

10th Anniversary Year of

The Windline



VOL. 10-NO. 3

A QUARTERLY ISSUE

Austin Organs official newsletter to our representatives

WINDLINE Staff: A.G. Isaacson, Editor; M.P. Martino & Karen Avery, Word Processors; Charles W. Walker, Word Authority

SEPTEMBER 1993

From the Editor... Al Isaacson

THE MOST FAMOUS ORGAN TRUMPET IN THE WORLD to be Restored by Austin

We are pleased to announce the signing of an agreement with Douglas Hunt and Tony Bufano, curators of the organ at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City to rebuild and restore the famous State Trumpet stop at the west end of the Cathedral.

This rank of pipes, perhaps the most single famous organ stop in the country, is remarkable in a number of ways. Installed in 1954 at the time of the rebuilding by Aeolian-Skinner of the 1910 Ernest M. Skinner instrument, the State Trumpet was one of the first modern day reeds placed in a horizontal position. Such a thing in itself would be fairly common today except for the unmatched and heroic proportions of this stop. Located on a 60 foot high gallery under the 125 foot high stone

ceiling of this, the largest gothic cathedral in the world, the 8 foot stop was augmented with an extra octave of full-length, non-speaking, 16 foot resonators so that it would not appear too tiny at the back of the nave. Fifty inches of wind pressure is used to play the reed which itself has extra thick brass tongues. The stop itself was originally voiced by legendary Skinner voicer Oscar Pearson.

Speaking personally, I played a recital on this famous organ in 1988 and had several hours of practice time during which I took ample opportunity to play on this stop. After getting used to the delay of almost a full second between the time the key is depressed and the time the pipes themselves are heard at the 500 ft. distant

console, I can only describe the sound of this unique stop as a fiery blaze followed by a powerful whoosh of fundamental tone.

Time finally has taken its toll. Metal fatigue has caused many of the pipes to split along their seams. Minor repairs made over the years were not always able to be done under the best of circumstances. Soon the pipes will be removed from their gallery and brought to our shop where they will be repaired and meticulously restored under the careful eye of David Broome.

Perhaps the most complex aspect of this work in our shop is the logistical feat of achieving 50 inch wind pressure. This we intend to do by linking up four blowers each feeding into

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



Proud of our past...

Focused on our future

the next and finally regulating the wind with a very small reservoir with reinforced gussets.

We will be documenting this project carefully as it occurs in our shop and we will update you in a future edition of The Windline of all the agonies and ecstasies of this very prestigious job.

Floyd T. Higgins

(See photos of State Trumpet on Page 8.)

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
West Hartford, Ct - Opus 2761

A contract has been signed and accepted for a new, 3-manual organ. This new organ will replace Austin Opus 2123 of 1950, which did not survive the disastrous church fire in October of 1992. (See Dec. 1992 issue of THE WINDLINE).

Opus 2123, which was given to the church by the Austin family, replaced an earlier, 2-manual Austin organ which was entirely in the chamber at the left side of the chancel. When Opus 2123 was installed a new space was made at the upper right side of the chancel for the new Swell organ. The Great, Choir and Pedal occupied the space at the left side of the chancel behind the elegant case which was also destroyed in the fire.

In the new construction the space at the upper right side will be further expanded to include two divisions. French nomenclature will be used throughout. The upper right space will contain the new Recit and Positif divisions. The original left chamber will, in the new planning, contain the Grand and Pedale divisions.

The Antiphonal organ will again be placed at the rear of the church along with its horizontal Trompette en Chamade.

The narthex area will be enlarged and the chancel will be rearranged with the altar brought forward to the crossing.

The console will be on a dolly placed at the left side of the chancel directly in front of the original organ chamber. It will be partly concealed by the pulpit. Some flexibility is planned to provide for different forms of musical programs or services of worship. The rebuilt chancel, as now planned, could be used as a small chapel in itself, for smaller weddings, prayer meetings, etc.

Ann Beha & Associates, Boston, MA, are the architects. This firm was involved in our recent instruments at Hanover, MA and South Weymouth, MA, - a very competent firm, and from all indications a wise choice for the rebuilding-renovation of St. John's.

During the fire the chancel roof was destroyed along with adjacent structures. There is now a new roof over the chancel and the church is well sealed to the weather. The office area has been restored and is in use. Construction should commence in the Spring.

The rebuilding plans have undergone a great deal of study with the architects and numerous committees. As rebuilt, the church will offer improved worship space, meeting rooms will be more flexible, traffic areas improved, etc., etc.

We are looking forward to realizing a fine, 3-manual organ for St. John's, and anticipate its being exhibited at the forthcoming 1995 AGO Regional Convention in Hartford.

F. L. Mitchell

Sign on a music store door: *Bach in an hour.*
Offenbach sooner.

**TWO NEW TROMPETTE EN CHAMADE
ADDITIONS**

First United Methodist Church of Miami, FL, has contracted for a new 61-note polished copper Trompette en Chamade to be located in a forward left corner of the rear balcony in this most unusual asymmetrical building. The Trompette en Chamade will be an interesting addition to the existing 3-manual 42 rank Möller organ located across the front chancel. The instrument is totally exposed and functional, including the Swell and Positiv expression boxes. This stop will have its own self-contained blower and pressure regulator to provide six inches of wind pressure. Mr. Thomas R. Thomas and Mr. Hugh M. Pierce handled the negotiations for this handsome new addition.

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, Atlanta, GA, has also contracted for the addition of a new Trompette en Chamade which will be added to Austin Organ Opus No. 2490 of 34 ranks and installed in the late 1960's. This instrument is also exposed and functional in the rear balcony. The new Trompette en Chamade will be located directly in front of the upper portion of the Swell box expression shades (lower level) preserving space below for the future addition of a Positiv Division. This stop will be placed on 5 inch wind pressure with its own blower and pressure regulator and pipework construction of polished copper.

The Trompette en Chamades will make dramatic statements in their respective buildings, both to the eye and ear.

**NEW 4-MANUAL CONSOLE
FOR A HOUSTON CHURCH**

A Letter Of Intent has been signed for a new 4-manual console for Chapelwood Methodist Church, Houston, Texas.

The new console will replace the present 4-manual console built by Möller in 1950 for their then new instrument.

The new console will contain a multiplexing system which will handle all aspects of organ switching, including coupling and a multiple memory level combination action. The console will also be fully MIDI-capable though exactly what form this capability will take needs to be determined.

The organist of the church is Mr. Thomas Jaber who worked with us in 1975 to build a new console for the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia.

Floyd T. Higgins

NEW ORGAN PROJECTS

We have just completed a rather interesting project on a 1969 Angell organ at the First Congregational Church, Chappaqua, NY. All the pipework was returned to the factory in Hartford for a complete re-voicing and re-balancing of flues and reeds.

Wind pressures were varied and very careful finishing was carried out by Daniel Kingman and Jon Van Houten.

Before AOI's involvement in this project, a number of stops were unusable, mixtures were harsh and overly loud, and reeds were most uneven. Since our work on this project, according to all reports, everyone is delighted with the organ.

Mechanical work was carried out by Mr. Bill Feldhaus of Instrument Technology Systems, Inc. His work included a sophisticated MIDI system, amongst many other mechanical adjustments and projects.

This type of work again proves the versatility of our company, and in many varied areas, including non-Austin organs.

WORK IN PROGRESS

The First Presbyterian Church, Grand Haven, MI, Opus 2002-A.

Work is presently in progress on the new Antiphonal organ of 8 registers divided on each side of a stained glass window in the rear gallery of the church. Included in the Antiphonal is a hooded reed of polished copper which will be located above two exit doors in the balcony. The original plan was to chamade this reed but for tuning and accessibility reasons that plan was vetoed, which makes this reed the first display hooded reed we have ever undertaken.

The new Antiphonal organ complements the present organ which was extensively revised in 1985 when a new Great division was added and work was done fairly extensively on the Choir, Swell and Pedal.

David A. J. Broome
Vice President & Tonal Director

NEW 4-MANUAL CONSOLE FOR OUR OPUS 2403, WETHERSFIELD, CT

Negotiations have been completed for the rebuilding of a 4-manual console to be installed at The First Church of Christ, Wethersfield, CT, home of Austin Opus 2403. Dr. Robert Baker was the original consultant on this Austin organ when it was installed in the mid-60's. In recent years the church music program has grown by leaps and bounds under the direction of David Spicer, who also holds the position of organist at the Bushnell Auditorium in Hartford.

Several additions have been made to the First Church organ and the impetus to procure a new console was greatly impelled by the purchase of an old 4-manual Aeolian-Skinner console originally installed at Christ Church in

Philadelphia. The Skinner console was itself replaced by an Austin console some 15 years ago.

The rebuilding of the Skinner console will involve the complete restoration of the console case-work, pedal board, ivory keyboards and keyboard contacts. New stop jambs, piston rails, and knee panel will be provided to match the original console in all matters concerning molding details, finish, etc.

On the interior, a multiplexing system will take over all organ switching functions and provide a multiple memory combination action at the same time. This console will be fully MIDI-capable.

Floyd T. Higgins

LOST AND FOUND

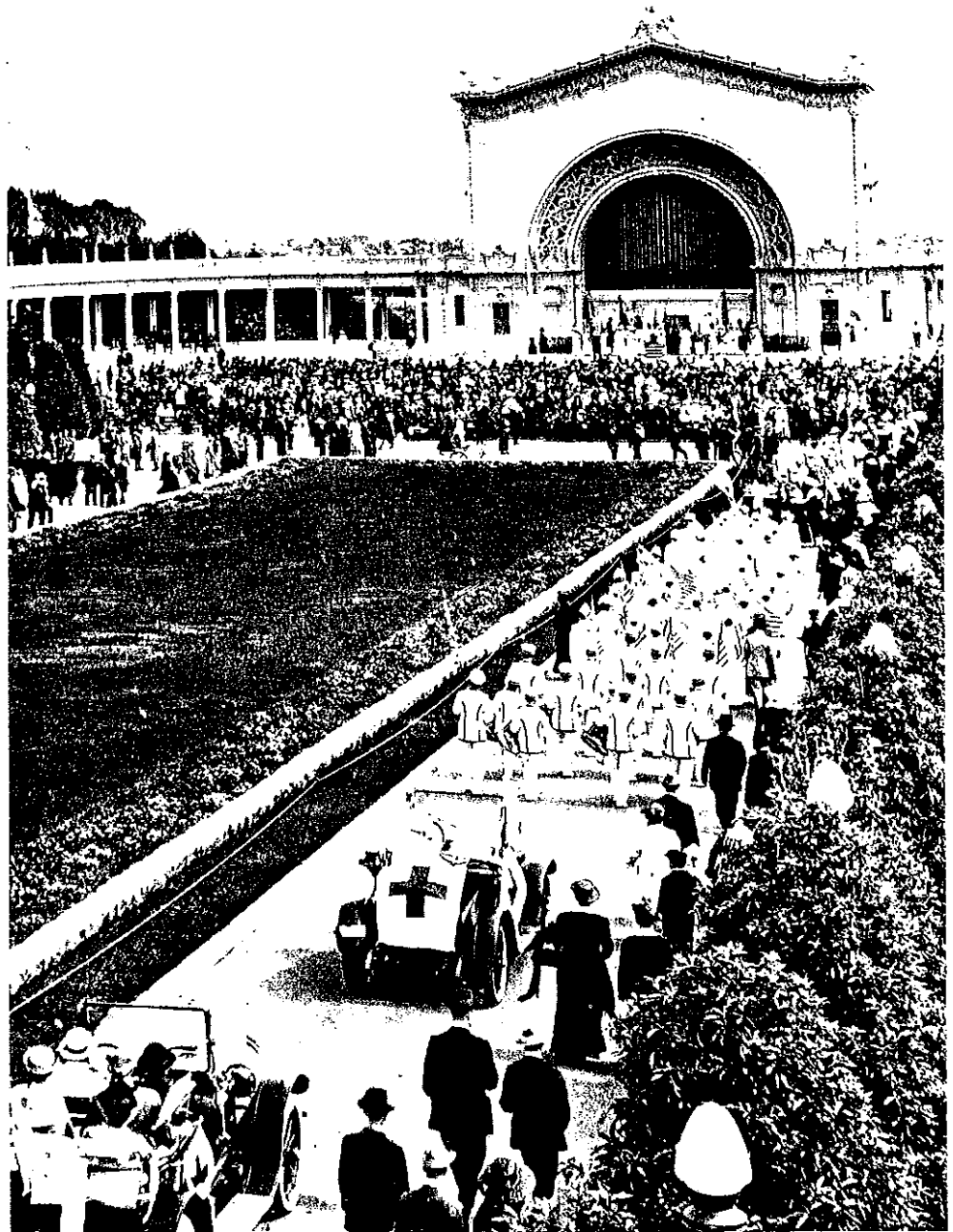
In the June 1993 issue of The Windline, a reprint of an article from the Yale Alumnae Magazine appeared on page 3 describing the "Lost and Found" Orchestral Trombone from the Woolsey Hall Skinner organ at Yale University in New Haven. We recently received a contract from the Thompson-Allen Company in New Haven to revoice and restore the reed, which is on 25 inches of wind pressure. The return of this reed in first-class condition to the Woolsey Hall organ provides a happy ending to the mysterious disappearance of this notable pipework.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

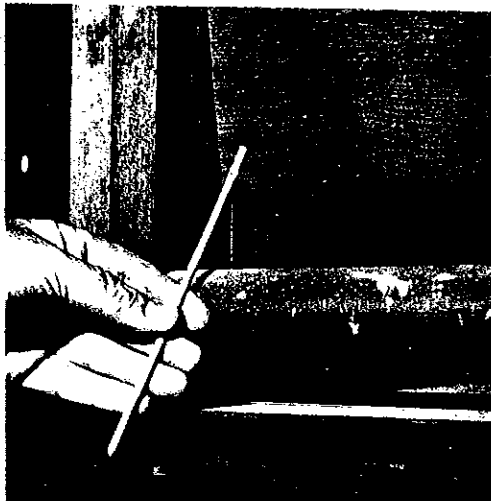
We are very happy to announce that Mr. Daniel R. Kingman, Head Flue Voicer, was also recently appointed Assistant Tonal Director and Mr. Floyd T. Higgins of our design staff, was recently appointed Assistant Vice President. Both Dan and Floyd bring unique talents to the firm and it is a pleasure to congratulate them both on their appointments.

Pictures from the Past

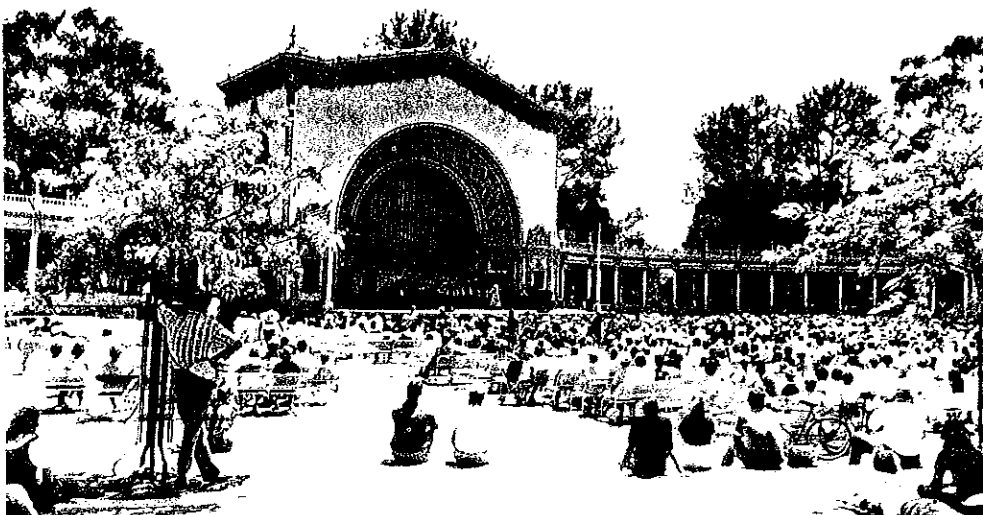
The centerfold of this issue of The Windline includes historical photographs of the Spreckels organ in Balboa Park, San Diego, California. These photos were reproduced from a well-documented brochure published by the Spreckels Organ Society, San Diego, CA. For information regarding a copy of this brochure please contact: Spreckels Organ Society, P.O. Box 6726, San Diego, CA, 92166. Telephone no. (619) 226-0819.



Mass at the Spreckels Organ Pavillion, 1916



One of the smallest metal pipes in the Spreckels Organ is held in front of the mouth (from which the pipe's sound is projected) of one of the instrument's largest wood pipes.



When the pavilion's renovation was completed in 1986, the north end of the audience area was raised slightly and finished with a semicircle of leafy shade trees.

New Console, 1935
 New Console and Restoration,
 1981
 16-Level, Solid-State
 Combination Action, 1991
 (24 generals; 8 pistons
 for each division)
 Total Pipes: 4,445
 Total Ranks: 72

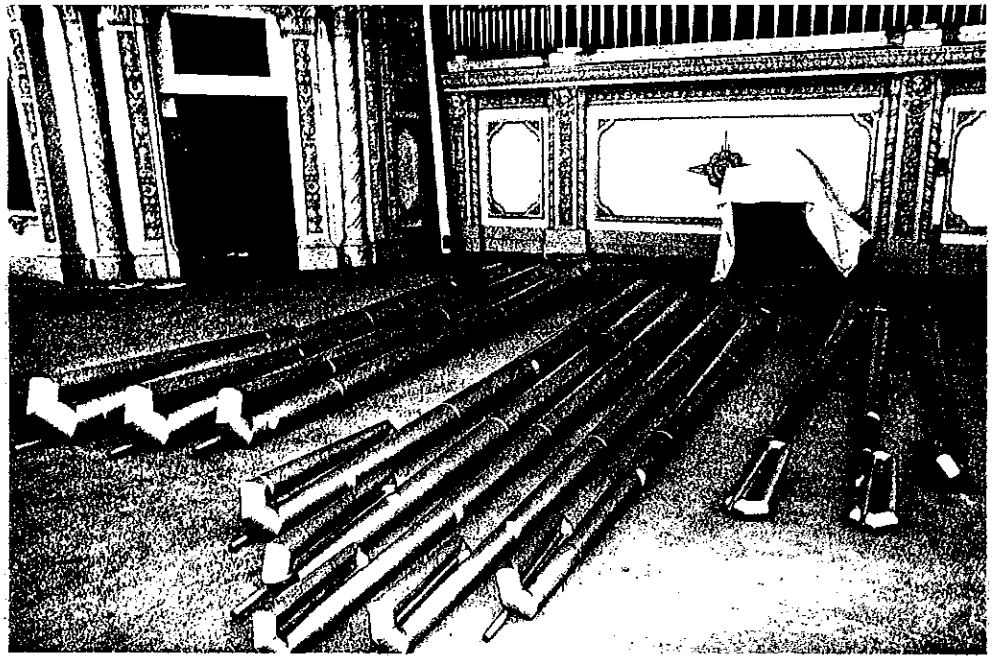
CURATORS OF THE SPRECKELS ORGAN

Roy Tolchard (1915-1932)
 Edwin A. Spencer (1932-1947)
 Leonard Dowling (1947-1974)
 Lyle Blackinton (1974-)

The Historic SPRECKELS ORGAN in BALBOA PARK San Diego, California

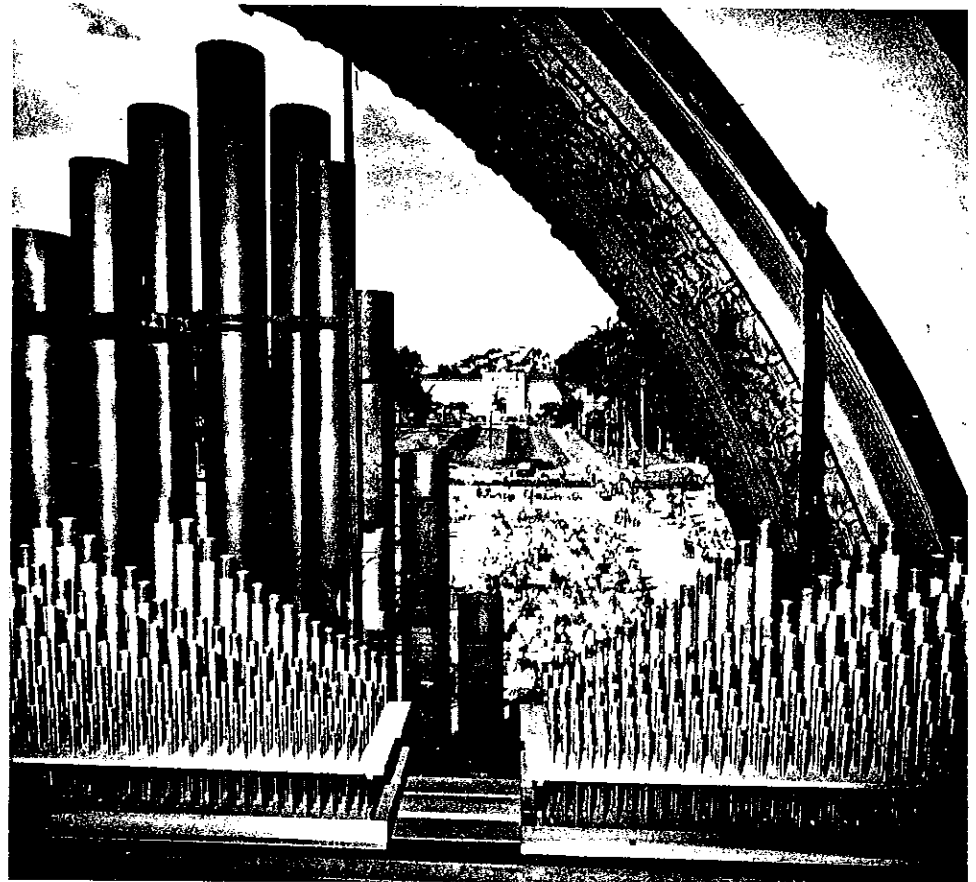
John D. Spreckels

was one of San Diego's most enterprising developers. At the height of his career, he owned every building on the south side of Broadway, from Union Street to Sixth Avenue. He spent the last two decades of his life (1906-1926) enriching the commerce and culture of his adopted city. In 1913, he offered to build a unique outdoor pipe organ in Balboa Park for the city's ambitious Panama-California Exposition. That same year Spreckels was elected first vice-president of the exposition company. In 1914, Spreckels' San Diego Electric Railway Company built a line that would bring exposition patrons directly from downtown San Diego to the exposition's east entrance gate (on Park Boulevard near today's San Diego Museum of Natural History). Below, Spreckels, right, poses with Joseph G. "Uncle Joe" Cannon, the colorful speaker of the House of Representatives. They are in an "eletroquette" at the 1915 Exposition in Balboa Park.



Immense bass pipes of the 32' Bombarde prior to installation

To provide an adequate sonic foundation for these additional reeds, the Spreckels Organ Society (see Chapter V) raised \$50,000 to provide a deep, sonorous 32' Contra Bombarde for the Pedal division in 1990. This massive set of reed pipes from the Austin Organ Co. brought the size of the instrument to a total of 72 ranks. In 1991, the Spreckels Organ Society acquired a solid state memory system and repaired the organ's percussion battery (bass drum, cymbal, and snare drum) at a cost of \$23,000. Built and installed by Blackinton and Associates, the 16-level combination action allows several organists to store simultaneously their individual program registrations.



The organ views its audience. Perspective from within the organ chamber

RECORD REVIEWS

By
John A. Hansen

Landing the job of installing a solid-state combination action in an Aeolian-Skinner emboldened me to "pop" for a number of new compact discs recently. Without a doubt, my greatest enthusiasm is for "Scherzo" (Koss Classics KC-1013), on which Gillian Weir plays 18 short, spirited works on the organ in Uihlein Hall, Milwaukee. Aeolian-Skinner built the 3-manual, 58-rank instrument in 1969. It featured one of that firm's first solid-state combination units, which proved unreliable. Along with deterioration caused by dirt and water from the stage (the entire organ is on a hydraulic elevator!), it was deemed necessary to have major repairs and alterations - including a new Solid-State Logic combination action - carried out by Austin in 1984. This disc, with excellent engineering, shows that the project was an outstanding success; and Ms Weir's playing is terrific - great rhythmic drive, technique "to burn," fine sense of line, and imaginative registrations. The composers range from early (Dandrieu, Bach) to 20th century (Durufié, Langlais). The Bach Allegro from the First Trio Sonata offers dramatic testimony to a fine, eclectic organ's ability to perform early music, played immediately after a robust Widor Symphonie movement. My desire to have a good recording of Horatio Parker's humorous Allegretto, Sonata in E-Flat, is now realized! While Bossi's "Giga" is very well played, Tom Murray's rendition of it at Czestochowa makes this performance seem a bit flat! All in all, though, this disc is tremendous!

Delos, with their DE 3148, has recorded David Higgs on the much ballyhooed Fisk in Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas. The composers are Bach, Franck, Schumann, Mozart, Liszt, d'Aquin,

David Conte, Calvin Hampton and Conrad Susa. The organ sounds unlike any Fisk in my experience, and that's good! Without "flexible" wind and "historic" temperament and located in a gracious acoustical setting, there is much to like about it. Interestingly enough, I find it more effective in the Romantic literature than in the Bach F Major Toccata that opens the program. Mr. Higgs is a most capable player and his reading of Franck's Chorale No. 2 in B Minor is one of the best. While the level is a bit low, the engineering is otherwise fine.

The first E. & G.G. Hook organ I ever experienced is that in First Congregational Church, Woburn (pronounced **Woo**burn by the natives!), MA. Through it I learned that fine organ building was being done in America in the 19th Century. It is one of three historic organs in Bruce Stevens' latest release (Volume III, Raven DAR-220) of the Organ Sonatas by Josef Rheinberger. My enthusiasm of about 30 years ago is vindicated by the sounds on this disc. While a little bit of this music often "goes a long way," Mr. Stevens plays it very well and has done a valuable service in seeking out vintage instruments on which to record.

"John Weaver performs..." is a 1993 release from Gothic (G 49060), played on the large, new Schantz in East 91st St. Christian Church, Indianapolis. It opens with a nice rendition of Dupré's "Cortège et Litanie". While some of Bach's Six "Schübler" Chorales come off well, they are "put in the shade" by a private tape I have of Ron Pearson playing them at First Presbyterian, Tulsa. Seth Bingham's rollicking "Roulade" comes off very well, and Weaver's arrangement of Schubert's "Ave Maria" is quietly effective. While the uncased organ looks

somewhat like a voicing machine on steroids, the sound is quite good, helped by a warm acoustic. John Weaver is a very communicative player, and I wish someone would record him playing Liszt's "Ad nos" on the Czestochowa organ - that would be something!!

RCA recently released some of its "Living Stereo" recordings, re-mastered for compact disc, and I recently heard one of that company's officials rhapsodizing about them, including "Virgil Fox Encores" (09026-61251-2). The original recording was done at the Riverside Church in 1958. Being unimpressed by the original, I bought the new release in the hope of a revealing experience. Alas, it was not to be! The sound is dry and hard, and Virgil's eccentricities are all too much in evidence - Mulet's "Tu es Petra" sounds like it was played by a bunch of souped up trip hammers!

Mr. Fox is far better served by Bainbridge Records' compact disc release (BCD 2505) of "The Christmas Album", recorded by Command Records in 1965 on the Möller of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, New York, -- possessed of a most spectacular acoustic! While the running time is short, the fine sound and good playing make it a good value. Louise Natale, who died not long ago, for many years soprano soloist at Riverside, joins in Reger's "The Virgin's Slumber Song" and Adams's "Oh Holy Night". These alone make the disc a "must have"!

In 1974 Simon Preston conducted the soloists and Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, in a stunning Argo recording of the Mass in D, Opus 86, by the great Bohemian master, Antonin Dvorak. It was accompanied by Nicholas Cleobury at the Willis organ (since replaced by a Rieger tracker) in the Cathedral. London has re-released it on compact

disc (430 364-2), and it is a treasure. The disc also contains Liszt's "Missa Choralis", performed by the Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge, conducted by George Guest.

**COVER FEATURE NOV. 1993
ISSUE OF THE AMERICAN ORGANIST
MAGAZINE**

The November issue of T.A.O. is our usual month to feature an Austin organ in a color picture on the cover. This upcoming issue will offer a unique cover display utilizing a beautiful evening photograph of the historic Spreckels organ in Balboa Park, San Diego, CA. The cover design will be the first one of its type ever published by the magazine.

The interior articles include a short overview of the Spreckels organ and a lengthy historical review of the company by Jonathan Ambrosino. Two separate philosophical articles, by Donald B. Austin, President and David A. J. Broome, Vice President and Tonal Director, are included in honor of 100 years in organbuilding.

Also, and again in honor of our 100th year in organ building, we have been informed by Mr. Michael Barone, host of a Minnesota public radio program called "Pipedreams", that an entire program will be dedicated to Austin Organs which will occur most likely on the weekend after Thanksgiving. Organs to be featured are as follows: Opus 2719, National Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Doylestown, PA; Opus 2711, Our Lady of Grace Church, Edina, MN; Opus 2536, Trinity College, Hartford, CT; Opus 2734, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Upper St. Clair, PA; Opus 323, Kotscher Memorial Organ, City Hall Auditorium, Portland, ME, and finally, Opus 453, Spreckles Organ, Balboa Park, San Diego, CA. It is interesting to note that the

"Pipedreams" radio program is also celebrating an anniversary, - this is their 10th year of broadcasting. So watch for the correct times and listings of the Minnesota Public Radio "Pipedreams" Program which should appear in the same November, 1993 issue.

**ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH
ST. CROIX, U.S.V.I.**

At the present time we are crating for shipment our Opus 2367, built in 1960, which suffered extreme damage from Hurricane Hugo in October, 1989. The organ was finally delivered here in Hartford in July, 1992, and is to be dispatched to the church in October or November, 1993.

In the next issue we will tell the entire saga of this instrument.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Births of children to our employees are always noteworthy and we are happy to announce the arrival on July 7, 1993, of a bouncing baby boy weighing 7lbs. 3oz. to Noemi Rivera of our Pneumatic Department and husband, Luis, of the Pipe Shop. Named Luis Daniel Ortiz Rivera we have personally witnessed that, while so young, the baby is constantly given to broad smiles.

Congratulations to the proud parents on their second 'Blessed Event' while in our employ.

JEFF DEXTER

We first heard from Jeff Dexter when he was organist and choir master at Wesley United Methodist Church in Bloomington, Illinois. The church was in the process of raising funds for a new organ in their large sanctuary.

Apparently Jeff was so enthused with the design of the Austin

organ that he decided to become an organ builder and came to Hartford to pursue this interest.

While still in Bloomington, Jeff was in contact with Austin helping to develop the design for a new organ for his church and initiated a fund-raising program. After coming here, he had an intimate role in the construction of Opus 2736, which was later installed in Bloomington.

During the almost four years he was in our employ he apprenticed in the Erecting Room which gave him valuable experience for when he was sent out as an installer. An extremely likable person, he was an asset to Austin in associating with committee members of the church where an organ was being installed.

Alas, being an organist, his interest in tonal work led him to seek a position in voicing and, there being no openings here, he left to follow this consuming passion with another organ builder. We wish him good fortune and happy voicing in his new location.

**AOI EMPLOYEES WITH 20+ YEARS
OF SERVICE**

<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEARS</u>
Austin, Donald B.	44
Broome, David A.J.	36
Barrett, Raymond	32
Breton, Joseph	34
Daugharthy, Grant	24
Heffner, Frederick	28
Isaacson, Alfred Q.	22
Johnston, David	24
Knight, Stanley	27
Kurtz, Nickolaus	35
Kingman, Daniel R.	25
Majewski, Judwiga	21
Mitchell, Frederick L.	42
Rios, Jose	28
Skates, Stewart	33
Walker, Charles W.	42
Westwood, John	29
<u>RETIREES</u>	
DiGennaro, Felice	43
DuBrule, Edward	31
Lamb, Merle	37
Martino, Margaret	21
Zsitvay, Zoltan	34

ZOLTAN ZSITVAY RETIRES

Friday, the 17th of September, 1993, was "Zoli Day" at the factory. A lunch honoring 34 years of employment at AOI was held.

Special guests included Mrs. Zsitvay, Mr. Burton Yeager from Chicago (who was instrumental in finding a job for Zoli at Austin in 1959), Mr. and Mrs. Felice DiGennaro, Mr. Nick Thompson-Allen and Mr. Joe Dzeda of the Thompson-Allen Company, New Haven, CT, Mr. Bon Smith of Austin Organ Service Co. in Avon, CT, Mr. Ted Gilbert of Wilbraham, MA, and Mr. Alan McNeely with Mr. Paul Joseph, his business partner, from Waterford, CT.

Zoltan was presented with a gift from the company by Mr. Donald Austin, our president. Charles Walker gave a card and cash gift from Zoli's fellow workers at Austin's.

Besides being one of America's foremost reed voicers, Zoltan leaves a legacy of many notable organs he has tonally finished.

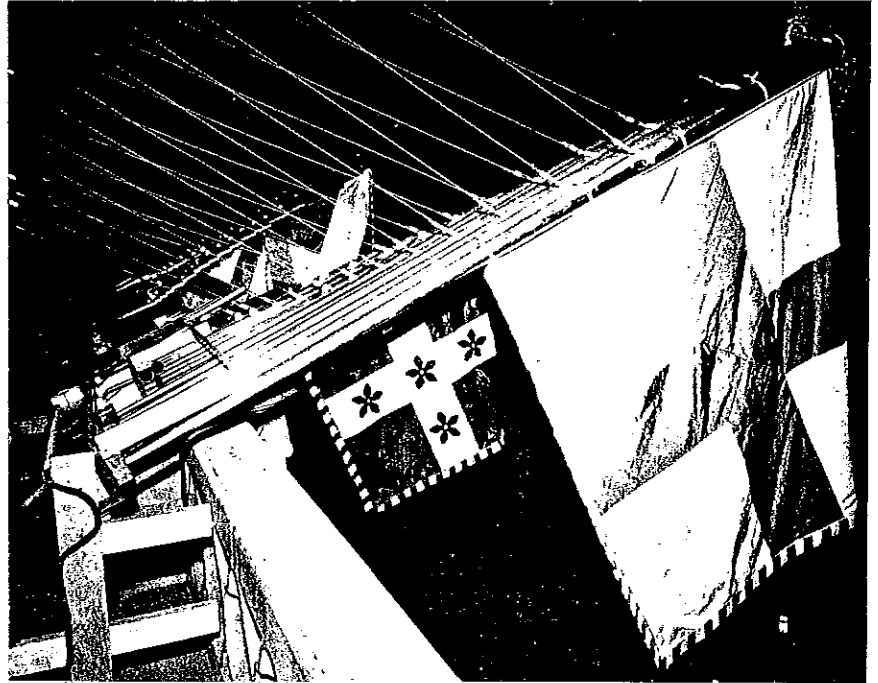
The following is a list of organs finished by Zoli, just to mention a few: Opus 2332, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Hartford, CT; Opus 2400, Brick Presbyterian Church, NYC; Opus 2533, South Congregational Church, Springfield, MA; Opus 2693, The Polish National Cathedral, Scranton, PA; Opus 2721, The Cathedral of Saint Vibiana's, Los Angeles, CA; and Opus 2743, The United Methodist Church, Madison, WI.

We wish Zoli a long and very happy retirement, although it is already rumored that he will be working for us on occasions in the future.

David A.J. Broome
Vice President & Tonal Director

LAST CHANCE!

The celebration of our 100th year is coming to a close. We can't produce a 101th year watch. Please enter your order a.s.a.p. We need a total of 25 to get our special rates of \$18.00 regular & \$23.00 water resistant.



State Trumpets, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York

