

February 2022

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Message from the Dean

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Perhaps the only good thing that has come during this long Covid crisis is a better appreciation and understanding of how technology can improve our lives. Not necessarily simplifying, but expanding possibilities and opening new ways to be creative.

Think of the new terminology we have become comfortable using in the last several years: “Zoom meetings,” “virtual meetings,” “streaming,” “podcast,” and “webinar.” And our heightened reliance on email and online resources.

Some have become so comfortable with meeting online that they now prefer this way to communicate rather than meeting in person. Many in the workforce now have the option to work from home.

As church musicians we often face restructuring of our job descriptions and responsibilities. A familiarity and working knowledge of music and communication technologies will be expected.

I'm excited about our upcoming virtual meeting with Brandon Mock on February 28th. His presentation will highlight the possibilities that we have to expand our capabilities and current technologies, and help us to be seen as forward-looking, tech-savvy leaders in our communities.

I look forward to seeing you 'virtually' on February 28!

Ken

Kenneth Danchik, FAGO
Dean

Message from the Sub Dean

Winter storm greetings, friends and colleagues.

On Monday, February 28, at 7:30 PM our guest presenter will be Brandon Mock. Mr. Mock will provide a survey and offer up practical resources, tips, and interactive activities to grow our technological skills. This program will take place via Zoom.

Brandon Mock serves as the Director of Music Ministries at Dulin United Methodist Church (UMC), Falls Church, VA. A graduate of Radford University in music education with a master's degree from Shenandoah Conservatory, Brandon has extensive experience in both church music and public school teaching, Brandon arrived at Dulin UMC in January 2020, shortly before the COVID pandemic and its many restrictions forced a dramatic change in doing music ministry. His tech skills were quickly put into action as he worked with choir members and other musicians remotely to create a virtual choir and instrumental music for worship services. Initially, those services were pre-recorded but are live-streamed now as well, allowing the church to reach a much larger geographic area and audience. (An example of Brandon's creative use of virtual music ministry may

be seen on YouTube—search for “Pentecost Dulin”.

Cutting and pasting this link should direct you there: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXs5QMNRltk>).

To help our guest prepare for this practical program offering, please look for follow-up email blasts between February 1-21st. The first one will be an invitation with an **RSVP** and a **questionnaire** to facilitate interactive participation for this event. Part of the program will include an opportunity for everyone to ask questions.

While this COVID pandemic has challenged us in our service to the church and education, the silver lining is the opportunity to grow and identify more effective ways to engage and deepen our commitment to serving others, diversifying our pathways for connecting to each other. We hope to see you in the Zoom Room on February 28th.

Please send your questions, ideas, comments, and technological topics to this email address: orgel@iup.edu.

Happy Centenary, PitAGO! Let the celebration ensue!

NOTES FROM THE REGISTRAR

A couple of things you might not know...

As of January 17, 2022, we have 202 active members of our chapter.

The Pittsburgh Chapter is the NINTH largest in the Amer4ican Guild of Organists! (*according to the AGO National website, there are over 280 local chapters*)

Directory Changes

Received through January 15, 2022

NAME

Fellows, Mr. Donald K.

Kearney, Michael

CORRECTION

New Address: 11105 Newell Road, Dunkirk NY 14048

New Address: 151 Milne Dr., Apt E23, Monaca, PA 15061

We Welcome Two New Members!

Kucherenko , Mr. Oleksii

16500 Collins Ave

Apt #551

Sunny Isles Beach FL 33160

oyk1@pitt.edu

(Dual Member with Miami and Fort Lauderdale Chapters, Pittsburgh is his Primary Chapter)

Litzinger, Mr. Kevin

130 Saunders Station Rd.

Trafford PA 15085

kevinlitz@gmail.com

Cell: 412-378-2177

Jeff Gray

Chapter Registrar

Historic Pipe Organs of Central and Western Pennsylvania - Part Five

by Kevin M. Clemens, CAGO

Part four of this series documented the historic instruments of Blair County. The following article will recognize the two remaining historical pipe organs of Bedford County. Bedford County was created on March 9, 1771, from part of Cumberland County and named in honor of Fort Bedford. George Washington stayed in Bedford County in response to the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794. The Bedford Springs Hotel became an important site for the wealthy. Under James Buchanan the hotel became the summer White House. The U. S. Supreme Court met at the hotel one time.

Father Gallitzin was assigned to Loretto, Pennsylvania in 1799, and his comings and goings as a Catholic priest brought him to Bedford. He stayed in the homes of different Catholic families. Father Thomas Heyden, a parishioner of the newly established St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, went to seminary at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland and was ordained in May 21, 1821. He served both in the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Dioceses during and after his tenure as pastor

at St. Thomas the Evangelist Church, Bedford. The original church of 1816 still stands on East Street with the original cemetery. (It has been restored and is used as a prayer chapel.) It was abandoned in 1833 because it was too small to accommodate the growing population. A larger church was built in 1833. Henry Berger, an early Maryland organ builder, in 1851 built a 1 manual, six stops, organ for the church. It had a Grecian case of imitation oak. The present church (third church) built on East Penn and South Richard Streets in the borough of Bedford was built in 1868. The Henry Berger instrument was enlarged and moved to the third church. It is not known who moved or enlarged the Berger instrument but it is Germanic in construction and pipe nomenclature. The instrument is reminiscent of the German immigrants who settled in Ohio and Mississippi River valleys in the mid nineteenth century, rather than Pennsylvania German builders. In 1998, Jim McFarland restored the instrument. He describes it as a delightful instrument with very strident voicing and the most peculiar pedal coupler action and even a pedal-to-pedal octave coupler. Through the restoration McFarland found that it was sized with German language newspapers from Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and has plug in toes on the wooden pipes. It also has a tremblant-doux. McFarland notes its construction details are like none I have seen. The 61 note manual is enclosed and contains the following stops: Open Diapason 8'; Stopped Diapason 8'; Gamba 8'; Present 4'; Flute 4'; Aeoline 4'; and Piccolo 2'. There are 27 pedals and the Contra Bass 16' (pedal stop) is unenclosed. The organ is used for week-end liturgies.

Zion Lutheran Church (ELCA) of Everett, PA. building dates from the 1860's. In 1903, a new tracker pipe organ was installed by the A. B. Felgemaker Organ Company of Erie, PA. as their Opus 823. Andrew Carnegie donated \$500 toward the purchase of the organ which cost \$1,400.00. The organ has 10 ranks of pipes including three couplers and a tremolo. The manuals are 61 notes and the pedal 30 notes. An electric blower was added in the 1930's. The organ was cleaned in 1973 and remains unaltered. This sturdy instrument has a robust and rich sound, and is appreciated and used every Sunday for worship. The Swell organ contains: Stopped Diapason 8'; Aeoline 8'; Violin Diapason 8'; and Flute Harmonique 4'. The Great organ contains: Open Diapason 8'; Melodia 8'; Dulciana 8'; Octave 4'; and Flute d'Amour 4'. The Pedal organ contains one stop, Bourdon 16'. A 25 note chime keyboard was placed below the Great manual prior to the 1973 cleaning of the organ.

In Memoriam: JOHN WELLMAN BECKER

Born in Cooperstown, NY, son of Clyde S. Becker, Sr. and Laura (Green) Becker, John Becker died of respiratory failure in the UMPC Passavant Hospital, McCandless, PA. John is survived by his wife of 63 years the Reverend Ruth Bosch Becker; son the Reverend Frederick Becker; daughters Susan (Peter Aziz) and Margaret (Kim Strommen); five grandchildren, and dozens of nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews. John's childhood was marked by an early love of music. He studied piano with several teachers and by high school he was accompanying public events all over Cooperstown. John enlisted in the US Navy in 1948, serving on the U.S.S. Cascade in Japan. Returning to Otsego County after his tour, John earned a BA in business administration from Hartwick College. Moving to New York City to work at The International Paper Company, he studied organ with Searle Wright. At his teacher's suggestion, and somewhat to his father's alarm, he left I.P. to earn a Master's of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary. Surely, the world is richer for this choice. John shared his gifts as organist and choir master at Grace Lutheran Church, Astoria, Queens, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo, NY and Rye Presbyterian Church, Rye, NY.

In 1974, he became Secretary for Church Music and the Arts in the national offices of the Lutheran Church in America. John served on the team that produced the Lutheran Book of Worship which appeared in church pews nationwide in 1978 and to which he contributed hymn settings and arrangements of service music. John moved to Pittsburgh upon his retirement in 1988.

In Western Pennsylvania, he was best known as the Founding Director of the Pittsburgh Compline Choir, which continues to sing Compline on Sunday evenings in Heinz Chapel, and for whom he composed countless pieces for organ and voice. Many of these works are published by G.I.A. or Morningstar Music Publishers. John loved technology and the ways in which it connected him to others. When the internet was new, John volunteered as an online tutor for learners of English. More recently, he dove into genealogy research, back in time to Rotterdam in the 1600s, and forward to a rich network of living, newly-discovered cousins. John embodied many of the qualities he valued in others: a good sense of humor, honesty of spirit, and the ability to love and be loved. His love for humankind radiated outward and supported those around him. A Memorial Mass was celebrated on Saturday, January 8 at Calvary Episcopal Church, Shadyside. Gifts in John's memory may be made to the Friends of Music at Calvary Episcopal Church.

PIT AGO POSITIONS AVAILABLE

(As of) January 19, 2022

Upcoming Events

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2022, 3 p.m.

Nicole Keller in Concert!

Where: Shadyside Presbyterian Church, 5121 Westminister Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Tickets available at the door (cash, check, or card).

General admission \$12.

Student free with valid ID.

Monday, February 28, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Technology for Music Ministry

Presented by Brandon Mock

*This event will be virtual only

Monday, March 28, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Living Woman Organ Composers

Presented by Sarah Simko

*This event will be virtual only

Substitutes

It is the policy of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Guild of Organists that only current members in good standing may list their names on the Substitutes List. Employers may contact organists directly or ask the coordinator for assistance. The AGO assumes no responsibility for the musicianship, reliability, or conduct of substitute organists, and background checks are the responsibility of the employer.

Persons listed as available substitutes may be required by employers to present clearances; e.g. Child Abuse History Clearance; Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Checks for Employment; and/or Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprinting.

Services: W-Weddings, F-Funerals, E-Evenings, S-Saturdays, L-Liturgical Only, N-Non-Liturgical

Substitute Organists Available for Sunday Mornings

ALEY, PHILIP 412.302.8653 WFE
ANDERSON, GERALD 412.251.6718 WFELNS
BROWN, JUDITH 240.522.5070 WFES
CAFARO, ROSS 412.885.1625 WFES
CLEMENS, KEVIN M. 443.604.5072 WFELNS
EARNEST, Dr. WAYNE N. 724.206.8854 WFESLN
HILL, THOMAS 512.421.1484 WFES
JANKO, RAY 724.325.7449 WFES
JUSTHAM, MARY ANN 724.335.7792 WFES
KETTERING, REGINA 412.477.5547 WFES
KRANTZ, DOUGLAS 724.554.3314 WFS
LA RUE, ELIZABETH SPC 412.999.4812 WFESLN
LINDSEY, III, C. DENNIS 918.409.6467 WFES
MASTERS, SARA 412.266.5821 WFES
MISLIN, DAVID W. 617.223.1270 WFES
PARK, HAEHYUN 734.657.0869 WFESLN
REILAND, MICHAEL 412.882.5521 WFESLN
ROEDERER, CHARLOTTE 412.853.6647 EFS
ROLLET, TONY 412.726.8569 ES
RUBRIGHT, SANDY S. 724.994.8872 WFE
SKROUPA, DANE 724.265.4840 FLN
STIPCAK, VALERIE 724.388.1038 WFES
SZEREMANY, RICHARD, AAGO 412.327.6254 WFES
WILL, NICHOLAS, AAGO 412.566.9597 WFES

Substitute Organists NOT Available for Sunday

Mornings

AIKINS, CANDICE 724.568.2640 WF
BRUHN, LYNN 724.733.8111 WFE
COCHRAN, NICOLE 724.799.1373 WFES
DANIELS, J.R. 412.389.6658 WF
HAMMER, MICHAEL 217.766.4230 WFES

HENRI, LAURA 412.418.7392 WFESL
KARDOS, MICHELLE 724.757.0972 WFELSN
MILLER, JANE 412.526.6618 WF
PINKERTON, RICHARD 412.561.2015 WFE
RASLEY, DON 724.487.7303(D) 724.283.4829(E) WFES
RIZZO, ELMIRA, CAGO 724.612.2029 WFES
SCHALL, STEPHEN 412.215.2971 WFE
SPENCER, GEORGE 412.731.3324 WFE
STROBEL, JOYCE MOON 412.366.0074 WFES
TYILLIAN, JON 724.456.5135 WFESV
ANDERLAAN, BRETT, SPC 301.919.1835 WFES
WALLACE, JUSTIN 412.531.0525 WFES

Free resources for Organ on IMSLP

by Bob Senay

Alfred Hollins (September, 11, 1865 – May.17. 1942)

Hollins was born in Hull, East Riding, Yorkshire, England, and was blind from birth. His mother died while he was young, and little is known about his father. After his mother's death, Hollins was sent to live with his "Aunt Mary", who gave him his first piano lessons. It is rumored that Hollins had perfect pitch and, upon hearing any two notes on the piano, could name them.

In 1878, Hollins enrolled at the Royal National College for the Blind at Upper Norwood. He impressed the principal of his potential as a musician such that he was given the opportunity to study with piano with Frits Hartvigson, and organ with Dr E. J. Hopkins. Hollins then presented several successful concerts, including one at The Crystal Palace, where he performed the solo part of the *Emperor Concerto*, and a concert at Windsor Castle in the presence of Queen Victoria.

The opportunity arose for Hollins to study in Berlin under Hans von Bülow. While in Germany Hollins gave a series of concerts – at one time playing three concerti in the one evening – The Liszt E♭, the Schumann A minor and Beethoven's "*Emperor*" concerto. He played before the royal families of Germany and the Low Countries.

In 1884, Hollins was given his first professional appointment as organist, at St John's, Redhill. In 1885, Hollins appeared at the Music and Inventions Exhibition in 1885, playing the concert organ. Shortly afterwards another period of study presented itself at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt.

In the ensuing eleven years, Hollins was organist at Upper Northwood Presbyterian Church, at the People's Palace (Crystal Palace) and teaching piano and organ at the Royal National College for the Blind. During this period Hollins also made a tour of the United States, and visited major concert halls at the time.

Soon the Reverend Hugh Black, assistant minister at the Free St George's Church in Edinburgh persuaded the Presbyterian Kirk to allow the installation of an organ at St George's. An organ was procured. According to some stories, Black travelled to Nottingham to hear Hollins play, and offered Hollins the position there and then. Hollins accepted the offer and was then committed to St George's for the rest of his life.

Hollins did make multiple concert tours. In 1904, Hollins toured New Zealand and Australia. In 1907, 1909 and 1916 he went to South Africa to give a series of concerts at Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town, giving the opening recital for the organ at the new Town Hall in Cape Town. He had been instrumental in developing the specification for the organ. On 2 and 9 August 1907 he played on the Feather Market Hall organ, Port Elizabeth, which at that time was the largest organ in South Africa. In 1913 he played in Germany, recording for the Welte Philharmonic Organ.

In 1922, Hollins was awarded an honorary doctorate of music from the University of Edinburgh. This was in addition to being made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Organists in 1904.

In 1923, Hollins played at the inaugural recital of the Caird Hall Organ, Dundee, Scotland, which he had designed. This famous concert organ was the first built by Harrison & Harrison, Durham, England, and has been maintained by them since. It is a Grade 1 Historic Organ (BIOS) and is recognized as one of the finest instruments of its kind in the UK and further afield.

In 1925–26 Hollins gave a major tour of the United States, during which he visited 65 cities. It has been estimated that Hollins traveled some 600,000 miles on his concert tours.

In later years, Hollins wrote *A Blind Musician Looks Back*, his memories as an organist and teacher.

He died in Edinburgh in 1942, aged 76.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Hollins

Achievements

His organ recitals were not only entertaining but were also instructive. He introduced the practice of discussing the program with the audience before each piece. He would describe the main elements of the composition and would pick out the key themes on the keyboard. He brought a tremendous enthusiasm to both his playing and teaching. His ability to entertain & instruct was based on a sound musicianship derived from a profound understanding of the music and a thorough knowledge of the musical instruments. It is well known that he had models of various organ actions. He was able to explain the mechanisms to all enquirers. They were even designed so that a blind person could 'feel' their way to an appreciation of the construction of the organ. From this understanding of the mechanics of the organ he was able to develop the principles of the tonal characteristics of the pipework and build on this appreciation when contracted to design specifications for new and rebuilt organs.

His style of playing was colorful. The Sydney Sunday Sun is reported as stating:- "...from the moment he placed his fingers on the keyboard, Mr Hollins showed his confident command of the instrument."

His earlier expertise on the piano was transferred to the organ. His fingering and hand action was freer than was normal for organists. Perhaps it resembled the type of playing developed by the 'cinema' organists of the later generation? However Hollins did not appreciate jazz. His main inspiration was the classics.

In those days organ recitals contained many more 'transcriptions' than would now be the case. In the days before wireless and good quality records it was far harder for audiences to regularly hear the standard orchestral repertoire. So the recitals would contain a variety of transcriptions and original works. The tonal balance of the organ was often designed to parody the instrumental capabilities of the orchestra.

Hollins himself believed in contrast in his programs. He would always include a 'scherzo' like piece.

He tried to balance heavy and light classics. He contrasted works in key, tone color and style.

Hollins favorite composers seemed to be the romantics. He included the Meistersingers Overture and the Prelude and Liebstod to Tristan, the Schumann Quintet and Liszt's Les Preludes as being amongst his key formative works. In the 'organ loft' he had a lifelong appreciation and enjoyment of Alexander Guilmant and the Englishman Henry Smart.

A brief overview of a series of concerts reveals pieces originally written for organ by Bach, Wolstenholme, Willan, Boelleman & Rheinberger. Transcriptions included the Largo from the New World Symphony and three pieces by Edward MacDowell.

Hollins was a prolific composer. He wrote much for the organ – there are some fifty five pieces.

However, he composed surprisingly little for his other instrument – the piano. He contributed to the repertoire of songs and choral works. Unfortunately, due to changing fashions these have become virtually unknown.

Typically his music was light and airy. More often than not tuneful with fairly conventional harmonies.

The music of Hollins was written as if he had an orchestra in mind – not necessarily parodies of the various instruments- but a genuine feel for orchestral tone and color.

All his pieces for organ display a consummate musical skill – and a quite a degree of original ideas.

His writing was eloquent displaying many of the tools in the composer's toolbox. His works freely utilize both harmonic and contrapuntal styles. Hollins was a great improviser, however virtually none of his extant compositions are based on any performed improvisation. It would be fair to say that most of his music is suffused by an improvisatory character worked out in pen and ink to a high degree of sophistication.

The three pieces which have best stood the test of time are:-

1. The Trumpet Minuet, written in a Handelian style.
2. A Song of Sunshine, perhaps his best known and best loved work – really one of those pieces where we feel better after having listened to it.
3. Spring Song – another joyful excursion into the dappled English landscape!

Source: <http://www.musicweb-international.com/hollins/biography.htm>

Link to Hollins' works available for IMSLP.

https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Hollins,_Alfred

Links to various performances of Hollins' compositions.

Trumpet Minuet by Alfred Hollins (1865-1942) played by organist Christopher Matthews on the Rothwell organ at St George's Church, Headstone, Harrow.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcIEO_YrZiw

Edward Taylor plays the peaceful and lyrical Berceuse (Lullaby) by Alfred Hollins on the organ of Carlisle Cathedral

https://youtu.be/_XcVk7WJGnw

Concert Overture in C major, performed by William Saunders, on the 2010 Harrison and Harrison organ of St. Edmundsbury Cathedral, Suffolk, England

https://youtu.be/XRTdj9_zW4g