

RCCO - Grey Bruce Centre Meeting  
Sunday, November 18th, 2018

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Southampton, ON

Present: President, Father Ed Wagner; Treasurer, Hilery McAlpine; Secretary, Satomi Currah; Immediate Past President, Richard Smith; Webmaster, Julian Delf; Membership at Large, Gertrude Weber; Azrael Hackshaw, Ian McAlpine, Laura McAlpine, John Tite, Marjorie Tite, Steve Tite,

After we examined and played the 1912 Casavant/1971 Keates-Geisler with new console work by John and Steve, Fr Ed lead grace, and we had pot-luck supper.

At 6:00 pm. we returned to the sanctuary, and Julian made a presentation on the use of MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) and Hauptwerk (organ software that allows fine pipe organ sounds to work through MIDI, designed by Milan Digital Audio). Julian first showed some hardware (e.g., connectors and MIDI-ready keyboard) that allows MIDI-ready devices that control sounds (e.g., computers, keyboards, and synthesizers) to communicate, and demonstrated: 1) a separate keyboard responding to the sound sets in the St. Andrew's organ, which allowed Julian to control both piano and the organ keyboard (i.e., piano and organ duet) and 2) St. Andrew's organ keyboard responding to the Hauptwerk sound sets (refined recordings of eminent church organs plus more of virtual instruments) downloaded in Julian's laptop computer, which allowed Julian to produce Hauptwerk sound in combination with St. Andrew's organ sound.

At 6.46 pm. Fr Ed called meeting to order. Fr Ed thanked Julian for his presentation, noting that he inspired us by showing the applicability of MIDI and Hauptwerk for making music in liturgy. "The future worship soundscape is going to be much different," he said.

Adoption of agenda was moved by Azrael, seconded by Julian. Carried.

In the minutes from September meeting, John pointed out the builder of the organ of Trinity United is "Lye" rather than "Ley". With correction of this error, acceptance of the minutes was moved by Gertrude, seconded by Julian. Carried.

The focus of the discussion at the meeting was on making our Centre's strategic plan (National counterpart recently has issued a strategic plan<sup>1</sup>). Fr Ed stated our plan should be guided by our mutual understanding of what distinguishes us as an organization in our community of Grey Bruce. Furthermore, the plan is essential so that we proceed proactively rather than reactively. Relating to our Centre's uniqueness, Fr Ed referred to previous email conversations among Centre members between October 5th and October 12th under the topic "Input on Issue of Prayer at Centre Meetings"

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rcco.ca/strategic-plan>

regarding our National Board of Directors' recommendation that prayer should not be included at our business meetings.

Fr Ed explained that the recommendation came from the National Board of Directors, which consists of officers including president, vice presidents, treasurer, etc. plus regional directors (our Centre belongs to Western Ontario region, and our regional director is David Palmer). National Council, on the other hand, includes the directors as well as presidents from local Centres, such as our president Fr Ed (both vice president Marilyn and Fr Ed attended one of the National Council meetings earlier this year). National Council is a separate entity from the National Board of Directors; the directive on prayer from the Board appears not to have invited any consensus or input from the Council.

Richard wants to read the minutes from the Board meeting where the decision was made. The minutes being apparently unavailable, the prayer decision seems to be made without transparency.

Fr Ed continues to circulate as much information as he gets from National RCCO to our Centre members for maximum transparency. The prayer decision seems to have come out of nowhere.

Regarding the prayer, Azrael (a middle schooler and our youngest member) and Gertrude (one of our senior members) said that prayer is simply a part of their lives and and they take it for granted without question. Laura wonders what sort of directives will come next after abolishing prayer at our business meetings. Among all reactions to the Board's recommendation, Fr Ed points out that Satomi alone had stated in her email under the topic "Input on Issue of Prayer at Centre Meetings" to Fr Ed that since the crux of the issue is inclusion, we need to be empathetic to the outsiders, proactively ensuring inclusion. Laura said that with prayer suppressed, ones who wish to pray will feel excluded from the group.

The majority felt at the meeting that despite the recommendation from the National Board of Directors and despite the seemingly apparent direction, i.e., toward a more secular organization, National RCCO is taking, we will do what we want to do, which resonates with Marilyn's opinion stated in the email thread in October: "It should be up to individual Centres to decide what works best for them, and govern themselves accordingly. One 'size' doesn't necessarily fit all.". Unlike urban Centres (c.f., John said at the Centre in Waterloo, which is a university town, three fourths of the members were church musicians), we are 100% church musicians, not recitalists, and this distinguishes the Grey Bruce Centre. Fr Ed added that churches have enormous charitable power in the community, and we church musicians coupled with this capacity of churches can be effectively relevant in the community of Grey Bruce. Richard, half-jokingly, suggested that we ask the Board to add a "notwithstanding" clause to their recommendation. Fr Ed said he will respond to the Board's recommendation in writing.

After we came to general agreement that what distinguishes us is that we are 100% church musicians, we had a brain-storming session toward our own strategic plan.

Julian suggested a membership drive needs to focus on church organists. Fr Ed reminded us that Friends are invited and Friends of the Centre do not pay the RCCO member fee—that RCCO member fee could be barring the community to come. How can we attract people to be interested in the organ? Because we serve the church, can we educate congregation to appreciate organ music?

Julian suggested we get grants for our activities.

Laura suggested rather than playing the organ to raise funds only for ourselves, we can play to fundraise for other charitable organizations. Dwayne and John will explore their community connections to come up with possibilities.

John said there are old abandoned organs as churches close their doors in Grey Bruce area. Fr Ed asked if we could become go-to persons to relocate them? We need to capitalize on the fact that our region has an unusually large number of pipe organs.

Fr Ed announced that since we are going to talk about our GBRCCO strategic plan in January, we should study the National strategic plan, and prepare ideas for the coming meeting.

#### Ongoing Business

- Travelling Clinician

Gertrude reported Sarah Svenson, adjudicator at the Midwestern Ontario Rotary Music Festival in Walkerton, will likely be scheduled to adjudicate on Monday April 22nd, 2019. We agreed we will ask Sarah to provide a fund-raising concert on Wednesday April 24th, 2019 at First St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Hanover.

- Float in Community Parades

John reported although this suggestion is good opportunity to achieve publicity, there are problems to participate in community parades: transportation of floats from town to town, selection criteria of town, who among us would like to travel, and we church musicians will have difficulty in finding time to participate in Christmas parades, in particular, during high season. Providing a float in community parades is not feasible.

- Local Orgelkit

John stated the cost of creating (e.g., making individual pipes) of our own Orgelkit is high. Renting is more economical (\$75 for any duration of time?). Hilery suggested renting a kit for the Midwestern Ontario Rotary Music Festival in Walkerton for school children.

- Owen Sound BALL (Bluewater Association for Lifelong Learning) presentation

Julian, who has been inquiring if BALL would like a lecture on organs, reported that this may be possible for the 2019-2020 season. BALL wants an outline of the talk. Julian's

idea so far includes topics such as construction and history of pipe organs, locally available organs. Julian added that the Grey Roots Museum and Archives is planning an exhibition about music as a part of life of music in the history of Grey Bruce.

- 2019 GROW Week

Marilyn is in Thailand. Fr Ed said two questions are currently being addressed. Should we bring in a “star” organist? If yes, cost is associated. The second question is whether we should have separate programmes for junior organists from advanced organists.

Officers reported as follows.

- President Fr Ed had no further report.
- Vice President Marilyn was absent.
- Immediate Past President Richard moved a motion that *Harmonies in the Midst of Madness and Miracle* (Good Friday presentation) 2020 be held at Christ Church, Lion’s Head. Seconded by Azrael. Carried. Fr Ed will communicate with Pastor Perry, the rector of LAAMB (Lutheran and Anglican Ministry of Bruce), which includes Christ Church, Lion’s Head.
- Treasurer Hilery asked the treasurer’s report to be accepted. Richard seconded. Carried. Hilery pointed out there was a donation to the Centre through National RCCO, and there is no way to identify the donor. Hilery proposed we donate \$100 toward a prize for organ students at the Midwestern Ontario Rotary Music Festival. Seconded by Julian. Carried. Hilery asked that we pay for a full-page advertisement of our Centre in the festival’s brochure. Seconded by Laura. Carried.
- Secretary Satomi said she routinely updates members’ email address lists (to circulate Centre notices as well as all notices from National RCCO through Fr Ed), so please send her any changes in email addresses.
- Membership Convener Dwayne was absent.

Fr Ed opened the floor to everyone.

John said he and Marjorie saw Blaine Sack, who is a former GBRCCO member and served as secretary until he left for the Ottawa area in March 2017, at his Zion Lutheran Church in Pembroke, where he currently serves as a music director playing the newly restored three-manual Casavant organ. Blaine, who still receives all notices from Grey Bruce Centre via email, sent his regards to us.

John and Steve asked if anybody knows what has happened to the historical pipe organ at Christ Anglican in Listowel. No one is sure. Meantime, their work installing a used pipe organ for St. Mary’s in Owen Sound will soon finish, and Ian Sadler will offer an inaugural recital in January or February, 2019. They noted that St Mary’s pastor is a

trained organist, and eager to play the instrument. Fr Ed will see if he would like to join us.

Robert is directing Handel's Messiah this coming season with the Saugeen County Chorus with the Orchestra Grey Bruce at Knox Presbyterian Church, Kincardine, on December 15th, 2018 at 8 pm. Tickets are \$20. Julian will announce the event detail online at the Centre webpage.

John reported that there is a problem with registering RCCO membership online. Fr Ed wants to be in the loop in communication with the National office.

Fr Ed reported that he as well as Yuumi and Satomi attended the Hymn Sing and Choir Workshop on September 14 and 15 at Kincardine United Church. David and his friend Dent Davidson did a superior job of organizing and offering an energetic, creative, and idea-provoking workshop.

At 8:10 pm. Fr Ed adjourned the meeting. Seconded by Azrael.

Next meetings:

- January 20, 2019 at St. Mark's Church, Chesley
- April 7, 2019 at Kincardine United Church, Kincardine
- June 23, 2019 (Annual General Meeting) at Marilyn Dickinson's residence, Durham

☐ Please let Fr Ed know of agenda items you wish added the Tuesday before the Sunday of meeting

Submitted by  
Satomi