

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010

Membership Statistics:

July 31, 1999 - 1551 members

June 1, 2000 - 1494 members

June 1, 2001 - 1459 members

June 1, 2002 - 1375 members

July 15, 2003 - 1354 members

June 1, 2004 - 1341 members

June 1, 2005 - 1315 members

June 1, 2006 - 1233 members

June 1, 2007 - 1279 members*

May 1, 2008 - 1176 members*

May 29, 2009 - 1147 members*

May 26, 2010 - 1103 members* (paid memberships = 1090)

* This total includes – Affiliates, Founding Members, Honorary, and 2 Utility records.

New Members: 2007 = 76

2008 = 41 projected 15 more by December 2008.

2009 = 91

2010 = 75 June 2009 to May 2010

Discussion: The 75 new members is average. Most applications occur in the winter months. For each new member a notice is sent to the local chapter indicating the new member's name, address, and a request that the member be invited to the local chapter meeting.

Dropouts: (non-renewals). 156. Of this 156 there were 17 members who had joined for one year and can be considered trial memberships. Looking back two years, the trial memberships were 46, or approximately one third of the non-renewals. The remaining non-renewals date back to as early as 1970 and are distributed quite evenly up to 2009.

Late Dues Payments: The deadline for payments is January 31. Dues notices are sent in mid-November, giving ample time for responses by the deadline. The November mailing is an attempt to avoid the heavy mail during the Christmas season. A late fee is suggested for those missing the deadline, but few members observe it. A great deal of extra work takes place in sending 341 (average) reminder notices. These extra mailings are also costly for postage. Because the count of members at the deadline always falls short of the Bulletins needed, extra Bulletins must be ordered to provide to the late payments. Additional costs occur when the Membership Secretary hand addresses and mails the Bulletins at First Class postage. (The cheaper Bulk rate can only be utilized by the printing company.) In the following years it is

suggested that a notice appear in the Sept/Oct and Nov/Dec Bulletins drawing attention to the need for timely payments.

Attempts to reach non-renewals: Again this year renewal notices were sent to the *previous year's* (2008) dropouts. This resulted in about 20 renewals from people who had dropped out for one year.

Because of other duties requiring my time, an effort was made to simplify the Annual Dues Notices for 2010. The MEMBER NAME and MEMBER I.D. was incorporated into the dues notice letter and the Instrument Listing was printed on the reverse of the letter, saving paper and time required for stuffing envelopes. This was worked out on a trial basis, but proved to have flaws in the area of extended instrument listings that went much beyond 56 lines. This was abandoned and I reverted to the regular but time-consuming dues notice packet that all members received. Frank and Shirley Nix and Jack Conway volunteered their time in Los Angeles and enabled a timely notice to the membership. Their generous support was greatly appreciated. The 341 notices to previous year's dropouts were sent the simplified dues notice.

Postal Rates Increases: A new member's introductory packet to Europe now costs \$13 to send. It would be even higher but the USPO now furnishes a cost free cardboard envelope that can travel beyond USA. The (local) USA Priority envelope is also free and the postage for a new member packet is \$4.95. Fewer printed white envelopes are now needed. When 8x12 white envelopes are used for single Bulletin, the cost is \$2.00.

Note – for Computer programming: All members who used Surface Mail are still coded in the computer as “S” but when Queried the Query should be combined with “A” for Airmail. The combination file is named “Airmail” as sent to the printing company. By retaining the “S” coding it enables identifying those persons who preferred the cheaper dues rate. If a new mail category is developed by the USPO, or if other mailing options become available the codes for the lower rate are in the database.

Classified Ads: In accordance with my request to re-introduce the free 30 word classified to all renewing members, a small ticket was included with each renewal. These were created on the computer, but with great difficulty in getting the information into a small space. Instead of expensive labels, the tickets were printed on plain green paper and cut to size. The free ads increased the Classified Ads section by a noticeable amount. Terry Smythe, the new Editor, worked a plan for receiving the ad-tickets. For ads which required payment the Membership Secretary received the payment (checks, money orders or credit card authorization).

CONVENTION PAYMENTS: In negotiations with Mike Walter for the Buffalo convention, it was decided that the Membership Secretary would accept the scanned authorizations for credit card payments. The scanning seems to be more than adequate protection against any hacking of text messages. This has worked out very well, and to date 4 payments were charged against credit cards. Each member is notified of the charge, the date and the transaction number via email.

Advertizing: AMICA has not engaged in advertizing beyond the Theatre Organ and the Piano Technicians publications.

Applications from the internet web have increased slightly but a more productive web search for “player piano” would be helpful to the organization. A Google search on ‘player piano’ reaches AMICA only on the 43rd page. Few people would read that many pages.

Submitted by:
Bill Chapman
Membership Secretary