

# Sacramento Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists Newsletter



August 2020

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## Dean's Message

Dear Colleagues,

My best wishes to you as you reopen your churches and perform your live-stream events this August. We have another packed newsletter for you which features part two of Mark Jameson's (our favorite colleague from the mother country) "The Organ in Miniature Works of Art" series. You will also find our membership profile of RuthAnn Lundgren (former Dean) our intrepid friend and organist. I first saw RuthAnn accompany Dr. Ivan Olsen's choir (in the Duruflé Requiem no less!) at Pioneer Congregational during his summer concert series (a very young and recently arrived Scott Nelson - another former Dean - was singing in the choir). Them were the days, we all miss Dr. Olsen (many of us studied organ with him at American River College).

But I digress, you will also find my CD and Book reviews for your summer pleasure. The executive board has a meeting planned for late August to talk about the upcoming season and review our renewal campaign. We will also talk about having a special Zoom concert with Dr. Lars Gjerde if our venues continue to remain closed.

As we have been successful in saving the Centennial Organ from the rubbish heap or travel abroad, our colleagues at the American Theatre Organ Society have saved the organ at the Fair Oaks Village Park Clubhouse!

Randy Warwick, President of the local chapter of ATOS writes: "It looks like we dodged a bullet and the organ will stay. However due to COVID and then in early 2020 the start of a one-year major renovation of the entire Fair Oaks Village Park including the Clubhouse auditorium holding the organ, we probably will not have access for events until 2022. So even after COVID for the next year and a half we will look for other venues likely either Grant High School with its Wurlitzer or

one of our member's home installation in Davis of the Moller originally in the Fox San Francisco Theatre lobby."

Congratulations to ATOS for keeping their instrument at the Clubhouse! We are looking forward to having a joint event with them at the Memorial Auditorium.

I will write more next month about the Centennial organ - suffice it to say it is safe and in storage now waiting for its new home.

This brings me to the last item and most important, we need your continued support, please take a moment to renew your membership with the Sacramento Valley Chapter of the AGO today. You will have already received your packet in the mail, if you did not, contact Adrienne Leach - tout de suite!

Our membership drive will end on the 15th of August so please respond today if you have not. Your membership brings you The American Organist, this Sacramento Valley Chapter newsletter and all the fine events that you have come to enjoy with our chapter. If you are receiving this newsletter as an enthusiast and enjoy it, would you please consider joining our chapter as a friend? Write to Adrienne Leach ([aleach6@netzero.com](mailto:aleach6@netzero.com)), she will provide the information to be a supporter of our chapter. (And if you are having a time of it, who isn't in these difficult times? Contact Adrienne she will work things out for you I promise)

If you can meet my "Dean Challenge" of an extra \$75 - thank you very much!

I wish you all a most beautiful and pleasant summertime whilst you promote the organ and support each other as colleagues!

*Ron*



## AGO Board Members

### Dean

Ronald Paul Sidhu  
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### Sub Dean

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### National AGO President

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### Region IX Councillor

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### Northern CA

District Convener  
Michael Varlas  
[mvarlas@yahoo.com](mailto:mvarlas@yahoo.com)

## Membership Profile



### RuthAnn Lundgren

Born and raised in Illinois - lived in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Texas as well as California since 1977.

I began taking piano lessons at the age of 7, played for choir in

high school and accompanied many soloists and band members at District and State contests. My organ career began when I was a young adult. A local church was in need of an organist and a friend asked if I would play for them. They had an older pipe organ, but it gave me a good start. Occasionally I had to fix a cipher. I played for three churches in Illinois (we moved a few times). I was teaching piano and organ by then, was a member of the Illinois Guild of Piano Teachers and started a chapter for them and the American Guild of Organists in Kankakee Illinois. The AGO chapter is still functioning. I organized a couple of combined church events, one with senior choir and one with the children's group and accompanied both.

When we moved to Citrus Heights, I played for a Lutheran church in Roseville for 3 years until I was asked to play for Christ Community Church in Carmichael, where I have been for 40 years. In 1989 I studied organ, theory, music history, piano ensemble playing, and voice at American River College, with thoughts of going on to Sacramento State. It was then my husband, Arnie, became ill with heart disease and

Parkinson's, needing more care, as well as my Mom who was in her 80's. So, I decided not to continue.

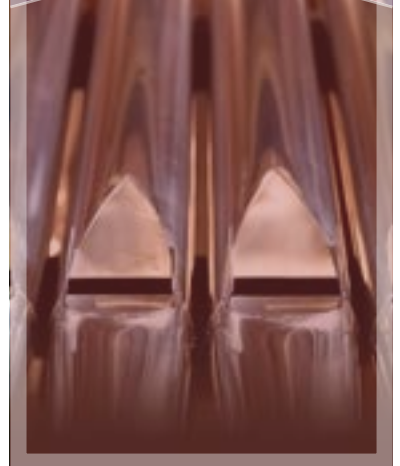
Serving the Sacramento AGO as Dean in 1995-96, I spearheaded the national quilt raffle for the AGO Centennial in New York City. Several of us went there and the quilt was awarded to a gentleman from Illinois, who has passed it around to members of the chapter to hang in their respective churches. I have served the AGO as Dean twice and as Secretary once.

I played for the choir and services at Christ Community until 2015 and have remained a substitute ever since. The Arts and Worship Director, Grady Manley, worked long hours, organizing music, and doing rehearsals for the 100-member team of choir, orchestra, and bell choirs. In January of 2019, I began learning the Finale program, so I could help him with arrangements. Unfortunately, Covid 19 has put a stop to my working in that capacity.

For the past two years I have been completing my degree in Christian Leadership at William Jessup University, and will be finished on Aug. 10. On the same day I will begin homeschooling a 5-year-old kindergarten girl and taking some online classes from Reformation Bible College in Florida.

God has been so faithful to me, guiding my path every step of the way, and it is pure joy to serve Him in whatever way He calls me.

*Please send your member profile, picture (not required) and short bio of yourself with organ experience to [rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net)*



### Need an AGO Organist to play at your service?

We are compiling a list of all AGO substitute organists to be published here for churches to have for quick reference when they need an organist.

#### Substitute list

Lars Gjerde

Email: [lars@larsgjerde.com](mailto:lars@larsgjerde.com)

Phone: (585) 200-8903

Randy Wurschmidt

Email: [rwurschmidt@yahoo.com](mailto:rwurschmidt@yahoo.com)

Phone: (260) 452-9751

*Do you want to appear on this list? If so, please email your preferred contact information to: [rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net) and you too can be listed here.*



**Mark Jameson**

## THE ORGAN IN MINIATURE WORKS OF ART:

### THE POSTAGE STAMP:

#### Part 2: USSR/Russia, USA/Canada & NICARAGUA

As a follow up to UK part 1, the outside of St Paul's Cathedral also appeared on a Lord Mayor's Show stamp in 1989 – and reissued on 18th August 2009 as part of the Prestige Stamp book 8 that is currently available from Royal Mail at about £10 including handling fees. Also, I believed at the time of writing the 1938/9 Lichtenstein Rheinberger issues were the only one of that Nation but a Christmas angel issued in recent times has a Positiv hand held instrument – there are quite a few of those and I intend dealing with them as a group. To answer queries sent to me – the UK issues for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales do not carry the country name as we invented the postage stamp. The Channel Islands & the Isle of Man have their own government so have to show their Island names.

In the first part I featured the UK special issues, but most stamps that are used are more basic and called “definitive” – in the UK we simply have the Queens head, but other nations have a variety of subjects. There is however, one DEFINITIVE design that features an organ – this is a **Russian** one, and there are two versions – one issued in 1997 and reissued in 1999 [but dated 1998, still current] with a revised currency. This features the Moscow Conservatory. The organ is by Cavaille-Coll built in 1896 and shown first at the Paris Exhibition then installed in Moscow in 1901 as a result of friendship between Widor & Tchaikovsky. Work has been done subsequently -the current state of the instrument is not known, but has since the 1990's suffered heating damage. The Warsaw Conservatory currently has a total of six pipe organs – details can be found on their web site.



The first special Russian stamp with an organ was on 20th December 1973 as part of tourist issue; a 4K stamp featured the Dom Kirk in Riga [then part of the USSR]. I think the organ in this building is fairly well known – it has appeared on a number of recordings.

Many nations issued stamps during 1985 to celebrate 200 years since the birth of Bach – the USSR issued a single stamp on 29/3/1985 with his portrait and some symbolic pipes:



Quite a few stamps have “pipes” like this!



[Second from left]

In 1978 the USSR issued a prepaid postcard, celebrating the centenary of the birth of Estonian composer Artur Kapp [1878-1952], the pre-printed stamp on the card features an organ but I have not been able to establish which – he studied the organ at St Petersburg Conservatory, but was also involved later at Tallinn university – it is an uncommon item: I do not have an exact issue date, and the reverse side is blank for the addition of messages.



On the 1st of August 1990 the USSR issued 8 15k “Historic Architecture” stamps. One featured Vilnius Cathedral [now Lithuania]:



[Top RIGHT]

On this stamp there is an excellent view of the organ case. The right inscription notes the historical time span (presumably that covered by the architecture depicted on the eight stamps) to be the 13th to the 18th centuries. The centre panel reads “Vilnius” in both Cyrillic and English.

## The Organ in Miniature (cont.)

Worship took place at this location from 1251. The current building dates from 1779-1783, with the interior completed in 1801. After abuse during the Soviet era, repairs were completed in the 1990's.

The first known organ of Vilnius' Cathedral was built in 1510, believed to be by the organ builder from Cracow, Stanislaw Zelik. Johann Koppelman built a new organ in 1595, that and the Cathedral were destroyed by fire in 1610. Further organs were recorded at the Cathedral in 1618, 1729 & 1797 - they were built by unknown masters and were destroyed or donated to other churches later. Vilnius' Cathedral got an instrument of the organ builder Nicolaus Jantzson in 1859 - initially it had stood in the Church of the Augustinians in Vilnius. About 1885-1889 the organ of the Cathedral was essentially rebuilt by the organ builder Juozapas Radavicius. The new pneumatic organ was constructed behind the old organ façade by the organ builder Waclaw Biernacki at the beginning of the 20th century. Later, in 1937, he rebuilt and enlarged his instrument once more. The current organ of Vilnius' Cathedral was built by [Alexander Schuke](#) in 1969 some old pipes of J.Radavicius were used as raw material in this instrument. The organ has slider chests, tracker playing action and electro pneumatic register action. The web site <http://www.vargonai>. It has a mass of information about local organs.

On 20th September 1990 the USSR issued a series of stamps - one including pan-pipes [GREEN] - pan pipes can be included, and are common world wide on stamps, on international descriptions they are often catalogued as organs.



The most recent Russian stamp to feature a pipe organ was issued on 12/7/2001 in a series of 14 stamps depicting houses of worship - they did not use the word "church". These were square stamps, but printed to be vertical as a diamond shape. One showed an organ case - an organ that had migrated from the USA. The church is at Bryansk and came back into use in 1996. USA builders, Helderop, located in Detroit moved this Hinners organ to its new home in Southwest Russia.



The **USA** has masses of stamps featuring music but none in their own right featuring organs with pipes - the nearest they have reached so far is a WURLITZER Juke Box:

As can be seen, this is a special stamp covering pre-sorted mail and this particular design has two colour tints, two variants of format of the 1995 data and one dated 1996, and there are also variants between gummed and self-adhesive.

Many nations issue Christmas stamps, and on 15th November 1975 NICARAGUA released a superb set of 11 stamps featuring choirs including the USA Salt Lake City Mormon organ and case. Pictured UK choirs are Kings Cambridge and Westminster Cathedral, whilst European choirs are the Vienna Boys', Sistine Chapel, Regensburg Cathedral and Einsiedeln Cathedral. The other stamps feature their own choirs.



The final stamp with a **USA** connection is one issued in **RWANDA** - [other "organ" stamps for Rwanda I will cover in another article]. This stamp features the work of USA artist Norman Rockwell - the original artwork is called "WEDDING MARCH" published on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post for 23/6/1928 for which he produced covers and illustrations for more than 40 years - the original is without the green surround. The Rwanda stamp is from a set of 8 stamps featuring this artist's work. Norman Rockwell [1894-1978]

## The Organ in Miniature (cont.)

was a prolific artist, illustrator and portrait painter whose works are highly collectable and very varied, and reflected American views pertaining to the time of the drawings – like “GUS” here, but not normally as line drawings. It is a very unusual stamp, there are few players at consoles/keyboards, still fewer depicting reed organs.



The final stamp for this section is [currently] the only organ stamp from **CANADA**. We are all familiar with the works of Henry Willan [1880-1968]. The Canadian post office on 4th July 1980 issued a stamp to celebrate the centenary of his birth. It was one of a pair issued in the same sheet, the other stamp features a soprano – Emma Albani. Willan is pictured at the console of an unstated organ, but possibly at a Toronto instrument where he spent a large part of his life after emigrating from the UK.



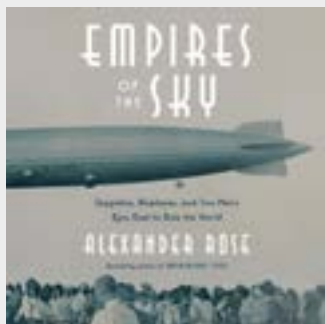
I would like to thank the many members that have contacted me as a result of the first part – I did not realise how many other OC members are also stamp collectors, and I would particularly like to thank Richard Blanch who has spent hours scanning all the stamps.

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## Book Review



Empires of the Sky – another good summer read from Alexander Rose!

Looking for a summer read about something other than organs and music? Here it is, from author Alexander Rose. You may know his first and now famous book “Washington’s Spies” which was turned into the AMC

4-year television series “Turn”.

Mr. Rose is an intriguing and friendly writer – he enjoys corresponding with his readers. I first wrote him when he published Washington’s Spies, and he obligingly sent allot more and pertinent information about the subject – then we corresponded about the Organ in his book American Rifle (of all the places to find information and details about an organ!).

This new book Empires of the Skies is a fascinating look at the race to conquer air travel, beginning from the air balloons in the Civil War to the quest to dominate air travel to Europe. Will it be Juan Trippe and the emerging Pan American airlines or Hugo Eckner and the great German/American Zeppelins?

By the end of 1930’s the National Socialist party in Germany and the Roosevelt Administration would bring it all to a conclusion. It is a captivating read from the first chapter and although we know the end result of the story the mesmerizing chapter telling’s by Alexander Rose are enthralling from start to finish – the personalities, the details (not too much, just enough) keep you moving forward.

Available at Amazon or any of your favorite booksellers. Lemonade and pistachios not provided (nip into your favorite Trader Joe’s for those).

*Submit your favorite book review to: [rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net)*

## CD Review



A brand new CD by Christa Rakich from Loft Recordings (available from Gothic Catalogue: [https://www.gothic-catalog.com/product\\_p/lrcd-1139.htm](https://www.gothic-catalog.com/product_p/lrcd-1139.htm)) - Wendy Rolfe on flute.

The recording is a tribute to Yuko Hayashi best known for her 40-plus years as Professor of Organ at the New England Conservatory, Boston.

It features the Bach prelude and fugue in f minor, the Mendelssohn fugue in e minor, and some delightful pieces by Johanna Snefter (three from Ten Chorale Preludes, Opus 70) and the Concertino in D, Opus 107 (1902) Cécile Chaminade 1857-1944, transcribed by Christa Rakich with Wendy Rolfe, flutist.

An Extravagance of Toccatas (2012) by James Woodman b. 1957 and “Sunset” from the Three Autumn Sketches after a Watercolor by Maria Willscher (2017) Carson Cooman b. 1982, round out the CD.

It is an enjoyable program and a delightful tribute to the ebullient personality of Yuko Hayashi. I had the privilege to meet her at the 2003 Chico Bach Festival.

It is also the first recording of the Richards, Fowkes & Co. Opus 16. – Excerpt from the program booklet about the organ:

“Early gothic instruments were explored for inspiration that would complete the vision of the architect and the timeless feel of the chapel. With the help of acoustician



**Yuko Hayashi**

Dana Kirkegaard, the room presents a warm acoustical environment for both music and speech. The organ contains narrower pipe scaling, a variety of color stops, and projects a solid but unforced sound into the room.”

Recommended with the proviso you get the CD and not the download. Gothic has yet to acquire a decent system for downloading their CD’s (as Hyperion or Lynn) so you’ll be disappointed with the management of the files etc. and as in my case the multiple times I had to contact them to get it right. (!)

*Submit your favorite cd review to: [rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net)*

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