



**Bethlehem Area Public Library
Local History Collections**

Bach Choir Collection, 1900-2000

Creator:	Bach Choir of Bethlehem (Bethlehem, Pa.)
Title:	Bach Choir Collection, 1900-2000
Inclusive Dates:	1900-2000
Extent:	1.5 linear feet, 4 rolls of microfilm, 3 scrapbooks
Abstract:	The Bach Choir Collection consists of annual festival programs between 1900 and 2000, programs for several special events between 1915 and 1951, and publicity items including newspaper clipping scrapbooks and articles.
Access to Materials:	The collection is open to researchers in the Bethlehem Room.
Copyright:	The Bach Choir of Bethlehem retains copyright for all materials.
Preferred Citation:	[Item], Bach Choir Collection, 1900-2000. The Bethlehem Area Public Library Local History Collections

Historical Note:

The oldest American Bach Choir was formed in 1898 due to the creative passion of J. Fred Wolle and the organizational efforts of Ruth Porter Doster. Growing up in the Moravian Church inspired in Wolle an appreciation for music, manifested through his first choral endeavor in 1882, the Bethlehem Choral Union, and his rigorous study in Munich under Joseph Rheinberger. Upon his return to the United States, he envisioned a performance of Bach's demanding "Mass in B Minor." His Choral Union lost enthusiasm for the arduous task, but Wolle persisted. Several years later, coupled with the work of Ruth Porter Doster, a new choir was organized and gave the performance of the first complete American "Mass in B Minor" in 1900. The Bach Choir grew steadily in recognition and popularity with its annual festival, held in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Performances at Carnegie Hall and in Washington, D.C. increased the Choir's following, attracting thousands of visitors to the festivals held every year in May.

For more information about the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, please consult the following sources:

The Bach Choir of Bethlehem website: <http://www.bach.org/>

Books in the Bethlehem Area Public Library: (All of these books can be found in the Bethlehem Room, under call number 783.)

Luckenbach, Martha O. *The Bethlehem Bach Choir*. (Bethlehem, Pa.: Gemein Haus, 1970).

Schwarz, Ralph Grayson. *Bach in Bethlehem*. (Bethlehem, Pa.: The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, 1998).

Walters, Raymond. *The Bethlehem Bach Choir: An Historical and Interpretative Sketch*. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1918).

Willistein, Paul A. *Bethlehem Pilgrimage: The Bach Choir Past and Present: A Pictorial Account*. (Bethlehem, Pa.: Moravian Book Shop, 1979.)

Collection Scope and Contents:

The Bach Choir Collection consists of annual festival programs between 1900 and 2000, programs for several special events between 1915 and 1951, and publicity items including newspaper clipping scrapbooks and articles. Please consult the Bethlehem Bach Choir for information about their archival holdings.

The Collection is divided in two series: Programs (1900-2000) and Publicity Files (1901-1972). The **Programs** series consists of a complete run of annual festival programs (often in duplicate) between 1900 and 1981. The Library holds some later programs as well (please see container list below for more details). Programs not only list the scheduled performances, but also provide the score and detailed information about the performed pieces. Names of all participants are also included. No festival was held in 1902, 1906-1911, 1924, and 1933. A subseries contains programs for special events such as the 1917 Carnegie Hall performance and Dr. Wolle's memorial service in 1933. The **Publicity Files** series consists of articles and newspaper clippings about the Bach Choir. A list of the articles is provided in the container list (see below). Microfilm copies of Bethlehem Bach Choir scrapbooks are available and three scrapbooks compiled by BAPL staff complete the series.

Organization of the Bach Choir Collection

The Collection is housed in the Bethlehem Room. Copies of festival programs, 1900-1981 are available in 4 translucent shelf files in the Local History 783 locked shelves. The rest of the materials are shelved in the Local History Storage section.

- 1) Series: Programs (1900-2000)
 - a. Subseries: Festival Programs (1900-2000)
 - b. Subseries: Special Programs (1915-1951)
- 2) Series: Publicity Files (1901-1972)
 - a. Subseries: Articles (1903-1935)
 - b. Subseries: Scrapbooks (1901-1972)

Index Terms

The Bach Choir Collection is indexed under the following terms in the Bethlehem Area Public Library Catalog.

Names:

Bach Choir of Bethlehem (Bethlehem, Pa.)

Subjects:

Bach Choir of Bethlehem.

Container List: An Inventory of the Bach Choir Collection (1900-2000)

Container

Title

Series: Programs (1900-2000)

Subseries: Festival Programs (1900-2000)

Consists of a complete set of festival programs between 1900 and 1981, often in duplicate. Includes some subsequent programs. Programs not only list the scheduled performances, but also provide the score and detailed information about the performed pieces. Names of all participants are also included. No festival was held in 1902, 1906-1911, 1924, and 1933.

Local History 783

Translucent shelf files

1	1900-1925 (1 st -19 th) (no 1902, 1906-1911, 1924)
2	1926-1950 (20 th -43 rd) (no 1933, 1942)
3	1951-1965 (44 th -58 th)
4	1966-1981 (59 th -74 th)

Local History Storage

Box 1

Box 1, Folder 1	The Mass in B Minor (first complete American production) 1900
Box 1, Folder 2	2 nd Bach Festival 1901
Box 1, Folder 3-4	3 rd 1903 (2)
Box 1, Folder 5-6	4 th (Christmas Festival) 1904 (2)
Box 1, Folder 7-8	5 th (Lenten Festival) April 1905 (2)
Box 1, Folder 9-10	6 th (Easter and Ascension Festival) June 1905 (2)
Box 1, Folder 11	7 th 1912
Box 1, Folder 12	8 th 1913
Box 1, Folder 13	9 th 1914
Box 1, Folder 14	10 th 1915
Box 1, Folder 15	11 th 1916
Box 1, Folder 16	12 th 1917
Box 1, Folder 17	13 th 1918
Box 1, Folder 18	14 th 1919
Box 1, Folder 19	15 th 1920
Box 1, Folder 20	16 th 1921
Box 1, Folder 21	17 th 1922
Box 1, Folder 22	18 th 1923
Box 1, Folder 23	19 th 1925
Box 1, Folder 24	20 th 1926
Box 1, Folder 25	21 st 1927
Box 1, Folder 26	22 nd 1928
Box 1, Folder 27	23 rd 1929
Box 1, Folder 28	24 th 1930
Box 1, Folder 29	25 th 1931
Box 1, Folder 30	26 th 1932
Box 1, Folder 31	27 th 1934

Box 1, Folder 32	28 th 1935
Box 1, Folder 33	29 th 1936
Box 1, Folder 34	30 th 1937
Box 1, Folder 35	31 st 1938
Box 1, Folder 36	32 nd 1939
Box 1, Folder 37	33 rd 1940
Box 1, Folder 38	34 th 1941
Box 1, Folder 39	35 th 1942
Box 1, Folder 40	36 th 1943
Box 1, Folder 41	37 th 1944
Box 1, Folder 42-43	38 th 1945
Box 1, Folder 44	39 th 1946
Box 1, Folder 45	40 th 1947
Box 1, Folder 46	41 st 1948
Box 1, Folder 47	42 nd 1949 (labeled as "50 th ")
Box 1, Folder 48	43 rd 1950
Box 1, Folder 49	44 th 1951
Box 1, Folder 50	45 th 1952
Box 1, Folder 51	46 th 1953
Box 1, Folder 52	47 th 1954
Box 1, Folder 53	48 th 1955
Box 1, Folder 54	49 th 1956
Box 1, Folder 55	50 th 1957
Box 1, Folder 56	51 st 1958
Box 1, Folder 57	52 nd 1959
Box 1, Folder 58	53 rd 1960
Box 1, Folder 59	54 th 1961 (includes booklet: History of Bach Choir)
Box 1, Folder 60	55 th 1962
Box 1, Folder 61	56 th 1963
Box 1, Folder 62	57 th 1964
Box 1, Folder 63	58 th 1965
Box 1, Folder 64	59 th 1966
Box 1, Folder 65	60 th 1967
Box 1, Folder 66	61 st 1968
Box 1, Folder 67	63 rd 1970
Box 1, Folder 68	64 th 1971
Box 1, Folder 69	65 th 1972
Box 1, Folder 70	66 th 1973 (75 th anniversary)
Box 1, Folder 71-72	67 th 1974 (2)
Box 1, Folder 73	68 th 1975
Box 1, Folder 74	69 th 1976
Box 1, Folder 75	70 th 1977
Box 1, Folder 76	71 st 1978
Box 1, Folder 77	72 nd 1979
Box 1, Folder 78	73 rd 1980
Box 1, Folder 79	74 th 1981

Box 2

Box 2, Folder 1	75 th 1982
Box 2, Folder 2	76 th 1983
Box 2, Folder 3	77 th 1984
Box 2, Folder 4	78 th 1985
Box 2, Folder 5	79 th 1986
Box 2, Folder 6	80 th 1987
Box 2, Folder 7	81 st 1988

Box 2, Folder 8	82 nd 1989
Box 2, Folder 9	83 rd 1990
Box 2, Folder 10	89 th 1996
Box 2, Folder 11	90 th 1997
Box 2, Folder 12	93 rd 2000

Subseries: Special Programs (1915-1951)

Box 2, Folder 13	Festival Booklets 1915, 1917 Festival Flyers
Box 2, Folder 14	1915, 1918, 1920-1923
Box 2, Folder 15	1924 – postponed, 1927, 1929
Box 2, Folder 16	1932, 1934, 1939-1940
Box 2, Folder 17	Carnegie Hall Jan. 20, 1917 (2 copies)
Box 2, Folder 18	2 nd Public Rehearsal of Bach Choir & Orchestra May 26, 1921
Box 2, Folder 19	“The Passion” performed in Washington, D.C. April 6, 1926
Box 2, Folder 20	Princeton University – dedication of the Chapel Mass in B Minor May 13, 1928
Box 2, Folder 21	The College Club presents Bach Choir assisted by the Philadelphia Orchestra Nov. 20, 1930
Box 2, Folder 22	Memorial Service for Dr. J. Fred Wolle May 13, 1933
Box 2, Folder 23	Bicentennial Celebration: Haydn’s Oratorio “The Creation” Feb. 22, 1942
Box 2, Folder 24	Music Booklet June 1943 (2 copies)
Box 2, Folder 25	Dinner Meeting & Showing of “The Life of a Choir” Nov. 19, 1951 (photostatic copy)

Series: Publicity Files (1901-1972)

Subseries: Articles (1903-1935)

Box 2, Folder 26	Articles about Bach Choir 1903, 1917, 1928, 1935, n.d. “Bach in Bethlehem.” (author, publishing information unknown) (OVERSIZED*) Craven, H.T. “The Bach Festival in Bethlehem.” <i>Musical America</i> , 19 May 1928. Long, J.C. “Bach in Bethlehem.” <i>Scribner</i> , May 1935. Myers, Elizabeth L. “The Story of the Bach Festival.” <i>American-German Review</i> , June 1935, 14. Times (Bethlehem) 12 May 1903. Times (Bethlehem) 18 May 1903 (OVERSIZED) Walters, Raymond. “The Bethlehem Bach Festivals: A Community Enterprise.” <i>The Playground</i> , May 1917.
Box 2, Folder 27	“Bach Choir 1898-1928”
Box 2, Folder 28	“Going to Bethlehem” Address by Charles Osgood 30 th anniversary Dec. 5, 1928 (2 copies)
Box 2, Folder 29	“Twentieth Bach Festival” (Fragments of a history of the Bach Choir by C.F. Abby Williams) n.d.

* Oversized items in this collection are housed in the bottom drawer of the Bethlehem Room map case.

Subseries: Scrapbooks (1901-1972)

Box 3	BAPL Bach Choir Publicity Scrapbooks (3)
Box 4	1901-1939
Box 5	1939-1946
	1963-1972

	Bach Choir of Bethlehem Scrapbooks (4 rolls)
Microfilm (local history storage shelf)	
Roll 1	SB1, 1913 – SB 16, 1925
Roll 2	SB 17, 1926 – SB 35, 1943
Roll 3	SB 36, 1944 – SB 53, 1961
Roll 4	SB 54, 1962 – SB 63, 1971