall. Check it out.*

*Our Music Sales of library duplicates at low prices continues to serve a nationwide constituency as a service to the organ community. Sales in the last 12 months have just topped \$3,000.*

*These funds supplement the Library budget, funding any student assistants that we hire, as well as pay some of our bills for supplies and subscriptions.*

*The regular work of receiving and sorting donations of organ music; cataloguing and filing; entering and filing duplicates; receiving orders and shipping them out; posting of recordings on the website; and other special projects and research requests have all been kept moving for the entire year. Even during the current shutdown, as the work there was done is complete isolation.*

*I believe that the BAGO Organ Library is the lasting legacy of our Chapter, it is the face of our Chapter to the world and is the how we are known. I am grateful to the Library Committee and the Executive Committee for their continued support of the Library, and I am delighted that I am able to continue this work.*

*Respectfully submitted, Carl D. Nelson Klein, DMA  
Administrator, AGO Organ Library*

Daryl Bichel then presented the Treasurer's report. He expressed his gratitude that John Dunn had given the YOI program \$5,000 again this year.

<b>Boston Chapter AGO 06/26/20 Finance Report</b>			
<b>07/01/19-06/30/20 Program Year Budget</b>			
<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>2019-20 Budget</b>	<b>2019-20 YTD Actual</b>	<b>2018-19 Actual</b>
Chapter Dues Received from National	12,500.00	11,581.00	9,886.00
Education Fund Donations	500.00	558.00	415.00
General Fund Donations	300.00	811.00	245.00
Program Donations		1,000.00	
Ad Sales		150.00	
Program Ticket Sales	100.00	515.00	105.00
Young Organists Initiative Donations		5,000.00	5,060.00
Food Reimbursement			506.22
Competition Fees			200.00
Placement Service Fees	1,000.00	850.00	1,200.00
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>14,400.00</b>	<b>20,465.00</b>	<b>17,617.22</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>2019-20 Budget</b>	<b>2019-20 YTD Actual</b>	<b>2018-19 Actual</b>
Dues for Honorary Members/Transfers Out	300.00	410.50	570.50
Program Expenses	6,000.00	7,013.06	5,625.17
Hospitality Expenses		873.04	
YOI Scholarships & Committee Expenses	5,000.00	2,916.00	3,625.00
Competition Expenses (next competition in 20/21)		500.00	1,500.00
Paper Newsletter Production	600.00	1,274.03	391.15
Web Site	500.00	375.00	245.00
Constant Contact	400.00	588.00	217.01
Dean's Convention Attendance	500.00		
Election Coordinator Expenses	350.00		
Annual Fund	500.00		
Convention Support	500.00	975.00	850.00
Tax Accountant Services	2,000.00	2,075.00	1,980.00
Filing Fees for State Tax Forms	70.00	35.00	70.00
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>16,720.00</b>	<b>17,034.63</b>	<b>15,073.83</b>
Surplus/Deficit	(2,320.00)	3,430.37	2,543.39
<b>OTHER</b>			
Helen Krasinski Memorial Fund (Restricted)		360.00	Location: Checking
Checking account balance on 06/26/20		16,463.92	

A question arose about the hospitality line: a new line item for Hospitality has appeared because, after the budget was approved, a decision was made to separate out hospitality expenses (food service) from general program expenses.

Lois Toepfner suggested that we should be able to see all the funds, not just the operating budget. Louise therefore provided the information for our restricted funds, shown here.

**Morgan Stanley Year Start Balances 2012 thru 2020**

	<b>Convention</b>	<b>Library</b>	<b>SPAC</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Total</b>
1/1/2012		390,090.05	100,087.37	61,998.29	552,175.70
1/1/2013		415,739.24	107,438.04	66,551.60	589,728.88
1/1/2014		413,141.97	107,405.30	89,697.56	610,244.83
1/1/2015	94,000.00	431,058.20	112,092.14	81,302.82	718,453.16
1/1/2016	94,000.00	422,008.36	107,441.38	86,625.68	710,075.41
1/1/2017	95,581.17	468,548.68	106,448.65	88,082.81	758,661.31
1/1/2018		565,917.74	107,008.46	120,456.58	793,382.78
1/1/2019		513,916.46	97,545.32	113,434.47	724,896.25
1/1/2020		552,904.59	100,825.17	126,735.43	780,465.19
4/24/2020		501,022.30	91,364.15	114,843.10	707,229.55

Robert Barney moved to accept the Treasurer’s report; Lois seconded; the motion was unanimously approved.

Next, everyone broke into small groups and discussed program ideas for the coming year. Ideas were typed into the chat box for future consideration.

Louise then thanked those people who were rotating off of the Executive Committee: Jonathan Ortloff, Joe Scolastico, Claire DeCusati, Christine Hogan, Tish Kilgore, Patrick Walker.

The slate for election was now presented:

- Sub Dean: Mitchell Crawford*
- Members at Large: Cathy Meyer, Christine Hogan, Stephan Griffin*
- Secretary: Jay Lane*
- Election Coordinator: Claire DeCusati*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Patrick Walker, MM, CAGO*

Remembrances were then given of Richard Hill, Charles Kriegbaum, Joe Policelli, and Ed Sampson, all of whom had died in the past year.

*To be asked to offer a few words about a departed colleague is an honor. To be asked to speak about Richard Hill is an utmost privilege.*

*I knew Dick Hill for about as long as I have lived and worked in Boston – through our AGO Chapter, The Organ Historical Society, and as a member of the Boston AGO Organ Advisory Committee, which Dick chaired for more years than I can remember. He had a way of making a group feel comfortable and relaxed, but could still bring them around to a new way of thinking. The perfect gentleman, he was a great leader with his ability to keep a meeting on track, without feeling pushed or hurried, allowing*

*thoughts to flow, but not wandering. He always seemed to be inconspicuously in control, and totally organized. Discussions were always lively, and meetings were fun.*

*After OAC meetings in various locations, he would always suggest that we ate at a local Diner – he knew of one wherever we were that had great food at reasonable prices.*

*Dick had special skills; qualities that made him stand apart in our competitive and sometimes mean-spirited profession. He had respect for all kinds of music – from all periods and styles, and knew what was good, respected it, and shared it. He had the same affection for people, and, although you clearly knew what he might have thought about something or someone, he never spoke an unkind word. Dick had a balanced approach that could help diffuse a situation and move a conversation toward resolution. I have heard from others that knew him to be an excellent teacher: Nurturing, supportive, yet encouraging one to be the best “you” possible. He seemed to take a deep, personal interest in his students, as well as his colleagues and friends.*

*As Chair of the SE MA OHS “Plymouth Colony” Convention, he promoted the area and the wonderful organs there, introducing visitors to a world that he truly loved, and in which he took absolute delight, sharing his infectious adoration of that region and its organs.*

*Dick always had a smile and the one word that seems to sum up Dick Hill is Genuine.*

*It wasn't that long ago that many of us participated in a musical celebration of his life and work, taking a rare opportunity to tell someone how valuable they are, while they are still on this side of the soil!*

*In this current covid-isolating experience it is a shame that we do not have the opportunity, openly to celebrate the life and work of Richard Hill – but hopefully we will, sometime in the future.*

*I know that I will hold dear to me the memory of Richard Hill as long as memories last.*  
**- Robert Barney, past Dean, BAGO**

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*Charles Krigbaum, age 91, passed away from Covid-19 on April 30, 2020.*

*Charles was born in 1929 in Seattle, Washington, and he grew up in West Orange, New Jersey just outside of New York City. With his academic and musical gifts, and the proximity of his hometown, it was no surprise that Charles attended Princeton University between 1946 and 1952 and received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in music, where he was a disciple of the neo-classic pioneer, Carl Weinrich. During Charles's studies with Weinrich, Weinrich became the first American to record the complete works of Bach. Following college, Charles Krigbaum enlisted in the Naval Air Force for three years. Remember, this was the Korean War era. After his military service, Charles studied in Frankfurt with Helmut Walcha on a Fulbright scholarship. Walcha himself was a devoted scholar and performer of Bach's works, and recorded the complete Bach twice during his lifetime. Charles then went on to Paris to study with Andre Marchal, himself a great proponent of the organ-reform movement.*

*In 1958, Charles joined the faculty of Yale University's School of Music, and he became fifth University Organist in 1965, after Frank Boyzan's death. His temperament and accomplishment was perfectly suited to one of the world's great universities, and Professor Krigbaum served happily at Yale University for nearly 40 years until his retirement in 1996.*



*Charles was an accomplished recitalist and a consummate and kind teacher. He played the entire organ repertoire convincingly with a remarkable and thorough preparation. It is not as well known that Charles was also a fine accompanist and service player. In his early days at Yale, between Yale Chapel services and the Divinity school, Charles played for 10 services a week! I recall televised Battell Chapel Christmas Eve services in which Charles would dispatch transcribed accompaniments from Handel's Messiah absolutely perfectly. And on the Holtkamp organ, no less! He appreciated the best organbuilding of all styles and eras, and found merit in all of Yale's famous organs—Skinner, Holtkamp, Beckerath and Taylor and Boody.*

*Charles could not imagine performing anything in public that was not thoroughly prepared. He is well-known for his recordings of Bach, Widor, and Messiaen.*

*I was a High School organ student of Charles, beginning in 1979. Perhaps I was his youngest pupil! At the time, my father worked for IBM, and we were returning to Connecticut after three years in Atlanta. My instructor there was Bill Weaver who was a friend of Charles's and had him give at least one recital on the Flentrop organ at St Anne's Atlanta where Bill was music director. Bill was a good teacher for me in Atlanta, and was insistent that I have a fine teacher in Connecticut. He was curt, southern and very direct, so I cannot imagine WHAT he must have told Charles to get him to agree to teach the very scrappy teenager that I was. After all, here was the Yale organ professor who had just finished recording Bach's complete Art of Fugue! I think it speaks to Charles's kindness that he did so, because he certainly was far more kind than I was accomplished.*

*Every Saturday morning for two years, Charles would meet me at Dwight Chapel, and we would have our lesson on the large Beckerath organ to which I always looked forward. In warm weather, I recall that Charles would ride his bike from his home in Hamden, and I remember him sight-reading trio sonata movements perfectly, wearing sneakers! When I was in my senior year, it was Charles who recommended various schools, but most especially the New England Conservatory with Yuko Hayashi. Thanks to his preparation of me I was accepted into Conservatory and that absolutely determined my direction for the future. Yuko's tutelage and the Conservatory were ideally suited to my temperament. Charles and I stayed in touch and wrote a few letters during those college years. I am sorry that I let that letter-writing fall away when I graduated.*

#### **Two anecdotes.**

*First, The Art of Fugue. Most of you will know the name of Robert J. Lurtsema. I was having lessons with Charles when he completed the recordings. Lurtsema hosted Morning Pro Musica on WGBH radio for decades, and got a hold of Charles's complete box set of records to broadcast. However, Lurtsema went so far as to broadcast the records at 33 RPM as if they were LPs, but he did not realize they were meant to be played at a higher fidelity 45 RPM until a listener called in and complained about how LOW and SLOW they were! So Lurtsema promised to rebroadcast at the right speed and the second time, invited Charles come and speak about the work. Charles could not have been a more gracious guest as Lurtsema probed him with his searching and somewhat obtuse questions.*

*Second Anecdote. Charles was with Yale for nearly four decades and had many recollections of the changes, victories and difficulties the institution faced. One major change was the migration of New York City's Union Theological Seminary's School of Music to New Haven, where it became the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, led by Dr Robert Baker. Robert Baker and Charles Krigbaum did not always see eye to eye. The very even-tempered Charles came into one of my Saturday morning lessons absolutely fuming. "That*

*Robert Baker has a plan to hook up the tracker organ in the balcony of the Chapel with the Skinner organ in the chancel, all controlled by a movable electric-action Austin console!" Needless to say, that did not happen.*

*Charles Krigbaum was one of those mentors without whom my life would be very different. Because of Charles's influence, I came to Boston and walked into The Church of the Advent for the very first time on September 27, 1981. And that surely changed the course of my life and career.*

*Rest in Peace, Charles Russell Krigbaum, Musician, Teacher, Friend.*

**- Mark Dwyer**

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Joe Policelli was remembered by Richard Bunbury

Joseph Policelli 1948-2020

Shortly after Joe's passing on April 27, 2020, a brief bio appeared on Facebook:

"We are saddened to hear of one of our dear colleagues passing, Joseph Policelli. A gentle and compassionate soul, a brilliant musician, his playing and choral conducting were of the highest caliber. His bachelors and Masters degrees were from Boston University. He had served Saint Columbkille's, Brighton, Saint Anthony's, Allston, and Temple Beth Shalom, Needham. Previously, he had built a renowned music program at Saint Paul's Cathedral in Worcester. He was also a professor at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He had survived serious heart issues over a year ago, but this time he succumbed to COVID-19."

Here follows excerpts from a few messages and FB posts.

Joe wrote me the following in October 2012: "Thanks so much for your birthday wishes. I can't believe I'm now 64 - hardly seems possible - but as the saying goes, 'Time marches on.'"

A dear friend and local organ builder wrote about Joe's passing: "I am so sorry to hear this news. I had not seen Joe in many years, but his work and reputation in Worcester set the bar, decades ago! Terribly sad loss of an exemplary colleague." Another colleague wrote, "Joe was certainly a fighter in all the right ways. I was impressed with his talents, great spirit, and joy of life. I'll miss him terribly, and wish I had been able to be better connected with him more recently."

"I add my condolences to all the others. Joe was a talented and joyful person, and a friend. I'm sorry the virus claimed him. May his soul rest in peace, and may strength and comfort be given to all who mourn his earthly departure."

And finally, one last quote from the online memorial book: "Joe made me aware of the riches of traditional choral and organ music. He introduced me to other very gifted musicians who together changed my life vastly for the better. His graciousness and sense of fun over the years gave me many precious and joyful memories. Joe made my world a much better place."

**- Richard R. Bunbury, Ph.D.**

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*I am humbled to be asked to give a remembrance of Ed Sampson, a legend in our time. Edward J. Sampson, 77, of North Andover, an employee of Raytheon, died in January. He was President of the Board of Trustees of Methuen Memorial Music Hall for **forty-three years**, the longest of any chair, starting in 1976. He was a caring, supportive gentleman to all who performed there. Even during his illness, his concern was for others.*

*Improvements during his tenure extended from the "Great Organ" to the Hall's second entrance, from the basement to the artists' room, from the exterior of the building and grounds to the archives' room, and from fundraising to expansion of programming. His extensive research is found on the [mmmh.org](http://mmmh.org) website. Here you will find the history of the organ and also lists of recitalists dating back to 1962 for the summer series and 1911 for special programs. I find these very interesting! His care for detail in preparing the printed programs of recitalists is well-known. Whatever one submitted, he would find a few details to add.*

*Ed was a member of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Lawrence, where he was a daily communicant. His funeral Mass was held there. Rest in peace, Ed.*

**- Rosalind Mohnsen**

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Dean Louise Munding then gave her annual address.

*Almost exactly six months ago it was New Year's Eve and as a proud Dean I started off at Old South where Mitchell Crawford held up demo organ pipes and then demonstrated them in a concert in front of a full house. Then I took off for The Mother Church and heard the annual AGO First Night recital played by Stephen Loher, Douglas Major, and George Sargent. 1200 attendees! Christa Rakich gave me a ride to the Church of the Advent and when I entered, the sparkle of "For Unto Us a child is born" bounced off the walls as Mark Dwyer played and Jeremy Bruns conducted the choir. The Händel fireworks were perfect for the evening as well as gentler on the ears than the later display on the Boston Common.*

*Not so long ago. But so long ago.*

*Now we cannot gather in our churches, our choirs cannot sing together, and we have been quarantined at home. We have had to learn to be sound engineers with no training, no equipment, and no time. Many of us have had to do everything remotely while others record from church. YouTube, Zoom, Facebook live just don't have the same feeling or sound as being together in the same space.*

*Tough, yes. But a time for opportunity as well. We have an even greater connection with our congregations. We can record and reach more people since presentations are no longer time dependent. I have seen wonderful presentations from colleagues. Some colleagues make recordings, some make movies, some make virtual choirs.*

*It is important to stay creative, to stay positive in this uncertain time. As colleagues we can support each other. Some churches may have to make difficult decisions considering lower than expected income. Some of us may face pay reductions or lose positions. It seems we are on a strange path. But I wonder. Our busy schedules disguised a lot of things. My congregation is much more open with me now than before. They tell me how the music has been helpful, how my notes about the music inform what they*

hear. I feel connected in a new way, in an authentic way. And all on a platform that makes me want to tear my hair out. "How can you like this imperfect music?" is my question. How can they? They can. They need it.

Our chapter has so much to boast about. We have an Organ Library that receives loving attention, sends out music each week, and is mindful of the fragileness of old music and recordings. We make things possible for musicians around the country with our Special Projects fund. We have recitals, concerts, and workshops with impressive attendance numbers.

But especially we have people in our chapter who dedicate themselves to keeping this chapter running – now going on 115 years. Check out Claire's hard work on the website – with bios of all the deans starting at 1905. You can also find descriptions of the wonderful instruments gracing our spaces. We have so much to be thankful for – so be kind, be patient with yourselves and others and use your time wisely.

Thanks for letting me be Dean. I enjoyed it. Robert Barney did a great job before me and Jeremy will continue the work. I plan on volunteering some more – I'll keep showing up. WIMFest – a party? Time will tell.

**-Louise Munding**

Father David Michael moved to adjourn the meeting; Joe Scolastico seconded; the motion was passed unanimously.

**The following reports, presented to the membership in writing, were not given at the Annual Meeting.**

#### **AGO PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Three people took the opportunity for professional development this year. One took the Service Playing exam, and two took the Colleague exam (CAGO). Results are not sent to examination centers; they are usually announced at the regional meetings held during the convention.

Respectfully submitted, Steven Young, DMA, AAGO

#### **PLACEMENT REPORT**

All of the jobs on our job board remain current. Many churches, due to the virus, are stepping back from hiring a musician. When I contact them, they want to keep the posting up, but they have their search process on hold, or are moving slowly.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Jodice

#### **REPORTER**

As indicated last year, the Reporter still needs to work on timeliness, though perhaps with the changes the upcoming year will bring, things will be easier.

Respectfully submitted, Joe Scolastico

**YOUNG ORGANISTS INITIATIVE**

*YOI held scholarship auditions in September where nine students auditioned, seven were awarded scholarships and six continued studies with instructors Jeremy Bruns, Christian Lane, Jack Russell and William Ness. Due to COVID-19 neither of the two end of year recital opportunities were held but instead each student will submit a recording by end of August to count as fulfillment of requirements.*

*Respectfully submitted, Christine Hogan*