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November 2021

The Newsletter of the Boston Chapter American Guild of Organists



A Message from the Dean

Greetings, colleagues!

I write to you during this month of remembrance. For the liturgical musicians among us, November begins with a bang with the Feast of All Saints' Day on November 1, immediately followed by the solemnity of All Souls' Day on November 2. Many churches opt to transfer one or both of these days to the following Sunday. We have the secular Veterans Day (or Armistice Day, or Remembrance Day) on Nov. 11, and often the transferred Remembrance Sunday

following that. Indeed, some traditions give special attention to the faithful souls of the departed for the entire month of November (the month of All Souls).

More so each year, I am struck by how suddenly the days become shorter and the temperatures shift, made more drastic still by the annual time change here in most of the United States. Does this month and time of the year hold special memories and/or challenges for you? Personally, I now remember this month as the last time I spent with one of my best friends ever, the one-and-only darling little shih tzu Princess Leia Organa Bruns, whose last fully-good day was Thanksgiving 2019. What a gift she was to humanity — may we remember with both tears and smiles those we have been fortunate to share this journey with.

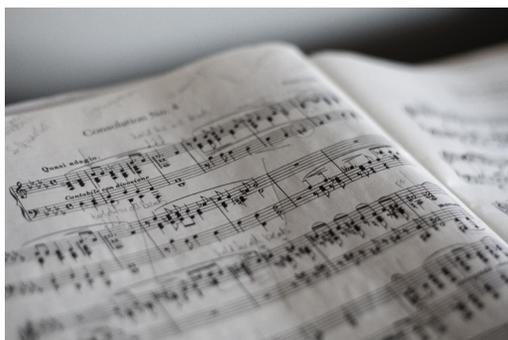
As we proceed through the rest of November, and the end of the liturgical year, I leave you with a poem by English classical scholar and poet Alfred Edward Housman (1859-1936). Here he remembers a deceased friend, who can no longer be tormented by the cold. All best wishes as we approach another Advent season,

Jeremy Bruns, Dean

The Night Is Freezing Fast
(from *Last Poems*, published 1922)
A.E. Housman

The night is freezing fast,
To-morrow comes December;
And winterfalls of old
Are with me from the past;
And chiefly I remember
How Dick would hate the cold.

Fall, winter, fall; for he,
Prompt hand and headpiece clever,
Has woven a winter robe,
And made of earth and sea
His overcoat for ever,
And wears the turning globe.



Free Music Download On Our Chapter Website: Adeste Fidelis

Anonymous, from a manuscript in the AGO Organ Library

A Christmas gift to our friends and patrons from the Boston Organ Library. It is a chorale prelude on Adeste fidelis, in the form of a Pachelbel chorale, but with more recent harmonies in some places. I think it fitting to celebrate the many church organist/composers who toil competently and generously, then pass into obscurity.

Happy Christmas, Carl Klein, Boston AGO Organ Library.

A Merry Music Hall Christmas!



Ray Cornils, organ
Robinson Pyle & Greg Gettel, trumpets
Saturday, December 4 at 7:00p.m.
Sunday, December 5 at 3:00p.m.

Holiday music Raffles Sing-along

Reserved Seating Only - Adults: \$20 Children: \$5

<https://www.MMMHbrownpapertickets.com/event/5293127>

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Dear Uncle Max Columns Now On Website

Max Miller was Dean of the Boston Chapter from 1960-1961. He served on the faculties of the School of Music and the School of Theology at Boston University for forty-two years until his retirement in 1991. He was simultaneously University Organist, Director of Music at Marsh Chapel, Director of the Master of Sacred Music program, conductor of the Seminary Singers, and Professor of Organ in the School of Music.

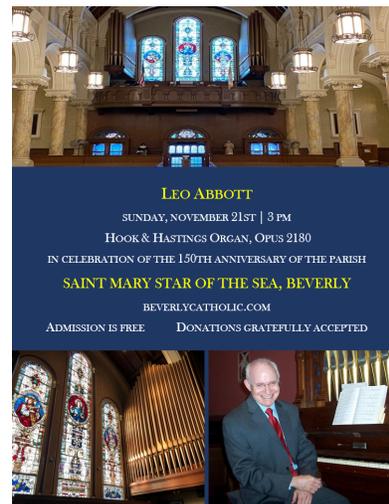
From 1961 to 2001, he wrote the "Dear Uncle Max" column for *The American Organist*, the national



publication of the American Guild of Organists. His columns were always the perfect blend of erudition and good musical sense. His interests were very wide, encompassing theology, literature, and much else.

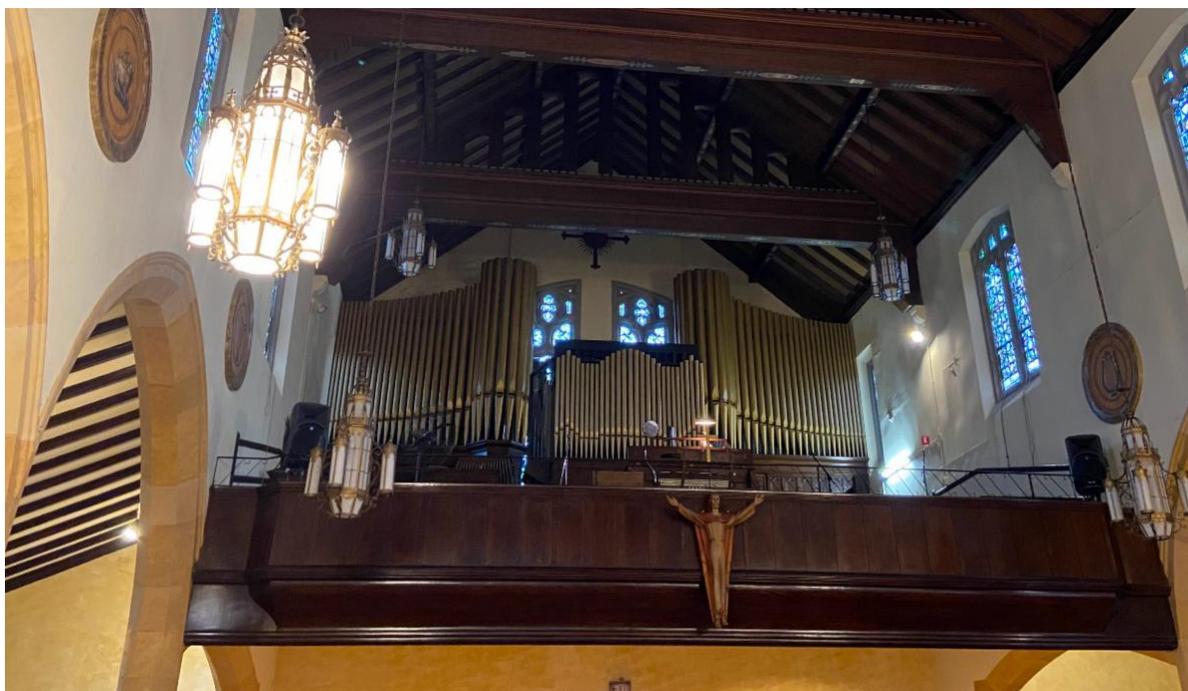
Our Chapter now has the complete collection of the "Dear Uncle Max" columns which are being indexed and uploaded to our website. The website is updated regularly as new columns are added. Special thanks to AGO Headquarters for assistance in research for this project.

Please check out the words and wisdom of this wonderful teacher, scholar, and church musician.



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[View On The Website](#)



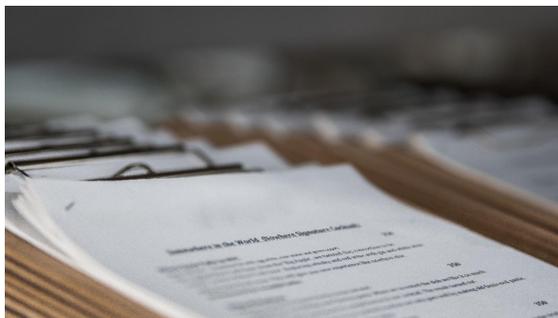
Chapter Instrument Feature: St. Mark Dorchester

Estey Organ Co., Aeolian-Skinner Organ Co., Hall Organ Co., and Morel Organ Co.

As a new section in pipings, each month we will feature an instrument of the chapter. Well known or not, these instruments make up the life of the music we share. For the first installment, the featured venue is St. Mark's Catholic Church on Dorchester Ave. The balcony of the church holds not one, but two instruments. Flanking the windows is Estey Op. 1309, constructed in 1915. Though it was the original instrument, it now sits silent, completely intact. At some point in the 1960s or 70s, it was replaced by Aeolian-Skinner Op. 30035 (Marie Antoinette model) which was placed in the center of the balcony where the Estey console was originally located. The Aeolian-Skinner console was placed close to the balcony rail facing the window. It is not known if it was installed without changes at that time, but notes on the relay indicate a different

stoplist than what is currently present. In June of 1993, the Morel Organ Company installed 9 ranks of pipework from a Harry Hall instrument and attached them to the existing Aeolian-Skinner console. These pipes are located behind the Aeolian-Skinner case but in front of the window between the Estey cases. The Hall pipework now makes up the Great and Pedal divisions while the Aeolian-Skinner pipework forms the Swell. In 2021, the Pelland Organ Co. installed a new Opus Two instrument control system in place of the original failing relay in order to keep the organ playing for years to come. You can view more information about these instruments (stoplist, photos, notes, etc.) using the links below.

Aeolian-Skinner, Hall, Morel Co.



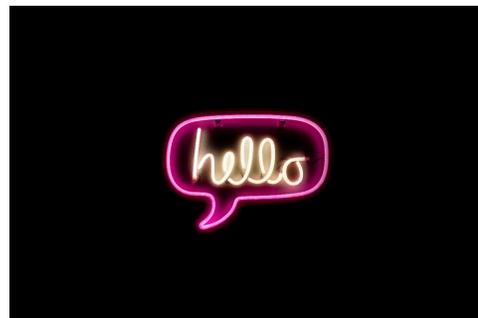
Organist Substitute List

The Organist Substitute list has been updated for Fall 2021 and is available on the website. If you were late in paying Chapter dues, you may have been removed from the list. If you wish to rejoin, please fill out the form [here](#).

[View List On The Website](#)



Estey Organ Co. Opus 1309



Welcome New Members!

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to our Chapter:

- Dr. Roger Graybill
- Benjamin Rechel
- Alice Yu
- Madeline Myers
- Julian Petrallia
- Thomas Mellan
- Andrew Byers
- Patrick Meaden

Seekers and Scholars Podcast Features BAGO Dean

Mary Baker Eddy dedicated her chief work Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures to “honest seekers for Truth.” The Seekers and Scholars podcast series celebrates the spirit of inquiry that is illuminating engagement with Eddy’s life, writings, and ideas in a wide variety of fields. The Mary Baker Eddy Library hosts monthly episodes at the intersection of scholarship and spiritual quest.

The episode recorded in December examines the contributions of Ruth Barrett Phelps, longest serving Organist at The First Church of Christ, Scientist in Boston, and the role she played in the

construction of the Aeolian-Skinner organ, dedicated in 1952. Ruth was the first woman Dean of the Boston Chapter, taking over the role in 1949.

In 1934 she moved to Boston, when the Christian Science Board of Directors appointed her the first woman to be a permanent Mother Church organist. She continued in that capacity until 1961, making her term of service the longest to date in the church's history. That was no small achievement for a woman; not only did men dominate the field (only one of Barrett's notable instructors was a woman) but "a rotation of organists had usually been the practice" in Christian Science churches, The Mother Church included.

While serving as Dean of the Boston Chapter, Ruth achieved several "firsts," including the establishment of classes to promote Guild examinations and certifications, a new Choir Master examination, and a joint meeting with the New England Choir Directors' Guild. Under her leadership the AGO held its twentieth national convention in Boston in June 1950, the with the largest attendance of organists up to that time. Both Ruth and the church played a role in this convention, hosting lectures and recitals. She also lobbied for greater recognition and pay for church organists.

The December podcast, hosted by Jonathon Eder, Programs and Scholarly Engagement Manager, is a discussion with Brian Ashley, current organist at the Mother Church, Allyson Lazar, Senior Manager, Research & Collections, and Claire DeCusati, long-time Boston Chapter Office and current EC member who has researched the roles of all the Deans of the Boston Chapter.

The podcast will be available in December.

[Click Here To Listen](#)

Learn More About Our Upcoming Programs!

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Boston Chapter American Guild of Organists | David Baker, 236 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115

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