

Report to Vestry – 8.11.15

Steve O'Connor

Report of Organ Committee Evaluation and Search Process Recommendation of Organ Builder

Immediately upon my arrival in 2007, Fr. Jeff asked me to initiate an investigation/process to replace the Church's failing organ and recommend an instrument that would properly serve the congregation, last under the climactic and use conditions of All Saints and make room for a columbarium on the mountain side of the church (a space currently filled with organ pipes).

An organ committee was formed, and an investigation began. The following are bullet points outlining the work in pursuit of the goal to replace All Saints' organ.

- We received a copy of the recent acoustics evaluation/recommendation by Mahoney Group.
- Manuel Rosales – builder of the Disney Hall Organ – was asked to visit All Saints and evaluate the current instrument. He identified moisture damage, mold, failing electrical parts due to corrosive environment, all of which was a result of poorly constructed/poorly insulated chambers, which leached moisture into the organ.
- Organ builder Jan Van Dahlin was asked to visit All Saints and present an evaluation/recommendation. His observations were the same as Rosales' and recommended a small "portative" organ be purchased to temporarily replace our current instrument. Van Dahlin stated that the temporary instrument would not be large enough to serve the full needs of the church long term, but would be a temporary stop-gap measure until a *grande orgue* could be built. He recommended an organ construction with costs exceeding \$2 Million.
- Organ builder –Jacquelin Rochette of Casavant Organs was asked to visit All Saints to evaluate and make a recommendation. Rochette's observations were the same as Rosales' and Van Dahlin's. He recommended that a 30-35 rank Tracker instrument be built at the center apex of the church and the reredos be moved/modified in order for the instrument to properly speak through it. He recommended that a proper organ chamber be built that would insulate the instrument from corrosive outside air, and suggested the chamber have its own climate control system. A tracker was recommended as its design is the original organ design that has stood the test of time, especially in Europe, has the fewest electrical parts to deteriorate and is most cost effective over the long run (a \$1M tracker should last @ 100 years. A non pipe -electronic instrument would need to be replaced @ 4 times over that period, at a cost of \$400-\$500K each. The tracker design is the most cost effective).
- Rochette assured us that the organ size and design that he recommended will fully serve All Saints' current and long-term musical needs, including

congregational singing, choral and special event programs. A cost of \$1.25M was suggested as adequate. This amount would enable All Saints to purchase an instrument of the suggested 35 ranks, the size instrument found in many churches of our size and musical experience.

- The project was dropped by Fr. Jeff.
- As All Saints' new Capital campaign began, a renewed interest arose in finding a solution to our failing instrument and give room for a columbarium.
- A new organ committee was formed and met for the first time in June of 2014. Members included Tom Mack, Bitsy Bacon, Mary Collier, Craig Moore and Steve O'Connor (Richard Kahler later replaced Craig Moore). The purpose of the committee was to continue the investigation/research needed to solve the All Saints' organ "problem." The committee asked that we consider various options, including rebuilding/restoring/reconfiguring to a smaller space, our current instrument, consider the possibility of purchasing a used/restored instrument, and purchasing a new instrument. The committee strongly favored the use of a fully manual (tracker) instrument, as its advantages of longevity, simplicity, and artistic preference were clear.
- Organ builder/technicians Manuel Rosales and Ryan Ballantyne were asked regarding the feasibility of restoring/reconfiguring our current instrument to a smaller space. Both indicated that our current instrument probably could not be reconfigured/restored to a satisfactory condition and the cost to try to do so would exceed the cost of a new instrument.
- Organ Historical Society and Patrick Murphy and Associates (OHS's field representative) were contacted and asked to evaluate the feasibility of our purchasing a restored/used instrument. Murphy indicated that the cost to do so would be nearly the same as the purchase of a new instrument, and suggested that an instrument originally built for another room would most likely not meet the needs of the All Saints' facility (a pipe organ is individually built for the dimensions and acoustics of the room it is in). Murphy recommended that a new, custom-made instrument be built.
- The committee asked that 4 builders of pipe organs be contacted, interviewed and asked to present bids for the installation of a new instrument. The committee agreed that only pipe organ builders should be considered, as an electronic/digital organ would be more expensive over the long run.
- The committee asked that the builder candidates include 2 tracker builders and 2 Electro-Pneumatic builders. The builder/candidates included:
 - Electro Pneumatic: Patrick Murphy and Assoc. and Goulding and Wood.
 - Tracker: Casavant Freres and C.B. Fisk
- Each candidate was asked to visit All Saints to present their company and to present a formal design recommendation and bid for a new instrument install. All candidates presented bids within a budget of \$1.25M (the amount

of a donation earmarked for the purchase of a new organ). Each were able to build an instrument within the time frame of the Church's capitol project.

- After many years and much work, the All Saints' Organ Committee would like to recommend that C.B. Fisk be appointed to build a new pipe organ for our Church, based on the company's ability to creatively and flexibly overcome space and design issues, and based on the company's reputation as one of the world's most prominent builders of pipe organs.
- It should be noted that ALL organ builders, consultants, and evaluators have recommended that the Church's poor acoustics be improved to the extent possible, before installing a new musical instrument.

Pass out Fisk Company Brochure Books

Brief description of Fisk Company.