FROM THE PRESIDENT

In 1985 I traveled to Dresden for the first time. It was appalling to me that, after so many years had passed, the ravages of WWII were still so evident in a great modern city. The most moving memory of that trip was seeing the pile of rubble in the middle of the Neumarkt that was once the fabulous baroque Frauenkirche. After 40 years the ruins were still undisturbed from the day the great church fell. Trees were growing in the great mound of stones. On the periphery were roses that had been planted to make the site a memorial to peace and reconciliation.

Some years later Klaus Furtwängler, then head of the German pipemaking firm Carl Giesecke & Sohn, celebrated the company's 150th anniversary year by donating all the money they might have spent on a lavish celebration to the then newly founded Frauenkirche restoration effort and encouraged all their clients, including us, to support this effort. As a result I began to watch this project develop with great interest. By 2006, architectural journals were filled with the stories of the completion of this incredible archeological clearing and cataloging of rubble, and the eventual reassembly of the Frauenkirche using as much of the original stonework as was possible.

This past September I traveled to Gdansk, Poland to attend the International Society of Organbuilders (ISO) Congress. Many friends and colleagues from around the world were there and we visited many impressive churches and organs of historic value in and around Gdansk and Stralsund, Germany. After that wonderful week-long event I drove down to Dresden to see the Frauenkirche.

While approaching Dresden it was exciting to see the gleaming stone dome towering over the city skyline. Even more overpowering was walking through the city to the Neumarkt, first catching glimpses of the Frauenkirche through narrow vistas created by all the recently restored historic buildings in this area of the city, and then finally walking into the square to have a full view of one of the most magnificent baroque buildings in the world. I spent two days absorbing the beauty of this place. After dinner on my final evening in Dresden I walked from the direction of the Zwinger Museum into the market square to see the entire interior of the Frauenkirche lit up through its clear glass windows. The church and its dome were silhouetted against a deep blue night sky lit with a full moon. I was reminded by this beautiful scene of just how much change we've experienced in our lifetime, and reflected upon the fact that beauty and integrity always seem to win over destruction and ugliness.

Earlier in the summer, during the American Guild of Organists National Convention, I had the opportunity to enjoy a lot of good music making with clients, friends and colleagues in Minneapolis. I appreciated seeing so many of you at Westminster Presbyterian Church during the convention to hear our recently installed Op. 86 and view my art show. The dedication of this new instrument took place just this past September while I was away to the ISO Congress. It is only the second dedication I've ever missed; the first was due to the fact that the dedica-



tions of two new organs were scheduled on the same day! Fortunately the company was well represented at the Op. 86 dedication by nearly twenty Dobson employees and family members.

After several years of planning, design and construction, I'm so pleased that the installation of the new organ for Highland Park United Methodist Church is underway. Music Director David Davidson, organists Bradley Welch and Chris Brunt, and architect John Brown (a member of the church and a baritone in the choir) have been superb and respectful colleagues. We were happy to have them, along with church member Joe Penland and David's grandson, Cameron, visit our shop last month.

I'm happy to announce the arrival late last Spring of a new employee. Cabinetmaker Pat Lowry comes to us from WOOD Magazine, where he was an editor and tool tester. Previous to this, he operated his own cabinet shop and was involved in retail woodworking businesses in the Des Moines area. With his strong experience he was immediately able to be involved in building the round tower elements and the massive mouldings for the Dallas cases.

I also want to acknowledge our excellent summer intern, Pat Thieszen, son of our head designer Jon Thieszen and a senior at Iowa State University. He's already capable of some fine woodworking and is contemplating a career in organbuilding.

We recently completed restorative voicing of the fluework on an organ I'm privileged to hear nearly every Sunday. Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, is home of the 1966 Schlicker organ designed and made famous by the music and recordings of Paul Manz. Our work was intended to reverse the effects of 40 years of dirt, gravity and cone tuning, restoring errant pipes to proper speech, dynamic strength and tone.

I want to commend the American Guild of Organists for organizing the 2008-09 "International Year of the Organ," particularly the very successful "Organ Spectacular" with so many simultaneously scheduled events the weekend of October 19. The organ seems to be alive and well!

Hum Soluson

PROFILES



Born in 1959, Randall grew up in Nassau County on Long Island, the adopted son of an owner of Peter's Backyard, a highly-regarded Greenwich Village steakhouse. The restaurant prospered, and the family was able to afford a live-in nanny and a substantial house in Sands Point and later, Lloyd Harbor. In 1969, they moved to Daytona Beach, where the family frequently summered, to open a new restaurant. Unfortunately, this venture didn't prosper, and they returned to New York City in more straitened circumstances. Now living in a number of different apartments in lower Manhattan, Randall was shuttled from school to school as the family moved.

In the 1960s and '70s, New York was ruthlessly tearing down many historic buildings, and treks to school brought Randall past many ornate old structures in the throes of demolition. In 1973, he saw a cast iron fire call box in the rubble of one such building, and liberated it. That experience inspired what he called "gargoyling," overnight outings scouting for and collecting discarded stone and terra cotta ornament, boiler gauges, and other intriguing demolition detritus. He stored his treasures in a corner of the family living room, and then in rented lofts when the collection threatened to overwhelm the apartment. He stopped going to high school because of the violence there, instead spending his nights roaming abandoned buildings and his days in the public library. By the time he was 18, he estimated his collection weighed 50,000 pounds.

The beauty of the pieces Randall salvaged (some designed by Stanford White, George Pelham, and Charles B.J. Snyder) led him to read about mold making and casting. He began making and selling reproductions of some of his pieces, and eventually worked for five years with a firm that produced gargoyles and other architectural sculptures. When his Park Slope loft was condemned by the city, he sold most of his collection and moved near his sister in Vermont, and later, to Oregon.

During the years of this cross-country sojourn, he became interested in the pipe organ. While still in New York he restored a salvaged player piano (which had, in a classic cartoon moment, fallen a number of stories on its way out of the building, landing relatively unharmed on the scaffolding over the sidewalk), and he later owned an Estey Virtuoso. He attended services at Christ Episcopal Church in Montpelier, Vermont, chiefly to hear their Karl Wilhelm organ. When he moved to Oregon, he began to take organ lessons, and bought a used pipe organ, Möller Op. 5252 of 1930, built

The trade of organ building, not surprisingly, seems to attract many people who have wide-ranging interest in handicrafts. The same people who lavish care on pipe organ parts during the day often spend time making furniture, creating stained glass windows, throwing pottery, or making model trains (or full-size ones) in their spare hours. For our coworker Randall Dana, the path to organ building took him from the East Coast to the West Coast to Iowa via a career in, of all things, the reproduction of architectural sculpture.

for a church in Southold, N.Y. He enrolled in woodworking classes at the local community college, and chose to build a gothic-style façade for his pipe organ. Considerably more ambitious than the typical shop project, the organ case prompted an admiring article in the local newspaper.

By this time, his interest in organ building as a career was serious, and he approached several companies about employment, eventually joining our firm in 1997. At Dobson he generally builds wooden pipes and interior parts such as rollerboards and wind trunks. In addition, he is the shop's maintenance man, servicing equipment and tools, and making any needed building repairs.

Since settling in Lake City, Randall has begun a second collection of architectural fragments, purchased from collectors all over the country, and is also taking sculpture classes at Iowa Central Community College, for which he received a scholarship. He rebuilt his home to include a modeling studio and casting room, and sells reproductions of pieces in his collection on his website at http://urbansculptures.com/. In addition to these pursuits, Randall raises purebred Bernese Mountain Dogs, and has exhibited at various shows, including one year at the Westminster show.

A classic autodidact, Randall's education has been mostly self-directed, gained primarily in libraries and hands-on experiences. His youthful comfort with exploring precarious old buildings has given him a fearlessness that allows him to approach difficult situations with equanimity. Even his coworkers were amazed to learn that he once removed a disused three-manual Kilgen organ from a balcony—complete with console and blower—entirely by himself, but that's perfectly typical of this can-do member of the Dobson crew.



Randall at work in his studio

WORK IN PROGRESS

As of this writing, during the last week of October, shop personnel are fully occupied with the building of Op. 87 (IV/95) for Highland Park United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas. Op. 87's Gallery division has been loaded on a truck and will be installed beginning next week. In matching cases on either side of the church's gallery window, the thirteen rank Gallery Organ will not have its own console but be available on the main organ as a floating division. Its façade contains the main organ's Herald Trumpet, one of two en chamade stops on this large and eclectic instrument. Also to be installed next week will be the windchests and the lowest sixteen pipes of the 32' Contra Diapason. These large open wood pipes will be located on the south transept wall.

Installation of the main organ, pictured on the right, begins in January. Consisting of four manual divisions and pedal, the electric-slider instrument will be cantilevered over the choir seating area in two matching cases. Pipes in the façade include the Great and Pedal 16' and 8' Principals and the en chamade Festival Trumpet.



Digital rendering of Op. 87 by Selzer Associates and Greengrass Studios





Laminated oak for curved mouldings



Randall building swell shades for the main organ



Gallery tower top and pipe shade (upside down)



Gallery case imposts (both resting upside down)



Case parts



Jim racking the Pedal 16' Posaune



Bill voicing the Herald Trumpet

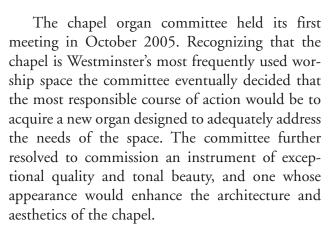
NEW CONTRACTS

The University of Tampa, Tampa, Fla., recently signed a contract for Op. 89, a new three manual and pedal mechanical action instrument of 56 ranks to be installed in UT's new 300 seat Sykes Chapel and Center for Faith and Values. Groundbreaking for the building took place on October 23; construction is scheduled to be completed by 2010 with the installation of the organ to follow. Sykes Chapel is the eighth new building on campus in the past decade.

Saint Thomas Church, New York, N.Y., this fall announced its decision to engage Dobson Pipe Organ Builders to design and build a new instrument to replace the existing Arents Memorial Organ (Skinner, 1913, Æolian-Skinner, 1956, Gilbert Adams, 1969, and Mann and Trupiano, 1982). Preliminary plans anticipate the new organ will be in place by 2013, the centenary of the Parish's landmark building by Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson.

FEATURED INSTRUMENT

Several years ago, as Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, was planning to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2007, Pastor Timothy Hart-Andersen, formed a committee to assess the condition of the chapel organ. The existing instrument, Op. 717 of the Skinner Organ Company, was built in 1928 for the residence of a member and was donated when the 175-seat neo-gothic chapel was built in 1937. In the 1960s, the right organ chamber was damaged by arson and much of the instrument's historic value, tonal charm and beauty were lost. Subsequently rebuilt by M.P. Möller, the instrument was less than successful and had in recent years become increasingly unreliable.



The proposal offered by Dobson included a specification that offered musical versatility and a space-efficient physical layout. A contract was signed in November 2006, and construction began about one year later. A group of Westminster members and friends chartered a bus and made a special trip to Lake City on January 19, 2008, to see the organ set up in Dobson's shop as it was nearing completion. The organ was delivered on a sub-zero day in March 2008; installation and tonal finishing were completed in mid-May. The organ was dedicated during worship on May 18, 2008.

Opus 86 is housed in two cases on either side of the chapel's chancel. The Swell and Great divisions, in a free-standing case on the right, have mechanical action. The Solo and Pedal divisions, located in a chamber over a fire exit on the left, have electric action. The façade pipes, drawn from the Pedal Principal 8' on the left and the Great Principal 8' on the right, are made of burnished 75% tin. The casework is built of American black walnut to complement the millwork of the chapel. Pictured below is one of the four carved faces from the wooden grillework of the old organ chambers that have been incorporated in the new organ case. Manual keyboards have blackwood naturals and rosewood sharps with bone overlays. The pedal-



board has hard maple naturals and teak sharps. The music rack and stop jambs are veneered with Carpathian elm burl.

The organ has 21 registers, 27 stops, 24 ranks totalling 1,406 pipes. As noted in the stoplist, nine ranks



The Chapel of Westminster Presbyterian Church Minneapolis, Minnesota Op. 86, 2008

G	REAT		
	Bourdon	existing Möller, rescaled & rebuilt	61 pipes
	Principal	façade, burnished 75% tin	61 pipes
	Chimney Flute	1–12 new, Möller Rohrflöte	61 pipes
	Octave	,	61 pipes
2'	Fifteenth	from Mixture	pipes
IV	Mixture 2'	J	244 pipes
	Swell to Great		1 1
	Solo on Great		
SV	WELL (expressive)		
	Bourdon		61 pipes
8'	Viole	existing Möller	61 pipes
8'	Viole Celeste	TC, existing Möller	49 pipes
4'	Principal	3	61 pipes
4'	Flute	existing Möller, rescaled	61 pipes
22/3'	Nasard		61 pipes
2'	Piccolo		61 pipes
13/5'	Tierce		61 pipes
8'	Trumpet		61 pipes
8'	Oboe	existing Möller	61 pipes
	Tremulant		
	Solo on Swell		
SOLO (unenclosed, floating)			
8'	Harmonic Flute	1-12 from Gt. Bourdon, 30% tin	49 pipes
8'	Flauto Dolce	existing Skinner	61 pipes
8'	Flauto Dolce Celeste	TC, existing Skinner	49 pipes
8'	Trumpet		61 pipes
PI	EDAL		
16'	Subbass	existing, rescaled & rebuilt	32 pipes
16'	Bourdon	from Great Bourdon 16'	pipes
8'	Principal	façade, burnished 75% tin	32 pipes
8'	Bass Flute	extension of 16' Subbass	12 pipes
4'	Octave	extension of Pedal Principal 8'	12 pipes
16'	Trombone	full length extension of Solo Trumpet 8'	12 pipes
8'	Trumpet	from Solo Trumpet 8'	pipes
	Great to Pedal		
	Swell to Pedal		

from the old organ were retained, modified and integrated into the new design. The organ is tuned to equal temperament. The Great and Swell are voiced on a wind pressure of 3", while the Solo and Pedal are voiced on $4\frac{1}{4}$ ". Wind is supplied to the organ by a new blower located in the basement via the original Skinner static reservoir, newly releathered.

Solo on Pedal

The "Chapel Organ Inaugural Concert Series" began on September 28 with organist Thomas Bara of the Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, Michigan, playing two identical concerts at 2:00 p.m and and 7:00 p.m. The series continues with five additional programs celebrating the instrument's various roles as accompanist, leader of congregational song and ensemble player. Details about each program may be found at the church's website www.ewestminster.org.

Lake City Union Church, Lake City, Iowa, recently hosted a recital by Nathan Proctor, a graduate student of Larry Smith at Indiana University. Nathan's connections with Dobson are unique. He began organ studies in 2000 with Dobson's John Ourensma, playing Op. 13 (II/29; 1980) at Union Church and gave a recital there after his high school graduation in 2002. Nathan then attended St. Olaf College, studying with John Ferguson on Op. 29, (III/42; 1985). He will finish at Indiana this fall after playing his graduate recital on Op. 35 (III/26; 1987).

Church of the Holy Comforter, Burlington, N.C., hosted a recital sponsored by the Greater Greensboro Chapter AGO, part of the October 19 AGO "Organ Spectacular." Resident organist Laurie Ryan played Op. 28 (II/30; 1985).

Trinity Lutheran Church, Webster City, Iowa, presented a recital on 11/2 featuring **David C. Pickering** playing Op. 43 (II/23; 1988).

Trinity Lutheran Church, Manhattan Beach, Calif., has announced its 2008-09 concert series featuring recitals on Op. 56 (II/17; 1992): 11/30, S. Wayne Foster, in a concert celebrating the 16th anniversary of the organ; 12/21, Karla Devine; 2/8/09, David Cherwien. First Friday of the month "Bach's Lunch" organists include: 9/5, David York; 1/2/09, Namhee Han.

McKinley Presbyterian Church, Champaign, Ill., hosted a recital sponsored by the East Central Illinois Chapter AGO, part of the October 19 AGO "Organ Spectacular." Resident organist Scott Montgomery played Op. 63 (II/21; 1994).

Presbyterian Homes, Evanston, Ill., has announced its 2008-2009 "The Gift of Music" series featuring Op. 64 (II/24; 1994). The 1:30 p.m. Monday concerts this fall include: 9/22, Jill Hunt; 10/27, George Williams; 11/24, Mario Duella. Featured in an evening program on 11/11 were Volodomyr Koshuba, organ, and Viktoriya Koshuba, piano.

Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa, home to Op. 67 (II/32; 1996), hosted David C. Pickering in a recital on 11/9, sponsored by the Waterloo Chapter AGO.

West Market Street United Methodist Church,

Greensboro, N.C., earlier this year presented resident organist **Susan Bates** playing Op. 71 (III/58; 1999) in her annual *Eastertide Recital*. In May the 2008 "Tuesday Music" series featured area organists **Eddie Huss** and **Laurie Ryan**, another solo recital by Susan Bates as well as a program of duets with Susan and **Alice Ann Johnson**, Director of Music.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, Calif., home to Op. 75 (IV/105; 2003), will host the fifth annual *Sing and Rejoice*, sponsored by The Mark Thallander Foundation, Sunday, February 15, 2009. A 1500 voice choir will include the Houston Children's Chorus, Stephen Roddy, conductor. Sigrid Johnson, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., is the festival conductor; Fred Swann returns as festival organist. The Cathedral continues its successful series of weekly thirty-minute recitals that begin immediately following the Wednesday 12:10 Mass.

The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia, Pa., continues programming involving Op. 76 (IV/125; 2006). 2008's "Summer Organ Series" included: 7/10, Bradley Welch; 7/17, Felix Hell; 7/24, Scott Montgomery. The 2008-09 "Master Musicians Organ Series," co-sponsored by the Philadelphia Chapter AGO, includes: 10/25, Vincent Dubois; 3/7/09, Jane Parker-Smith; 5/2/09, James David Christie. Each recital is preceded by a chat with the artist, hosted by American Public Media's "Pipedreams" host, Michael Barone, and is recorded for broadcast on Philadelphia's WRTI-FM. Kimmel Center's 2008-09 "Great Orchestras on Tour" series of four concerts will be followed by free organ postlude performances. As part of the October 19 worldwide AGO "Organ Spectacular," students of Alan Morrison at the Curtis Institute and members of the Philadelphia **Chapter AGO** performed a program on Op. 76. Kimmel Center also presented a Halloween program that included the 1920 silent film Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, with organ accompaniment by Wanamaker (Macy's) organist, **Peter Richard Conte**. The Philadelphia Orchestra's Fall 2008 programming includes four performances of Copeland's Organ Symphony, November 6-9, with Paul Jacobs, organist and Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor.

United Lutheran Church, Red Wing, Minn., celebrates its 150th anniversary with events that included performances on Op. 77 (II/20; 2001): 9/21, **William Kuhlman**; 11/16, *Music Celebration Concert*, featuring ULC musicians and Director of Worship and Organist, **Karen Hanson**.

St. John United Methodist Church, Augusta, Ga., has begun its sixth season of "Concerts with a Cause" featuring Op. 78 (III/42; 2003): 10/5, **Alan Morrison** and **Jeanine Morrison**, organ/piano duo; 12/24, *Christmas Eve Concert and Lessons and Carols*; 1/11/09, **W. David Lynch**.

Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church, Ellison Bay, Wis., recently presented recitals on Op. 79 (II/23; 2004): 6/29, **David Cherwien** in a hymn festival; 8/13, **Bradley Welch**; 10/26, **Naomi Rowley**, assisted by **Mary Bell**, flute.

Kenilworth Union Church, Kenilworth, Ill., home to Op. 81 (II/29; 2003), has scheduled two organ recitals for the 2008-09 season: 10/26, John W. W. Sherer; 2/22/09, Timothy Olsen.

St. David's Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pa., hosted a summer noontime recital series featuring Op. 84 (II/47; 2007): 6/3, **Clair Rozier**, Director of Music; 6/10 **Robert Gallagher**, Associate Director of Music; 6/17, **Wesley Parrott**; 6/24, **Andrew Hull**.

The Church of St. Peter Claver, West Hartford, Conn., presented Ezequiel Menéndez in the October 20 inaugural recital of Op. 85 (II/19; 2007). The program was also planned to coincide with the AGO "Organ Spectacular" events held around the world on October 19.

Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park, Minn., home to the Holtkamp/Dobson rebuild (III/50; 2002), hosted the Twin Cities Chapter AGO 2008 student competition this past April. The Chapter plans to hold its annual "Members' Recital" at Westwood on 2/2/09.



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SPECIAL FEATURE ~ Op. 86, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

LOOKING BACK

20 Years ~ **Op. 42** (**III/44**), for Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota, was installed in the late summer of 1988. At that time it was the firm's largest instrument (its fifth three-manual) and was the eleventh commission for a college or university. Both key and stop actions are mechanical. In addition to the usual couplers, two mechanical combination levers are provided as well as a general cancel lever. From the start of the project, the architect's choice was to have the organ installed in a wide and shallow chamber rather than in a freestanding case. Three large, arched openings to the chamber each have divisions placed directly behind them; the Pedal is located left, the console in the center with the Positive and Swell above it the Great is on the right. The November 18, 1988, weekend of dedication events included programs by guest recitalist Roberta Gary, and College Organist Stephen (Gabe) Gabrielsen. Mark Sedio, a former student of Gabrielsen, presented a recital and hymn festival in March of the following year.

Op. 43 (II/23), for Trinity Lutheran Church, Webster City, Iowa, was installed in the fall of 1988. The project was first proposed eight years earlier, but stalled. It was revived some years later and, with renewed enthusiasm, was successfully completed. The all mechanical instrument has its manual divisions housed in a slender, free-standing solid oak case with the Pedal division located in a separate case directly behind. The dedicatory service and recital took place on February 5, 1989, with organist Lynn Zeigler from Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

10 Years ~ Op. 72 (II/24), for Calvary Lutheran Church, Brookfield, Wisconsin, was installed during the summer of 1998. The new instrument was part of a larger building and renovation project, which included the removal of a rear balcony, improvements to the acoustics of the sanctuary, and the arrangement of space for the new organ and musicians on the main floor. The Swell division is located behind and above the slightly raised choir seating. The Great is placed forward and to the side in a separate case and the Pedal is situated behind the Great. The attached console, placed in the Great case, is located on a raised platform so that the organist can easily direct the choir or other ensembles. The design of the curving white oak casework echoes the arching lines of the ceiling, which rise toward the front of the sanctuary. The instrument's key action is mechanical; an electric stop action and multi-level combination action are provided. Several Pedal stops are made available at two pitches through a system of mechanical duplexing. Festivities included a service of dedication on Reformation Sunday, October 25, and a hymn festival with Michael Burkhardt on November 29. John Behnke of Concordia University, Mequon, served as organ consultant; Scott Riedel, of Riedel and Associates, Milwaukee, was the acoustical consultant.

In addition to complete organ specifications, pictures of all Dobson instruments are now included on the "Instruments" page of our website. We invite you to learn more about the particular organs listed in this column by visiting www.dobsonorgan.com.