

**HILBUS CHAPTER**  
**THE ORGAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
*Where the Tracker Action Is!*  
**WWW.HILBUS.ORG**

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**Celebration to Honor the Founders of Our Hilbus Chapter**

**Saturday, October 23 at 10:30 AM, Trinity United Methodist  
Church, 1205 Dolly Madison Blvd. (Route 123), McLean, Virginia**

- Introductory remarks
- Musical tributes by Hilbus Chapter members
- Luncheon in the church hall (provided by Hilbus Chapter)
- Presentation of Honorees

**Our Hilbus Chapter Founders**

Jim Baird  
Ruth Charters  
Frances Elliot  
Cleve Fisher  
Fred Gloeckler  
Pat Heflin  
Randall Wagner

Paul Birkner  
John Corkill, Jr.  
Ben Faidley  
Carolyn Fix  
Stan Gossard  
Rick Morrison

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# Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup> Crawl to Three Mechanical Organs in Baltimore, MD

BY ALAN HASTINGS

## Old Otterbein United Methodist Church Conway Street, Baltimore, MD

### Henry Niemann, two manual and pedal, 15 ranks, 1897

Old Otterbein is a treasure. It is a splendidly preserved church set in an utterly charming churchyard with two vintage out-buildings (an office and a Sunday School building), and although it is completely cut off from any humanly scaled neighborhood by massive concrete boxes of civic buildings and heavy duty roads, it has managed not only to survive, but thrive.

The building itself is light and airy, having an abundance of clear-glazed windows on three of the four walls and a high ceiling. The organ is free-standing in the center of the rear gallery.

I was late, as usual, having had a more than usual hassle finding a parking space, and as I came in the front door, Harley Perkins, the current incumbent, was performing Back's Little Fugue in G, and even out in the narthex, it was possible to hear how completely

ample the instrument is in the room.

The six 8' stops provide a long dynamic range, and at the same time, a generous variety of basic organ sounds. The higher pitched stops are very well regulated and blend well, adding color but not overwhelming the foundations, as well as allowing for some nice solo effects.

The compass of the keyboards is 58 notes, CC to aaa, and that of the pedals is 27 notes, CC to d.

There are two mechanical stop movements: full organ and "Gt p".

It must be remarked: this organ is in splendid condition both tonally and mechanically. It is a delight to hear and a delight to play.

#### Great

Open Diapason 8'

Melodia 8'  
Dulciana 8'  
Octave 4'  
Octave Quint 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ '  
Super Octave 2'  
Sw to Gr Coupler

#### Swell

Violin Diapason 8'  
Stop<sup>d</sup> Diapason 8'  
Salicional 8'  
Flute Harmonique 4'  
Dolce Cornet 3 Rks.  
Oboe 8'  
Swell Tremolo

#### Pedal

Ped. Bourdon 16'  
Gr to Ped Coupler  
Sw to Ped Coupler

## St. Martini Lutheran

Henrietta and Hanover Streets, Baltimore, MD

### Hilborne L. Roosevelt, No. 329, 1886, 2-manuals, 21 ranks

As I drove down from Old Otterbein to St. Martini, I passed a church, and wondered if it was the one I wanted. It was not in the right place, but it was a handsome building. I made a mental note that we might want to visit this church some day.

The mental note lasted less than a minute. As I drove around the corner, I saw that the church had been divided up into condominiums and was now being used for dwelling.

When I get to my actual destination, I learned that I had indeed passed St. Martini Lutheran. It seems that the city of Baltimore had at some time in

the past, condemned the old St. Martini for some grand civic purpose, and, as a result, the church had built their new building and moved to it, organ and all.

Later, the grand civic purpose faded and the old building was sold to developers to be converted to rather townhouse-like places for people to live.

I would suspect that there is a division of opinion as to whether the parish gained or lost in the move. I never saw the old church intact (and now, never will) so I cannot offer a comparison.

I can say that the new space is both attractive and hospitable to the organ. The visual impression of the room is of

roundness and height and the sound of the organ seems completely integrated into the space.

Hilborne Roosevelt had a well-deserved reputation for quality. The workmanship was always first rate, and the tone was always generous, open and warm. I have always approached a Roosevelt anticipating a powerful, assertive, commanding sound, and I have always been surprised that my anticipations were inadequate to the actual experience. (Well, *almost* always; there was one Roosevelt which had, in a spasm of orgelbewegung inspired political correctness, had its wind pressure



lowered. A wind-starved Roosevelt does not deliver the authentic Roosevelt experience, but that is a story for another time). Opus 329 did not disappoint.

Not having seen the old building, I could not say for sure, but I suspect that the volume of the new building is a bit less than the old and that may have made it a bit easier for the organ to fill the room.

The similarities of this organ and the Niemann in Old Otterbein are evident. Both are rather large footprint trackers. Both have a 58 note (CC-aaa) manual compass and a 27 note (CC-d) pedal compass and they have a similar tonal architecture. The Roosevelt, however, is a larger organ and somewhat more generously equipped; there are more stops above unison pitch; there is a second reed and there is both a loud and a soft 16' flute in the Pedal. (I did

not get inside for a look to see if the Lieblich gedackt was an independent rank or not). The independent 8' string in the pedal adds a very nice bite to the pedal line.

The Roosevelt also has more mechanical stop movements and the couplers, instead of being on stop knobs have on and off pistons between the manuals.

Great	
Gr. Open Diapason	8'
Gr Doppel Flöte	8'
Gr Dulciana	8'
Gr Octave	4'
Gr Rohr Flute	4'
Gr Fifteenth	2'
Gr Mixture	III
Swell	
Sw Stopped Diapason	8'
Sw Salicional	8'
Sw Vox Celestis	8'

Sw Octave	4'
Sw Violine	4'
Sw Flute Harmonique	4'
[ ] Piccolo Harmonique	2'
Sw Trumpet	8'
Sw Oboe	8'
Sw Tremolo	

Pedal	
Ped Bourdon	16'
Ped Lieblich Gedackt	16'
Ped Violincello	8'

Couplers	
Swell to Pedal	
Great to Pedal	
Swell to Great	
Swell to Great Octaves	

Pedal Movements	
Swell Piano Pedal	
Swell Forte Pedal	
Great Piano Pedal	
Great Forte Pedal	
Gt to Ped Reversible Coupler	

## St. Stephen and St. James Lutheran Church

*Hanover Street, Baltimore, MD.*

### The Maryland Church Organ Company, Baltimore, MD, No. 2 2-manual tracker, 20 ranks

St. Stephen and St. James is just down the street from St. Martini, and it is one of those big, beautiful, old churches rooted in an era when everyone in the neighborhood walked to church every Sunday, and often for several services. Spacious to begin with, it is equipped with a horseshow gallery and was (and still is) capable of hosting a large crowd of people, and it would have needed a powerful organ.

Sadly, the organ in this church is no longer up to that task. There has been a well-meaning, but poorly thought out and ineptly executed attempt to turn the organ into a baroque organ. The octave coupler was simply removed, and it was not clear what had been done to the stoplist, but the stops no longer work together as a functioning ensemble.

One particularly egregious example is the Great Bourdon. This stop is so weak that either of the 4' stops can

dominate it; the quint overwhelm it, and drawing it with the 8' open causes no noticeable change in the sound.

A look inside the organ reveals a sight reminiscent of the Walt Disney organ, except in the latter the jumble of pipes was intentional and properly engineered. Here it is simply evidence of neglect and/or vandalism. Pipes are askew and a number are lying on top of other pipes.

The double rise bellows were in need of re-leathering. Rather than doing that, they were simply bypassed and an electric blower now sits on top of them. The wind noise is reminiscent of a vacuum cleaner and plainly audible.

All in all, it was a sad not to end the day.

Great	
Gr Open Diapason	8'
Gr Bourdon	8'
Gr Flute	4'

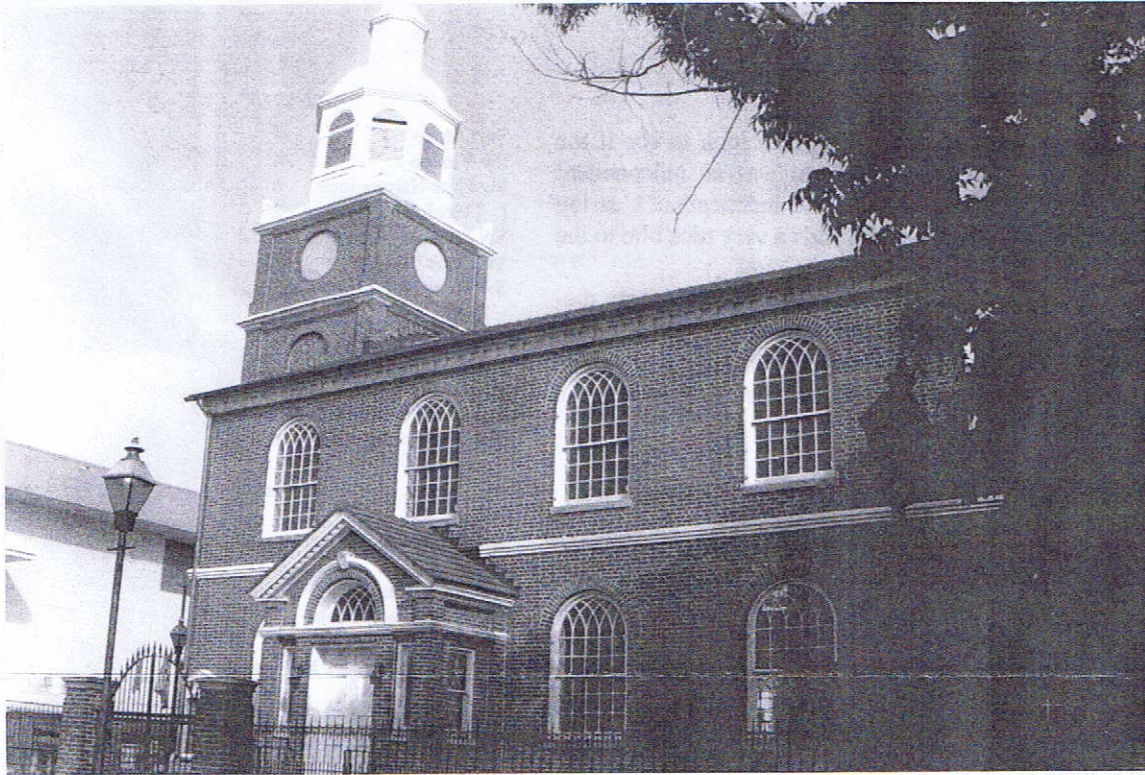
Gr Octave	4'
Gr Octave Quint	2½'
Gr Super Octave	2'
Gr Mixture	III
Gr Trumpet	8'

Swell	
Sw Bourdon	16'
Sw Violin Diapason	8'
Sw Std. Diapason	8'
Sw Salicional	8'
Sw Flute Harmonique	4'
Sw Octavin	2'
Sw Mixture	III
Sw Oboe	8'

Pedal	
Bourdon	16'

Couplers	
Gr to Ped	
Sw to Ped	
Sw to Gr	
Sw to Gr Octaves	



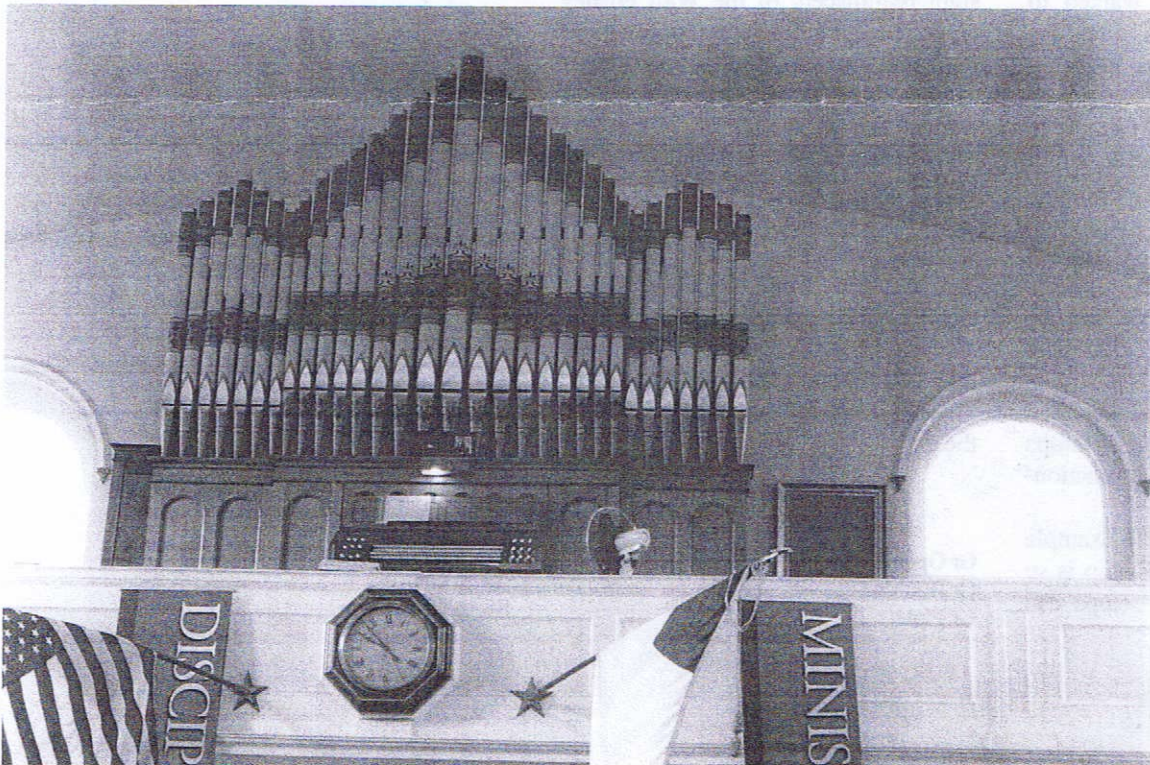


Old Otterbein United Methodist Church

St. Stephen and St. James Lutheran Church

The Maryland Church Organ Company, Baltimore, MD, No. 2

Henry Niemann, two manual and pedal, 15 rks. 1897  
Old Otterbein



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St. Stephen and St. James is just  
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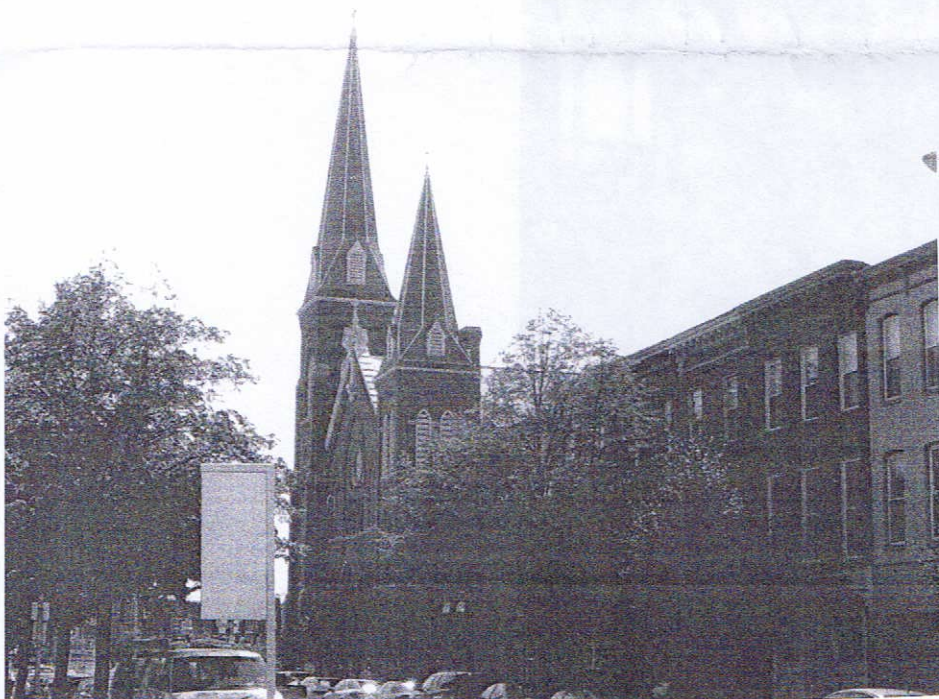




Dedication plate on Niemann organ



St. Martini Lutheran  
Henricetta & Hanover Sts.  
Baltimore



St. Stephen & St. James  
Lutheran Church  
Hanover St.





The Maryland Church Organ Company, Baltimore, Md., No. 2  
Two manuals and pedal, 20 rks.

All photos by Paul Birekner

Hilborne Roosevelt, No. 329, 1886, 2 manuals, 21rks  
St. Martini





## News and Information

Richard Howell is nearing the ending of the voicing of his organ at Emmanuel Church in Greenwood, Va.(about 16 miles west of Charlottesville on US Rte 250). He says- " it is by far the nicest room I have had to work in; a perfect room for music making on a small scale, one in which you hear everything- and I mean everything!" This news is nearly a month old. He may well be finished the voicing by now. His wife Peggy, will play the dedication recital. No date has been set yet.

Mr. Howell also has the contract to build a new organ of 30 stops with Hauptwerk, Brustwerk, and tall Swell for Peggy's church, St. John's Episcopal in Lynchburg; one mile from his shop. The scheduled delivery date is currently 2007.

The Johnson organ at the old Friendship Baptist in SW DC is still needing a new home. Anyone who knows of a church that is seeking a historic and very beautiful organ needs to contact David Storey. E-mail [DMS1518@aol.com](mailto:DMS1518@aol.com) ; Telephone: 1-410-889-3800

The Eastman School of Music and Westfield invites you to attend a conference on The Organ and The Pedal Clavichord, October 20-22, 2004. See their website for more details.

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