

Organo Pleno Newsletter 2016



The crew that removed console and pipes from FBC
Shelbyville, TN.

Greetings,

What a great year 2015 was for all of us! The economy is growing and the gas prices have been falling. Great news for technicians traveling for service calls. Our company had a vibrant year with more churches calling for service work. We traveled from Kentucky to Mississippi, working on many interesting projects. Here are a few projects that we would like to mention.

- **First Baptist Church Shelbyville, TN.**

First Baptist Church Shelbyville just completed a renovation of their sanctuary. We first removed the console and façade pipes so the contractor could enlarge the stage for the choir and pulpit. The console had been painted white and the church members decided they wanted it changed back to the original natural color. We took the console and façade pipes back to our shop facility to make the alterations. The console was taken apart before starting the process of removing the white paint. It took many hours to remove the paint without damaging the beautiful carvings on the case. The pipes were sanded by hand and dents removed before spraying a new coat of silver/gray paint. Everyone was pleased with the results of our work to the console and facade.

- **Belle Meade Methodist, Nashville TN.**

We just completed the third stage of the renovations to Belle Meade's 37 rank Schantz organ. Doing the renovations in three stages made it possible for the organ to be playable during the entire project. The first two stages of our work were done in the pipe chambers — re-leathering the organ. The third and final stage was upgrading the console to an ICS-4000 Peterson control system with new chamber relays. A new set

of Peterson chimes was also installed. Choirmaster and Organist, Mark Acker was very helpful and patient through all three stages.

- **Fisk University Chapel- Nashville, TN.**

In 1865, barely six months after the end of the Civil War and just two years after the Emancipation Proclamation, three men; John Ogden, the Reverend Erastus Milo Cravath and the Reverend Edward P. Smith established the Fisk School in Nashville. Fisk's world-famous Jubilee Singers originated as a group of traveling students who set out from Nashville on October 6, 1871, taking the entire contents of the University's treasury with them for travel expenses, praying that through their music they could somehow raise enough money to keep the doors of their debt-ridden school open. The singers struggled at first, but before long, their performances so electrified audiences that they traveled throughout the United States and Europe, moving to tears audiences that included William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Ulysses S. Grant, William Gladstone, Mark Twain, Johann Strauss and Queen Victoria.

Today, we are honored to be refurbishing their 1960 Holtkamp organ that is located in Jubilee Hall. This past summer, we re-leathered the Great division and polished the façade pipes. We will be re-leathering all divisions and upgrading the console under the watchful eyes of Dr. Phillip Autry and Dr. Anthony Williams. We are excited to be part of this ongoing project.

- **Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, GA.**

The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer purchased a used Reuter organ from our firm. They built a new room in their sanctuary for the chests and pipework. We added three new stops, 2 2/3 Nazard, 1 3/5 Tierce and 1 1/3 Nazard. A set of Chimes and a Zimbelstern were also added. The entire organ is under expression except for 11 pipes of the 8' Principal that are in a display. The new windchest and casework support the façade pipes. It was a snug installation in the new chamber room but, everything fit and sounds great. Dr. Kristen Hansen made the project possible, and she loves the organ. She found the experience so inspiring that she plans on writing an article for the AGO magazine.

- **Bartlett United Methodist Church, TN.**

Bartlett United Methodist Church began looking for a pipe organ in 2001 after deciding to build a new sanctuary. They purchased the 1928 Kimball, opus 7035, pipe organ from the Cook Convention Center in Memphis, TN. This is the smaller of the two Kimball organs, which sat in the South Hall of the 12,000 seat Ellis Auditorium. For a full capacity gathering, both organs could be played from the V manual console. It must have been very exciting considering the smaller organ we rebuilt has a 16' Tuba Mirabilis on 25" of wind. The historic forty-one rank organ was dismantled several years ago and stored in a portion of the convention center. We made several trips to Memphis to gather the organ and transport it to our shop facility. It took us over a year to rebuild the organ; adding five more ranks of pipes for a total of forty-six ranks, totaling 3,029 pipes. We made major changes to the console; for example, refinishing the shell and adding all new electrical systems including a Peterson MSP-1000 and MIDI.

The organ was in need of re-leathering. Last summer, we started the project in the Swell division. The air supply to the two main chests in the Swell was blocked off. This way the organist, Karen Strawhecker, could still play the rest of the organ for Sunday service while we did our work.

- **Woodmont Christian- Nashville, TN.**

Woodmont Christian Church has a III manual 1971 Reuter opus 1714, which needed major re-leathering. Our firm was contracted to re-leather the organ in two stages. The first stage was to remove the pouchboards in the Great and Pedal divisions. Combined there were 354 note pouches and 61 primary pouches. We used chrome tanned, African hairsheep leather with new felt and leather valves.

The second stage was re-leathering the Swell division, including the 8 stage swell machine. The reed pipes in the Swell needed attention as well, so we removed them and brought them to our shop facility. The reed sets were cleaned and the tongues were polished and tightened. The caps on the Bourdon pipes were tightened as well. We were able to shim the caps in place without removing them from the division. The project was a success. By doing the work in 2 stages, organist, Michael Graham, had some organ to play each Sunday throughout the process.

- **First Presbyterian- Jackson, MS**

First Presbyterian Church has a beautiful Casavant organ, opus 3862. The organ has 65 ranks with 3,896 pipes. Unfortunately, the church had a roof leak last summer and water leaked onto the chests in the Swell division. Our firm was called to help with the water damage. We re-leathered over 50 pouches on the main chest and off notes. The mitred low notes on the 16' Trumpet still had water trapped in the miters. The roofing company

made several attempts at repairing the roof, but a secondary ceiling was installed over the Swell as a safeguard. Dr. Bill Wymond was very patient throughout the process.

- **Galloway United Methodist- Jackson, MS.**

The creation of Galloway's Casavant organ, opus 3735, took ten months to complete. After a major renovation of the sanctuary, the organ was installed. The new organ has 65 ranks, is comprised of 3,709 pipes and is organized into five divisions. Last year our firm was contracted to protect the organ during another renovation project in the sanctuary. The pipes of the organ's exposed Great division were removed and stored in trays, and the console was moved to a safe room. During the construction, a pipe burst in the blower room causing major damage. The blower room itself needed to be rebuilt. Gaps in the wall to the furnace room were sealed to block the natural gas fumes from entering the blower room and the organ's wind system.

During the reconstruction of the stage area, we had the electricians install new floor boxes in key locations so the placement of the console was flexible. New D.C. connectors and cables were also installed. The blower bellows was damaged beyond repair by the water. We replaced the bellows and uncovered the organ after the construction was finished, leaving the entire organ clean and in fine tune. It was very nice working with Ms. Reagan Lord, Worship Arts Director.

- **Forest Lake United Methodist – Tuscaloosa, AL.**

Forest Lake United Methodist has a 1968, 34 rank Moller Organ, opus 11724. It was a transplant that our firm made in 2003. The organ was transported by us in two trucks and trailers from Kenilworth Union Church in Kenilworth, IL. It was the farthest relocation and rebuilding project that Milnar Organ had to date. This past summer, we made a bid to revoice the Great high pressure 8' Festival Trumpet. The trumpet was having problems staying in tune and was too loud. We removed and shipped the Trumpet to Oyster Pipe Works in Louisville, OH. Oyster was contracted to revoice the Trumpet to 4.5" wind pressure, it was originally on 6". The Festival Trumpet can now be played with the rest of the organ without overpowering the instrument.

- **First Baptist 8th Street – Chattanooga, TN.**

First Baptist was organized in 1866 under the leadership of Chaplain Van Horne and a small group of Federal Army soldiers who had served during the Civil War. Rev. Alan

Nickerson was the first pastor and was ordained by Chaplain Van Horne. He served for 19 years during a period of great growth before his resignation. Currently, Mr. Bryant Lowery is the Director of Music and Organist. It is a pleasure to see him during our tuning visits. We have serviced the pipe organ since 2008.

Organo Pleno Newsletter 2015

Greetings,

What a great year 2014 was for us all! The economy is growing and the gas prices have been falling. Great news for technicians traveling for service calls. Our company had a vibrant year with more churches calling for service work. We traveled from Kentucky to Corinth, MS, working on many interesting projects. Here are a few projects that we would like to mention.



FUMC Opelika, AL

The First United Methodist Church of Opelika has a rich and varied history, a history that parallels the city of Opelika itself. They have a beautiful 1968 Reuter. As you can see in the photo, the entire Great and part of the Pedal is exposed. The metal pipes and the slide tuners were very tarnished. We washed all the pipes in a chemical bath and replaced the tin slide tuners with modern stainless steel ones. The pipes really brightened up the center of the sanctuary.

We reconfigured the 1' Great Mixture to a 1 1/3 Mixture by adding new pipes. Behind the center three pipes of the Pedal 16' Contrabass is a new 8' Trumpet. We felt the reverse diatonic layout filled in the design and the sound of the Chorus reed put a nice crown on the division. The Swell and Choir divisions are about six feet above the Great on opposite walls. Tuning has always been an issue. Before our work on the instrument, air vents were installed high on the back wall of the chambers with exhaust fans at the base of the chamber doors. One exhaust fan did not work and one of the air vents had no diffuser allowing the heat or air to blow directly on the pipes. There also was no insulation above the rooms. After the church installed two feet of insulation above the chamber ceilings and corrected the fan and diffuser, the divisions stay in pitch together. When we design an environment for an organ, we strive for natural convection air flow. We found in some older installations, keeping the circulating fan on all the time, helps in the tuning stability.

We went over every pipe in every stop correcting speech and volume, while keeping the original tonal levels. We removed the Great, Swell and Choir division's bellows and note pouches for leather refurbishing. We were able to do the work in phases, so the congregation would still have an organ through the project. The last major change was adding a new console. Our three manual console has tracker touch keyboards that feel great. We also added an ICS-4000 software based organ control system that has all the features!



St. Joseph's Episcopal McDonough, GA

We designed and installed pipe additions on a Rodgers electronic organ at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in McDonough, GA. Father Bancroft, Richard Rhineheart and his wife Candy were instrumental in adding pipes to their Rodgers organ. The church not only desired the tonal improvements, but also the visual majesty of real pipework. It was in 2006 that we designed and installed the first phase which included the 16' Pedal Principal. The church built a substantial platform over their sanctuary doors to support the pipe additions.

Our most recent additions include an 8' Principal, 4' Choral Bass and III Mixture for the Great division. We added a total of 18 ranks of pipes which gave them an independent Principal and Flute Chorus in the Great and Pedal. All recently built Rodgers organs have the circuitry to add speaking pipes.



Athens State University, AL

Athens State University, founded in 1822, began as a women's college and is the oldest learning institution in Alabama. Its impressive campus has three buildings on the National Register of Historic Places to include McCandless Hall which was built in 1912. Last year we removed the 1892 George Kilgen and Son tracker organ to make way for a complete renovation of the hall. We worked closely with Mr. Jerry Bradford, who is the university's staff engineer in charge of facilities. Under his watchful eye, most of the older buildings on campus have been renovated. The Kilgen organ was first installed in the First Methodist Church in Athens, Alabama. In 1925, the church was given a \$500.00 credit towards a new Pilcher organ. Pilcher removed the Kilgen and re-installed it in McCandless Hall.

The Kilgen family tradition of building pipe organs originates with Sebastian Kilgen. He was a French Huguenot (Calvinist) who fled to Germany to avoid religious persecution. He took refuge in a monastery near Durlach where he learned organ building from the monks and in 1640 built his first organ. The succeeding generations of Kilgens built organs in Durlach for over 200 years before George moved to New York in 1850. He worked for Jardine for a short time before he built his own shop. In 1873, he moved his shop and family to St. Louis. His son Charles joined the firm in 1886. Charles later succeeded his father as the head of the company and guided it during its most productive years.

We approached this project with enthusiasm and a little apprehension. We have done many historical restorations of mechanical instruments in the past, but we had

yet to do a stenciled façade. We communicated with Marylou Davis, an expert on stenciling, and she gave us some valuable advice which helped us to complete this task. The façade pipes had been painted silver, but with delicate use of paint thinner, we were able to expose the original stenciled design. We transferred the designs onto Mylar, a clear thin plastic. Then we cut out the designs to produce twenty-four different stencils.

After comparing the existing colors with hundreds of samples, we settled on fifteen different colors. We used extra help to keep labor costs down, but the stenciling still exceeded our estimate. The feeder bellows and hand pump arm were not tossed out when a blower was added many years ago, so we were able to restore the hand pump system. We also installed a back flap in the wind line to the blower to allow the feeder bellows to fill the main, multi-fold bellows. We replaced the inoperable blower with a quiet, sleeve bearing, German blower that is situated to the left of the Swell box. The thick leather and felt that was applied to the pallets one-hundred, twenty-two years ago was retained. The wooden trackers were still pliable and other than a few that were broken, were retained. The organ was installed in a room behind a presidium arch. This location, along with thick theatrical drapes that were positioned in front, greatly restricted the full egress of sound. The hall was to continue having theatrical productions, so we encouraged the architect to allow a portion of the organ to move forward of the arch and to install draperies that were light weight.

Moving the organ forward also allowed for better access to the pump mechanism and allowed for a rear access door to the Swell division. For better access, we added new ladders and walk boards to the Swell and Great divisions. We felt these practical improvements did not take away from the authenticity of the historic organ. Fortunately, the organ received very little service work during the 80+ years it was in McCandless Hall. As a result, the pipe work was in pristine condition. We retained all of the original tuning scrolls and the pitch of A435. During the careful cleaning and the restoration of the pipe work, we discovered the string stops of the organ were built by A. Gottfried & Company, who was considered the finest pipe maker in the country. Tonally, we retained the volume levels set by the builder within each rank with only minimal blending within individual ranks. The organ was well received and will remain the focal point in the beautifully renovated McCandless Hall.



St. Ann Catholic, TN

It has been a pleasure working with the people and staff of St. Ann since 1969. Their Schantz organ was installed with only six ranks, but was designed with future ranks in mind. As time went on and funds became available, we added a total of eleven new ranks. In 2000, we added the much needed upperwork to the Great division. We installed a 2' Principal and an III 1 1/3' Mixture. The final stage of the 1961 Schantz pipe organ was completed this year. The last three sets of pipes are considered color stops and were added to the Swell division. The 8' Oboe is a reed stop with a full warm sound that blends very well with the flutes in the organ. The 2 2/3 is a color stop as well and adds upper harmonics. The 1 3/5 Tierce also adds a great deal of harmonics as well. It completes a full Cornet. In 1983, we installed a "starter" organ at First Baptist Church in Manchester, TN. We initially installed eleven ranks. We built the bellows, chest frames and relay large enough to accommodate a much larger instrument. The name board was built with additional stop tablets for the future ranks. The original organ has grown to 15 ranks with room for 8 more ranks without having to add any new stop tabs!

Console of FUMC, Corinth, MS

First United Methodist in Corinth is going through a huge renovation of their sanctuary. We were contracted to refurbish the console that had water damage. The veneer had several areas that needed to be replaced and re-finished to original color. We added a new Peterson ICS 4000 control system. We installed 40 engraved drawknobs, 32 engraved thumb pistons and a new AC control system. This is an ongoing project and should be completed soon.



FBC, Dyersburg, TN

First Baptist in Dyersburg is also doing major changes to their sanctuary. Our firm has been contracted to protect and make additions to the pipe organ. The 3 manual Casavant organ currently has an 8 – level SSL combination action that we are upgrading to 128 levels. We are also installing a record / playback feature in the console.

Belle Meade UMC, Nashville, TN

In the summer of 1950, thirteen families started a church in the rapidly growing development of west Nashville. Belle Meade United Methodist has become a large congregation in a beautiful area of the city. They have a 37 rank Schantz organ situated in two large chambers on either side of their chancel. They have a busy wedding schedule so we coordinated with the Choirmaster, Mark Acker, to re-leather the organ in three stages. In this way, we were able to keep enough of the organ playable at all times by blocking the wind supply of the divisions we were working on. They are now raising money to update the electrical system. We plan to install an ICS-4000 Peterson control system that will require us to shut the organ down for several weeks.

Organo Pleno Newsletter 2014

Spring Hill United Methodist – Spring Hill, TN



The small railroad town of Spring Hill, Tennessee is situated just south of Nashville. The outskirts of town have grown considerably due to a recently constructed General Motors plant. Fortunately, the heart of town remains as it was at the turn of the twentieth century. The Historic Methodist Church just celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. The sanctuary, with its original furnishings, chancel area and fixtures, was given a touch-up prior to its birthday.

The 1915, eight rank, Hinners tracker organ was installed shortly after the church was built. Founded in 1879, the Hinners Organ Company of Pekin, Illinois developed a number of stock models of mechanical-action instruments that were advertised throughout the central U.S. Operating without salesmen, the company was one of the first to conduct all of its affairs by mail. Buyers first met a company representative when he arrived by train to set up the crated instrument that had been shipped ahead of him. Tracker organs with hand-pumped bellows were suited to an area that, for the most part, lacked electricity. In all, the company constructed nearly three-thousand pipe organs during its sixty years of operation.

Opus 1970 Hinners particulars:

The pump arm was disabled and a blower, situated in the basement, was installed when the town was electrified.

When restoring these early instruments, we re-leather the feeder bellows and if disabled, we re-install the hand pump. The one hundred year old leather on the pallets was like new, so along with the manual trackers, they were retained. The Pedal Bourdon was played by a tubular pneumatic action. The lead tubes were in poor condition and were replaced with black rubber hoses. The low Octave of the Swell 8' Violin Diapason was mounted in the façade and also has a tubular pneumatic action.

The most unusual thing about this organ is its lack of a Swell roller board. The tracker squares are mounted on an angle and the tracker runs are of various lengths running diagonally between the square rails. The action is smooth and has less friction than the normal rollerboard design. In Spring Hill, the Methodists purchased an electronic organ when the Hinners went into disrepair, but they kept their tracker knowing that someday it would be rebuilt.

In the South, the lack of trained organ technicians has caused a lot of these early trackers to be discarded when a bellows corner blew out. Ironically, the lack of regular tunings for this organ left the pipes with tuning scrolls in wonderful condition. After cleaning and reconditioning the pipes, all the tuning scrolls were retained as well as the organ's original pitch. New pull down wires were installed with new felt connection points. Like the builder, we installed new leather adjustment nuts instead of modern plastic ones. Besides the early addition of an electric blower, the century old organ was restored to its original level of high craftsmanship.

Blair School of Music, Nashville, TN

Vanderbilt University

Reuter / Milnar – 23 Ranks FOR SALE

The organ was removed from Peabody College in August of 1981 and transported to our shop in Eagleville. There it was rebuilt, redesigned, and enlarged. A moveable platform was made for the console so it could be stored off stage while not in use. The white console was refinished to match the furnishings of its new home.

Casework to cover the mechanism of the windchests was designed to blend with the room's décor. A new 16' Pedal Trumpet was added to the specification. In 1986 we moved the existing 1' Great Mixture to the Swell division and a new 1 1/3 Mixture was installed in the Great division along with a new 8' Trumpet. A total of 276 pipes were added. The original organ was a gift from Mrs. Hugh W. Stallworth in memory of her mother Caroline Bevill McMichael. The additions to the organ were a gift from

Peter and Lois Fyfe. This organ can be redesigned to fit into a new home. Upgrades and some additions are recommended. The organ can be played until early March at which time it will be removed to make room for a Dobson organ. Specification is on our website.

- Current Projects

- Nashville's Belle Meade United Methodist Church's Schantz organ is in the process of being rebuilt and re-leathered. Working with Mark Aker, we are re-leathering a division at a time so the organ is playable through the rebuilding process.
- This summer, we will start rebuilding the Reuter organ at First United Methodist Church in Opelika, Alabama. The city is only eight miles from Auburn, Alabama. Working with Dr. Lisenby, the project includes a complete re-leathering, new console with a software based organ control system and a good many new stops.
- Soon we will have the organ at First United Methodist Church in Columbia, Tennessee in playing condition again. The console controls and relays are now solid state. New tracker touch manual keyboards and rebuilding the pedalboard give Shannon Arnett and David McClain a much improved feel at the console. Dr. Brian Russell is the new Choir Director.
- St. Patrick's Anglican Church in Murfreesboro, Tennessee will soon be using the pipe organ that was formerly in the chapel of First Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee for their services.

Athens State University, McCandless Hall



Last year we removed the 1892 George Kilgen and Son tracker organ to make way for a complete renovation of McCandless Hall. We are scheduled to reinstall the organ at the end of February 2014.

St. Joseph's Episcopal – McDonough, GA

In 2006, we designed and installed pipe additions on a Rodgers organ at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in McDonough, GA. The church not only desired the tonal improvements, but the visual majesty of pipes. The church built a platform over their front doors to support the pipe additions.

We just installed a 4' Choral Bass and an independent Pedal Mixture. We have been told to start on the final phase of pipe additions as well. When completed, the organ will have independent Principal and Flute Chorus in the Great and Pedal. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Rhinehart have been the catalysts behind the pipe additions.

Newsletter 2013

- **McAfee Concert Hall at Belmont University - Nashville, TN**



The III/55 Aeolian/Skinner at Belmont University has been in our care since it was installed in 1969. At that time, the building was functioning as a large local Baptist Church. After years of declining membership, the church was purchased by Belmont and plans were made to make it a concert hall. We removed the organ during the extensive renovation that included the sloping of the floor, removing the ceiling to the roof line and covering their large windows with additional 1" thick glass to enhance acoustics. The hall rivals the Schermerhorn Symphony Center for its glorious acoustic environment. Both venues employed the acoustic engineers of Akustiks, an acoustical consulting firm based in South Norwalk, Connecticut.

We made several improvements to the organ to include a new ICS-4000 solid state control system, moveable console platform with six plug-in locations, and tonally we took an edge off the mixtures and the high pressure trumpet.

- **Cumberland Presbyterian Church – Scottsboro, AL**

The transplanted Schantz at Cumberland Presbyterian Church is another organ that we marketed, removed and installed. It came from the Chapel of Bartlett United Methodist Church. The sanctuary at Cumberland Presbyterian is larger than the Bartlett Chapel, so we suggested additions. We added an 8' Oboe and 8' Celeste T.C. to the Swell and a 4' Hohlflute to the Great. We updated the control system to an ICS-4000 to add features and eliminate the airline to the console. The Swell division was installed in a well-insulated room in the attic above the center reredos. We had the church install two layers of drywall in the chamber and replace the chancel ceiling with hard material to help project the tone. We finished the final voicing and we're pleased with the balance between divisions and the organ's overall presence in the room.

- **Settle Memorial – Owensboro, KY**

This is a new client for us. We worked with Dr. Diane Earl. She is the Director of Music at Settle, Artist in Residence and Director of the music program at Kentucky Wesleyan College. She also directs the Owensboro Symphony Chorus. We have recently re-leathered the Swell and Choir shade machines. We added 12 pipes to the Swell 4' Oboe to make an 8' Oboe. In the Choir division, we added a new 8' Clarinet. We also had the church add louvers to the doors and insulation above the ceiling of the organ chambers to increase the tuning stability.

- **University of Montevallo – Montevallo, AL**

We added the four organs at the university to our tuning roster. The largest organ is a III/60 1980 Holtkamp located in Palmer Hall. We replaced its single level combination action with a new 10-level one. The second largest organ is in LeBaron Recital Hall and is a 15 rank Flentrop tracker. Finally, the two small practice organs, located in the music building, are Schlicker trackers. One has two ranks, the other four. Dr. Betty Lumby, longtime head of the organ department, is responsible for the placement of these instruments and many others in the southeast.

- **Mountain Brook Baptist – Birmingham, AL**

Our most recent project at Mountain Brook was under the direction of Organist Joshua Coble who is currently working on his P.H.D. We made several console improvements to include adjusting the key action to AGO standards. We installed a new 2' IV Mixture in the Swell division and moved its existing 1' IV Mixture to the Choir, replacing its ½' III Cymbal. The two Mixtures are now scaled to fit better in the full ensemble. The overly loud Choir 8' Tromba and the 32' Bombarde low 12 were sent to our reed voicer for new tongues. We spent several days re-voicing the three manual Möller.

- **St. John's Lutheran – Donelson, TN**

We received a call from the Baptist Church in Florence, Alabama. They said that they were going to re-purpose their chapel and that their pipe organ was available. We found a new home for their like new Reuter organ at St. John's Lutheran in Donelson, TN. The organ was placed in the balcony at St. John's Lutheran which looks and sounds great. The Choirmaster/Organist Dakota Bone said that the first Sunday that he played was not only well received, but two church members wanted to join the Choir and one lady was ready to pay for additions!

- **Madison Street United Methodist – Clarksville, TN**

After the tornadoes knocked down their historic sanctuary in January of 1999, the members had to start from scratch. They chose to install a Reiger-Kloss pipe organ from Czechoslovakia to replace their Jardine organ. It fills the back of the chancel up to the ceiling. Its tall case and polished pipes are impressive. Along with its 49 ranks of pipes, it has several Walker "ranks". The Walker Company works with pipe organ companies to add digital voices to pipe organs. We have worked with them on several projects with great success. Under the supervision of Rev. Jared Wilson, we worked with the Walker Company to complete the prepared stops.

- **First United Methodist – Tullahoma, TN**

Needless to say, if you lived through the 70's, you know how styles can change. Organ building was also influenced by the styles of this period. The Methodist in Tullahoma wanted to change their "modern" organ casework to a more traditional, classic look. They used design cues from the sanctuary walls, specifically the back of the chancel. Currently subdued from view, are very large arches that were painted the same color as the walls. The new case design uses these arches as their basic theme. The design was drawn by Mary Lee Hoge and built by a local woodworker Mr. Tom Gillard. We installed the case pieces, cutting to fit as needed. We also installed painted stamped metal grille replacing burlap in the open areas of the case.

-Water Damage-

The Methodist Church in Hopkinsville, Kentucky (home of Edgar Casey) had a water leak over their Great/Pedal division causing damage to approximately twenty pouches. We removed the damaged pouch boards on a Monday and re-installed them before the Sunday service. The damage was more extensive at the Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Tennessee. The organ is a very old Möller with rare bar chests. The Swell primary pouches had to be replaced with new leather. The Great had

damage in several areas. We used the downtime to have the room insulated and covered with rigid panels. The old sanctuary was built before insulation was used in construction. In both cases, we worked with the churches insurance agents to ensure that they were compensated fairly.

Don't Overheat Your Pipe Organ!

Your sanctuary doesn't need to be kept at a constant temperature to protect your organ. In most cases, this can damage it. Keeping your humidity between 35-60% is most important. We recommend installing a commercial humidifier on your HVAC system and keeping it set to 45%. If you can't control the humidity in your sanctuary, we recommend an unoccupied temperature between 55 and 80 degrees. Setting the occupied temperature the night before the sanctuary is needed gives the organ enough time to settle in. If you can program your thermostat, set it to occupied temperature four hours before your sanctuary is needed.

Current Projects:

Athens State University – Athens, AL

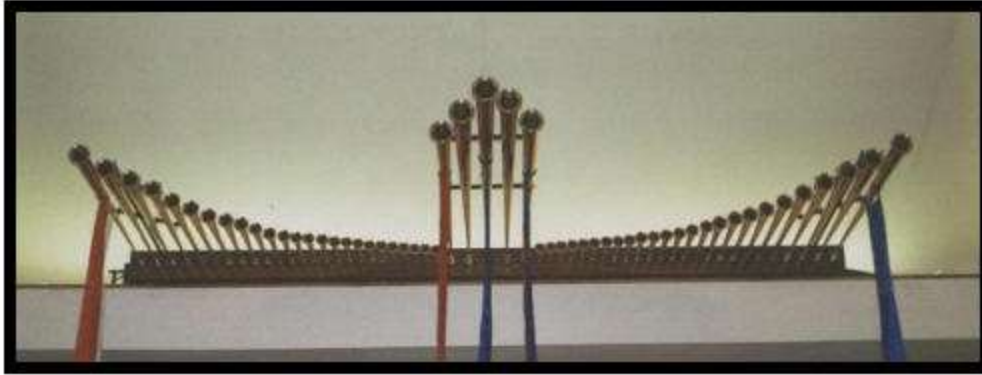
Holy Spirit Catholic – Huntsville, AL

First Baptist Old Hickory – Nashville, TN

Spring Hill United Methodist – Spring Hill, TN

St. Michael's Episcopal – Cookeville, TN

★ We are doing historical restorations on two early American tracker organs, details in our next newsletter.



Organo Pleno

Milnar Organ Company - Established 1968

www.milnarorgan.com

Newsletter 2012

- **Belmont University Concert Hall**

We are very excited about the Belmont Music Hall transformation in Nashville, TN! The 1969 Aeolian/Skinner, Opus 1504 was removed without a hitch. The building's ceiling was removed and has been raised to the roofline. The extra volume in the room will improve the acoustics. The floor was removed and a new floor will be tapered to the front of the room to create theater seating. There are many aesthetic changes that will make the room look like new.

The design of the organ will remain unchanged. We have taken the opportunity to re-leather bellows, replace expression machines and replace the mechanical control system with a Peterson ICS-4000 software based system. We are building a new moveable platform for the console. This will allow it to be plugged into six different locations on the stage floor and can be stored off stage for certain occasions.

Dr. Richard Shadinger and Andrew Risinger wanted the high pressure trumpet a little less aggressive, so we're adding a bellows to regulate it to a lower pressure. It looks like the project is on schedule for an installation of the organ this Spring. We will keep you posted as things progress.

- **Saint Barnabas Episcopal Tullahoma, TN**

Saint Barnabas has a beautiful 1977 Casavant organ, Opus 3371 that has been under our care since it was installed. Several years ago, Evans Baird (Choirmaster) had us add an 8' Dulciana to the Great division. This past year, we removed the console and totally rebuilt it adding a new Peterson ICS-4000 system and built a new name board for the expanded stop list. There wasn't space to add additional pipes so we contracted with the Walker Technical Company to add their voices to the organ.

With some re-voicing on our part and Walker blending their voices to the existing organ, the tonal scope of the organ was much improved. The Casavant is much more versatile with the new console upgrades, which makes it like a new organ.

- **First Baptist Lebanon, TN**

Reverend Zack Young called from First Baptist in Lebanon and wanted an upgrade on their fine 21 Rank 1970 Shantz organ. We added two sets of nave shades. Since the nave shades make a new tonal change, we added a lighted "nave shades off" piston to the console for flexibility. Our firm removed the console and Great 8' Trompete, Swell 8' Hautbois and the Pedal 16' Kontra Trompete. The reed ranks were cleaned, tongues and schallots polished and wedges tightened. All the cotton-coated cable from the console was removed and replaced with new PVC cables. New drawknobs were added with gold contacts in a vacuum tube. A Peterson ICS 4000 system with MIDI, etc. was installed in the console and organ chambers.

- **Saint Paul's Episcopal Franklin, TN**

Milnar Organ Company has been servicing St. Paul's in Franklin for over thirty years. Saint Paul's was the mother (first) church of the Episcopalians in Tennessee. From 1902 to 1915, several memorials were donated by members that included eight stained glass windows and the Alter Cross, created by Louis Comfort Tiffany. The 1974 Shantz organ has 13 ranks. Don Dicie, the organist, wanted to upgrade the control system with a Peterson system and install MIDI sounds. The organ is in a balcony with no room for pipe additions. We added a MIDI sound module to the new Peterson ICS-4000 to increase the possible sounds that Don could use.

During the War Between the States, the town was occupied by the Federal Army and for three years, St. Paul's was filled with soldiers who used the building as barracks. The pews, altar and organ fueled the fire that burned under the bell tower which now serves as a chimney stack. We hope that after our work on the organ, no one will use it as firewood!



Sound Module inside console

- **First Baptist Roanoke, AL**

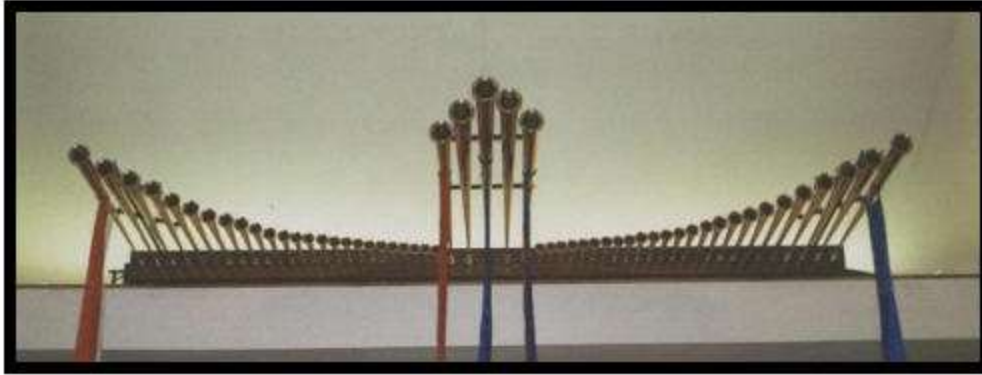
We were installing a small organ in the Music building at Samford University in Birmingham, when a member of FBC Roanoke approached Todd and asked if we would look at their instrument. First Baptist has a 16 rank Wicks organ that needed the relay and switches upgraded. We replaced the old, worn out Wicks mechanical relay with a new solid state diode- matrix system. This time proven relay will reliably serve the church for many years.

- **First Baptist in Cullman, AL**

Milnar Organ Co. was in the middle of tuning organs in Tuscaloosa and Huntsville when several tornados ripped through the North Alabama area. We had three crews in different locations heading for cover! Greg and Kevin had just left Cullman when the tornado struck. Derek and his wife Denise were just finishing the tuning at Calvary Baptist, in Tuscaloosa, when the tornado sirens started. They stayed in the building until the tornado passed. Their next stop was in Jackson Mississippi, and it took them almost two hours to leave Tuscaloosa due to the devastation on the roadways.

Jeff and his wife Trisha were at the Lutheran Church of the Messiah in Madison, Alabama. While holding keys and looking out the window, Trisha could see debris flying horizontally at high speeds through the air. They, too, stayed in the building until the wind stopped. There wasn't any power in the greater Huntsville area, so they could not get enough gas to come back home to Murfreesboro. They stayed in a Huntsville hotel with no electricity. Using flashlights, they were able to play cards. Thanks to God they were all safe.

Dr. Hirsbrunner from the First Baptist Church in Cullman called. They lost some of their roof and a large stained glass window was blown into their worship space. Water caused some damage on two of the Moller windchests. Debris was everywhere throughout the organ. We removed all the pipes for cleaning and replaced the damaged leather pouches in the windchests. All was back together before the Christmas program.



Newsletter, Spring 2011

Master Organist Andrew Risinger performed a wonderful recital of classical and contemporary pieces as part of the Murfreesboro Symphony series. It was performed at the First United Methodist Church on their Milnar Organ. Andrew played with Symphony musicians for select organ pieces. Isn't it great that over 325 people paid good ticket prices to hear an organ recital that ended the evening with a standing ovation! Check out our home page of our website for more information on the recital.

This past winter was one of the coldest on record. We had many service calls on organs that were ciphering due to dryness. We advised churches to keep the humidity level above 40% in the sanctuary. In the past, this was not as difficult because most congregations kept the heat set back to 55 or 60 degrees during the week. If your humidity is low and you're required to keep your heat at a constant temperature, we recommend that you install a commercial humidifier on your heating system. A gauge that displays temperature and humidity should be placed near the console so you can personally keep track of your humidity level.

Forest Hills United Methodist Brentwood, TN

Forest Hills Methodist Church suffered water damage during the historic flood of May 2010. Their 1975 Möller was not damaged in the upstairs chambers, but water did flood the basement where the blower is located. We were able to make a quick service call to the church to block off the airlines to the chambers before humidity and mold damaged the organ.

We removed the damaged blower and bellows from the basement blower room. It took several hours to disassemble the old blower; it was too

large to take out in one piece. We built a 6 foot platform above the water line to support a new blower and bellows. Their rectifier, 220VAC disconnect and motor contactor were also replaced. It was necessary to kill the mold that had started growing in the main airline before installing the new blower and high pressure bellows. Mold can deteriorate leather very quickly costing thousands of dollars to replace.

The new blower can be handled by one person and has a greater wind capacity. Don't you love new technology?

Schermerhorn Symphony Center Nashville, TN

The big flood also damaged the basement of the Symphony Center. The water stood twenty six feet deep and ruined the Schoenstein console, four blowers and the high pressure bellows to the organ. There were also many musical instruments including two new Concert Grand Steinway pianos that were a total loss. Being the designated service technicians, we were called by Schoenstein to seal off the airlines leading to the organ chambers. This was to prevent mold and high humidity from damaging the organ. Before we were able to work at the Schermerhorn, everyone had to get a tetanus shot and put on a bio hazard suit. Not comfortable!

We also removed all the damaged parts in the blower room including all the airlines. We stripped the console down and sent Schoenstein the custom made brass parts that were not damaged by the flood and the internal hard drive memory.

After the Schoenstein Crew installed the new console, blowers, etc., they turned the organ on and found it to be in relative good tune. It's amazing, but they retrieved stored music from the flooded hard drive that Andrew Risinger had recorded before the flood and put it in on the flash drive. When they plugged it in and the organ came alive, people all over the Schermerhorn Center stopped work and came to the Laura Turner Hall to listen to that fine instrument. When the piece was over, they responded with very enthusiastic applause. A moment to remember!

Today, after all the work on the restoration of the building and the instrument, the Schermerhorn Center and the Nashville Symphony are back in full swing.

First Presbyterian Rockwood, TN

First Presbyterian in Rockwood has a 6 Rank Henry Pilcher's Sons organ, built in 1920. We were contracted to update the air-driven console to solid state, re-leather their two bellows and re-leather the stoppers of three sets of wooden pipes. Their 90 year old internal note pouch and primary leather is still holding, but will need replacing in the next 10 to 20 years. The tanning process of leather, before World War II, used only natural substances. This, along with small town clean air, explains the longevity of their internal leather. Longtime organist, Geraldine Wallick, was pleased we were able to "update" the Pilcher organ without changing its original tone quality. As you can see, the before and after pictures are pretty dramatic.

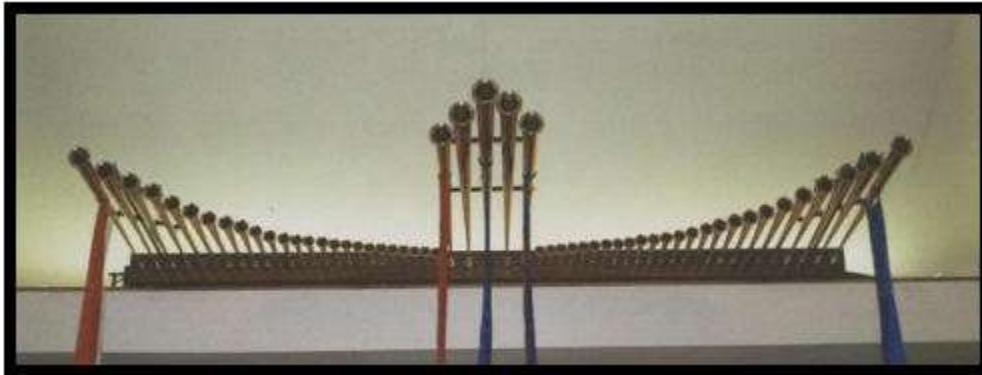
First Christian Rockwood, TN

First Christian Rockwood has a wonderful 1972, 27 Rank Möller pipe organ in their sanctuary. The Organist, Mr. Fred Pogue, called us in the summer of 1995 to service and tune the instrument. We found the organ in need of a good tuning. The chambers were high in the room on both sides of the sanctuary on outside walls. The fabric grill material was very tightly woven, restricting air flow into the chambers. We replaced their original melatone grill material with stamped metal sheets. This allowed air to flow into the chambers. Prior to the re-screening, the organ chambers went through dramatic temperature swings rendering the reeds unusable until we returned to tune again. Since the metal sheets were installed, the reeds stay in tune with the flue pipes and the divisions are also in tune with each other.

The console, although very well built, still had its noisy driver pouches, air switches and limited single level memory. The interior leather pouches were deteriorating and in need of rebuilding. The church chose to upgrade the console. We installed a 32-level Peterson combination action and diode-matrix relay in the console to handle coupler and Pedal switching. We also installed a new 4' Principal and II Sesqialtera in the Swell to fill in gaps in the principal chorus.

Milnar Organ Company - Established 1968

www.milnarorgan.com



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Phone# 1-877-244-6177 Summer
2010

2010

Greetings,

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that we had removed the only free standing Aeolian/Skinner Organ ever built. It was removed from the Cathedral of Christ the King in Kalamazoo, MI. We have completed the installation and touchup voicing. We totally rebuilt the console with a new organ control system. Several new stops were added. The organ was such a famous classical instrument; Dr. Darryl Miller wanted to be able to play the instrument as it was originally designed. The tonal additions added a wider range and color to the instrument but when you start with a full range of Mixtures and reeds in each division with two Trumpet En Chamades, it sure was not necessary to add any volume.

Another bit of color is the gold painted rotating star Zimblestern. Dr. Miller and the church wanted the organ introduced to the community in a special way and engaged Mr. Olivier Latry of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, to give the inaugural concert to a capacity audience. A very exciting day for all.

Memorial Auditorium in Chattanooga, TN

The 114 rank Austin in Chattanooga is now fully restored. We've been rebuilding one division at a time as the local music club raised the funds. The final stage was the electrical control system. We installed a Peterson ICS-4000. They routinely lift the four manual console from its normal home (just off stage right) to center stage for concerts. The unpluggable, pencil size cable was a welcome site to the stage hands. When using the ICS-4000, we sometimes install several floor jacks for the Cat 5 cable and 110v current. Even though the cable is very small, having multiple jacks avoids tripping over it.

First Presbyterian Church in Pulaski, TN

The beautiful sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church is like a snapshot in time. Other than fresh paint every so often, it is completely unchanged since the days before cars and electricity. The historic Pilcher Organ (built in Louisville, KY) was rebuilt in 1938 by Pilcher. We can't find the date of the original installation, but we know the first rebuild was much sooner than normal. The original action was tubular pneumatic. It was the second action used by several American Tracker builders. It was comprised of long lead tubes (one per key) connected to valves at the back of the keys at one end and the chest primary at the other. Its efficacy was dependent on the length of the lead tubes. At First Presbyterian, the action must have been too slow, hence the rebuild.

Today, it has a modern organ control system, three new Great stops and two new Reed ranks. I think the Pilcher Brothers would be proud that their organ is working so well in its second century.

First Christian Church in Rockwood, TN

Fred Pogue, the organist at First Christian Rockwood, requested we prepare a quote for a new organ control system. We proposed a Peterson ICS-4000 to replace the chamber relays and the pneumatic console switching and combination action. The funds fell short of what was needed, but we told him we could rebuild the console now and deal with the still working chamber switching at a later date.

While working on the console in our shop, Fred called with word of new funds that he wanted to use for two new Swell stops. He had mentioned earlier of his desire for

these ranks so we had already installed draw knobs for them. We had a list of all the pipe scales and were able to order the pipes and build the wind chest. We installed the new stops along with his rebuilt console.

Grace Episcopal Church in Hopkinsville, KY.

In 1985, we signed a contract to rebuild the 1906 Estey Organ. The church had to repair its roof and was not able to honor the contract. We understood their position and cancelled the contract. In 2007, we signed a new contract to completely rebuild this historic organ with all new wind chests. Longtime Choirmaster/Organist, Steve Wiggins, worked very closely with us on a new stop list. We retained many of the original ranks and were able to keep the basic Estey sound. The new Swell box and shades greatly improved the volume control and sound projection. Steve was very pleased with the final outcome.

Dawson Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL.

We were first called to Dawson Baptist Church by a colleague of ours, Mark Hayes, to assess damage to the Great and Pedal divisions due to a faulty A/C drain. The air conditioner is mounted above the ceiling of the main organ chamber. This church is very large with four multi-story buildings with connecting walkways mounted over streets (more common with large hospitals). They have dozens of air conditioners installed in every configuration possible.

In the south, we have a type of algae that grows in the drain pans of air conditioners and it will eventually clog, causing water to leak out of the pan. Certified A/C technicians are aware of this problem. They drop some “pan pills” in the pan at the start of cooling season to prevent algae growth.

We have had to repair three separate organs in the past five years due to leaking air conditioners. We strongly suggest churches set up a service plan with your local A/C technicians. After the repairs, we were contracted to rebuild the console using a Peterson ICS-4000 organ control system. The organist, Dianne Norton, just celebrated her 50th anniversary of playing for Dawson. That says a lot about Dianne and all the wonderful people she works with.

Mountain Brook Baptist Church in Birmingham, AL

Our first trip to MBB was to assess the damage to the great division due to a leaky roof. During the inspection, we informed them that their expression shutters were not opening enough and we could replace the actions with a modern shade machine to get a larger opening and greater control. Also, we told them that the leather on the bellows needed replacing and it would save the church some money if we did all the repairs at the same time. After our work was completed, the church asked us what else should be done to their 1967, 51 rank, Möller. We met with Josh Coble, the organist and his instructor, Dan Lawhon. We prioritized their suggestions and plan on presenting our proposal, with options, to their organ committee soon.

Christ Episcopal Church in Elizabethtown, KY.

Christ Episcopal Church is the latest church to come under our care. They have a 1949 Möller Organ that was donated by St. Francis-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church. In its old home, it was in a chamber with expression shutters mounted on the wall, facing the congregation.

The organ was installed in Christ Episcopal by Rev. John Eberman and three parishioners. They mounted the organ in the back of the small sanctuary and the console was positioned to the left side of the chancel. Without shades, the organ lacked volume control. We improved the situation by re-voicing the organ including, softening the trumpet by adding caps at the top of the pipes and installing thinner tongues. Refinishing the console, as you can tell in the before photo, was the biggest challenge. A new combination action and relay replaced the previous air driven system.

A Warm Welcome To Our New Clients!

- Schermerhorn Symphony Hall Nashville, TN
Organist: Andrew Risinger
- Covenant Presbyterian Church Nashville, TN
Director of Music: Paul Magyar
- First Presbyterian Church Jackson, MS
Minister of Music: Dr. Bill Wymond
- Galloway Memorial United Methodist Jackson, MS
Minister of Music: Michael Hrivnak
Organist: Robert Knupp

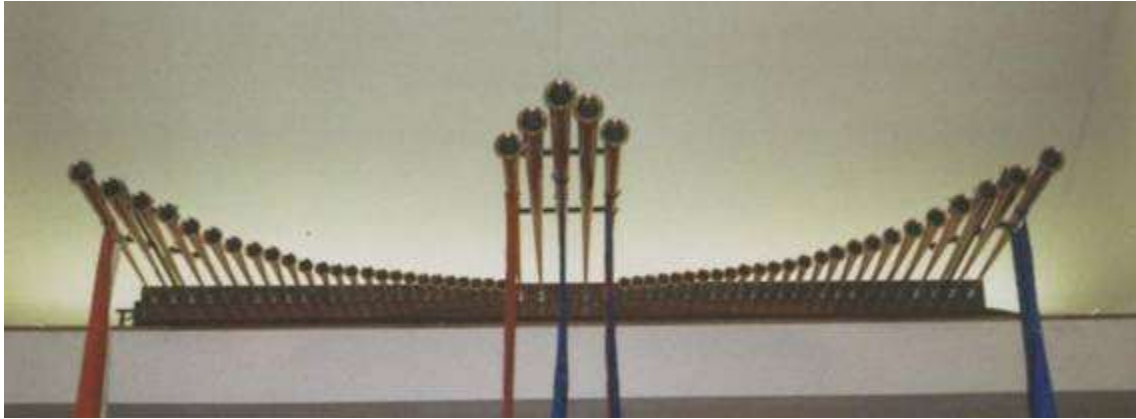
- Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church
Birmingham, AL
Organist: Gary Smoke
- Samford University Birmingham, AL
Organist: Dr. H. Edward Tibbs
- St. Bernard Abbey Cullman, AL
Organist: Dr. Betty L. Lumby
- Christ Episcopal Church Elizabethtown, KY
Organist: Beckie Henry
- Episcopal Church of the Ascension Montgomery, AL
Director of Music: Becky Taylor
- First United Methodist Church Mount Pleasant, TN
Organist: Lawrence Douglas

Organo Pleno

Milnar Organ Company - Established 1968

3165 Hill Rd. Eagleville, TN 37060

Ph# 615-274-6400



2009

Greetings,

There have been many exciting things happening for Milnar Organ Co. during this past year. We are currently in the process of re-wiring the beautiful Austin Pipe Organ, Opus 1206 in Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Auditorium. The 114 rank Austin is located in Chattanooga, Tenn., and has been restored with the funds from donations gathered by the Chattanooga Music Club. The rewiring of the organ is the final stage of the renovation. It includes a Peterson ICS-4000 control system. When this organ project is completed, the instrument will be the largest fully operational symphonic organ in the southeast.

Saint Andrews Lutheran Church, Franklin, TN

In the summer of 2007, a crew of nine men from our shop met Darryl Miller at the cathedral Church of Christ the King in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The cathedral was closing its doors and Saint Andrews was the successful bidder on their famous Aeolian/Skinner organ opus 1511, 1970. We spent a 66 hour week

dismantling the organ and transporting it to our storage facilities. We have been rebuilding the organ for the last year. The organ is scheduled to be installed this fall with all the necessary repairs, updates and additions. You can view the removal of the organ on www.youtube.com (Draft of Organ Removal). More on this great instrument in our next newsletter.

The Church of the Assumption purchased the 1895, 25-rank William Johnson pipe organ (Opus 819) in 1994. The organ was originally built for the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Milnar Organ Co. refurbished the organ and installed it in its new home in 1995.

Recently we did more renovations that were needed. We removed the Great and Swell primaries and stop actions. Brought them back to our shop and refurbished with new felt and leather. Albenia Ladieu, the organist of the Church of The Assumption in Nashville heard about a Johnson organ in Valparaiso, Indiana. A member of the church and a well-known restoration architect Michel Emrick, A.I.A., and I went to inspect the organ. It was in an old barn in the middle of a field with chest-high grass and weeds.

First impressions were poor. Vermin had eaten the exposed leather off the bellows and shades, etc. The tracker action had been converted to pneumatic pull-downs. These were stored in wood boxes, and were still in good condition, the slider wind chests were sealed well. All the sliders moved freely and the almost 100-year-old leather pallets were in good condition.

What sold us was the superior quality of the pipes. We brought the organ to our shop for re-working. It was originally in one room with a common wind chest support and at the Church of The Assumption it had to be in two rooms. We also made two pipe displays and Michel Emricks decorated the pipes. It looks great, and sounds even better. Mr. Peter Fyfe gave the dedicatory recital to a full house. Peter and the organ received rave reviews. Thanks, Albenia.

First United Methodist has a wonderful 1962 Reuter pipe organ. In 2006 Milnar Organ Co. Installed a new mixture wind chest with 111 pipes in the Great chamber. We also installed a new solid state relay system. Then in 2008 we removed the decorative organ screens and replaced them with painted steel

grill panels. These new steel panels have a 47% opening which allows airflow to the chamber. Also, because of the open pattern in the screens, we were able to turn off a circulating fan (on 24 hours a day) that was installed in the 1960's. The fan sent conditioned air from the Great (Lower Division) to the Swell (Upper Division). No one misses the noisy fan.

Addition for

St. Joe, McDonough, GA

The addition to St. Joe McDonough by our firm was one that has become common. Adding real windchests and pipework to an existing electronic organ. We added 8 stops, including a full 16' Principal with bellows and a new ventus blower. Needless to say, the "real" ranks are played more often.

Downtown Presbyterian, Nashville, TN

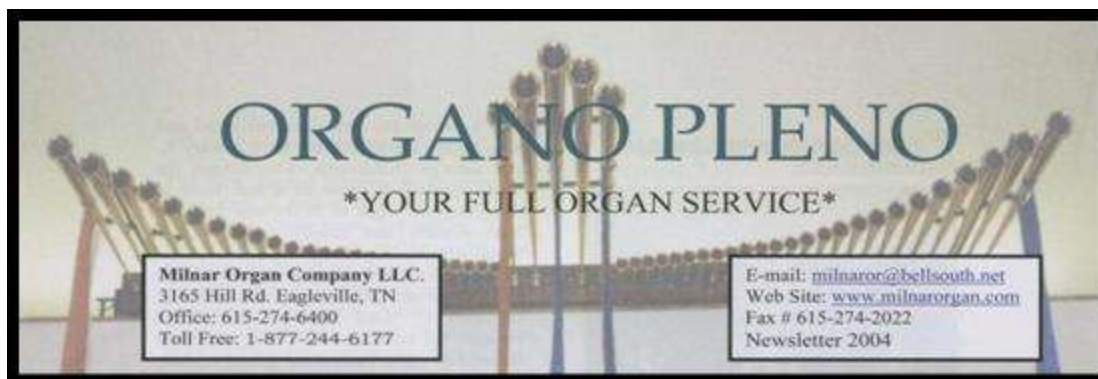
Downtown Presbyterian Church has an Austin pipe organ that had been expanded by our firm in 1972, to a total of 48 ranks. In 2008 we did a major upgrade and refurbish to the organ. The console was taken out and upgraded to a solid state system, with new silver key contacts and stop controls. All leather actions were recovered.

First Presbyterian, Humbolt, TN

First Presbyterian in Humbolt, Tenn. had outgrown their downtown building and decided to build a much larger facility just outside the core of the city. We were asked to split the organ, utilizing two elevated chambers on either side of the choir loft. This improved sound projection helped fill the larger room with the minimal addition of a swell 4' Octave. We re-leathered the bellows and installed a new Peterson control system.


University of Campbellsville, KY

University of Campbellsville was fortunate to acquire a historic organ for the new chapel on campus. The organ was originally built in 1894 by Ferrand and Votey for Christ Church Cathedral in Nashville, Tenn. Originally it was a modest fifteen ranks driven by a water pump for wind pressure and batteries providing D.C. electrical power. Many fine organ builders have made additions to the organ. Over the past 1/3 century we have had the organ under our care, and have added several ranks to its now 51 rank total. For its move to Campbellsville, we converted the console to solid state and refurbished much of the instrument.



2004

Greetings,

 Spring tunings have been completed and we're all in the shop working on several projects. My wife and I are looking forward to the International Society of Organbuilders meeting in Belgium in late August. We will be seeing some great instruments as well as visiting four organ shops. These organ conventions are not only a valuable learning experience, but also a lot of fun as well. We wish all of you good health and a fun summer! –Dennis

- **Soldiers and Sailors Auditorium in Chattanooga, TN.**

The Chattanooga music club has been raising funds to restore their 114 rank organ. The Choir is now the third division restored by our firm; of the famous Austin organ. All the pneumatic actions have been re-leathered. We also re-leathered all the door seals to the original skived leather covers and the massive bellows has all new leather inside and out. All the pipes were repaired and the stolen ones replaced. One set of pipes called 8' Cor De Nuit was a real puzzle. Edwin Lamear altered the original specifications. He calls for a 49-tapered scale in metal. The Austin factory had no information on the stop. In Lamear's notes he wrote in reference to that stop "like Portland". Gordon Auchincloss from the Austin factory, referred me to a colleague of mine, David Wallace, who rebuilt the sister organ in Portland, Maine. David said he would be happy to help and sent me photographs and measurements of the mystery stop. Organ Supply Industries made a sample pipe that matched perfectly. They were able to supply us with the full set that sings very well

in that division. We are looking forward to restoring the Swell division. It's in very rough condition but will be gorgeous when brought back to life.

Speaking of Chattanooga, we are expanding our tuning and service to that city. We are proud to have Brainerd Baptist Church under our care. ("inquiries are welcome").

- **First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro, TN.**



First United Methodist Church in Murfreesboro has completed its new building and it is truly a work of art. I've heard some people affectionately call it the "Methodist Cathedral". The sanctuary ceiling is 87' tall and the acoustics are wonderful! The entire sound system consists of two hidden speaker clusters located in the organ chambers. The beautiful stained glass throws a rainbow of colors on our polished façade pipes. It was no small task to fill a room that size with enough sound to lead the large congregation. The fifty ranks not only fill the room with a great volume of sound, but many beautiful colors as well. The expression rooms were built over 4 inches thick, insulated with double layers of 5/8" drywall. With sixteen stage swell machines, the organ can speak as a whisper. We originally built this instrument twenty-five years ago for their former sanctuary.

The building has been deconsecrated and now houses the Mid South Bank. Mary K. and George Huddleston, who funded the organ, generously gave us a free hand in designing the organ to fit the new building both visually and tonally. Dr. Murray Somerville dedicated the organ November 22 and it was an exciting performance. On his last curtain call, he played a rounding rendition of "God Bless America" and brought the audience to its feet. We look forward to more local artist giving recitals. We are quite proud of this instrument and welcome all to visit.

- **First Baptist Church in Decatur, AL.**

The First Baptist Church in Decatur has completed a major renovation of their auditorium, music room, and offices. Since the sanctuary was not usable during the construction, the choir director felt this was the best time to update and enlarge their Casavant organ. They wanted a three manual console with a new Choir division and added some accompanying stops to their existing divisions. There was no physical space to place all the additional pipes. It was necessary to add electronic sounds to the organ. We called on the Walker Technical Company of Zionsville, PA. They are the undisputed leaders in fitting sampled electronic sounds to pipe organs. Dr. Fred Swann told me he has heard none better. We installed a new three-manual console for the Casavant in the main auditorium and rebuilt and installed the original two manual Casavant console in their chapel pipe organ. Our voicers worked with Walker's voicers to make the best possible marriage. We have all heard poor combination organs. This one works. Elizabeth Carter is very happy with all her new bells and whistles!

- **McKendree Methodist Church in Portland, TN.**

McKendree Methodist Church in Portland had an organ "Extreme Makeover". This was my oldest son Derek's project. It was quite a twist but we added four extended ranks to a Rodgers 740B electronic organ. We built a floor in the base of the altar that houses the blower, rectifier and switching system that supports the new pipe additions. The stops added, placed on two wind chests, were an 8' Principal, 8' Gedeckt, 4' Octave, 4' Kopple Flute, 2' Principal and 2' Piccolo. It's the church's first step to a full pipe organ.

- **First Methodist Church in Huntsville, AL.**

A few years ago, we did some major rebuilding to the First Methodist Church Shantz organ in Huntsville, AL. At that time, a parishioner, Mr. Preston Hayes, wanted to add an electronic Echo division to the rear of the sanctuary along with a video camera. He never liked the looks of that addition and asked us to design a false façade to go in front of the screen. The pipes have an antique gold finish with a polished silver mouth. They sit on a dark pecan toe board. The pipes are so prominent; the camera hole is no longer as noticeable.

- **Forest Lake Methodist Church in Tuscaloosa, AL.**

Organist and consultant Dr. James Dorrah was commissioned to find a good used pipe organ for Forest Lake Methodist Church. He narrowed his search to two instruments. We had worked on several projects in the past and he asked us to get involved. We decided on the Moller in Dr. Margaret Kemper's Church in Kenilworth, IL. Dennis and Derek flew to Chicago, while Greg and Kevin drove the long distance with a van and truck. It took us three days to dismantle the 33 rank organ and load it into the trucks. The drive back home through downtown Chicago during rush hour, with a full load, was a grand experience! We have redesigned and rebuilt the instrument to fit in its new home. The organ is ready and the church should be finished this summer. We should be able to start the installation of the organ this August.

- **St. Bede's Episcopal Church in Manchester, TN.**

Manchester, TN is about 40 miles south east of Nashville. Their budget did not allow for a totally new instrument. We had a Moller Artiste opus 10265 we traded for some rebuilding work on a Shantz organ at the Southern Methodist University in Birmingham AL. "A little horse trading with Dr. James Cook". This was to be St. Bede's swell division. We totally rebuilt the Artiste including solid state relays. We placed this division in the center and front edge of the balcony. The all new great division is suspended from the ceiling by four steel rods and fastened to the stone wall for stability. Both divisions are at the same height for stable tuning. The divisions blend well with each other and there is no stereo effect in the small live sanctuary. The organist Dr. Luwin Lewis is enjoying the new organ and working on mastering the midi and playback sequencer.

- **Highland Baptist Church in Florence**

Highland Baptist Church is located in the city of Florence, Alabama. Their Auditorium on Simpson Street needed major renovations. After a great deal of study it was decided to demolish the building and build new at the same location. A new state of the art 1000 seat auditorium was constructed. The 1964 Shantz three manual organ needed to be disassembled and stored until the new sanctuary was completed. Milnar Organ Co. was contracted by Highland Baptist to remove the organ, make several repairs, and redesign the organ for the new worship center. All parts of the organ being repaired or rebuilt were transported to our shop facility in Eagleville, TN.

We were very excited about the move due to the changes made by the new room and upgrades to the organ. In the old auditorium the entire organ was hidden behind a screen. There is a beautiful new facade using pipes of the 16' Pedal Principal, 8' Great Principal and 16' Bourdon. Six of the 16' Principal pipes were mitered. We

had to straighten and re-solder them before the gold paint was applied. New wind chests were built to support the new facade. The console was totally rebuilt and upgraded with a new solid state 32-level combination action. Multiplex relays and switches brought the organs electrical system to today's standards. All the cotton coated DC cables were replaced with PVC coated cables. The new facade layout and solid state console, makes the organ as state of the art as the new auditorium. The congregation had their dedication to the building on Jan 18th 2004.

- **Keith Memorial Methodist Church in Athens, TN.**

Keith Memorial Methodist Church in Athens, TN was told their Reuter organ was in terrible shape and needed to be replaced. They asked us for a second opinion. We found the internal and external leather of their pneumatic organ in excellent condition. The graphite on the inside of the toe boards had dried up and lost its lubricity and was causing some periodic ciphers. We consulted with the Reuter factory and decided the internal toe boards needed fresh graphite. This simple repair took care of the organ problems. While we were there, we upgraded the console to solid-state and added a soft string to the Great division.

- **Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville, TN**

Scarritt Bennett Center's Casavant tracker just went through some renovations. The slider motors that had shafts impregnated with a lifetime lubricant, didn't live up to the manufacture's expectations. We had cleaned and re-lubricated their units for years. We finally had to replace them. We upgraded their entire electrical system and increased their console memory system from one-level to thirty-two levels. Jenny Smith and other organists can go through an entire service without resetting pistons. Hurray!

A Warm Welcome To Those Organs Now In Our Care!

- Cumberland Presbyterian in Scottsboro, AL –Organist: Nora English
- Covenant Presbyterian in Huntsville, AL – Dir. Music: Bryan Page

- Brainerd Baptist in Chattanooga, TN – Organist: Barbara Bowers
- Shades Mtn. Baptist in Birmingham, AL – Organist: Edwina Forstman
- Huffman Baptist in Birmingham, AL – Dir Music: Dennis Altizer
- St. Louis Catholic in Memphis, TN – Dir. Music: Mary Jo Hoffsommer
- St. Bede’s Episcopal in Manchester, TN – Organist: Dr. Luwin Lewis
- Messiah Lutheran in Montgomery, AL – Organist: Margie Lee
- First United Methodist in Woodbury, TN – Organist: Bill Mancy
- First United Methodist in Scottsboro, AL – Organist: Grady Bennett
- West Nashville United Methodist in Nashville, TN – Organist: Tim Cover
- First United Methodist in Batesville, MS – Dir Music: Alahna Ducker
- Mckendree Memorial United Methodist in Portland, TN – Organist: Pat Empson