



# AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

# Newsletter

of the UTAH VALLEY CHAPTER

JANUARY 2001

No. 5

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## NEXT CHAPTER MEETING:



January 17 (Wednesday)

7:30 p.m.

### *The Organist as Accompanist*

Workshop with Ronald Staheli  
Lecture and Demonstration

Guidance in mastering the art of accompanying



**Oak Hills Stake Center – 925 E. North Temple Dr., Provo**

*Located on the north end of the missionary playing field by the Provo Temple.*

## My Untimely Service As Music Director

*Or, It's half past three-quarter time, and the situation is getting verse.*

Ensign June 1988

By Don L. Searle, Associate Editor

The idea, I suppose, was to help all of us missionaries prepare for that inevitable day when we would be called upon to direct the music for a meeting. So all of us in what was then called the Language Training Mission had to take a turn at conducting the hymn for our morning devotional. That meant standing before a hundred missionaries, with all two hundred eyes on you.

Sing? Sure, I loved singing the hymns. Direct the music? I'd have promised to tract out Honduras by myself to get out of it. The news that we might have to baptize people in crocodile-infested rivers would have been less unsettling. Why didn't they ask Elder Wilson? He actually *knew* music. I asked one of the members of my district who had been an outstanding, dauntless fullback on his high school football team if he would substitute for me. He blanched. I implored Elder Wilson. He laughed. He had already taken his turn.

Fortunately, the elder who had been selected to play the piano that day was an old hand at this. "Listen," he advised, "this is an easy hymn. And you know how to beat this pattern. But if you get lost, just beat a series of points on a straight line until you can catch the rhythm again."

Sure enough, I got lost. But I did as he said, and we finished together. Elder Wilson cornered me after the meeting. "I want to know what this means," he demanded, and he beat a series of points on a horizontal line.

Of course, the day did come when there were just two of us missionaries and one piano in a tiny branch whose meeting place was right next to some railroad tracks. My companion, who served as branch president, was skilled at the keyboard. That made him the branch pianist. Unaccountably, I had more music training than anyone else in the branch. That made me music director.

(Now, I *can* direct music—when no one is watching. I have directed the Boston Pops, the Beach Boys, the Glenn Miller Orchestra. Not long ago, I was directing the Tabernacle Choir one day in my living room when my teenage daughter walked in and caught me. The choir had to go on without me, but fortunately they were up to it.) That, however, was mere embarrassment; that was spilling your chili dog in your lap at the wrestling match. Standing before a congregation of twelve with a hymnbook in one hand and the other hand poised for the downbeat was being in the ring with the Masked Mauler—right after he learned he was due for a tax audit.

Luckily, the placement of furniture in the room forced my companion to sit at the piano with his back to me. He wouldn't be able to detect any false movement—horizontal or otherwise. Even more luckily, most of the congregation were new in the Church and had to look down at the hymnal to follow the words.

I began beating when my companion started playing, and by the end of the first verse, I was only half a beat behind. No one noticed. But while I was congratulating myself for avoiding the points-on-a-line technique again, my companion sneaked several notes of the second verse past me. I tried to catch up. By the time the third verse began, I felt that sweat must be pooling around my feet.

Was that the beating of my heart I heard? Or ... no! It was a train! My companion, who had polished his piano technique on rock 'n' roll in pre-mission days, played the hymn louder. But we were no match for the locomotive. A fourth verse was going to be impossible. The congregation probably thought my wan smile meant disappointment. Actually, I was remembering that there would always be next Sunday.

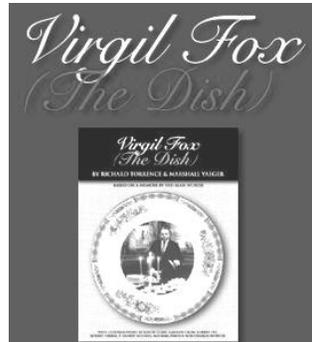
Unbelievably, my transfer came before the next Sunday did. I was made a senior companion and sent to another tiny branch in another isolated town. It seemed obvious immediately that the duties of branch president would make it impossible for me to give proper attention to directing the music. That left only one other candidate for the job—my companion.

Why not? After all, he had been prepared at the Language Training Mission, hadn't he?

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## ORGANARTS.COM ANNOUNCES

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*By Richard Torrence  
& Marshall Yaeger  
Based on a memoir*

*by Ted Alan Worth with contributions  
by Louise Clary, Andrew Crow,  
Robert Fry, Robert Hebble, T. Ernest  
Nichols, Michael Stauch,  
and Charles Swisher*

*Commissioned by  
the Virgil Fox Society  
Published by Circles International*

**January 1, 2001** - Organarts.com announced today that the Virgil Fox Society has commissioned Circles International to publish a biography of the late Virgil Fox (1912-1980) in the spring of 2001.

The idea for a book about the most successful American organist in the history of the instrument originated in San Francisco in the early 1990s when Richard Torrence and Marshall Yaeger were visiting Ted Alan Worth, the late organist who was Fox's confidant, protégé, and artistic heir.

Torrence had been Fox's manager from 1962 to 1979, and Yaeger had written Fox's management material and record liner notes, and had been booking and marketing director during Torrence's management of him.

Worth suggested that Yaeger, who was an author, dramatist, and former head writer for CBS Television, write the definitive biography of Fox, "warts and all." Yaeger suggested that Worth was more qualified to create a book about a musician; but he and Torrence promised to edit and add to it. Worth spent two years completing a 375 page manuscript in longhand, which he gave to Torrence shortly before his

death in 1998 from cancer.

Torrence and Yaeger have edited and rewritten the manuscript, added portions of their own regarding the management and marketing of Fox's talent, and invited several of Fox's closest friends, students, and artistic collaborators to contribute additional sections of the book that pertain to Worth's commentary.

The book draws an affectionate but irreverent picture of a brilliant, irreverent artist; and is therefore subtitled "The Dish," which was a term popularized in a line from Rodgers & Hart's "The Lady is a Tramp."

Scores of historical photographs collected by Ted Alan Worth, Richard Torrence, and the Virgil Fox Society will be included in the book. The cover pictures Virgil Fox dishing up "Chicken à la King of Instruments" in his sumptuous dining room.

Fox was known to "burn water when he boiled it"; but the publicity photograph was treated to a one-month ride on the New York subways to help promote his New York concerts.

Publishing the long awaited book became possible when the Virgil Fox Society guaranteed its preparation. A significant portion of the proceeds, therefore, will benefit the society and help sponsor organ scholarships.

Copies of the 350-page paperback book, designed by Len Levasseur and published by Circles International, may be reserved by credit card from <[www.organarts.com](http://www.organarts.com)>. The cost is \$30 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling. Estimated time for shipping is March 31, 2001. The first 500 books ordered will be signed by the authors and shipped with one of the "Organ Power" buttons that were given out at Virgil Fox's first "Heavy Organ" concert on December 1, 1970 at New York's Fillmore East.

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## RECITALS

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**January 19 (Friday)** – Neil Harmon, 7:30 p.m., SL Tabernacle. Neil Harmon recently received his DMA from the Eastman School of Music and is currently Director of Music and Organist at First Methodist Church in Wilmington, Delaware.

**PROGRAM:**

*Marche Heroique* - Herbert Brewer  
*Psalm Prelude* - George Broske  
*Comes Autumn Time* - Leo Sowerby  
*Two Schubler Chorales* - J.S. Bach  
*O Whither Shall I Flee*  
*Abide With Us, Lord Jesus Christ*  
*Prelude and Fugue in D-sharp Minor* - Otto Olsson  
*Prelude, Andante and Toccata* - Andre Fleury  
*Marche on a Theme by Handel* - Alexandre Guilmant

**February 28 (Wednesday)** - Dr. James Drake, Professor of Organ at Utah State University, 7:30 p.m. Assembly Hall, SLC

**March 17 (Saturday)**, Kenneth Cowan, RCCO National Organ Competition prizewinner; graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School; current DMA candidate at Yale University, 7:30 p.m. Tabernacle, SLC

**June 30 (Saturday)**, Raymond and Beth Chenault, renowned organ duo from Atlanta, Georgia, 7:30 p.m., Tabernacle, SLC

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MINNESOTA PUBLIC RADIO PRESENTS

**Pipedreams** Sundays at 9:00 p.m.  
on KBYU-FM

**January 7 - *Going on Record*** – Beginning the New Year with a review of recently released compact discs of organ music. Host Michael Barone guides you through.

**January 14 - *The Art of Marilyn Mason*** – An irrepressible energy, this legendary University of Michigan professor shares music and reflects on her career.

**January 21 - *England's Glory*** – British composers provide splendid scores which Jennifer Bate, Thomas Murray, John Scott, Benjamin Dobey and others play on pipe organs in both "Olde" and New England.

**January 28 - *Sounds from Sacred Spaces*** – A sampler of impressive, mostly new instruments installed in convent and monastery chapels in Wisconsin, Kentucky, Indiana and California, including several premieres.

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## JANUARY FRANTIC ORGANIST STORY

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By Joel Pressman

I am not an organist, but I pride myself on being able to figure things out--most of the time.

The choir's pre-concert rehearsal went well. Our organist, a German woman who was usually very uptight and very careful about everything she did, played a good rehearsal. Before the concert was a dinner break, so, after dinner, the conductor decided to warm up the choir before admitting the audience.

The organist was nowhere to be seen; but, I, in my fearless way, was sure that I could turn on the organ and play a few pitches for the warm-up. I knew something about organ presets, so I pushed a few buttons at random until I got some ranks to sound.

We warmed up.

Unfortunately, one of the buttons I pushed completely cleared all of the organist's carefully programmed presets. She became aware of this fact during the first number on the concert, when the organ seemed to have a demonic life of its own. Although her blood pressure level shot up to the hydrogen Bomb level, it is to her credit that she still speaks to me today.

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## BIGELOW ORGAN SITE

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You might be interested in checking out the M. L. Bigelow & Co. organ factory site. There's a lot of interesting information found there.

<http://www.mlbigelow.com/>

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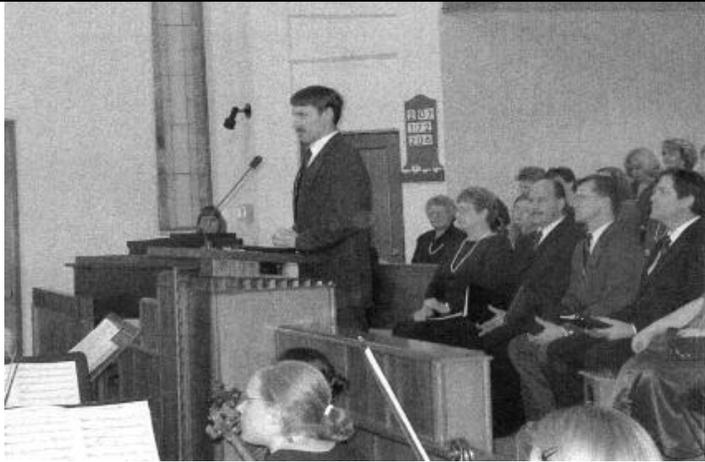
### ANSWERS

**Gary Ewer's Easy Music Theory**

<http://www.musictheory.halifax.ns.ca>

- 1. VOCAL TENOR CLEF:** Used in vocal music. Music written in the vocal tenor clef should be read as if it is in treble clef, then sung one octave lower.
- 2. TENOR CLEF:** The clef has been placed so that it is centered on the 4th line. That means the 4th line is middle C.
- 3. ALTO CLEF:** In this case, the clef has been centered on the middle line. The alto clef is used by violas in an orchestra.
- 4. NEUTRAL CLEF:** : Used for unpitched percussion music. This one is for two different percussion instruments, one with a high sound, the other with a low sound.

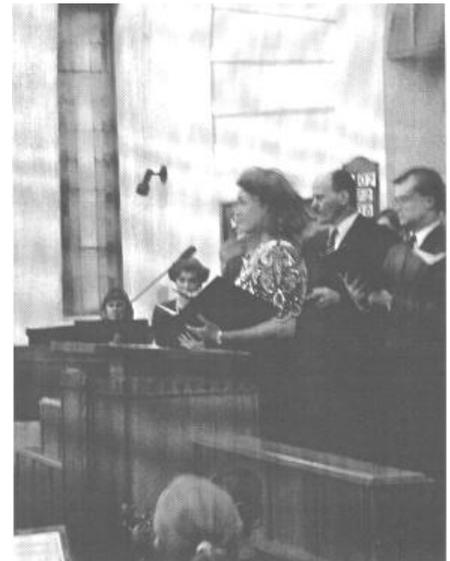
Photos from the December 20<sup>th</sup> performance by the Mapleton Chorale for our chapter. Thanks to Lillian Heil for taking the pictures.



Welcome



Walter Whipple organ solo



Kay Webb vocal solo



*Seventh Annual  
Christmas Concert*

Andrew Crane, *Director*  
Debbie Augustus, *Accompanist*  
Walter Whipple, *Organist*

Wednesday, December 20, 2000  
8:00 p.m.  
Historic Main Street Chapel, Springville  
Sponsored by the American Guild of Organists



Refreshments following the program, furnished by Doug Bush, Carol Dean, Claire Rogers, and LeeAnn Brockbank.



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## UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

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**February 11 (Sunday):** *Hymn Sing*, Jim Kasen, organist, deJong Concert Hall, 7:00 p.m., co-sponsored by the BYU 21<sup>st</sup> Stake. There will be a choir of 100 voices participating.

**March 8 (Thursday):** *Workshop on mental practice and imagery* with invited guest, Malva Freymuth, DMA. "Practice Guide for practice time and enhancing performance and preventing injuries." BYU MRH 5-7:00 p.m.

**April 7 (Saturday)** Chapter Competition for the Regional Competition, 8:00-12 noon, Madsen Recital Hall, BYU

**April 28 (Saturday):** *Pipes and Pizza at BYU*. Organ Crawl and Pipes & Pizza, with a silent movie at the end.

**May:** *Member Recital and Potluck Dinner* This activity will give members a chance to perform one or two songs without the pressure of trying to prepare a full recital on their own.

"Choosing appropriate music and performing it in a superior way should be the objective of every church musician. We can come closer to achieving this goal when we prepare ourselves both spiritually and musically so that the Spirit of the Lord can direct us as we serve Him and His people through music."

*(By Parley Belnap, Doug Bush and Robin Cardon - "Organ Essentials")  
Thanks to Meg Griffith for the insightful quote.*

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## Resources for *LDS* Organists

<http://members.nbci.com/dadstone>

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### 2001 National AGO Membership Directory

Last fall our chapter purchased a copy of the 2001 National AGO Membership Directory, and it has just arrived. If you need to contact a national member, please get in touch with DeeAnn Stone and she can give you the information. (There are no e-mail addresses listed.)

### American Guild of Organists



*Utah Valley Chapter*  
Dr. Parley Belnap, Dean  
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American Fork, UT 84003

**Test yourself. Name the following  
clefs.**

**(Answers inside)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_