



The Ledger Line

Christmas Memories: The story of "O Holy Night"

"O Holy Night" was written by a Frenchman named Placide Cappeau de Roquetaure in 1847. Placide was the commisionaire of wines in his small town and was known for writing poetry. The parish priest asked him to write a poem for that year's Christmas mass. Cappeau was honored and soon completed his poem, "Cantique de Noel".

However, after the inspiration of writing his poem based upon the Gospel of Luke's account of Christ's birth, Cappeau decided that his poem was worthy as a song as well and he asked his friend Adolphe Charles Adams, who had written scores for both opera and ballet, to assist in writing the music. The completed song was presented to the priest and parish and received wholehearted acceptance. Soon, it became widely known throughout churches in France.

The French people loved the carol, but later, after Cappeau left the church to join the socialist movement and after it was discovered that the composer was a Jew, "Cantique de Noel" was suddenly deemed inappropriate and banned from use in church.

...continued on page 2



**Wishing you
a wonderful
holiday season
and a very
Happy New Year!**

Adjudications Reminder

The revised deadline for Skagit chapter's online adjudications registration (at WSMTA.org) is January 16th. Envelopes should also be post-marked by this date. Please remember that the \$2 per student chapter fee payment needs to be sent directly to Linda Wilson along with a copy of your registration information. Please make checks payable to:
SVC WSMTA.

"Without craftsmanship, inspiration is a mere reed shaken in the wind."
- Johannes Brahms

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2014-2015 CHAPTER OFFICERS

President:	Annie Scherr
Vice-President:	Barb Van Vliet
Treasurer:	Joanna Zagelow
Secretary:	Becky Hedman

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! December

6- Jeanne Sparks
8- Shirley Haley

Years la
Jew fou
gether.
saved it

Christmas Memories: The story of "O Holy Night"

...continued from page 1

However, the French people would not let the song die and they continued to embrace it--even if they had to sing it outside the official approval of the church.

Then in 1855 a Unitarian minister named John Sullivan Dwight found and translated "Cantique de Noel" into English. Dwight had left the ministry because of severe anxiety and panic attacks. He became reclusive but continued to serve musicians by finding new musical pieces and reviewing them in a journal he privately published. Falling in love with the lyrics of "O Holy Night" as he translated it, Dwight published the lyrics in his journal and in several songbooks and the carol took off in America.

The last amazing part of the story occurs in 1906 when it is reported that a former chief chemist for Thomas Edison made the first voice radio transmission. Inspired by the Morse code transmissions of Marconi, Fessenden was determined to speak **words** to the world, not merely dots and dashes. On Christmas Eve of 1906, Fessenden achieved his goal and the first words were spoken through airwaves: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed..." He read from the Gospel of Luke as amazed radio operators listened to the story of Christ's birth! And afterwards, Fessenden picked up his violin and played what would be the first song heard on radio, "O Holy Night", adding his voice to the last verse. The broadcast ended and one of the world's most favorite Christmas songs took flight!

Sources: TeachingMom.com

A Moment In History - Jeff Sanders
Radio's First Voice - www.ieee.ca
Wikipedia.com

Next Meeting is January 13, 2015

Milica Jovanovic will present "Style and Expressions in Haydn Sonatas".

Location is at Sue Van Nortwick's.

Sanford-Hill Piano Series

Tickets are still available for the following concerts held at WWU:

Beatrice Rana*

2013 Van Cliburn Silver medalist

Concert: February 6, 2015 at 7:30pm

Masterclass: Saturday, February 7

Gilles Vonsattel

Concert: April 11, 2015 at 7:30pm

Masterclass: Sunday, April 12

* Ms. Rana is the wonderful young artist Jeffrey Gilliam shared about at his presentation for our chapter on the Van Cliburn finalists.

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