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Silver Spring, Maryland Crawl

Saturday, March 17, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Colesville Presbyterian Church
12800 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

1893 Adam Stein

2 manuals and pedal - mechanical action - 14 ranks

Directions: If coming from VA or DC, off the Capital Beltway take Colesville Road, Route 29, North, toward Columbia. At New Hampshire Avenue, take the exit going north. The church will be on your left and is down the hill, not totally exposed to the highway.

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Dues are due in October. \$14.00 mailed to Secretary -Treasurer.

Checks payable to HILBUS CHAPTER OHS

11:30 a.m.

Boston Market
(White Oak)
11297 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

There are other fast food restaurants available in the shopping area.

Directions: From Colesville Presbyterian Church, go south on New Hampshire, just past Route 29 to Lockwood Drive. Make a left and go left into the shopping center. The Boston Market will be to our left.

1:00 p.m.

Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church
(Now a part of Silver Spring United Methodist Church.)
33 University Avenue, East
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

The organ was originally a Hook & Hastings Pipe Organ located in a Baltimore church.

About 1950, Wicks rebuilt the instrument with additions.

It was subsequently moved to a church in Arlington, Virginia.

In 2000, it was moved and installed with additions in Marvin UMC.

Currently 3 manual and pedal - 32 ranks.

Directions: When you leave the White Oak Shopping Center (Boston Market), stay on Lockwood Drive until it deadness into Route 29. Take that South to University Avenue, East. You will have to take the right there and follow the directions for a U turn onto University Avenue. As soon as you pass the intersection, take the driveway into the church's parking lot. **(It may be helpful to use a map or GPS system.)**

HILBUS CHAPTER OHS
Organ Crawl January 27, 2018 – Washington, DC
Prepared by David Storey
Review by Peter Crisafulli

A bright, sunny and unusually warm day (for January) greeted the several members of the Hilbus Chapter who travelled to Capitol Hill this past January 27 to visit two churches and examine the organs contained within.

First up on our itinerary was Christ Church (Washington Parish), 620 G Street SE, Washington, DC 20003. Parish musician Richard Thibadeau, and parishioner David McCahan were on hand to greet us and tell us about the organ.

Built by Casavant Frères Ltée in 2017, their Opus 3914, the organ is situated at the back of the nave and housed in a simple but attractive oak case that harmonizes with the church interior. It consists of two manuals & pedal controlling 17 ranks on electro-pneumatic unit chests. The detached console is moveable, compact, and “user friendly” with tilting tablet stop controls above the swell manual.

This reviewer especially enjoys examining smaller instruments of seemingly modest means. It’s interesting and informative to see what builder and client consider essential. The best of these “multum-in-parvo” instruments are imaginatively designed, effective for their intended purpose, and may contain a surprise or two that one would not expect from a smaller organ. They give the impression of a larger instrument than is actually the case.

It is the opinion of this reviewer that this new Casavant organ succeeds on all counts. It boasts a nice principal chorus, three different beautiful flute ranks, strings, mutations, a versatile chorus reed, and a distinctive color reed. With the exception of the Great Open Diapason, Chimney Flute and Octave, and the Pedal Subbass and Principal, everything is enclosed in a swell box. Thoughtful use of duplexing and extension has expanded the flexibility of the basic ranks. Most importantly, the voicing is carefully done so that no one sound stands apart, balances are good, and yet the individual voices have character and color.

One of the illustrious past members of this historic parish was John Philip Sousa, and there is a window in his honor located in the parish hall. While the organ does not include a Sousaphone stop, it does offer the following:

GREAT

- 16 Bourdon (from Swell Bourdon 8 + 1-12 from Pedal Subbass)
- 8 Open Diapason*+ (some in façade)
- 8 Chimney Flute*
- 8 Viola (Swell)
- 8 Open Flute (Swell 4 + notes 1-12 from Bourdon 8)
- 4 Octave*
- 4 Spire Flute (ext. Ch. Fl.)
- 2 2/3 Nasard (Swell)
- 2 Fifteenth (ext. Octave 4)
- 1 Mixture III (Swell)
- 8 Trumpet (Swell)
- 8 Clarinet (Swell)
- Swell to Great

SWELL

- 8 Viola
- 8 Viola Celeste (from low F)
- 8 Bourdon
- 4 Principal
- 4 Open Flute
- 4 Celestes II (from 8)
- 2 2/3 Nasard (TC)
- 2 Flute (ext. Op. Fl. 4)
- 1 3/5 Tierce (TC)
- 1 1/3 Larigot (from Nasard)
- 1 Mixture III
- 16 Clarinet (TC; from 8)
- 8 Trumpet
- 8 Clarinet
- 4 Clarion (ext. Tpt)
- Tremulant

PEDAL

- 16 Subbass* (wood; ext. Ch. Fl.)
- 16 Gedeckt (from Subbass on reduced wind pressure)
- 8 Principal*+
- 8 Chimney Flute (Great)
- 8 Viola (Swell)
- 4 Choral Bass (ext.Pr. 8)
- 4 Chimney Flute (Great)
- 16 Posaune (ext. Swell Tpt L/2)
- 8 Trumpet (Swell)
- 4 Clarinet (Swell)
- Great to Pedal
- Swell to Pedal

*Unenclosed

+some common basses

Manuals 58 notes; Pedal 32 notes

Following an enjoyable lunch at a local restaurant, we headed to Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, 201 4th Street SE, Washington, DC 20003. Here, the organ was built by the Schlicker Organ Company of Buffalo, NY. No date is given on the builder's nameplate. The pipes are situated in chambers at the front of the sanctuary covered by a grille cloth, and a stationary three manual console with tilting-rocker stop tablets above the top manual is situated to the right near the front.

Although three manual divisions were planned for, and the console built to accommodate this, the Positiv division (bottom manual) has, to date, never been installed. However, the stop tablets were engraved, so we know what was envisioned. Also prepared for, but so far never installed, are chimes and a pedal mixture.

Schlicker organs have sometimes been criticized as too brilliant or aggressive as taste has shifted to a more foundational tonal center in recent years. This organ, though, to this reviewer's ears, sounds more genteel than overly bright or aggressive. The Great Principals 8' 4' 2' are pleasant and well defined, while the Mixture V adds a silvery sheen to the ensemble. (Of course, the prepared-for

Positiv division would undoubtedly add more brilliance.) As well, there is a delightful variety of engaging flute stops. The Swell offers the most in the way of solo sounds, as it includes mutations and the only manual reed at present.

GREAT

16 Quintadena
8 Principal
8 Rohrfloete
4 Octave
4 Quintadena (ext. 16')
2 Octave
V Mixture
Chimes (prepared for)
Swell to Great 16, 8, 4
Positiv to Great 16, 8

SWELL

8 Gedeckt
8 Salicional
8 Voix Celeste (TC)
4 Spitzfloete
2 2/3 Nazard
2 Waldfloete
1 3/5 Tierce (TC)
8 Fagot
Tremolo
Swell 16, 4

PEDAL

16 Bourdon
16 Quintadena (Great)
8 Principal
8 Quintadena (Great)
4 Choralbass
4 Quintadena (Great)
III Mixture (prepared for)
16 Fagot (independent)

4 Schalmey (Swell Fagot)
Great to Pedal 8
Swell to Pedal 8
Positiv to Pedal 8

POSITIV (prepared for)

8 *Quintadena*
4 *Rohrfloete*
2 *Principal*
1 1/3 *Larigot*
IV *Scharf*
8 *Krummhorn*
Tremolo
Swell to Positiv, 8, 4

The Hilbus Chapter thanks David Storey for arranging this enjoyable crawl. And, of course, we extend our thanks to Christ Church and Capitol Hill Presbyterian for welcoming us

HILBUS CHAPTER OHS
Anniversary Celebration: James Houston & the 1893 Niemann Organ
Sunday, February 11, 2018 at 4:00pm
First Unitarian Church of Baltimore
12 W. Franklin St., Baltimore, MD 21201

Review by Peter Crisafulli

In lieu of the February organ crawl, we decided to join the gala celebration honoring Hilbus Chapter member James Houston for his fifty years (!) as Organist and Music Director of the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, and celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Henry Niemann organ in that church. Given the *raison d'être* of the OHS, it was fitting for us to do so. Jim has been a long-time member of our chapter, and he continues to preside over one of the most distinctive historic organs in Baltimore – a city of many historic organs – and has been the moving force behind its preservation and restoration.

First Unitarian and the Baltimore Chapter of the AGO collaborated in this event. And what a grand event it was! First Unitarian was filled to capacity, and there

were eloquent and heartfelt speeches honoring Jim. Rev. David Carl Olson, Minister of First Unitarian, joked that while some churches are identified by a famous minister, for example, “There’s Rev. So-and-so’s Church,” First Unitarian is known simply as “Jim’s Church.”

Attendees were presented with two extensive documents prepared for the occasion, one a biography of Jim, the other a comprehensive account of the Niemann organ, its history and its technical details. Those arriving early were treated to a slide show on a large screen at the front showing various aspects of recent restoration work by David Storey.

A recital followed the speeches, presented by four organists who have had long and close associations with Jim. But just before that, we were treated to an impromptu soprano aria from Handel’s “Ode to St. Cecilia” sung by a wonderful recent graduate of Peabody (I apologize for not getting her name, for this was not printed in the program), accompanied by Michael Britt on harpsichord, and Jim playing a small positiv-like organ.

Following this delightful addition to the program, all attention was focused on the organ gallery at the back of the church. Cameras at the console allowed the audience to view the performers on the screen up front.

The four performers were Marijim Thoene, Michael Gaffney, Michael Britt, and Marvin Mills. The composite program was diverse, ranging from Handel to composers still living, allowing the audience to hear the venerable Niemann organ in many contrasting styles, and to enjoy its many luscious timbres.

A reception in Enoch Pratt Parish Hall concluded the festivities.

The Hilbus Chapter salutes Jim for his remarkable achievements and his dedication to upholding the ideals of the OHS. We wish him many more years! Thanks to Jim, future generations will have the joy of experiencing this beautiful Niemann organ. As well, it will be their responsibility to be the stewards of this irreplaceable work of art. Let us hope it is so.