

# DAVID MCCAIN

## TREASURER

### Biographical sketch: David McCain

David McCain's pathway through a maze of organ-related interests never followed a straight line. In his early years, he didn't envision the organ as being more than a sideline diversion – something to do when not engaged in the mass marketing field for which he had been trained. Nonetheless, the powerful attraction (Siren call?) of the organ has managed to occupy the center of his attention for nearly 60 years. It has been suggested that if the whole story of McCain's experiences were to be told it would be a book, not a biographical sketch. So, for the sake of brevity, this report will touch only on a few of the highlights of David McCain's organ-related experiences.

During his Chicago years, David McCain's musical education was gained through a combination of private study and independent coaching on both the organ and the carillon. Also, joining a prestigious choir of Men and Boys where solid musicianship was expected yielded a comprehensive knowledge of choral music and direction.

In the mid-1970s Mr. McCain took on a challenging position at a small Episcopal church where he realized that there was a lot of untapped potential. Within a few years he was able to transform five "singers" that sang only at Christmas and Easter into a 20-voice choir that sang every Sunday.

(Here the urge is being resisted to include matters related to McCain's work with the organ building firm of Robert L. David & Associates.)

It was also during this time that McCain joined the staff of The Diapason, first as the publication's business manager, later as managing editor, and finally as editor.

McCain was also instrumental in forming the Chicago/Midwest Chapter of the Organ Historical Society. A charter member, he was elected as the chapter's first President. Through a strange set of circumstances he also found that he would be serving as Co-Chair for the OHS National Convention barely two years after the founding of the Chicago chapter.

During those halcyon days David McCain once remarked that between his church job, his work at The Diapason, and his activities with the OHS, he often didn't know if he was working or just having fun!

Moving on to Orlando, Florida in the early 1980s, McCain accepted a position as Chapel Music Director for the Orlando Naval Training Center. "Chapel" was, in fact, four chapels: three on one base, and a fourth chapel on another base nearly four miles away! In addition to playing organ and directing choirs at two of the chapels, he was required to see that other musicians filled the required needs of the other two chapels. McCain remained in this position until the bases were closed, in the 1990s. He soon accepted a position at a large Roman Catholic church where a new tracker organ was being installed.

During his Orlando years, David McCain remained active in the Orlando Chapter of the AGO, serving first as Historian of the Chapter, and later as Sub-Dean. He also served three terms as Dean of the Orlando Chapter.

A long association with a Georgia-based organ building firm led to McCain providing technical support services to the company. Through that affiliation there remain several pipe organs in Georgia, Alabama and Florida that were designed by David McCain.

Now retired and living in Iowa, McCain's musical services are limited to being an Associate organist at All Saint's Episcopal Church, Omaha. There he regularly plays the organ for the weekly 5 p.m. Saturday service.