

VIII - ORGANIZATION

Voluntary associations, to be successful, require some formal structure. Typically, a constitution and/or bylaws are adopted to provide an organizational framework. This framework can be too elaborate or too slavishly followed, in which case the organization becomes rigid. Or, the framework can be too vaguely defined, or it can be ignored, in which case chaos can result. Either extreme can create inefficiency, tension, and low morale.

The Denton Bach Society appears to have struck a reasonable balance between these two extremes. The organization appears to have functioned systematically according to its formal rules and guidelines, but it has also made changes and adjustments when necessary. And it has survived, and matured.

The need for formal incorporation of the Denton Bach Society, for tax and other purposes, was recognized early on, and in 1977, with the assistance of Mr. Miller Davidge, an attorney in Denton, the organization was registered as a 501 (c) (3) corporation under Texas Law.

Three versions of the Bylaws of the Denton Bach Society are in existence. In what appear to be the earliest Bylaws (date unknown), the organizational structure was outlined, and, basically, that structure has continued to the present. In May of 1988, a revised draft of the bylaws was printed, and a formal, revised version based upon that draft was issued in Spring, 1989. A third, and somewhat more substantial revision, was adopted in April, 1991.

In the original document, the statement of mission was defined thus: "The Denton Bach Society (the Society) shall function as a non-profit organization, as outlined in its articles of incorporation, for the performance and promotion of the music of J. S. Bach and other composers."

The 1989 version takes a somewhat different tack, citing the mission as "the performance and promotion of secular and sacred choral music," and adds somewhat cryptically that, "[I]ts name stands for the organization's commitment of highlighting the music of J. S. Bach as much as artistically and financially feasible." The 1991 edition states that the Society "exists to perform and promote secular and sacred choral and instrumental music in general, but with a particular commitment to the performance of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach."

Membership in the organization has always been quite open and informal. Originally, membership was accorded to "anyone who donates time, talent, or money to the Society. This includes all performers and patrons of the Society." The simple beauty of this statement has since been vitiated by more technical terminology, but without altering its fundamental meaning.

The organization is, and has been, governed by a Board of Directors. There appears to be some harmless confusion about the title of this body, however. The original Bylaws specify the election of a "Board of Directors," but these persons were referred to in concert programs as the "Board" (of the Denton Bach Society), or as the "Executive Committee." The 1989 Bylaws also refer to the governing body as the "Executive Committee," while the 1991 Bylaws declare the formal name to be "Executive Board of Directors"--and then go on to refer to it as the "Executive Board". Meanwhile, in newsletters and concert programs the title "Board of Directors" became, and is still, the preferred title.

The original Bylaws stated that, "The Board of Directors shall be made up of the officers of the Society...", and the number of officers "shall be fixed by the Board of Directors, and shall be not less than eight." The officers, in turn, were to be "chosen from those members who have been active in the performance, or in support of the performance of the past season."

On the first Board of Directors were three instrumentalists: Charles Brown (Director), Alis Dickinson Adkins, and Carol Lynn Mizell; and six choir members: Hildegard Froehlich, Martha Range, Herb Schaaque, Jane Brough, Lester Brothers, and David Carlson.

Drawing officers for the organization from the list of performers seemed like a reasonable idea. This policy effectively kept control of the organization in the hands of performers, but it also placed many duties and responsibilities on their shoulders. During the first few seasons, the work was spread around fairly equitably between instrumentalists and singers. In time, however, the instrumentalists, having less frequent appearances in concert and fewer practice sessions than the choir members, had less interaction with one another and with other Society members. They were less involved with the on-going affairs of the Society. Hence, choir members were increasingly depended upon to fill the officer--and board member--roles. By the seventh season, only choir members--no instrumentalists--were elected as officers and Board members. The burden of responsibilities placed on a small core of choir members would eventually take its toll.

The first Bylaws actually allowed for "other members," i.e. non-officers, to be elected as members of the Board at the annual meeting, and from time to time several non-officers were placed on the Board. But these persons were still drawn from the ranks of musical performers or former performers.

Eventually, the requirements for Board membership were changed to allow non-performer members to serve as officers and as Board members. And at the beginning of the 16th season, one such person was elected. This number increased by one member per season, and by the twentieth (1995-96) season, five such Society members were, or had previously served, on the Board.

Interestingly, during the first four seasons, the Society functioned without a president or vice-president.

Presumably, the Director, Charles Brown, and the Associate Director, Hildegard Froehlich, were elected to fill their directorship roles and the presidential and vice-presidential offices simultaneously. In 1989, the office of Associate Directorship was eliminated, and in 1991, it was stipulated that "the Presidency, Vice-Presidency and Musical Directorship...shall be combined with no other Office..." In 1980 the first president was elected, and this was Hugh Kirkpatrick. Following is a list of those persons who have served as President of the Denton Bach Society, together with their years of service:

1976-80	(No president is listed)
1980-86	Hugh Kirkpatrick
1986-87	Richard Edyvean & Hildegard Froehlich
1987-88	Hildegard Froehlich
1988-91	Richard Edyvean
1991-93	Carol Kernek
1993-94	Don Rosen
1994-96	Ed Glick
1996-99	Carol Kernek

The first Bylaws said that the "Board of Directors will appoint an Advisory Council of no more than fifteen members...to provide artistic counsel to the Board of Directors concerning the performance and educational objectives of the Society." This option apparently was never exercised. More recent Bylaws say that the Board of Directors may appoint an Advisory Council to provide "financial, legal, promotional, and in certain instances, artistic advice." Concert programs for the 13th and 14th seasons list an Advisory Council of eight people, and an Advisory Council of eleven persons was appointed for the 20th season.

Names of Denton Bach Society Officers, Boards of Directors, and Advisory Council members for the twenty seasons are listed in Appendix G.

Communication is the basis for the structure and function of any social organization. And next to personal, word-of-mouth interaction, the newsletter has been the chief medium of communication of the Denton Bach Society. Much of the history of the organization is reflected in its announcements and reports of the group's activities over the years. It is the dominant means by which vital information is transmitted throughout the Society, and thus is crucial in helping the organization to carry out its intended functions. Additionally, the newsletter serves as a medium through which the Society's members are tied to one another and are keyed into the ethos of the organization.

February 1, 1979, is the date of the first newsletter sent by the Denton Bach Society to its membership. Jo Schwegler, a charter member of the Denton

Bach Choir, was the editor. Some early issues of the newsletter, which for several years was unnamed, are missing, and the editor of the newsletter from the fall of 1980 to the fall of 1983 is unknown. However, members who recall this period of time say that it was Hugh and Lina Kirkpatrick who were the faithful ones who wrote and sent out the newsletter.

The February, 1983, issue introduced the Denton Bach Society logo which was designed by Susan Treacy, a choir member for many years during the 1980s. During the eighth season, Marcia Henderson, another charter member of the choir, assumed the editorship, and she held this position for six years. During this time, distribution of the newsletter reached as high as 1,400.

The present newsletter, Vivace!, was in large part the creation of Therese de St Aubin. She named the newsletter, designed its logo and its format, and held the editorship until the Spring of 1994. Therese sang in the choir for eight seasons. At her wedding to Wayne Adamiec, a bass singer for five seasons, the Denton Bach Society Choir sang. Julian Long, another choir member of long tenure, assumed editorship of Vivace! in August, 1994. Julian also is on the Board of Directors, serving as the Membership Director, and was also appointed to the Advisory Board for the twentieth season.