

AGO Certification Updates

In the July 2007 TAO issue, publication of the 2007 AGO Examination Hymn Booklet was announced, and the changes resulting from that new resource were discussed. For further details, please review the July article on the AGO web site (www.agohq.org). The 2007 Revised Examination Hymn Booklet replaces the 1997 Hymn Booklet, which is no longer valid for use in any AGO exam. This impacts every exam except the AAGO and FAGO.

In spite of all of the pairs of eyes that looked at the new Hymn Booklet, two errors crept into it. Although the mistakes were caught in a second printing, candidates should check the following and enter these corrections if necessary, since they may have received the first printed version:

- 1) # 10, Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor (Bryn Calfaria), please add a natural sign to the F, alto part over “le” on the last quarter in measure 10 (as in measures 6 and 13).
- 2) # 24, Psalm 100, the correct pointing for the Gloria, last four lines, should be:
Glory be to the Father, and | to the | Son,
and | to the | Holy | Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now and | ever | shall be;
world without | end. | A- | men.

We regret any inconvenience caused by these errors!

Feedback thus far on the new Examination Hymn Booklet has been very positive, with reactions ranging from excitement over the broad range of hymns offered, to dismay at the need to adapt unidiomatic hymns to the organ. This situation is, for many church musicians, the real world.

AAGO candidates, please note the new hymn playing requirement in Section 1, A 6, and read the specifications of that question carefully.

Another glitch: the Choir Master anthem, “Laudate,” by Knut Nysted contains some brief divisi passages. Since most Choir Master ensembles will consist of a mixed quartet, the missing parts could be covered simply by using an accompanist for the examination rehearsal. Examiners will be aware of this situation.

The Committee listed the piano accompaniment for the Colleague C 3 Solo, “I Got Me Flowers,” (Galaxy Music Corp., 1.5038) instead of an organ version because it was judged more appropriate to the CAGO level. The organ arrangement is, however, acceptable if the candidate prefers to play from that instead, and the Examiners will be so advised.

Some have reported difficulty in obtaining A Leighton Album (Oxford, ISBN 978-019-322-2922) for the Colleague Group C repertoire piece “Fanfare.” This is part of an ongoing problem of works suddenly going out of print either before the exam

requirements are published in TAO or during the year before the exams are administered. Cliff Hill Music (800-819-8772) recently had at least one copy. Be assured that many hours are spent in the days before the TAO deadline for July publication checking every repertoire piece for availability. Many thanks are due Mr. Hill for his assistance in this work and for stocking some foreign editions as well.

Candidates experiencing problems obtaining required repertoire should try to borrow the music locally, try Inter-Library Loan or check the Organ Library web site (orglib@bu.edu). In a few instances, the AGO has been able to get publishers to reprint items or can obtain permission to copy, offering them to members for exam use for the cost of copying and mailing.

An exciting certification story from the Fort Worth, Texas Chapter is developing. Under the leadership of Edwin Ackermann, along with Exam Coordinator Dr. Joseph Butler (a new AAGO in 2007), and assisted by a strong committee of organizers and teachers, the chapter has undertaken an ambitious, highly detailed and organized project called the SPC Exam Study Group. They currently have about 15 candidates working on the SPC and meeting monthly since May 2007 for in depth training sessions targeting the various skills needed for achieving the certificate. The class members will take the SPC test in April.

Mr. Ackermann has been sending monthly updates, and the progress is very inspiring. It is hoped that this will be a wonderful AGO Certification success story for the Fort Worth candidates and chapter. Kudos and best wishes to the participants and trainers for all of their hard work! Everyone will be a winner with increased skills, confidence and camaraderie for the journey.

For certification questions, contact info@agohq.org.

Joyce Shupe Kull, FAGO, ChM
Director, AGO Committee on Professional Certification