

The Windline

Volume 16 - Number 4 A Quarterly Issue

Austin Organs official newsletter to our representatives and friends
Windline Staff: K. J. Austin, A.Q. Isaacson, N. J. Sansone



December 1998



Yes, Benjamin Franklin! There is a Santa Claus!!!

**It's a Curtis Christmas!!!
(The Curtis Organ that is!)
The fascinating fable continues!
Opus 1416!**

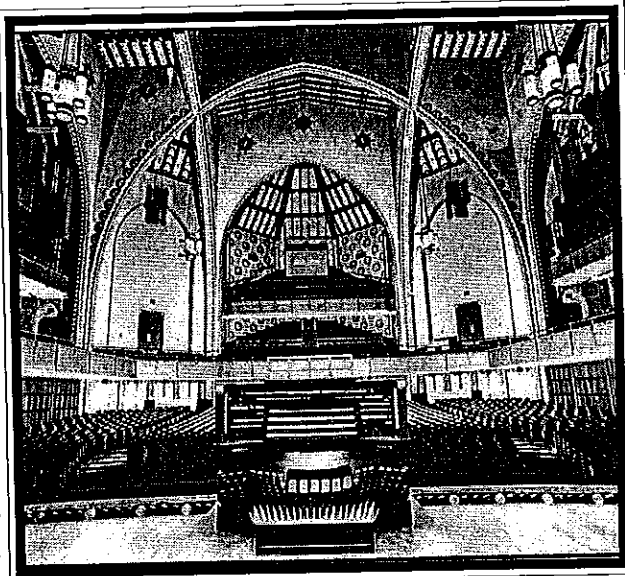
Thanks to the vallant volunteer efforts of the **Curtis Organ Restoration Society**, combined with the consultant and the out-pouring of support from the general public, the University of Penneylvania has committed to the restoration of the venerable Sesquicentennial Exposition Organ.

The pipework, previously removed by AOI to protect it from the ravages of auditorium reconstruction, has been approximately 70% refurbished to date. Reeds are to being revoiced, in authentic style, and flues washed, repaired, fitted with new slide tuners and checked for speech.

The remainder - and lion's share of the project - was entirely left out. The **Curtis Organ Restoration Society** took up the reins and spearheaded a campaign to raise funding to releather, address

the console and switching issue, and the mute 32' facade pipes (builders unknown), and toys. **CORS** succeeded in locating a donor for a new, four manual drawknob console (including multiplexing of the organ). Lots of excellent publicity was had when **CORS** and *Friends of the Wanamaker Organ* joined forces last June 6th for Wanamaker Organ Day.

CORS held a fundraising recital at Girard College Chapel on the world-famous Skinner organ that evening. This reaped the benefits of the Wanamaker crowd who stayed in town. Mass mailings and periodical advertising, along with a letter writing campaign also helped a great deal in bringing the instrument to the attention of the PENN administration.



At any rate, with council of consultant William Czelusniak and under pressure from forces as outlined above - along with the firm realization that the instrument could well be entirely unplayable after expended funds on the pipework, has brought this wonderfully happy conclusion!

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT THEM

(OR: Tom Crossan to the rescue!!)

by A. Q. Isaacson

On Sunday afternoon, October 4th, I was very happily riding Amtrak (and if you know me, you know that means **VERY** happy!) headed for Philadelphia to visit two prospective clients. The schedule was to visit one church to take measurements midday on Monday in the Chestnut Hill area. The other prospect was quite a bit further away in West Chester on Monday evening, thus requiring a car rental.

As the train was nearing 30th Street Station in Philadelphia where I was to pick up my car, I started to get organized for departing...but with a slightly uneasy feeling!!

Here I was, approaching Philadelphia at approximately 8:00 P.M., when I suddenly realized I had NO credit cards...and even worse, NO driver's license!!! Upon arriving in the station, I made my first, frantic call to my wife, Becky, who blurted out that she had found my cards.

I keep my cards and license in a small, brown case when travelling, along with my business cards. I had inadvertently placed the case on top of the book she was reading, which was on the dining room table, just before I left. The case just blended in with the book cover and I missed it.

If any of you know my wife, she is a voracious reader and her book was obviously the first thing she reached for after her afternoon choir rehearsals and dinner. As a very kind gesture, she immediately offered to take the early (5:00 A.M.) train and bring my cards to me...and, of course...read all the way down to Philadelphia!!! (At least I had one option!)

Talk about a panic attack!! There I was in Philadelphia...there were no return trains home and I could not rent a car. On the brighter side...I did pre-pay my round-trip Amtrak ticket; had made a hotel reservation; had some cash...and full well knew that our trusty area representative, Tom Crossan, lived near by!!

The next hurdle was to get a hotel room!. I took a taxi to the downtown Holiday Inn Express...and to my surprise they informed me I had no reservation. The panic was really beginning to settle in now...!!! However, they checked with the other Philadelphia Holiday Inn and found my reservation there.

Next hurdle...How am I going to pay for this(?)...I didn't bring **that** much cash and this is downtown Philadelphia!! I am a member of Holiday Inn's Priority Club and because I made my initial reservation through the club, they allowed me to: ...1) cancel my other reservation without charge...2) stay there at the Express Inn...3) charge my two night stay with my credit card on file...4) **AND** for half the price of the other hotel!! **WHEW...BIG** hurdles jumped here!!

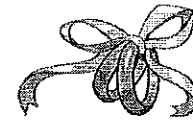
After scrambling around in my room for Tom's telephone number, I finally was successful (pure luck!) at finding him home on a Sunday evening. I was able to get to Chestnut Hill by train the next morning. Luckily, Kim Austin had previously mentioned that the church was just up the street from the station. By the way, Philadelphia's SEPTA Regional Rail system is excellent and very convenient and easy to use. Try it the next time you visit Philadelphia...you'll like it!!

Then, Tom worked it out that I would take a different train out to Paoli, PA and he would meet me. I did and he did...we had a leisurely dinner and made it on time to the church in West Chester. I was glad Tom was with me as he was familiar with the existing organ and contributed to the meeting in many positive ways.

After our meeting, Tom delivered me back to the Paoli Station in time for a late train back to the city. The next morning, I took the train back to 30th Street Station and was **gladly** on my way home.

WHAT A TRIP!! And remember: double check...triple check...but **DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT THEM!!!!!!**

PS: THANKS AGAIN, TOM!!



An Austin Wedding

September 19, 1998 witnessed the union of two of Austin Organ's best kept secrets. Ed (all purpose wiring guru) and Holly (pneumatics) became Ed and Holly Odell at the Derby United Methodist Church. The Wedding was an intimate and elegant affair, the music being provided by the church's Odell organ (what else). The food at the reception was outstanding. A first-class affair from beginning to end, Ed and Holly held center stage with grace and charm.

Best wishes from all of us at Austin Organs, Inc.



From "The Stoptab" - Spreckels Organ Society Newsletter

Balboa Park, San Diego, California
Austin Opus 453

by Edward S. Barr, Archivist - Historian

David A. J. Broome may not yet be a familiar name to many Spreckels Organ Society members, but he certainly left his multiple musical fingerprints on the pavilion instrument. After 64 years, in 1979, all of the reed pipes were returned to their original builder - the Austin Organ Company in Hartford, Connecticut - where they were cleaned, repaired and fitted with new brass tongues.

Dave Broome was then the head reed voicer, tonal director, and vice president of Austin. He was given the ultimate responsibility for the completed project, later also including the creation of three ranks of brilliant festival trumpets and the bellowing 32' Contra Bombarde. In a phone conversation with me, Broome said, "That Bombarde is the loudest 32' rank we have ever built. When being tested in the voicing room, we essentially had to shut down the entire administrative section of the factory - the walls were shaking!"

After 41 years, David Broome has now retired. A native of England, he joined Austin in 1957. He has been offered by Austin the position of "head reed voicer" indefinitely. David also receives from me much of the historical information being accumulated. He adds these materials to the Spreckels organ archives being maintained by Austin.

The Voice of San Diego continues...



The Dickinson Kimball (3-66)

by Kimberlee Austin

I recently enjoyed a wonderful evening in Wilmington, Delaware where I saw and heard for the first time the fabulous Dickinson Kimball!! I was in great company as well, - Curt Hawkes of the Hartford office, Tom Crossan (Philadelphia area rep), Ray Biswanger (President of Friends of the Wanamaker Organ), Paul Marchesano (Program Director of the Curtis Organ Restoration Society) and meeting us there was A. J. Buttler (New York City rep). This instrument was moved from a theater to Dickinson High School in Wilmington by a volunteer crew. What a great job they did. Veteran Austin man Brant Duddy has had lots of involvement with this baby!

CARLO CURLEY was this particular evening's artist. Featured were pieces from all styles of organ repertoire. I never heard Bach like THAT before!!! We were all impressed by how wonderfully the Dickinson Theater Organ Society had pulled things together. The house was very close to capacity, refreshments were sold, souvenirs and CDs, - it was like attending an event at a for-profit facility. There is nothing like volunteer labor - the heart, soul and loyalty are the driving forces, and what could be better than that?!

As a special surprise, imagine how wonderful it felt when it was announced that Lyn Larsen was in the audience! We all got a chance to shake his hand and chat with him - a very personable man with loads of charm.

Anyone who might be in the area on the following dates should make an effort to go ahead and hear the Dickinson-Kimball. All events begin at 8:00 p.m.

1999

- ☛ January 30th - A Dick Smith Happening
- ☛ March 13th - Donna Parker
- ☛ April 6th - 10a.m. Daytime Concert
- ☛ April 24th - Simon Gledhill
- ☛ June 5th - Ken Double

For more information please contact:

Dickinson Theater Organ Society

1801 Milltown Road

Wilmington, DE 19801

302/995-2603

e-mail: redtoservicenot.com



From the Desk of Alan McNeely ...

St. Mary's College, Moraga, California Austin Organ Opus 2768

This very interesting organ was installed during October and November and is currently in the finishing stage by Fred Heffner and Chris Broome. Fred reports that it will be "one h_ _ _ uva good sounding beastie". It contains pipes and casework from the previous organ, which was originally built in 1858 by Henry Erben of New York and shipped by frigate around Cape Horn to the West Coast! In 1902, it was completely rebuilt and enlarged by Murray-Harris and relocated to St. Mary's in 1928. The large College Chapel has recently undergone complete acoustical improvements including a sealed ceiling and a new stone tile floor. The Chapel is used by the Brothers for daily mass, as well as a Sunday Episcopal Congregation and Sunday evening student mass, plus an average of three weddings every weekend! The instrument speaks high from the rear gallery where it is housed with the old Erben case which had been expanded and richly decorated. Lanny Hochhalter, David Broome and Fred Mitchell spent countless hours planning with every detail of its unique specification, design and construction, of this four manual with three Walker 32' stops and future Chancel organ preparations.

Austin plans to feature this organ on the cover of the 1999 issue of The American Organist magazine, and plans are underway for a recital series beginning next fall, and CD release. This will be the finest organ on the West Coast when it is completed!

Fellowship, Lutheran Church Tulsa, Oklahoma - Opus 2770

Installed and finished earlier this year, this organ is already having preparations ordered and installed. Even the beauty of the November 1998 TAO did not even begin to show the real beauty of the appearance and sound of this organ in its magnificent acoustical environment. Everyone who had a part in the design, construction and tonal finishing of this organ should be very proud of its success!

David Broome's West Coast Retirement Party Also a Huge Success!

On November 7th, coinciding with the East Coast festivities, a smaller but equally enjoyable celebration of Mr. Broome's Tonal Director career was held at Hunter's Restaurant in Lafayette, California. The conversation was centered around stories of Mr. Broome's work, especially reeding, and much food and multiple beverages were merrily consumed by Mr. Bob Melhuish (Episcopal Organist at Moraga), Alan McNeely, Paul Joseph and Paul's 18 month old son, Tate! This is the FIRST instance of an Austin festive gathering occurring on the East and West Coast at the same time!



Two Big Rebuilds

Double the congratulations to Lenny Harris and Kim Lewis upon their first sales!!! Both have sold major rebuilds on existing Austins.

Lenny's is Opus 591 - Faith United Parish in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. A new console, leathers, and more is in the offing.

Kim's is Opus 1301 - First United Methodist Church of Appleton, Wisconsin. New console, tonal work, leathers, etc.

It is very important for all reps to stress that the refurbishment should be done by the original builder - both of the above churches suffering at the hand of non-Austin people and unfortunately, paying the price now.

☆ Rebuilds -R- Us ☆

Don't let your local Austins get ruined!!



♪♪Bruce is Here!♪♪

For any of you who might have been in a coma the past month or so, be advised that our new Tonal Director is officially "on the job" and firmly ensconced in the throne of thrills and piping pleasure.

Come on in and meet him if you have not yet done so.

Bruce and his lovely wife Helen are making their new home in West Hartford, Connecticut.



THE PARTY

As most readers know, a party in honor of David Broome was held on November 7th at a nearby banquet facility.

Luckily, Bruce and Helen Buchanan had already arrived and were able to attend! Several Austin reps were also there, from near to far. Winning the prize for longest distance traveled was Dr. Orpha Ochse (Whittier, California). Everyone ate, drank and was merry! Several of us got up and told anecdotes or just gave heartfelt testimony to his Lordship's greatness!

All in all it was a very nice evening, - although no tribute could be enough to "The Master", but we put a dent in it!



MORE NEWS FROM PHILLY!



Episcopal Church of St. Martin in the Fields, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, PA

A contract was recently signed for improvements and additions to the 1957 Aeolian-Skinner organ at St. Martin in the Fields, Philadelphia. The church is a charming English village style edifice which will undergo acoustical improvements. Unfortunately, the extant instrument is very unremarkable, - and to add insult to injury, the placement and egress are not so so hot either! (Chancel installation with next to zero egress to the nave.)

The contract with Austin includes: new three manual drawknob console, revoicing of reeds and new eleven rank Grand Choir division with facade. Contracted for separately by others is a complete re-leathering and thirty ranks of Walker digital.

Consultant for St. Martin's is noted area authority, Richard Alexander.

AOI WELCOMES TWO NEW EMPLOYEES !!!

New to the Pipe Shop is Mike Vader, who decided he needed a change in occupations after 15 years of driving garbage trucks.

Mike is doing exceedingly well in the Pipe Shop after only a couple of months on the job.

Mike and his wife Jeanette enjoy relaxing at their home in Torrington, Connecticut.



Joining us this past September in the Console Department is Luke Bittner.

Luke graduated from the Hartford Conservatory as a Jazz major and is a huge fan of Brazilian Jazz music.

Luke is also a professional guitar player and gives guitar lessons in his spare time.



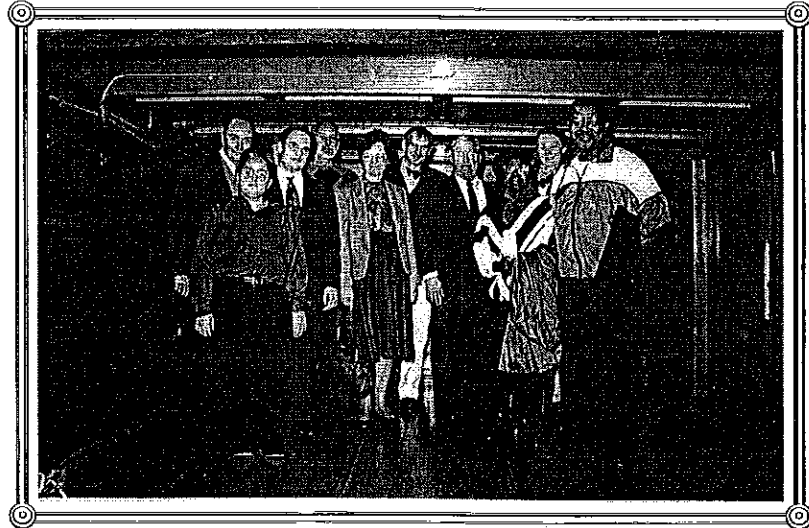
An Austin Photo Collection



★★CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION★★



OHS Member and Councillor candidate Paul R. Marchesano presents "Historically Significant Instrument" plaque to Eric Watkins of Liberty Christian Center International and Kimberlee J. Austin of Austin Organs, Inc.



Well-wishers gather in Opus 22's enormous airbox

★★DAVID A. J. BROOME'S RETIREMENT PARTY★★



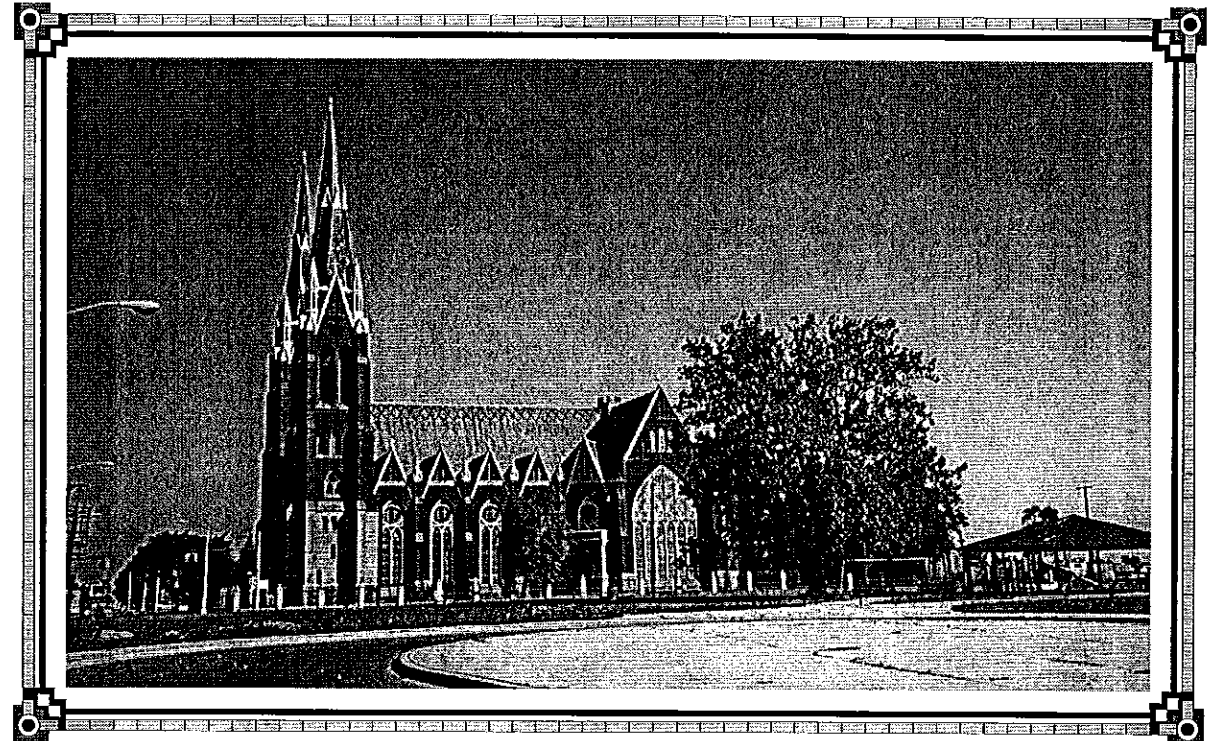
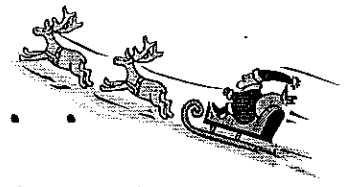
Fred Heffner presents DAJB with the "Shirt-Tail Out" Award!!!



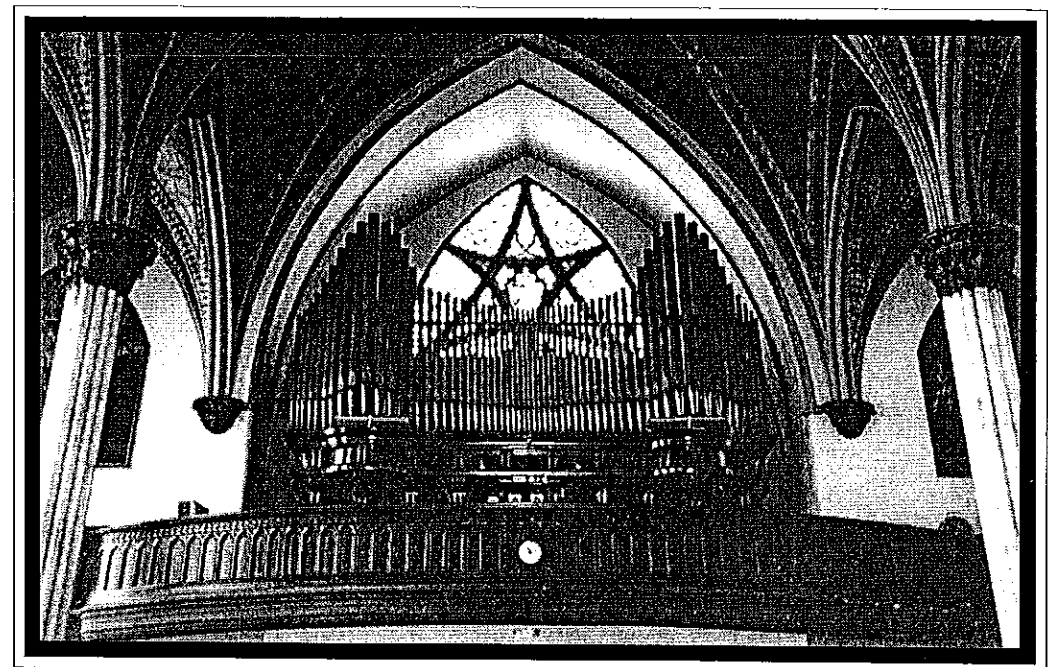
A truly "Ike" gift - a lamp with Davey memorabilia hanging from everywhere - including teabags, shallots, and a big rubber ear!!!



More Photos...



Snapshots of Opus 2...Yes, Opus 2! At Sweetest Heart of Mary in Detroit. Taken by Kim Austin on a summer trip to same!





Best Wishes
from all of us at
Austin Organs, Inc.
for a
Joyous Holiday Season
and a
Happy and Healthy
1999 !!!