

Introduction to excerpts from the Oral History Project

In the spring of 2009 the TCAGO board approved the creation of a committee to carry out an oral history project. Such a project provides a historical record that is unique and separate from the paper trail that emerges from the TCAGO Board, its committees and printed programs of events that it presents. TCAGO 100th anniversary seemed an appropriate time to carry out such a project. The committee consisted of Jerry Bonstrom, Laura Edman, Priscilla Franken, with the later addition of Merritt Nequette, chaired by James Callahan.

Project advice was solicited from James Fogerty, a consultant at the Minnesota History Center. Through Philip Asgian we also contacted Rodney Schwartz at Westminster Presbyterian Church to request the use of their recording and playback equipment that had been used for their oral history project.

The committee initially created a list of 32 names. Ultimately the committee decided to interview the following persons: Michael Barone, James Biery, Carolyn Bliss, Jerry Bonstrom, Phillip Brunelle, Maria Bucka, Roger Burg, David Engen, John Ferguson, Charles Hendrickson, Diana Lee Lucker, Kathryn Moen, William Stump, Richard Waggoner, and Robert Wolf.

The interviews were completed on April 29th 2010. Merritt Nequette transcribed these interviews.

We found that those we interviewed lived in a world rich in teachers, mentors, colleagues and friends. Our selection of texts tries to highlight these interesting worlds.

I am sure you will find the reading enjoyable.

Sincerely,
James Callahan

J. Michael Barone

Do you have any sense of the impact that the Pipedreams has had on the general public?

It's all anecdotal. I mean, people say, "*Pipedreams* keeps the organ alive in the United States. Without *Pipedreams* we would have nothing left." Not quite true. Diane Bish, with her program, *The Joy of Music* on television, reaches many more viewers than *Pipedreams* reaches listeners. But she's struggling, too. She's had cable networks pull her program for reasons only managers can explain.

I do know that the *Pipedreams* does reach out. It's heard by a wide range of people, and not just the traditional Classical music demographic. There are young folk who listen. There are at least as many women as men who listen, so that's nicely balanced. I know that there are so-called 'Children of *Pipedreams*' who grew up listening to the program because their father or mother was interested in it, and thus heard it as young people, and got interested in it themselves. I have evidence of people who were subjected to the program before they were born, and listened to it quite avidly at least until their fifth or sixth year, before growing into other interests, but nonetheless still remember how important *Pipedreams* broadcasts were in their infancy, and on the other end, getting very touching letters from very old people.

A 97-year-old woman heard a broadcast about Guilmant. She was blind and could not write legibly anymore, so she sent me an audio tape with a little message saying that she remembered listening to Alexandre Guilmant at the St. Louis Exposition in 1908. Another thank-you note came from a widow whose husband had only recently died. They were both regular *Pipedreams* listeners. He had had a stroke while swimming at the "Y" and was in a coma for ten days or so, and she was with him on his last day, and they listened to *Pipedreams* together, he in a comatose state, and she holding his hand with the radio on. Ten minutes after the program, he died. So *Pipedreams* connects with people from before birth to the edge of the grave..and everyone in between. I find that remarkable in a marvelous and totally unexplainable way.

And there are young kids who grew up listening to the program, and then either went on to become organists or choir directors, or organ builders. It's kind of like with Paul Manz recently. Eric Suter posted something on a Facebook page - Paul Manz's memories - saying that as a six-year-old, he had gone with his parents to a recital at Rockefeller Chapel - Paul was doing a hymn festival, and afterwards from wherever Erik was standing next to the console, before the postlude started, Paul looked over, picked Erik up, and plunked him on the bench, and played the postlude. Erik said from that moment on, he wanted to be an organist. And he did go on to study at Oberlin and be an assistant organist at the National Cathedral.

So the impact that one has is always completely unknowable - in every detail. But I am aware that *Pipedreams* does have an impact, which delights me. In a way, though, I do the programs just to entertain myself, and hopefully will catch someone off guard and stimulate some curiosity. The fact that the program actually does that is heartwarming.

James Biery, FAGO

I was born in England. My father was in the Air Force, and apparently they moved around. He was stationed near London. My family comes from Pennsylvania.

The next place he was stationed was in Nebraska, which was actually a return trip, and as luck would have it, I ended up going all the way through public school in Nebraska, near Omaha.

Piano lessons pretty early - age seven, I guess. I had a local piano teacher - a neighborhood teacher who had an electronic organ in her house. She would teach anything. So I kind of started on organ with her at some point - pretty early, like age eleven or so. I was fortunate enough to have parents who were supportive, and they found me a teacher in Omaha, at probably a Congregational church at that time. It had an Aeolian-Skinner organ. The teacher's name was Roger Arnold, and I studied with him for four or five years - eighth grade through high school. That was a wonderful experience. And that's where I really got hooked on making music in churches.

Then I went to school at Northwestern, where I did my undergraduate organ with Grigg Fountain, and then while we were there, it was convenient to just stay and do a master's degree. It only took another year. So I did that. That year of study was with Wolfgang Rubsam.

I was in Wallingford, Connecticut at a Catholic church for about seven years. From there I went to the Catholic cathedral in Hartford and I was there for about seven years. If you're in a Catholic cathedral, you start networking with cathedral musicians, and that's another world of its own. That led to coming here. We've been here at the St. Paul Cathedral for about fourteen years. It's amazing.

What did you gain from your participation in the Twin Cities American Guild of Organists?

In broader terms, I think it's important to have some type of a collegial organization. There have been many times when I have needed the support of colleagues. I mean, it may be just as simple as having a directory that the Guild publishes so you know how to contact the colleagues. Having meetings that you can go to, programs that you can attend and connect with your colleagues and see what's going on with them; I think that's very, very important.

I was one of the student competitors in 1980 at the AGO national convention here. So that was the first time I'd ever visited the Twin Cities. When I was the dean (1998—2000), the application for the convention was officially filed - the national convention that we just had two years ago. I know there was a lot of back and forth over when it would happen. I think originally we were looking at 2006, maybe even 2004. At that point, it became apparent that the lead time was not long enough on that bidding process. We were looking at 2006, and hotels were already booking up.

And I think it was during my two years as dean that Phil Asgian and Westminster started working on the Pipe Organ Encounters project and to build the organ sometimes used for that teaching program. So that had its beginnings at that point, too.

Carolyn Bliss

My dad was a high school teacher and first influenced my interest in music. He directed the church choir and I sang a lot while growing up in Battle Lake and then in St. James. While I was in high school our Norwegian Lutheran church hired an organist who was a graduate of Concordia. She did everything at church and was my first organ teacher. Because of her work load she was a bit fragile and would say, "Carolyn you're just gonna have to play today."

So, I did. That was my introduction really, to organ playing. Since we lived close to the church I would practice, leave the doors open. We also had a dog and in those days the dog came along everywhere (unleashed) including on my visits to the church so the dog would sit under the pews while I practiced.

I also studied piano. I recall one of my piano teachers always played *Nola*, including a version for church although she just played it slower.

Both of my parents graduated from Augsburg and so for me and my sister, this is where we went to school to focus on music education. For a year I had organ lessons with C. Wesley Anderson at St. John the Evangelist church, St. Paul. I would take the bus from campus to organ lessons and then to choir practice at Morgan Avenue Church. This was a marvelous experience for me as a kid from the prairies of southern Minnesota, to play on the Aeolian-Skinner organ at St John the Evangelist. I played at various churches during my college years as regular organist (Morgan Avenue Finnish church) or as a fill in (Diamond Lake Lutheran and Bethel Lutheran).

After college I taught school for a year. Then I traveled to Norway to study organ. I did graduate study at the University with Heinrich Fleischer. About that time I met Bill and we were married, started our family. At that time I mostly did volunteer duties at our home church, Bethlehem, and sang in the choir. When our youngest was in elementary school I was hired to run the choir school and serve as assistant organist. Later I took a position at Calvary Lutheran Edina, for five to six years, then went on to Nativity Lutheran in St. Anthony Village.

This was a Director of Music position and I had the privilege of working with resident organist Paul Emch, who was very active in AGO and a real character. It was during this time that I also became involved in TCAGO. This was between the 60s and 70s when my friends were telling me to get involved in AGO.

These professional and social connections with people especially working as part of a committee is hard to quantify yet very important, especially as churches were growing, changing and organists or their role was somewhat threatened.

Jerry Bonstrom

I joined the Guild when I got out of the U.S. Army in July of 1970. I had been drafted and spent two years in the army (stateside) as an Army Bandsman. My MOS (military occupational specialty) was “piano player.” On the march I played bass drum, glockenspiel or cymbals. The first Guild meeting that I attended was on September 20, 1970, and it was at a UCC church on South Snelling Ave. - close to Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. There were slides and recordings of European organs, and a professor from Madison came to present this program.

Mostly with the Guild, it's been the networking aspect, and having common interests with people. That's been important. And then, of course, the salary schedule - that's been a part of it; that's part of how you make a living. The job listings - that's been part of it. I've always been energized by so many activities, and it makes me come back to the console with new attitudes and new ideas. So it's been very beneficial in that way.

In '01, I was asked to be the archivist, and I hesitated. I took over for Roger Burg, and I didn't know what the involvement was, and I wasn't sure that that would fit me. But in a way, it does. I mean, it does, because I have an interest in history, and how things used to be - names from the past, and how that's influenced the present, and so on. So I was asked to be the archivist, but that was also... I was asked to be on the board in 2002, and so I served on the board then for those three years - until '05. I'm still the archivist, and in some ways, I think it would be good to get some new blood interested our archives, and come at it in some new ways too. We've kind of asked that through *Pipenotes*, I think, but we just haven't had a response for someone to work on archives.

Well, it's a lot more work than people might expect, or maybe I make it more than it needs to be. It's also a connection with the Minnesota History Center. In the late '80s - Carrie Bliss was the dean at the time - it was decided that we should have a permanent, temperature-controlled place for our archives. Before, it seems that whoever the dean was would schlep our archive boxes around, and then would just store them at their house until a new dean took over. To organize them, and so on was important, but Carrie made a connection with the History Center, and so we put those boxes and archives at the History Center for professional librarians to take care of them, and to be in an air-conditioned place in acid-free boxes - for our future history, it's important.

Then we had a wonderful addition in 2001. A man who was our treasurer in the '50s must have also been what was called then the librarian. His name was Franklin Smith. He taught math at the University of St Thomas and when he passed on in 2001, he donated these minutes from meetings that he had. There were minutes from 1910 to 1950, and it's pretty amazing to look at our first meeting and the minutes of other early meetings - from our first year and on.

Philip Brunelle

My background. OK. I was born in 1943. We moved to Minneapolis when I was seven, and I began piano lessons at MacPhail that year. I had studied piano before that in Austin, Minnesota, but I studied at MacPhail with Theodore Bergman, who was teaching at MacPhail, was organist at First Baptist downtown, and was pianist for the Apollo Club, and was also probably the busiest funeral player in town. He was at everybody's mortuary playing for funerals. I remember many lessons that had to be changed because of funerals.

I studied with Ted Bergman - a wonderful man. When I went to Minnehaha Academy, I was still studying piano with Ted. I had started playing the organ a little bit, just on my own, had a few lessons from Ted. When I was in 9th grade, I became organist at Bethany Covenant Church in Bloomington. Ted had given me some music, and I played there one year. Then I was offered the job as organist at Park Avenue Covenant Church on Park Avenue and Franklin. Now somewhere in that time when I was in 9th grade, Harry Opel, the choir director at Minnehaha Academy said, "You need to be taking organ lessons from Arthur Jennings." So I called Mr. Jennings and said I would like to come and audition for him at Plymouth Church. I had never been in Plymouth Church. He said, "What will you bring for your audition." I said I would bring the Mendelssohn f minor sonata, and he asked "which edition?" I said G Schirmer, and he said "which of the G Schirmer?" And I told him and he said "I prefer the other, but come along." Lessons with Arthur Jennings had no length - they went until they were done. Or, until there was a ball game on the radio. So you could have a two-hour lesson. You never had less than an hour, but you could go two and a half, depending on what we were working on, and what needed to be accomplished. Wonderful man. Absolutely wonderful.

I would say that the two things that I have gained 1) an incredible number of friendships. To meet so many wonderful dedicated generous people that I have met over these years - people that except for the AGO I would never have known. This was a way to bring us together. Some people are doing amazing work in a small church, but they're doing quality work. And others of us are in big churches downtown, but getting to know these people - you get to know the downtown ones - but I hadn't the opportunity to meet as many as I did over the years. That's one thing. And then the other thing for me [2] has been that I see this chapter as being a real leader and a catalyst for quality and music and for preserving a tradition. Being able to be a part of that march of history, to me, has filled me with a lot of pride for what we have been able to do. And I look back and see the names of these great people of the past that were here - I mean Jennings of course, and Ed Berryman, and Heinrich Fleischer - dozens of people - Marion Hutchinson - it's never just any one single person, but it's that whole group of people that have stayed right with it, that over the years, you say it's because of all of these people that we are now able to come to the point of celebrating 100 years.

I've been blessed... But you just have to work very very hard. And then I think, that lastly, I am a very big believer in the importance of mentorship. But in the same way that Ted Bergman and Harry Opel and Arthur Jennings were mentors to me in a very deep and satisfying way, I've been always concerned that if I see young people that I feel could use some mentorship, I try to find a way to make that happen.

Maria Bucka

I started piano when I was three, informally; then at four with Marguerite Astroth of St. Paul. When I was twelve, my father purchased an organ for our home although I had no interest in the organ. Then I heard Paul Manz at a concert. From that point on, I became hooked. So my parents allowed me to study with Paul Manz when I was fourteen. After a couple of years I was hired for my first organ job at age sixteen, in Richfield at Hope Presbyterian Church.

I was there for 15½ yrs. My piano teacher urged me to study with Bernard Weiser at the UM where I enrolled. I decided to also study organ initially with Dan Chorzempa and then with Heinrich Fleischer for two years.

After college I started graduate courses in music. I eventually earned my Vocal Education degree and looked for a job. I ended up teaching at Macalester College for five years even though I didn't have a doctorate - I just was in the right place at the right time. I was also on staff at Hope Presbyterian and accompanied several singing groups. Eventually I needed to spread my wings and explore a liturgical church position, so I took a position at Bethlehem Lutheran that I applied for in 1976 and was hired for in January 1977. I started as organist, in 1984, became the coordinator of music, then in 1989 Director of Music, although I had been doing that job for four years unofficially...

We did housecleaning fifteen years ago to account for our membership numbers. When I started my position we were at 3200 members and now we are at about 3600. Keep in mind that churches count memberships in various ways. Some of the developments I've been part of are the formation of the Bethlehem Music Series in 1981. I developed a hymn supplement *Song of Bethlehem*, that we used until *With One Voice* was published. I was Dean of TCAGO 1991-1995 and served on numerous committees. At Bethlehem we added services and acquired more staff. I continue to play organ three Sunday services and administer the total music program and budget. As Artistic Director of the Music Series we have developed a strong active board. This is a creative outlet for me although worship playing is still my first love.

TCAGO offers collegiality and resources. We celebrate each other's talents and achievements... I would say friendships, education, and support and to be able to find substitute organists has been beneficial. A significant aspect of our chapter's professional development was to update the salary guidelines and incorporate education, achievements, awards, and years of experience aspects into the grid. We tried to disseminate to churches as well as to funeral homes in an effort to be more consistent with compensation. I think this was the beginning of really being more intentional about making the guidelines known and upholding these guidelines.

Roger Burg

I went to an AGO convention in Dallas, and I went to one in Denver. In 2008, I was a proofreader for Jim Frazier, as you were, for the booklet. I enjoyed that so much, and was so devastated on the day when we opened the first book and found the error on the back cover, because there was an extra zero in "2010." Jim was so careful about everything. If we thought we were careful, he was *triple* careful. Anyway, it was fun to do. It was nice to be involved in that way, using our eyes and our brains and our knowledge of the language, without having to prepare a recital, or a workshop, or a lecture.

But I've always kept my membership going. I also belong to the Organ Historical Society. I got into that several years ago - decided I liked the *Tracker*. I also discovered the Organ Clearing House, and began to read about that. I have a friend in Chicago who bought an organ from the Organ Clearing House - a wonderful three-manual Casavant - for \$35,000 - to rescue it from demolition.

I also had a very exciting year in 1988 when I was one of a group of people who went with Richard Proulx's choir from Holy Name Cathedral [Chicago] to be in Amsterdam, or the Netherlands, for the completion of the large Flentrop organ. So we got to hear it played the first time in the shop there on the Fourth of July. Richard Proulx played the *Star-Spangled Banner*, which was quite wonderful. Everybody was just thrilled, because this was a 119-rank instrument in this tiny church where they had set it up for fabrication. And they took it all down, and packed it up, and shipped it off to Chicago, and I went down for the dedication there.

The woman who gave it was ninety-nine years old, and she was there for the dedication recital, with a huge orchid and a black mantilla. It was quite thrilling to think that she had seen it from start to finish. Then I think they had to use it for her funeral after a few months.

That's about it for the AGO. I've not really been involved lately, except as the proofreader for the 2008 convention book. I don't get to meetings very often, partly because of other things that I'm doing. I've tried to get to a lot of the opening seasonal meetings, and I'm really glad that they've got so many people involved who are younger now, because the torch has got to be passed. I think there are so many talented member organists coming along. I don't know many of them, but I try to hit their recitals. I have never met Chris Stroh, for example, who is at the Basilica, and I don't think he knows who I am, but long before he was born, I was there. And to be able to say that is very peculiar!

David Engen

Have you had a number of church jobs along the way?

The first paid job was when I was at St. Olaf [College], and I was choir director at Farmington Lutheran. Didn't have a car, so I had to rely on people from the church and they set up a rotating carpool for me. I directed two choirs there. It was a very formative experience, because I was in Jennings' conducting class during that time. And the things we were learning there seemed to be in a different world from what was going on at the church. It was a pretty small church.

Eventually, the senior choir was basically eight women. We had a Conn organ over in the corner of the balcony, totally dead wood. A dreadful experience. And ironically, just last night, I posted that job on the TCAGO Website, in the new building. Both the organ and choir director jobs are open right now. So it's a full circle.

So that was the first job, when I was in college. Then I went to Iowa City, and some of the church music folks that I know in the Twin Cities knew Dan Moe, so he knew that I was coming, and he was choir director at Gloria Dei, and the first - almost literally the first day I was in town - I went into Gloria Dei and ran into the secretary. Roger Petrich had preceded me, and he had just left (currently music director at St Thomas More, Chapel Hill, NC).

The secretary played for the first two services and filled in for Roger on the third, and she didn't want to. Literally, when I walked in the door of the church, she said "Who are you, hello - oh would you play for me on Sunday?" And so I did, and that wound up being my audition. After church, the committee met and I was offered the job. So I had that job my two years while I was in Iowa City. They paid \$75.00 a month. After grad school, I moved to St. Peter. People weren't finding any teaching jobs. I could go back to work for Charles Hendrickson in the shop. So at \$2.00/hour in 1973, that was better than nothing. Not too long after I had gotten in town, Chris Johnson at First Lutheran offered to split her job. She played and directed. She hired me to play. So I played there off and on for fourteen years. During that period in St. Peter, I taught part-time and full-time at Gustavus. My last year there I directed the concert choir.

John Ferguson

What got you interested in the organ?

Well, I think the first thing was the organ at our church in Cleveland. A couple in the church gave the organ to Bethel Baptist. So then, of course, they needed somebody to play it. I was fascinated by the organ. Oh, yes, and we have to back up. In 1950, when I was nine or ten years old, our family went to Sweden. Mom was a Swedish immigrant, and all her relatives are in Sweden. They invited us to come, and they paid our way, or we wouldn't have gone. My one uncle, very very successful, had a farm which I think we would have called an estate. And anyone who had perfect attendance in Sunday school in the Mission Covenant Church, which was the *Vischungskirke* in Sweden - the Protestant church, the protesting church - and here I am, later in life, selling out to the Lutherans.

Anyway, he had this summer camp, and you got a free week in camp if you had perfect attendance in Sunday school. And they had a chapel with a two-manual reed organ - pump organ - in it. And the week I spent at Langkeniss, once I found that thing, I was playing that thing for all it was worth. There was no camp that week, and the relatives still talk about, remembering me - they could always know where I was, because they could hear this organ going full tilt.

I just fell in love with the instrument. I also got very interested in the mechanical dimensions - the organbuilding side of it - and so would take books out of the library to read about organbuilding, and of course the Barnes book immediately joined the bookshelves. So organbuilding has always interested me, and we actually had an 18-rank pipe organ in the basement rescued from an inner-city church in Cleveland, which also just happened to be about Russ Farling and Holtkamp organ. So perhaps I was destined to write a study of Walter Holtkamp, Sr. Because the very first pipe organ I encountered, both to play and also to work on, happened to be Holtkamps. But then that was Cleveland - that was natural.

So we had the organ in the basement, and so instead of being under a Model T in the garage, I was under the windchests in the basement, and the only condition about this from Mother, was that because the organ was underneath the kitchen, I was not allowed to play when she was baking anything in the oven. An angel food cake didn't do quite the right thing. So from then on, that was the only condition that I had to remember - the organ was off when anything significant was baking in the oven.

Anyway, that's what I supposed got me interested, both the musical and the mechanical end, and I got very interested in the lore of the organ.

Charles Hendrickson

I was born in Willmar, Minnesota and raised by parents who appreciated fine music. My father, even though he was not a musician, was fond of classical music and collected 78 recordings. I recall listening to pieces like Bach's *Brandenburg concertos* on 78s. This had an impression on me, as did singing in the Willmar community concerts like the annual *Messiah* sing along. We were issued bound copies of *Messiah*. In fact I still have my original bound copy of *Messiah* from this experience. Later as a teenager, I was able to work as "go-do-go-get" subordinate as part of the Möller Organ Company crew hired to rebuild our church's aging Estey organ. I was introduced to the larger realm of installing, sorting, tuning and voicing under expertise of Harry Iverson, a remarkable character. These experiences and the teachers who taught me piano, Mrs. Sophus Larson as well as my high school vocal teacher, Doris Larson, had a lasting impression on me.

My wife and I were married in 1964, while I was teaching physics at Mankato State. Just a few months after I was married, an old friend of the family from Winthrop, a Rev. Lambert Engwall came to me and asked me to give him advice. His church had received memorial funds designated for an organ fund. So Rev. Engwall was trying to figure out how to get an organ project going. I gave him names of established commercial organ-building firms to contact. But he decided that I was going to do it. Eventually everything was agreed upon and we had an old canning factory near the church to use for our project. And this got me started and we've never been out of work in these forty-five years since.

I had to give up teaching and then set up a small factory in St. Peter, Minnesota in 1964. It has grown over the years. In 1964 we had a very important contract to build the first tracker organ in the Midwest for a chapel at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. No other builder had built a tracker organ in this part of the world since the 19th century. This prompted us to build our organ shop at the north end of town industrial park region. We are a family operation with my sons Andreas and Eric very much involved in the design, installations, service and tuning work. So they do all the real work that I originally did. And I can take it a little easier, although there's plenty of work for me to do in the shop.

The Twin Cities chapter, at least for the last half century, was one of the most important and supportive chapters in the church music and organ world. You could regularly depend on the Twin Cities chapter to host a regional or a national AGO convention, as it did in 2008. There are major events for recitalists, choirs, workshops etc that help keep our focus on developing good music. There's always a list of organists who are available on a part-time or fill-in basis for churches. So there's no excuse for any church to be without an organist.. The development of employment agreements and salary guidelines also has been beneficial for everyone.

Diana Lee Lucker

I was born in Seattle, Washington. My mother was a concert pianist, and so she was my first piano teacher. When I was eleven years old, I was very tall for my age. My grandfather built pipe organs, and one day he said to me, "You know, your piano playing is doing rather well; how about organ lessons?" And I thought, well that would be fun. I had been with him on some of his installations, and was quite fascinated by the pipe organ. So he set me up with lessons with Ronald Hooper at the University of Washington.

My first church position was in Seattle. And then my dad was transferred to St Paul, we moved to Minneapolis, and at that time (1948), I studied with Marion Hutchinson. That was at Central Lutheran and I studied with her for, oh maybe, six months, and then she became quite ill, and left.

In the meantime, my mother found out about the student chapter of the AGO, and we went to a meeting together at MacPhail, and there sat Rupert Sircom. So we spoke with him, and I started studying with Rupert. That went on for quite a long while, because when I went to the University, I was so happy with Mr. Sircom that I didn't want to change teachers. So I decided I would be a piano major, which I thought was a pretty good idea anyway. I studied with Clyde Stevens, and with Earl Reimer.

Then I went to the Juilliard School, and decided I would really seriously be a pianist. I was there a year, studying with Lonnie Epstein, and I missed the organ because I didn't play the organ at all at that time in my life. I came back, graduated from the University as a piano major, but then went on to study with Heinrich Fleischer and got my master's degree in organ. My career took off from that point, I guess. Then, of course, I later studied with Dean Billmeyer and got my doctorate in organ.

My first church job was here at Fifth Church of Christ Scientist. Next, I went to Richfield Lutheran. Then I was at Oakland Avenue Evangelical. From there I went to Bethel Lutheran, and had the permanent position. My next job was Emmanuel Methodist. (I can't believe all of this, because I've put it so far out of my mind.) But then my next big job was at Second Church of Christ Scientist downtown. They, at that time, occupied the old Souls' Harbor building, and had a Farrand and Votey Organ. It was quite something. I felt privileged to be there. That would have been the 1950s, so I was still in high school.

I was there quite a while. They moved to the new building—where it is now—and installed a new Möller organ. But I felt that I didn't really get a chance to get involved in an active church music program, with a choir and a more liturgical setting. So, I joined St Mark's, and I was really into liturgical organ playing. I went to Salem Lutheran, and I was there until I married. My husband was a pastor, so I had to play at his church, of course, so I went to Epiphany Lutheran, and I was there until 1962, when I received a call to play at Mount Olivet. I was there for sixteen years. One more year at Wayzata Community Church (where I am now), and it will equal my time at Mount Olivet. My life will be balanced.

Kathryn Ulvilden Moen

I started piano lessons in South Dakota when I was in grade school. When I got a little older into high school - by that time we had moved from South Dakota to LaCrosse, Wisconsin - I was enamored of the organ in that church which my father served. The organist had me as a piano student. I was in high school. She often had me substitute for her when she went to communion. And the ridiculous thing about it was that she would hold the last chord that was part of what she was playing, and I was to put my hands over her hands, and play that same chord so that it was continuous. I cooperated and played. But that was the beginning. I began taking organ lessons from her out of the John Stainer book. I remember there was one passage that was only three measures long - a badadeedadadum - for pedal. I just loved to play that, and I used to play that when I had to play for prelude.

Then in the summer, there was the AGO convention in Minneapolis. And I was given a sabbatical for the year. I didn't know much about where to go. While standing at the Minneapolis Auditorium, I was listening to something and talking to someone, and it turned out that that person was the carillonneur from Princeton - Arthur Bigelow. And he took an interest in my predicament. "Oh, no," he said, "you don't want to go to California. You want to go to Paris. I have a cousin who lives in Paris, and I'm sure she has a room where you could live." So from there on, I decided that's what I would do. I went to André Marchal at St. Eustache, and asked whether he would take me as a student. Oh, yes, he would be delighted. I had no recommendations or anything. Well, it turned out to be a very interesting year of going to his studio for the seminars and the soirées that we had, and some of the other students included Bernard Lagacé who is from Canada, now from Montreal, and also Gerald Hamilton. And Grethe Krogh Christianson, who later became the head of the organ department at the conservatory at Copenhagen.

One evening, we were invited by Jean Langlais, to go to Ste. Clothilde to play whatever piece we had learned of his for him in the dark church - just the three of us students - Grethe Krogh from Denmark, Ruth Bauman from Switzerland, and I. I played the *Epilogue* - the pedal solo - for him. Greta did something from the *Suite Médiévale*, I don't remember what Ruth played. And then afterwards, he said, "Well, now you have played for me; I will play for you. Give me a theme." So I gave him, foolishly, the Norwegian national anthem. Grethe took a Danish tune, and Ruth Bauman, the Swiss, a yodeling song. Well, he put all those three together, and played for us that evening in that dark church - the famous place where Franck has played, you know.

I joined the AGO when I first came up here, and have not been an officer, so to speak, until I was... if I was anything else before I was dean, I don't know. Paul Manz was elected to be the dean, and I was to be the sub-dean in 1966. Paul resigned after two or three months, so then it fell to me to take the job, and it's listed incorrectly in the directory. But that year was a fruitful one. I had many helpers. We had interesting meetings with organists who came here to play, and for whom we gave receptions. I had some of them here at our house - that would include, for instance, Marie-Claire Alain from France, and André Marchal, who played out at Westwood (Marie-Claire played at Central), and Gustav Leonhardt played a harpsichord program at the seminary. They were all our house guests as well, and we had a reception for Leonhardt for all the harpsichord fans here at our house.

Bill Stump

The first major role I had in the AGO was in the '80 convention, working on the program committee. As part of that, somehow I ended up being in charge of all the A-V equipment for all of the workshops. So I do remember driving around, picking up music stands, trying to get movie screens and tape recorders - this was years ago. Actually, the hotels we used have been torn down. The Leamington was one, and the Curtis, (both in Minneapolis) and we had workshops in both of those hotels, plus at some of the churches in the area.

I remember during the convention, McNeil Robinson came up to me and he said, "You look like somebody that knows what they're doing." And I said, "Well, I'd be happy to help you out. What is it?" And he said, "Well, I have my airline ticket here, and nobody has bothered to give me a check to reimburse me for this. Can you help?" So I had the airline ticket, and Carsten [Slostad] was writing checks. So I went and gave it to Carsten. Carsten wrote the check, and McNeil said, "Now, I need help in cashing this." So he and I walked down to Twin City Federal, and using my account as collateral, they cashed McNeil's check for him. He was ever so grateful.

Another interesting story - I think it was Marianne Webb - was doing a workshop at Gethsemane [Episcopal] for music for brass and organ and other instruments. She evidently had a rehearsal, and she came up to me and said, "I need to talk to you." So she pulled me into one of the ballrooms or big spaces there, and she said, "They can't play the music. What am I going to do?" I said, "Well, give me fifteen minutes." So I called a fellow in town that I knew contracted brass, and had good brass. And I called and explained what the situation was, and he said "I'll have a competent quartet there at 8:00 o'clock tomorrow morning." So I told Marianne that, and she came after the workshop and she said, "Thank you *so much*." Now I don't know who had contracted the original brass group, and whether it had been done through Schmitt Music, or ... "*was it the publisher?*"

I don't know who had done it, but she was so distraught, because they could *not* play the music. I had arranged for an oboist to do a piece for oboe and organ, and he was competent, so that went very, very well.

Richard Waggoner, AAGO

I'm glad there's a Guild, just because - for one reason because of the trendy thing that's going on - and I know as an 82-year-old, one can sound really like an old fogey about this, but I think it's important to keep the great traditions which I believe had substance to them, and I think so much of what's going on right now doesn't have substance. It's a dumbing-down, as they say, of our corporate worship life. I think the Guild needs to hold the line somehow. I have people come into Good Shepherd Church, which has a rather nice little 16-rank organ, and they will say to me, "Oh, they don't do that anymore. Nobody builds them anymore, do they?" I say, "There are shops in every city." There are, you know. "And yes, there are installations all over the country, every year." And they're astonished. They just don't think it happens, because, yes, quite a few churches are abandoning the organ, and doing praise bands.

But thank goodness, we get the Guild magazine every week, every month (they pile up, it seems like weekly), and there are some beautiful spectacular installations somewhere in the country, and that makes you proud, and you realize it still is happening. They need to know that. The Guild keeps that out in front of people.

Of course, a program like Michael Barone's is huge in keeping it alive. I mean, people from all over the United States have said to me, "I heard you on *Pipedreams*." Yeah, once and a while he does that thing I did out at Wayzata Church, and there it is. So, that's pretty amazing too, that we still have that going on. That really helps.

reflecting on the AAGO certificate he has framed above his desk

This is what makes me realize the historical reach of the Guild, and how we do join hands with those founders who started it in the early part of the 20th century. I look at that certificate, and I see who signed it, and it just kind of makes me exclaim, "Whoa!"

There's Seth Bingham, who in the middle part of the twentieth century was a distinguished teacher/composer. Leslie Spelman of the University of Redlands, T. Frederick Candlyn, Charles Dodsley Walker, S. Louis Elmer, long-time national president. These old-timers are long gone, but they were giants in the mid-part of the twentieth century, and they're on my certificate, and as the years go by, I think "My gosh."

L. Robert Wolf

My organ study began at the MacPhail College of Music. My first teacher there was Theodore Ganschow. I want to tell you what my introduction was from him. He came into the studio for my first lesson, and he had with him the file of information I had filled out that was required at the school. He snorted and said, "Hmmp. I see you want to become a church musician." I said, "Yes, sir, that's right." "You must be out of your mind. You must be crazy. I can't think of a worse profession to get into." This was my introduction to Theodore Ganschow. Well, he was a very good teacher, but he had had a devastating experience with a church that he served, and his opinion, I guess, was influenced by that experience.

I also studied at MacPhail with Hamlin Hunt who was at that time organist at Plymouth Congregational Church. And he was on the faculty. All of these people - several of them - were on the faculty at MacPhail. I also studied with John Jacob Beck who was then organist at the Basilica of St Mary. Then I did some study with Dr Mario Salvador. I'm sure you remember - he was a very fine concert organist, and he was organist for St Louis Cathedral for many years. We became very good friends. The man with whom I studied the longest was Dr Rupert Sircom who was at Westminster Presbyterian Church. I was his assistant there for three years. I must say that I consider my training with Rupert Sircom the most superior part of my organ education. Maybe it was because of the length - eighteen years - a long time to study with one person, but he was a very very unusual individual, a very modest gentleman, but an extremely fine musician.

I was dean of the local chapter, as you know, from 1958 to 1960. But, prior to that time, most of my activity in the chapter was as a chairman or director of the concert series that we had. I did this for quite a few years, and it consisted of arranging for concert artists to come here and perform. During that time, of the people that I arranged to bring here - the names I remember - are Dr Mario Salvador, Jean Langlais, E Power Biggs, Alexander Schreiner from the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Virgil Fox (I'm sure he was here at least four times during the time I was handling this), Gerry Hancock, Alec Wyton, Wilma Jensen, Robert Baker, Frederick Swann, and Marilyn Mason. Now, I'm sure there were others, but these are the names that come to mind. What I did was contract with the concert management that represented each of these people, and from the time that they arrived in the Twin Cities, I did everything I could to make their stay pleasant and comfortable, took care of the transportation, took them to wherever they would be performing for rehearsals and that sort of thing. So I got to know these people, in a very brief space of time, quite well, and considered them my friends.

I don't remember as much about the activities as I do remember the people who were very important to the operation of the chapter at that time. I have a long list of names here and many of these people are now deceased. I'm surprised that I'm not also. One of them was Marion Hutchinson FAGO. She was at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis for many years. I got to know her quite well during the years that I was at Ascension Church in Stillwater. Just an odd timing, but I made three or four trips a week to Stillwater. I was living in Minneapolis at the time. Every Sunday, when I would come back, here would be Marion standing waiting for a bus on Hennepin Avenue. I saw her and picked her up, and gave her a ride home, and we had little conversations, and I got to know her quite well. She was one of the most brilliant sight-readers I've ever known. She could take an organ score that she had never seen before and perfectly play every note. I was impressed by it because I'm not very expert in that particular thing. I have to study it a while. But this was a gift that she had. . . And the list goes on. I have over two pages of

names here. But these were the people that I remember fondly having worked with.