

From a profile in *The Cathedral Age* Fall 1967

**TCA** What about the new phase your work has taken with Advance Program, the music, drama, ballet that has come to the cathedral? How did this evolve?

**RWD** There came a time when my concern with the cathedral was obviously much more involved than just being associate organist and choir master. In that capacity I had shared responsibility with Paul for the growth of the Choral Society, I had equal responsibility for the services, the training of the choir boys and full responsibility for the Glee Clubs. But I still didn't feel that I was progressing.

When the dean started to plan the dedication of the central tower in 1963, he decided that I should be responsible for coordinating the day. Actually, it was Bill Workman and I who went out on the south side of the cathedral and talked about what kind of a day we would have. And, by the time we got into November, we were dreaming up medallions, picture books, bell ringers from England, and I found myself with a bear by the tail. Finally, it became evident to the dean that I must be relieved of some of my music duties so that I could devote my full time to the tower dedication.

Everyone knew that this great building stood quiet and dark for about 350 nights in the year. Except for the three Choral Society concerts and perhaps two or three special services – nothing. There were whole new areas of ministry being investigated – man's relationship to God through the arts, through advance of theology, through an experiment like Coventry, through the ecumenical movements – all of these new areas that we at the cathedral were just woefully behind in.

It kept crossing my mind, as I worked on the tower dedication – what am I going to do when this is over?

But the dean, in our frequent talks, kept telling me not to worry; that I would do what we had been talking about for years, start a program to bring everything best in music, drama, dance and conferences to Washington Cathedral. And this was called "Advance Program" – that which is happening next year instead of next Sunday.

Then, the dean had to convince the Cathedral Chapter that ours was a good idea. And I always try to explain this aspect very carefully.

In the history of the building, all bequests that flow into the cathedral during the year that are not sent for a specific thing are called "undesigned bequests." **Every penny of this had, by chapter policy, gone to the building fund.** This money was for building, it could not be used for ministry or maintenance except by special permission. And it was then that the chapter began to see that we had to build for the future, not only with stones and stained glass and iron gates and marble floors, but also with that which could move men's spirits.

**They agreed, then, that we could take a set amount from undesigned bequests for a three-year pilot program.**

So, that's what happened in 1964 after the tower was dedicated. In a sense, I was given my "druthers." I kept Glee Clubs; I became a stand-by to help the organist-choirmaster when needed; in televising cathedral services I do whatever has to be done from creating music to directing or producing.