

Hilbus Chapter

The Organ Historical Society, Inc.

Where the Tracker Action Is!

www.hilbus.org



VOLUME 48

NUMBER 12

SEPTEMBER 2017

WHOLE NUMBER 430

BALTIMORE CITY CRAWL

Saturday, September 23, 2017

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Mount Calvary RC Church
816 Eutaw Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Andover-Flentrop, Methuen, Massachusetts, 1961

Opus 35, 2 manual and pedal, 51 ranks, mechanical key and stop action

Directions: Turn right onto Madison Avenue from Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. The front doors will NOT be open. Do not try them. Park in the lot or on Madison Avenue. Enter the church from the parking lot door on the Madison Avenue side of the building.

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

Checks payable to HILBUS CHAPTER OHS

12:00 p.m.

Lunch

Lunch in the Mount Vernon area of North Charles Street and Read Streets.
Choice of French, Afghan, Indian and American cuisines.

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church
811 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Létourneau Ltée 2009
Opus 114, 3 manual and pedal, 40 stops, electro-pneumatic

Directions: Park on the street or in the pay lot behind the church. Enter through the side door at the top of the ramp on Cathedral Street.

RECITALS

Friday, September 22, at 12:15 p.m. - Music at Midday - National City Christian Church,
Organist - **Hans Uwe Heilscher** (Wiesbaden, Germany)

Saturday, September 23, at 4:00 p.m. - Music of the Reformation - Spencerville Adventist Church.

Sunday, September 24, at 3:30 p.m. - Community Concerts at Second - Second Presbyterian Church of Baltimore - Organist - **Felix Hell**

Friday, September 29, at 12:15 p.m. - Music at Midday - National City Christian Church,
Organist - **Patrick Pope** (Charlotte, NC)

Friday, October 6, at 12:15 p.m. - Music at Midday - National City Christian Church,
Organist, **James Mellichamp**

Sunday, October 8, at 4:00 p.m. - Music at the Monastery - Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, Washington, DC - Organist - **Jeffrey Pannebaker** (St. Luke's Lutheran, Silver Spring)

Friday, October 13, at 12:15 p.m. - Music at Midday - National City Christian Church,
Organist - **Michael Batcho** (Milwaukee, Wisconsin)

Hilbus Chapter OHS Crawl - Home Organ Crawl in Northern VA July 22, 2017

Report by Peter Crisafulli

Hilbus chapter members Jim Baird and David Dutton arranged a most unusual and enjoyable crawl for our chapter in July, visiting the homes of two of our members and experiencing a host of historic pipe and reed organs.

In the morning we visited the home of Richard Foth in Catlett, VA, situated in the beautiful countryside of northern Virginia. Between Richard's house, the older original house on his property situated beyond his current residence, and the barn, there is an amazing collection of keyboard instruments that include: 1846 E. G. G. Hook I-6; 1901 Möller tracker II-10; c. 1932 Möller theater organ II-6; 1930 Wurlitzer theater organ II-4; Estey 2-manual + pedal reed organ; c. 1790 English pianoforte; and numerous other reed organs and harmoniums.

Obviously, time and space does not permit a review of all of these instruments, so I have selected a couple of the outstanding pipe organs to describe in detail. Let's begin with the 1846 E. & G. G. Hook located in the original house on the property. This is a one-manual tracker organ that may have originally been in a church in New Hampshire. Jim Baird first became involved with this organ while in storage at Ruth Charter's home. He recalls a 13-note pedalboard which at that time was not connected to anything. In the late 1970's, Jim replaced this with a 27-note pedalboard, chest and pipes from an 1890's organ. Originally pneumatic, Jim converted this to tracker action. When the organ was moved to its present location, Richard Foth decided to not include the pedal chest and pipes, so the 27-note pedalboard is present, but without pipes.

An unusual feature are the twelve extra manual keys below normal low C. At present, these are not connected to anything, but there is room inside the casework to allow for a 12-note chest with 16' pipes (presumably stopped), and there is an extant comb on the rear frame that would have held squares to connect to this chest. Perhaps the original 13-note pedalboard was also intended to be connected allowing an organist to add depth to the bass line by playing either with the left hand or the feet.

The organ is housed in a simple pine case with non-speaking display pipes in the front. The sound of the individual stops is sweet and mild, but the sum of the individual parts adds up to a rich, full sound. Here follows an annotated stop-list.

MANUAL (divided stops between TF#-TG)

8' Open Diapason (notes 1-12 borrowed from Stopt Diapason Bass via tubing; TC & TC# are independent stopped wooden pipes; from TD & up open metal)

8' Stopt Diapason Bass & Treble (1-24 stopped wood; from middle c & up metal chimney flute)

8' Dulciana Treble

4' Principal Bass & Treble
8' Hautboy (original missing)
Octave Coupler
Bellows Signal

PEDAL

16' Sub Bass (not installed at present)

Next we walked over to Richard's barn. Up in the loft is an amazing collection of pipe and reed organs in various states of playing (or non-playing) condition. For this part of the review I will focus on the 1901 Möller tracker organ which is a real gem.

This organ originally came from a church in Salem, VA. Prior to finding its way into Richard's barn, Dr. Bob Hobbs bought and moved the organ to his home in Cheverly, MD in 1967, and then moved it again to his home in Rose Haven.

Jim Baird has pointed out three archaic features, things that would have been unusual for Möller by 1901. These include original cone tuning for upper work, the pedal built with tracker action at a time when Möller was building pneumatic pedal actions, and the Tenor F 8' stops relying on common stopped basses (controlled by separate draw knobs) to fill out the bottom octave-and-a-half of these stops (except for the Great Open Diapason).

Tonally, this instrument features a clear and forthright 8' 4' diapason chorus, lovely flutes and delicate strings, and even a perky little 2'. The stop-list is as follows:

GREAT

8' Open Diapason (bottom 17 pipes in façade)
8' Melodia (TF)
8' Dulciana (TF)
8' Unison St'd Bass
4' Principal (bottom 5 pipes in façade)
Swell to Great
Swell to Great by Octave

SWELL

8' Viola Diapason (TF)
8' Stopped Diapason (TF)
8' Salicional (TF)
8' Unison St'd Bass
4' Flute d'amour (stopped wood)
2' Flautino

PEDAL

16' Bourdon
Great to Pedal

Swell to Pedal

Standing opposite the 1901 Möller tracker is a playable II-6 Möller theater organ from c. 1932 with electro-pneumatic action. The six basic voices, extensively unified, are: Diapason, Stopped Flute, String, Dulciana, French Horn, and Vox Humana.

Also in the loft is a disassembled 1930 II-4 Wurlitzer theater organ. The four basic voices are Concert Flute, String, Trumpet and Vox.

In addition to what has just been described, there are various reed organs and harmoniums scattered about, including a couple of impressive two-manual and pedal instruments - a veritable museum of pipe and reed organs!

Before leaving Richard's "organ farm," I'll just mention one more pipe organ in his living room, a little one-manual (no pedal) positive Richard built some years ago consisting of one rank of wooden flute pipes. It has a charming sound and has the unusual feature of sub and super octave couplers acting on the mechanical action.

Following lunch at a local shopping mall, we headed over to the beautiful home of John and Kathy Ackley in Manassas, VA, home to not only John & Kathy, but also to a magnificent 1893 Mason & Risch two manual & pedal Vocalion, a 1906 Estey (Style K) two manual and pedal reed organ, as well as a couple of other smaller reed organs. Because it is so rare and unique, I will devote this part of my review to the 1893 Mason & Risch Vocalion.

When one enters the Ackley's music room, one would think there is an elegant pipe organ gracing the space. In truth, the beautifully decorated façade pipes adorning the oak case are decorative only because, in fact, all of the sounds on this instrument are produced by free reeds.

The Vocalion was developed in the late 19th century as a less expensive alternative to the pipe organ. John Ackley pointed out that the reeds of a Vocalion are of larger scale than those found in the more common reed organs of the day and as such produce a fuller, rounder sound, hence the name Vocalion, suggesting its more vocal nature. Everything about this instrument seems so pipe organ-like, except for no pipes! I'm sure this is the only time in my life that I have heard a mutation stop on a reed organ (although it was not originally so). It was convincing. Especially amazing was the flute-like quality of the stops with flute names produced from free reeds. And I must mention the 2' Piccolo which runs all the way to the top without breaks using - again - reeds! They must be tiny at the top end. The full sound, including Quinte and Piccolo, with the Swell to great unison and octave couplers, truly resembled a pipe organ's plenum.

Here, then, are the specifications, courtesy of John Ackley:

Mason & Risch Vocalion, Worcester, MA

Opus 1960, Dated February 14, 1893

New Swell and Great action parts, new blower & box, and tuning (A438.5) by Eliot D. Freese, 2004

GREAT (348 reeds total)

16' Open Diapason

8' Open Diapason

8' Melodia

8' Dulciana

4' Harmonic Flute

8' Trumpet

SWELL (enclosed & expressive) (522 reeds)

16' Bourdon

8' Stopped Diapason

8' Gamba

8' Viol D'Gamba (celeste tuning)

4' Flute D'Amour

2 2/3' Quinte (originally 4' Eolian II)

2' Piccolo

8' Oboe

PEDAL (120 reeds)

16' Double Open Diapason

16' Bourdon

8' Violoncello (added by Carey Organ Co., 1988)

4' Flute (added by Carey, 1988)

A grand total of 990 reeds!

COUPLERS: Swell to Great, Swell to Great Octaves, Swell to Pedal, Great to Pedal.

ACCESSORIES:

Great to Pedal Reversible

Piano Great, Forte Great

Balanced Swell Pedal

19 ranks (18 independent voices in use)

Tremulant (fan type, located in swell box)

Wind Indicator / Bellows Signal (switches on blower) / Ventus Blower 220 volts, 60 cycles, 0.75 hp

Façade pipes (25 painted and stenciled)

Balanced mechanical key action / mechanical stop action

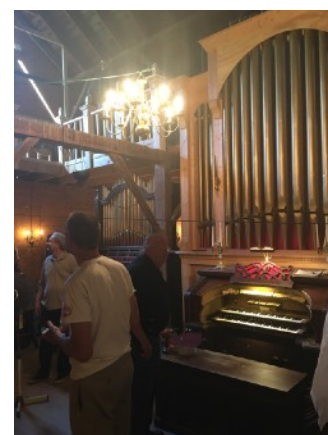
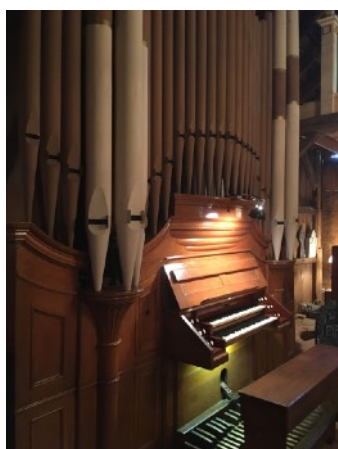
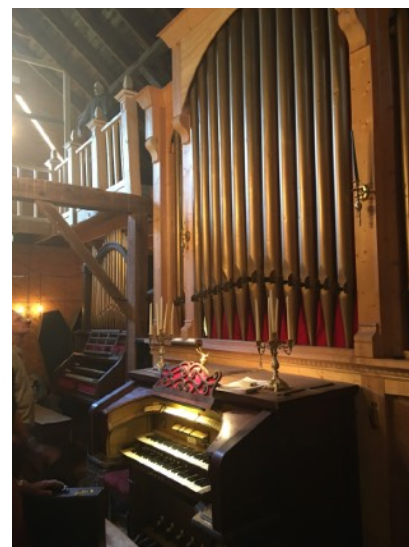
COMPASSES: Manuals 58 notes CC-a3 (ivory naturals, ebony sharps); Pedals CC-f (straight, flat)

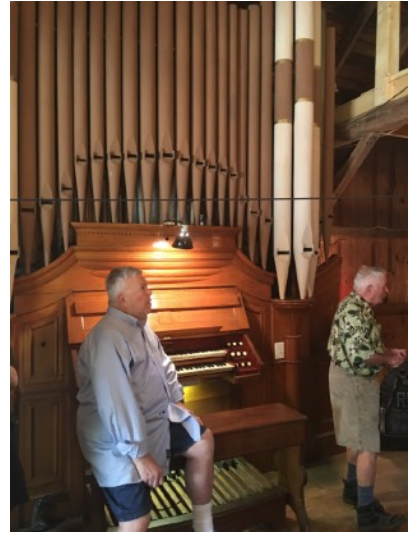
CASE: solid oak

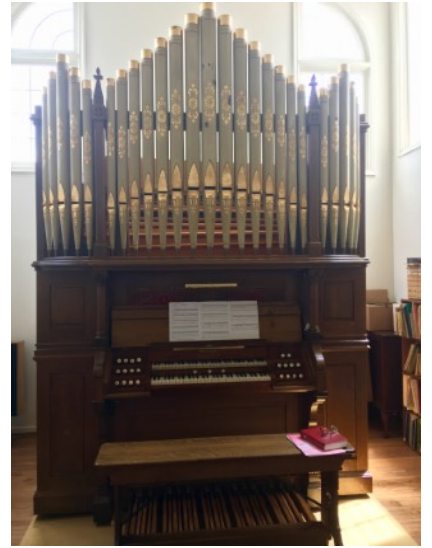
DIMENSIONS: W 108" / H 120" (with pipes) / D 65" (excluding pedalboard)

WIND PRESSURE: 100mm static, 60mm regulated (about 2")

The Hilbus Chapter wishes to extend its heartfelt thanks to Jim Baird and David Dutton for organizing and arranging this crawl, and to Richard Foth and John & Kathy Ackley for their generous and warm hospitality welcoming us into their homes and sharing with us their rich musical treasures. Finally, I want to thank Jim Baird and David Dutton for giving me so much valuable detail and interesting information concerning the pipe organs reviewed in this article.









Many thanks to Glen Frank for providing the photos of the crawl.

