

HILBUS CHAPTER
THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
Where the Tracker Action Is!
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Theater Organ Recital Played by Michael Britt
Sunday, June 26, 2005, 4 PM

Cosponsored by:

The Potomac Valley Theater Organ Society

Hosts:

Mildred and Jack Hardman

548 Innsbruck Avenue

Great Falls, Virginia 22066

Phone: 703-759-5281

Michael Britt, Organist

Through the gracious hospitality of Mildred and Jack Hardman and in conjunction with the PVTOS, our last chapter meeting of the year will be a grand sendoff into the summer. The Hardmen's have installed into their most unique home a 4 manual, 37 rank Studio Wurlitzer theater organ. Organist extraordinaire, Michael Britt, will give us a short history of the theater organ, and will play an exciting program of theater organ music. We will also have a sing along for those of you who feel so inclined. Jack will also give us a history of the installation at their home. Just an added note of interest, there is a large Dutch street organ, several Buskeris organs and smaller street organs, two concert grand pianos, several music boxes and a workshop area for the maintenance and restoration of these instruments.

Michael Britt is Minister of Music at the Shrine of the Little Flower, Baltimore, where he had been active in commissioning new music for organ, choir and congregation, and is past Dean of the Baltimore AGO chapter. As well as being a frequent recitalist of classical organ literature, he is a performer of theater organ music and is in demand throughout the east coast as a silent film accompanist, performing for chapters of the AGO and the American Theater Organ Society.

Due to limited seating capacity, it will be necessary for you to make a reservation to attend this concert. Please RSVP NO LATER THAN JUNE 17th to hirickels@aol.com or 703-759-9283.

We hope you will take this opportunity to spend a fantastic afternoon in the beautiful environs of Great Falls, which will include a warm welcome from Mildred and Jack, to meet and talk with our performer, and enjoy a delectable selection of refreshments. We guarantee you will have a delightful afternoon – a grand closure to our 2004-2005 chapter year.

Driving Directions and Parking

Because of limited parking space around our house, group parking is always a problem here. When the ground is really dry and firm, parking is normally possible on the meadow behind the barn. During or just after wet weather, we avoid using the meadow parking area because of soft ground, slippery wet grass, and the potential for muddy ruts and stuck cars.

Please do not park on the narrow driveway loop, and when parking in the lower driveway, please do not block driveway access to the meadow parking area.

Regardless of the weather, we prefer that you carpool from the Wachovia Bank parking lot, at 750 Walker Road, across from Safeway in the center of Great Falls. This helps minimize traffic volume on Innsbruck Ave., much of which is only one lane wide. Be alert for passing locations or driveways to pull into when meeting oncoming vehicles. Sometimes it is necessary to carefully back up to a safe passing location.

After dropping off passengers at our front door, carpool drivers can sometimes find parking space on the hard pavement in front of the garage doors or on the meadow behind the barn when available. If meadow parking is closed because of soft ground, please park at the Wachovia Bank and join another carpool to the house.

Plan to arrive early enough to permit time for parking. In any event, a green passenger van will make a final shuttle pick up at the bank parking lot at 3:45PM.

A glorious spring day was the setting for our May crawl to three Montgomery County churches.

The morning began with a visit to the new organ in Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, Potomac, Maryland hosted by Carolyn Booth, who is Organist at that church. Carolyn related the history of the project and demonstrated the instrument for us. The church initially contracted with Atelier Guibault-Thérien, a highly respected Canadian builder to build an instrument for the new sanctuary. The new three manual organ was to include pipework from the existing 1985 Möller from the old church and suitably altered to combine with the new material. The firm was chosen on the basis of its outstanding organs that many feel are the very best produced in Canada.

Tragically Guy Thérien was diagnosed with cancer and soon succumbed. Work continued under the direction of Jacques L'Italien and ultimately the organ was completed and installed by Karl Wilhelm Organbuilders for whom Christoph Linde is a voicer. This project was also completed through the sustained efforts of Richard Hedgepeth. At the request of the widow of Guy Thérien this organ does not carry his firm's nameplate.

The result, notwithstanding the convoluted path to completion, is excellent and immediately impresses with its variety of choruses, smooth buildup, beautiful individual stops, and powerful ensemble. Certainly the French tonal dialect is apparent in the broad eight-foot foundations of the organ which include a beautiful Harmonic Flute. The stoplist is a remarkably complete organ for the purposes of playing French organ literature and contains a full range of mutations, Cornets in every division, ample 16' manual tone - all the right stops. Yet in many ways: the Principal choruses, many of the individual flute stops, the broad Viole and Celeste of the Recit, ear tickling Flute Celeste of the Positif, and tonality of the reeds it is an eclectic North American organ - from first impressions it can do it all very nicely. This should be considered a virtue for the full blooded French Romantic and neo-Classique organ is temperamentally unsuited for the purposes of an American church organ which is at the same time a solo instrument and an accompanimental one. The tone of those instruments tends to be brazen. In this organ there is much intensity and energy but of a more refined sort. When overstatement is the order of business the nicely voiced Trompette-de-fete can be brought in on top of the full ensemble for an unforgettable thrill. This organ is at home with Bach, with the nostalgic sounds required for English and much American music, as well as the dynamic contrasts called for in the German romantic repertoire. Importantly it has the right sounds to support congregational singing, soloists and a choir elegantly and colorfully. It represents a significant addition to the group of fine larger organs in the area and can hold its own with any of them.

The organ is controlled by a compact moveable drawknob console that is comfortable to play and has all the modern control technologies. The Grand-Orgue, Recit and Pedale divisions are encased on a shelf built out into the choir area of the church. The Positif division is expressive and located to the left of the main organ, behind the choir and in a chamber with pipe facade.

Manual II -Grand-Orgue: Violon 16', Bourdon 16', Montre 8', Salicional 8' (ext. Violon 16'), Bourdon 8' (ext 16' Bourdon), Flute Harmonique 8', Prestant 4', Flute 4', Quinte 2 2/3',

Doublette 2', Fourniture IV-V, Cornet V (from tenor F), Trompette 8', Clairon 4', Trompette-de-fete 8' (floating), Sub Octaves, MIDI, Chimes

Manual III - Récit (Expressif) : Bourdon-Doux 16' (ext 8'), Principal 8', Viole de Gambe 8', Viole Celeste (CC) 8', Bourdon-a-Cheminee 8', Octave 4, Flute Octaviante 4', Octavin 2', Cornet II (full compass), Plein Jeu IV, Bombarde 16', Trompette harmonique 8', Basson-Hautbois 8', Voix Humaine 8', Tremulant, Sub Octaves, MIDI

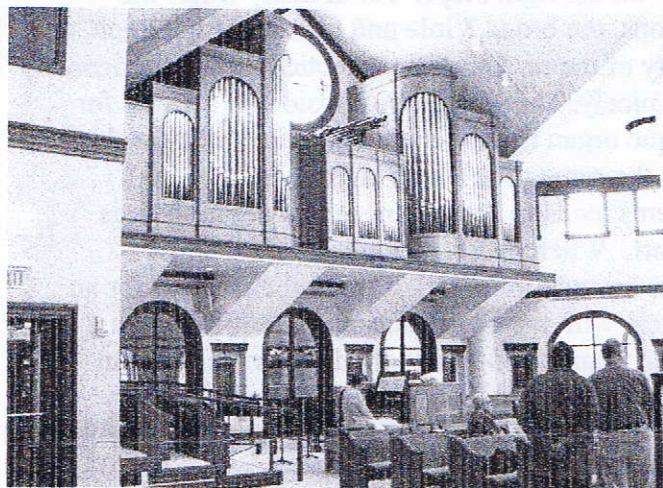
Manual I - Positif (Expressif) Diapason 8', Flute Conique 8', Flute Couverte 8', Flute Celeste II 8', Octave 4', Flute a Fuseau 4', Nasard 2 2/3', Flute des Bois 2', Tierce 1 3/5', Larigot 1 1/3', Plein Jeu III-V (progressive), Basson 16', Cromorne 8', Trompette-de Fete 16', Trompette-de-fete 8', Trompette de-fete 4', Tremulant, Sub Octaves, MIDI

Pedale: Contre Bourdon 32' (digital), Contre Basse 16' (ext Violoncelle), Bourdon 16', Violon 16' (Gt), Bourdon-Doux 16' (Rec), Violoncelle 8', Principal 8', Bourdon 8' (ext. Pedal Bourdon 16'), Octave 4' (extension Principal 8'), Mixture IV, Contre-Bombarde 32' (digital), Bombarde 16',

Bombarde 16' (Rec), Trompette 8' (Extension 16'), Clairon 4' (Extension 8'), MIDI

Couplers: Grand-Orgue to Pedale 8'/4', Recit to Pedal 8'/4', Positif to Pedale 8', Recit to Grand Orgue 16'/8'/4', Positif to Grand-Orgue 8, Grand-Orgue to Positif 8', Recit to Positif 8' Grand-Orgue/Positif manual transfer of keys and divisional pistons. All 8' couplers controlled by reversibles.

Compass 61-32 AGO, Electric Slider Windchests



Case of the organ at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church. Photo: P. Birckner



Console of Our Lady of Mercy Church. Photo: P. Birckner



Carolyn Booth, organist of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church. Photo: P. Birckner

Our second stop of the day was Holy Trinity Lutheran Church on Old Georgetown Road. This attractive modern brick sanctuary houses a 1952 Möller formerly located in a Pennsylvania church.

The instrument was installed in 1992 by R. A. Daffer, Inc. The relocated organ was unsatisfactory in many ways, the sound did not get out of the chambers well, the choir could not hear the sound of the organ due to the orientation of the expression shades and many physical aspects of the installation were not executed to the standards desired by the church.

The rebuilding contract was awarded to a small Massachusetts firm: the Nobscot Organ Company of Framingham. The mechanical issues were corrected, wind system reconfigured, Great shades removed, Swell shades reoriented and the chamber walls treated and revised to make them more reflective. The console, which is from a Schantz organ, was rebuilt with new solid state switching and combination action. Additions were made to the organ, and it was extensively revoiced.

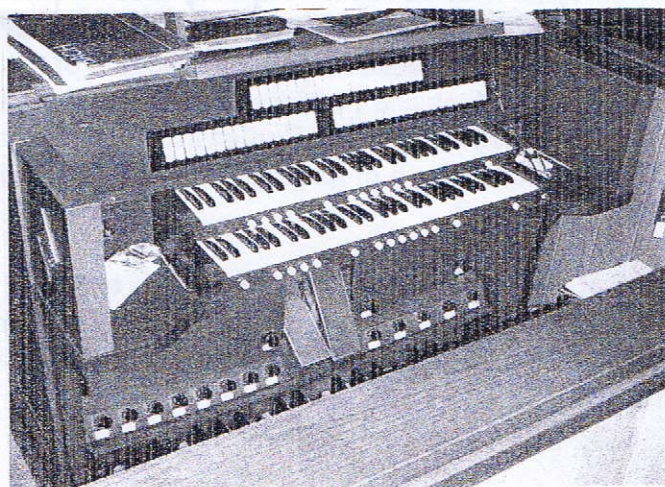
Mechanically the organ is now in good condition and works properly. Releathering has been deferred. The surprise was the sound of the organ, which is very good. This is an instrument that has a variety of moods. On one hand it can hold its own in the Romantic literature with warm foundations: Diapasons, Flutes, and Strings. The choruses are brilliant but still within acceptable limits of balance. The reeds are impressive in their regulation and tone. It is astonishing what has been accomplished here with the old Möller pipework and the church is very pleased with the outcome. The old windchests are of high quality and will continue to function well as they are releathered in due course. Certainly the success with the tonal revisions and additions would justify further renovation.

Great: Dolce 16' (extension), Principal 8', Melodia 8', Dolce 8', Octave 4', Flute d'Amour 4', Fifteenth 2' Mixture III, Krummhorn 16', Trumpet 8', Krummhorn 8' (extension), Oboe 8' (Swell), Tremolo, Zimbelstern, Great 16', UO, 4', Swell to Great 16', 8', 4'

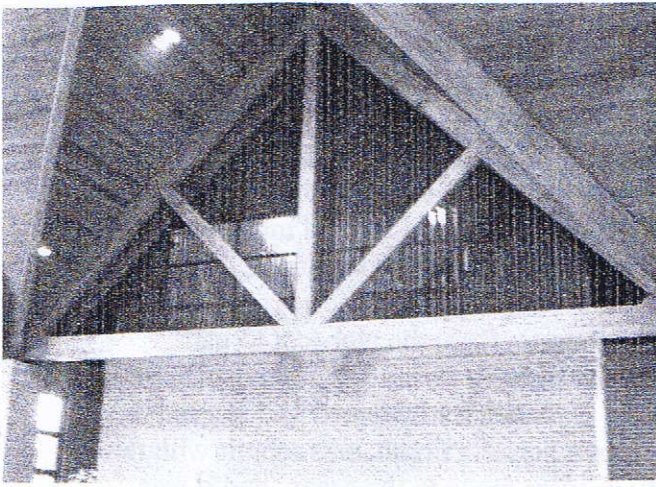
Swell: Lieblich 16' (extension), Geigen 8', Gedeckt 8', Salicional 8', Voix Celeste 8', Principal 4', Triangle Flute 4', Nasard 2 2/3', Octavin 2', Mixture III, Oboe 16' (extension), Trumpet 8', Oboe 8', Vox Humana 8', Trumpet 8' (Great), Tremolo, Swell 16', UO, 4'

Pedal: Resultant 32', Subbass 16', Lieblich 16' (Swell), Principal 8', Bourdon 8' (extension 16'), Dolce 8' (Great), Choral Bass 4' (extension 8'), Trombone 16' (extension Great Trumpet 8'), Oboe 16' (Swell), Trumpet 8' (Great), Oboe 8' (Swell), Great to Pedal 8', 4', Swell to Pedal 8', 4'
Krummhorn 4' (Great)

61/32 Compass, Electro-Pneumatic action



Holy Trinity Lutheran's organ console
Photo: P. Birekner



Holy Trinity Lutheran chamber above altar
Where the organ works are located
Photo: P. Birekner

After a tasty lunch at Hamburger Hamlet the remnant of the group visited the familiar Holtkamp organ at Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church.

This organ is reflective of its period and Walter "Chick" Holtkamp, Jr.'s thinking at that time. . The sound is typical of the builder with bright sassy choruses, dark, limpid sounding yet articulate flutes, and incisive, almost stinging reeds. Otherwise complete in most ways it is notable for the lack of any Celeste rank deemed essential for the performance of French romantic literature. Eclectic in intent it combines disparate elements into the Swell division: a classic Brustwerk of 8' Rohrpfeife, 4' Principal, 2', Larigot 1 1/3', Zimbel with a broad Geigen Diapason and fiery Trumpets at 8' and 4' pitch. A short length Dulzian 16' completes the reed chorus. Here we have accompanimental tone (8.8.4) under expression, a tertiary principal chorus, flute ensemble (8.4. 1 1/3) and the fiery reeds to achieve the effect of a French Recit Expressif (8.8.4.8.4). Even the Dulzian 16' provides the possibility of a modified English Full Swell effect (Zimbel.16.8.4). All this is contained in a modern rectangular case in which each division is sharply outlined and is striking to look upon. Does this all work, or was too much being laid at the feet of one small division? . Is the celeste missed? Perhaps the musicality of the stops triumph, nothing seems to be lacking. It is an interesting essay in tonal design as far as the Swell is concerned. The rest of the organ is strictly Werkprinzip in conception and execution. The tonal structure is sharply exemplified in the case layout, each division stands visually in its distinct position and separate from the others. This is Walter Holtkamp Sr.'s approach adapted to an encased organ.

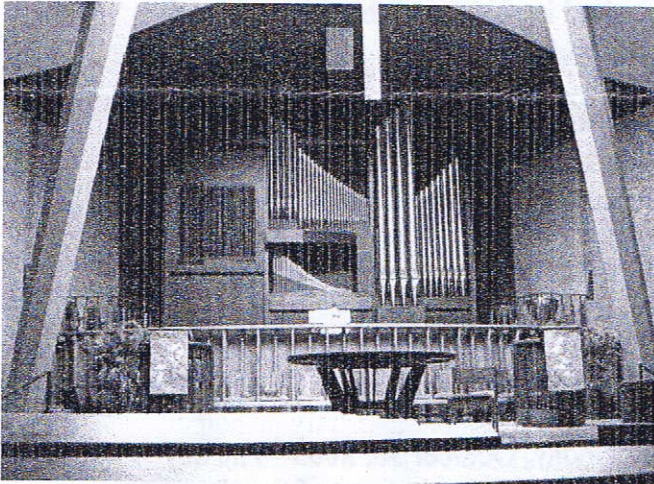
Compare this with the refined eclecticism of the more recent organ built under the direction of F. Christian Holtkamp for Griswold Hall at the Peabody Conservatory. Where Bradley Hills presents an unambiguous visual representation of the organ structure, Griswold takes a page out of the book of Hook and Hastings. Viewed close up and in the room it unmistakably evokes Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston with its signature neo-classic case. This is a more romantic presentation of the organ as the sum of its parts rather than an instrument of bold contrasts. The sound is friendly and warm.

Much of the tonal drama at Bradley Hills is tamed by the effect of the acoustic when the organ is heard from the nave. In the Choir gallery across the front of the room and in the central space around the communion table the organ has more impact and seems at its most inspiring to this writer.

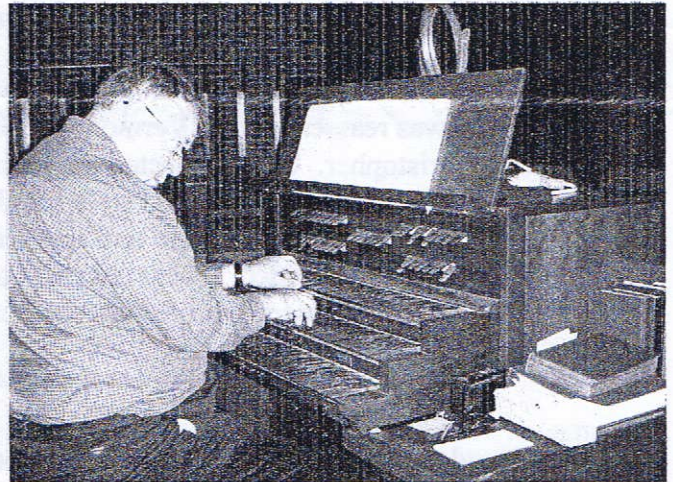
Great: 16' Pommer, 8' Principal, 8' Gedackt, 4' Octave, 4' Spitzflute, 2' Super Octave, Sesquialtera, Mixture, 8' Trumpet
 Positiv: 8' Copula, 4' Prestant, 4' Rohrflute, 2' Doublette, Cornet, Scharff, 8' Cromorne
 Swell: 8' Geigen (FF), 8' Rohrpfeife, 4' Bourdon, 2' Prinzipal, 1 1/3 Larigot, Zimbel, 16' Dulzian, 8' Trumpet, 4' Clarion, Tremulant
 Pedal: 16' Principal, 16' Pommer (GT), 8' Octave, 8' Flute, 4' Choralbass, Rauschbass, 16' Posaune, 8' Trumpet, 4' Schalmel.
 Great to Pedal, Swell to Pedal, Positiv to Pedal, Swell to Great, Positiv to Great, Swell to Positiv

61/32 compass, Mechanical key action, electric stop action

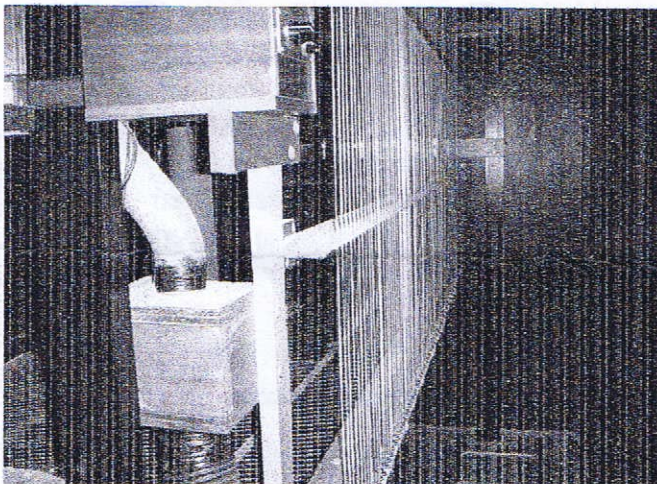
Submitted by Carl Schwartz



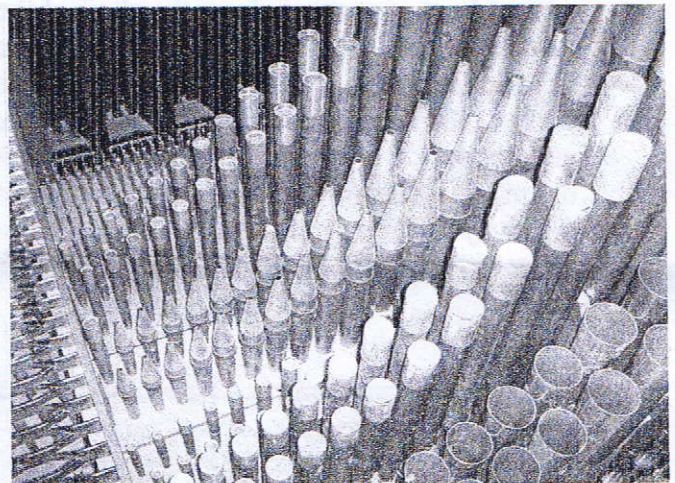
Holtkamp organ at Bradley Hills Presbyterian
 Photo: P. Bircckner



Carl Schwartz at the Holtkamp console
 Photo: P. Bircckner



Action of the Holtkamp at Bradley Hills Presbyterian
 Photo: P. Bircckner



Swell division pipes of Bradley Hills Holtkamp
 Photo: P. Bircckner

News and Information

Hilbus member, Carl Vogt died recently. He was in his 90s.

Carl Schwartz recently purchased M.P. Moller Opus 8209 (1950) and relocated it to the family vacation home in Warren, Vermont. This instrument had been located in several residences since it was removed from a Baltimore Church many years ago. It is a 3 rank Artiste model where the stoplist is derived from a 4' Principal, 8' Viola and 16' Gedackt.

This particular organ was originally built for a chamber installation and there is no cabinet. Case panels have been added to it in the course of its travels from location to location. Tom Allen has maintained the organ, rewired it, recovered the reservoir and had the blower rebuilt in addition to adding a reed stop, now removed

The organ was reassembled in Vermont by Michael Schwartz, assisted by his younger brother, Christopher. Carl connected the wiring and tuned. The instrument is located in a modern basement of the Cape Cod style farmhouse, much of which dates from the 1840s. It works perfectly and has a warm and appealing sound that is well suited to the small space in which it is located. There are plans to have a garage/studio outbuilding designed and built that will provide a more suitable location for the organ.

The Dresden Frauenkirche will be consecrated on Sunday, October 30, 2005. The day will begin (9AM) with brass ensemble music on the New Market in front of the church. At 10 the Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Saxony will speak followed by music sung by the choir of The Church of the Holy Cross. Next will be the Ludwig Guettler brass ensemble playing music from the choir of the Frauenkirche. The church will be open for visitors from 2 - 4 PM during which time the organ will be played every 15 minutes for devotional prayer. At 6 PM the Bishop Colin Bennetts of Coventry will speak and the choir of the Frauenkirche will sing Bach's cantata Lobe den Herren, BWV 137. After another period of free public access the Daniel Kern organ will be presented in its first organ recital beginning at 10PM. All of November and December have been scheduled for many concerts as well as regular church worship times. Prices for seating at concerts range from 6 to 92 euros.

Chairman: Carolyn Booth, 9200 La Belle Lane, Gaithersburg, MD, 20879

(301) -869-6271

Vice Chairman: Michael T. Britt, 3022 Westfield Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21214

(410) 319-9634

Secretary-Treasurer: Barbara Birkner, 6606 Farmer Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744

(301) 449-4399

Editor: Paul Birkner, 6606 Farmer Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744

(301) 449-4399

Editorial Advisor: Carolyn Fix, 116 Battle Street, SW, Vienna, VA 22180

(703) 281-5046

Dues: Due in October, Send \$10.00 to Secretary-Treasurer. (NOTE: Please make out checks to Hilbus Chapter, OHS)