



*The Royal Canadian College of Organists
Le Collège royal canadien des organistes*

KINGSTON CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Opus 87 – March 2012

Website: <http://www.rcco-kingston.org>

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From the Chair

Greetings Fellow Organistas!

Easter is fast approaching! Hands down, the best music of the year. I hope that your Easter celebrations will be the best ever.

I have fond memories of my childhood during this time. Mom used to make beautiful Easter hats for my sisters and me. Even matching bows on our shoes! And Mom would make special Easter ties for the boys. What a great celebration it was! When our children were small, Larry and I also went all out to make the time special. The children would have special clothes for church and Larry produced an elaborate Easter egg hunt requiring a good part of Easter afternoon spend in the deciphering and locating the various treasure troves! But alas, our children are all grown and scattered hither and yon. Not interested in hunting for eggs at home anymore.

At the Academy we are madly getting ready for our fashion show fundraiser March 23. Some designers from Toronto will be showing pieces and as designers, weavers and artists from the Kingston area will be showing their work, as well. It should be a great event ~ The Calamity Janes, that fabulous girl band will be performing. I just love to hear and see them perform. We are hopeful that this event will raise the necessary funds for completing the theatre.

And before that, St. Patrick's Day on March 17! I have big plans. I hope that you, too, have a wonderful celebration!

Please consider bringing your choir members to the workshop planned with Maestro Brian Jackson in late April. For more information on the workshop or anything mentioned in this note, please e-mail me at <[adokken@ucperforming arts.com](mailto:adokken@ucperformingarts.com)>.

All the best,
AD

From the Editor

Well! My plea for more material to put into the Newsletter certainly didn't fall on deaf ears, but then, who in our Centre would have deaf ears. So, read on. It's all good and interesting stuff. Please keep up the good work for the next issue too.

Celebration in Song

On Saturday, March 3, a choice collection of people streamed into the recital hall of the Upper Canada Academy of Performing Arts for the celebration of Dr. David Cameron's 75th birthday and 45 years of music making in Kingston. The energy in the room was remarkable. People were excited to be joining in the celebration and doing their part to make David's birthday celebration a great event. Fran Harkness provided the direction and served as emcee.

Musical offerings were marvellous and many, Limestone Trio, Trillio, Gilda diCola Mills, Doug Routledge, Lisa Draper, Liz Tremblay, Fran Harkness, Bill and Joan Egnatoff, Cathy Redsell, Don Maclean, Jeff Hanlon.

And the food was very special. I wish I had a photo to include! Notable creations were Maja-Lisa Thompson's first-rate grapeleaf wrapped delicacies and Gilda DiCola Mills' consummate crab creations. There were oodles of scrumptious desserts made by Dave's adoring fans. For my part, I made a triple chocolate cheesecake with a white chocolate brownie base, almost devoid of calories! Wines and a festive punch rounded out the offerings beautifully.

Happy Birthday, David! Thanks for all you have done to make Kingston such a vibrant musical community! Here's to many more years of joyful music making to come!

Aurora Dokken.

Members Recital

If art music really is the playground of the one percent, judging by the exceptionally large audience for the Annual RCCO Members concert this past Sunday, a good number of the one percent must be organ fans!

The concert was held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Ian Bevel's domain.

First up was John Uttley who played two works, the first, *Rhythmic Trumpet* by Seth Bingham, an east coast American organist and composer. The piece was full of those lovely little fanfare

motifs that trumpets and organs do so well. The second piece was *Berceuse* by Edith Beaulieu, a Quebec organist and composer. It was an especially pretty piece.

Joan Egnatoff and I then played an arranged of Brahms "How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place" from the *Requiem*, a nicely done arrangement by Billie Nastelin. I must say that playing with Joan was a whole lot of fun. I hope that we will do it again.

Third on the program was Elizabeth Mitchell who played *Trinitas* by Eleanor Daley. What an interesting piece of music and Elizabeth's choice of registrations were lovely!

David Cameron then played Couperin's *Offertoire sur les Grands Jeux*. I just love French Baroque music and it was a treat to hear this played by David.

Michael Capon followed with the performance of two works, the "Andante" from the *Fourth Sonata* by J.S. Bach and Emma Lou Diemer's *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*. That second piece was something else, a real rhythmic extravaganza. Michael had us all tapping our toes!

The finale was played by Ian Bevel, *Variations on the National Anthem* by Charles Pearce, not our national anthem, mind you, but it was a smashing success, a perfect ending to a wonderful concert.

Charles Balme organized the concert and Charles and Ethnie Balme provided delicious food and drinks for the reception.

Thanks to all who contributed to this lively event!

A Reminiscence of Ted Brown

'Man loved to perform': that was the headline of Ted Brown's obituary in the Whig Standard, on January 5, 2012. He was a quiet, kind, gentle, caring man, who loved music, wrote and taught music, and lived music! He played as if he was caressing the instrument he was playing. His improvisations were fun. He cared about people and was interested in what they were doing. He shared his sometimes 'naughty' sense of humor, and Scottish jokes with everyone!

In the last few years, he spent time on the computer, finding things that he found interesting, and passing them along. Many people who received these emails, would just delete them. Some of them were amusing, and hoped to brighten one's day. Others were intended to either educate, or scare! As I was going through these emails, (I obviously didn't delete them all!), I rediscovered the vast array of things that he found interesting or enlightening.

There were the nature ones - pictures of animals (especially the colt snuggled on his mother's lap), an elephant playing basketball, the woman with the hummingbirds on her hand, exotic birds from around the world, and beautiful Northern Lights. Another nature one that he sent was of a mother duck and her 8 newly hatched ducklings who needed to get to water, in the

middle of Edmonton. After one duckling fell from a great height, a man caught all the others, one at a time, and took them in a box, with mother following, across the road to the water.

He passed along some stories and jokes, which I cannot include here (too risqué, but funny).

I learned many obscure things from Ted's emails. In one, he gave the complete history of how our railway tracks came to be the size they are. Seems it goes all the way back to the Romans, and chariot wheels, and such. He sent information about new scams, how to detect heart attacks, Islam simplified, a quick history of the Bible, and all the references to Iran (The Garden of Eden was in Iran; also Mt. Ararat, where Noah's Ark landed, Ninevah, Babylon, almost anywhere!!)

He sent information on uses of coffee filters - not just for making coffee, but you can polish windows, shine shoes with those (unused for coffee) filters. Then there's the Bounce for the dryer - I learned that the Bounce sheets can repel yellow-jackets, mice, ants and bees. They can be used to deodorize almost anything that needs it; untangle thread, and clean the car. Wow! If only that could happen without me having to do anything about it!! Then there's the one about butter vs. margarine. The premise was that margarine is one chemical away from being plastic. I still prefer butter, thank you.

I learned a new word - Paraprosdokian! Not that I can explain what it means, but what it is. It is a figure of speech' in which the latter part of the sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader to reframe or reinterpret the first part'. For example, "If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong!" Or, 'I asked God for a bike, but I know He doesn't work that way, so I stole a bike, and asked God for forgiveness'. My son calls it 'Bait and Switch' . Comedian's use it all the time!

A quote from an email Ted sent that I particularly like is "You can't stay young forever, but you can be immature for the rest of your life"
Or this one: "The government cannot give to anyone anything that it does not first take from someone else." How true.

I'm going to miss those emails! They brightened up my day, or made me say, "Oh Ted!" I'm not sure I'll delete all of them from him. Especially the last one. It is of a Flash Mob in the Copenhagen Train Station, where a drummer and conductor come in, set up, and begin Ravel's 'Bolero', with other musicians joining - flute, clarinet, etc until the whole orchestra is there. Then they melt away into the crowd.

I guess music is what stays with us. Thanks for the memories!!

Joan Egnatoff

Utterly Uttley

Last spring I got a call out of the blue from the owners of St. Mark's Hall, Deseronto They were taking part in "Doors Open Ontario", a one or two-day community event in which historic or

otherwise significant buildings are held open, for the general public to visit. St. Mark's Hall is the former St. Mark's Anglican Church, and many of the church furnishings are still there, including a 1901 Lye pipe organ, much of which still works. The owners asked, "Would you entertain our visitors by playing from time to time on the organ?"

Now, having begun my organ career on an 1897 Lye organ in St. George's Church, Trenton, I was only too glad to re-live a bit of personal history. I arrived at the appointed hour of 10 a.m., tried out the various stops, and was shuffling up a selection of music when one of the owners re-appeared, brandishing an ancient copy of an anthem. "Could you play this? I would really like to hear it." I took a quick glance and cracked a faint smile. "BLESSED BE MY ROCK" by Caleb Simper. (Copyright 1907)

Simper was an English organist, a prolific and immensely popular composer of church music, back in the year 1901 when the St. Mark's organ was built. But by the 1950's, when I first joined the RCCO, he was the composer that the critics loved to hate. Epithets like "hackneyed", "stodgy", and "trite" come to mind. In fact, I first encountered the name "Caleb Simper" as the correct answer to a multi-choice question in an RCCO quiz - one something like "Victorian composer famous for bad music". Simper could be described, unkindly, as "Handel and Mendelssohn for Dummies". These worthy gentlemen were also immensely popular at the time, but their works were more difficult to tackle.

Now Victorian music made up a large part of the choral repertoire at St. George's, Trenton, but Caleb Simper was not among the featured composers. Nor, for that matter, were Handel or Mendelssohn, although I played music by both when I was organist there during my final year at high school. After gaining my BSc. at university I got a job in the Physics Department at the Ontario Agricultural College in Guelph, and sang in a local Anglican choir. A professor in the department shared with me that he too sang in a local Anglican choir, but at a different church. One day he accosted me with a request 'out of the blue'. "There's a little country church south of here, and they need someone this Friday to conduct a choir practice. Would you be able to help?" Until that time I had never conducted a choir, but I thought "What the heck! I need the experience."

The choir consisted of about eight women and older girls, two men (basses), and a boy of fifteen whom the basses called a tenor, but who turned out to be a "grumbly groveller". The hymns went okay but the anthem was, to put it mildly, a challenge. It was by - guess who? Caleb Simper may have been a bad composer but he knew better than to write lines for grumbly grovellers.

So - 48 years later, in Deseronto - I had to deal with Caleb Simper a second time. At the top of the front page was a McDonald's-style caption, "Twenty-First Thousand", and below, in smaller print, was the encouraging information, "Sung at a Choral Festival in Cornwall by 300 Voices". In a large box comprising the lower half of the page was a list of 22 other Simper selections, some with asterisks or obelisks respectively denoting "Band Parts Issued" and "Also done in Tonic Sol-fa". I gave "BLESSED BE MY ROCK" a run-through; actually several run-throughs in the course of the day. It sounded so naturally at home on the old organ that even the owner was impressed. I found even myself enjoying it, as one enjoying forbidden pleasures, and I thought temptation, for yielding is FUN! " Later, I tried to figure out what endeared Simper to the

singers of his day. It could be this. His music can easily be subdivided into discrete little blocks. As each of these blocklets is quickly mastered, the singer has the satisfying sensation of making good progress.

My friends, Caleb Simper lives today. You all know who he - or she - is. His name is legion - the generator of prodigious quantities of music for school choirs and for small, and sometimes not-so-small, of a famous quote from the mouth of my late organist friend S. Alec Gordon, "Yield not to church choirs". But today, so many different styles of music are acceptable in worship, that modern Simperts can easily escape the stigma of being trite. A myriad folk-songs from all over the world wait in line to be re-cast as hymns and anthems. Latin rhythms, jazz, blues, pop, revivify old tunes like spices and herbs giving kick to stale food. Even plainsong and modal music have been recruited by sons and daughters of Caleb - old stuff that would have been rare even in churches of their famous ancestor's day. Modern Simperts like to make money too, and they know that music will sell better if it is attractive, flexible, and well-crafted, as well as being easy to master. The one downside, in my opinion, is that the very accessibility of all such music may incline us not to bother exploring the deserving works of lesser-known composers. These have a right to be heard, as Peter Togni recognized when a decade ago he broadcast his Thursday morning radio series on forgotten composers, "Out of the Shadows".

The ancient Biblical name Caleb - he and Joshua were the only Israelite men to make it all the way from Egypt to the Promised Land - has enjoyed a resurgence in the last few decades. A hundred years after his zenith, Caleb Simper enjoys no such resurgence, but languishes in obscurity. A music critic once wrote " Successful composition is the felicitous combination of predictability and surprise." You might say, Caleb Simper at least got it half-right, and enjoyed his day in the sun.

John Uttley

Fr. John Uttley's Bust may be viewed by going to his church's website at www.stthomasbelleville.ca and clicking on "News".

Music in the Summer

It's not too early to start planning your summer musical activities. This is a great time to relax and refresh yourself by spending a week making music with other like-minded people. Choir directors can experience the joy of singing in a choir and leaving the directing to someone else. Organists can learn from some of the best musicians, or perhaps even take the opportunity to play another instrument. There are two destinations within easy travel distance from the Kingston area where you can do all this and more.

The first destination is the Summer Institute of Church Music, now in its 43rd year, and held, as always, at Trafalgar Castle School in Whitby. This year it will run from Sunday afternoon, July 1 to Friday morning, July 6. It's an easy Sunday afternoon drive from the Kingston area.

Details about the program will be announced shortly, but the clinicians will be Rachel Laurin (organ) and Hilary Apfelstadt (choral). Rachel Laurin was the organ clinician last year, and she had such a good time, and we enjoyed her instruction so much, that SICM invited her back for a

second time. Hilary Apfelstadt is Associate Professor of Choral Conducting, and Director of Choral Programs at the University of Toronto.

Each day starts with a short worship service in the chapel, followed by a variety of programs. There could be lectures on organ techniques or choir directing, discussions on topics such as global music, new technology, or bringing other instruments into the worship service, and audience participation is encouraged at all times. A representative of Music Plus (Kitchener) leads anthem reading sessions, and has a display of organ, choral, and other instrumental music for purchase, so there is lots of opportunity to spend money.

This is the year for the biennial Osborne Organ Competition, held at St. George's Anglican Church in Oshawa. There are generally three competitors, and it's exciting to hear some of the best young organists in Canada, and then follow their progress as they go on to compete with the RCCO and other competitions.

Because SICM has always emphasized the importance of using music to lead congregational worship, we have the "Great SICM Hymn Challenge", which is a master class in hymn playing. This is a good opportunity to take a hymn which you find challenging to lead a congregation in singing, perhaps because of the rhythm or the tune, and to play it for the others to sing, and then get helpful advice from the experts. There is also an organ master class, and if you choose to play, you will have one-on-one instruction from Rachel Laurin, who is a wonderful teacher.

You will also be able (or I should say expected) to sing in the choir. The choral clinician directs rehearsals of a selection of anthems (we learn them faster than the average church choir), which we present as part of the program during the Thursday evening organ recital on the magnificent 3-manual Casavant organ at St. George's.

I could say a lot more about SICM. I have lost count of the number of times I have been, and I always learn new things and come home refreshed. Watch the SICM website (www.sicm.ca) for more information on this summer's program.

Elizabeth Mitchell

Coming Events

Students' Recital

The Student Recital will be on Sunday April 1st, at 2 pm at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Please come and give an enthusiastic welcome to the new talent in our Centre.

Choral Workshop

Our Choral Workshop with Brian Jackson will take place on Saturday, April 28 at 2 pm. Please encourage all your choir members to come and take part in this wonderful event of learning

and singing through church anthems both old and new. This will be at St. George's Cathedral and for more information please contact Michael Capon at the Cathedral.

Non RCCO Events

On Sunday afternoon, March 25 at 2:30, there will be a concert by the Prince Edward County Ecumenical Choir, under the direction of Michael Goodwin, at St. Mary Magdalene Church, Picton. The main work on the program will be the Requiem by John Rutter plus pieces by Praetorius, Boyce, Buxtehude and Bach. The organ accompanist will be Brian Jackson and soloists Linda Minty, cello, and Heather Schreiner, oboe.

Kingston Theatre Organ Society

The Kingston Theatre Organ Society has owned and maintained the 82-year-old Kimball Theatre Pipe Organ since its arrival in Kingston in 1979. They have presented a concert at the former Anglican Church of the Redeemer on Kirkpatrick Street series for over 30 years, except for 2010-11 when the church was closed and the society was in limbo. When the church was bought and re-opened as the Kingston Korean Church, they generously allowed the society to continue with the concert series.

Two remaining concerts are set. Friday, March 30, our own Michael Capon from St. George's will perform a programme slightly different from his usual repertoire at the Cathedral. The final concert of this season will feature Jelani Eddington on May 4. Both concerts begin at 8 pm.

Supply Organists

Mark Sirett is available to play for church services. He can be reached at 542-6506 or 542-9616 ext.24 or msirett@cantabile.kingston.net

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Commercial advertisements will be accepted as follows: the normal size will be business card (one eighth of a page) at \$15 for a single issue and \$50 for a year (four issues). If space allows, we will accept an occasional half-page advertisement at \$30 for one issue. Please send your requests to the Editor, enclosing a cheque for the appropriate amount made payable to *RCCO Kingston Centre*. *Positions Vacant, Jobs Wanted* and *Supply Organists* notices will continue to be published free of charge.

Deadline for all submissions to the June Newsletter May 31 2012

