

THE FIRST PARISH ORGAN

Since 1829, First Parish Church has looked after portions of the organ still being played every week at Sunday services.

The First Parish Church organ has been subject to a series of alterations, renovations and rebuilding, all of which have used parts, pipes and pieces of the existing organ. Consequently, the organ does not bear the name of any single famous organ builder, nor has it been memorialized by the name of a generous donor. Instead, it stands as a tribute to a sacred succession of saints who have cared for and maintained the thread of the instrument that was begun in our church in 1829.

In 1829, First Parish Church dedicated its fifth meeting house since the founding of the church in 1633. In the new meetinghouse, built on the same site as its immediate predecessor, an organ of 13 stops and 731 pipes was installed in the balcony. This instrument, a product of the early and famous American organ builder, William M. Goodrich of Boston cost the church \$ 1,250.00

In 1878, the church contracted with another well-known American organ firm, Hutchings-Plaisted of Boston to re-build and re-locate the organ as its Opus # 81. Substantially expanded and moved from its balcony location to the left front side of the church. In the move from balcony to front of the church, the organ size more than doubled the number of pipes, and it received a new organ case. The Hutchings-designed black walnut organ case, with minor modifications is still in use today, albeit now painted white. Of tracker (mechanical) action, the 1878 organ was blown by hand until 1903, when a water motor was installed to raise the necessary wind pressure.

The 1878 Hutchings organ was altered with conversion to electric key and stop action and a new console in 1929, while retaining the Hutchings slider windchests. The water motor was replaced with an electric unit in 1917. The 1878 Hutchings slider windchests on which the pipes sit were replaced in 1957 including a substantial renovation undertaken by the late Rostron Kershaw. This re-building increased the organ to twenty-eight ranks and a set of chimes.

In 1976, the Berkshire Organ Company undertook a major tonal renovation and supplied a new console. The tonal pallet was recast along more classic lines. In 1985, a visually and aurally impressive Festival Trumpet stop, positioned in the rear gallery in en-chamade position, was built by the Trivo Company, and installed by E. A. Kelley Associates. This addition, coupled with the Berkshire renovation, brought the organ to a total of thirty ranks of pipes.

In the late 1980s, the Church Council was apprised that extensive repairs and renovations would be necessary to address the tonal and mechanical deficiencies of the instrument, either ignored or not recognized in previous organ renovations. Subsequently, an Organ Committee was formed and their work continued for several years, culminating in May 1996 with the dedication of Opus 11 of the Faucher Organ Company of Biddeford, Maine.

The new colonial style console was built in the Faucher Organ company shop. The reversed color keyboards are rosewood and maple. The console interior, framed by the colonial white lacquered shell, is mahogany accented by inlay of anigre, an exotic wood with holographic properties. The mahogany cover is bordered with contrasting sapele inlay. The matching mahogany bench is adjustable. Harris drawknobs and tilting tablets were utilized.

A built-in computer controls the multi-level memory, action, switching, and coupling. The organist is able to easily reprogram crescendos and tuttis, transpose, and setup MIDI settings at the console. With a sequencer, an organist can record performances for later playback and analysis.

The Walker Technical Company of Zionsville, Pennsylvania was selected to provide the digitally sampled sounds, superior due to their high quality of construction and sound reproduction. Entirely software controlled, this allows for high resolution recordings and on-site, note-by-note tonal finishing.

The entire winding system was replaced with new blower, schwimmerbalg curtain-valve reservoirs, and windlines. The ailing pneumatic swell engine and tremulant were likewise replaced with all-electric units. All windchests were rewired with new cabling.

In planning the specification for the new organ, several of the deficiencies in the existing organ were addressed. Both solo and chorus reeds were added digitally. An Antiphonal division speaking from the rear balcony was added with a full principal chorus up through mixture. A flute celeste and several reed stops were added to the Swell division. The entire Choir division with flutes, principals, two reed stops and a mixture was included. The pedal, which after the renovation contained only two pipe ranks, was increased substantially. Several power levels of both flue and reed stops were added in the pedal division, including three 32' stops and a four-rank mixture.

The new console arrived at the church in January 1996 and the task of connecting it to the pipe chamber, along with voicing and regulation of the digital voices, was completed. The completed new organ was first used for worship on February 18, 1996.

SPECIFICATION of the ORGAN--First Parish Church, Dover, NH
FAUCHER ORGAN COMPANY, Biddeford, Maine
OPUS # 11—1996

(P=pipe ranks; D=digitally sampled ranks)

GREAT		SWELL, <i>continued</i>	
Bourdon-D	16	Festival Trumpet-P	16
Principal-P	8	Trumpet-D	8
Gemshorn-D	8	Oboe-P	8
Rohr Flute-P	8	Clarinet-D	8
Harmonic Flute-D	8	Festival Trumpet-P	8
Octave-P	4	Clarion-D	4
Pommer Gedeckt-P	4	Festival Trumpet-P	4
Twelfth-P	2-2/3	Tremolo	
Fifteenth-P	2	Swell Sub	
Tierce-P	1-3/5	Swell Unison Off	
IV Mixture-P	1-1/3	Swell Super	
Trumpet-P	8	MIDI A	
Festival Trumpet-P	8	MIDI B	
Chimes			
Great Sub		CHOIR	
Great Unison Off		Bourdon-D	8
Great Super		Flute-D	8
MIDI		Viol-D	8
		Viol Celeste-D	8
SWELL		Spitz Principal-D	4
Geigen Principal-P	8	Copula-D	4
Geigen Celeste-P	8	Block Flute-D	2
Gedeckt-P	8	III Cymbal-D	1
Flute Celeste II-D	8	Cromorne-D	8
Principal-P	4	Tuba Magna-D	8
Chimney Flute-P	4	Harp	8
Octave-P	2	Tremolo	
Flageolet-P	2	Choir Sub	
Quint Flute-P	1-1/3	Choir Unison Off	
III Scharff-P	2/3	Choir Super	
Bassoon-D	16	MIDI A	
		MIDI B	
		MIDI C	

ANTIPHONAL

Gemshorn-D	8
Gemshorn Celeste-D	8
Dulcet II-D	8
Principal-D	4
III Mixture-D	2
Voix Humaine-D	8
Pedal Dulciana-D	16
Tremolo	
Antiphonal Sub	
Antiphonal Unison Off	
Antiphonal Super	
MIDI	

PEDAL

Contra Bass-D	32
Contra Violone-D	32
Principal-D	16
Sub Bass-P	16
Violone-D	16
Lieblich Gedeckt-D	16
Octave-P	8
Gedeckt-P	8
Choral Bass-P	4
Nachthorn-D	4
IV Mixture-D	2-2/3
Contra Bombard-D	32
Bombard-D	16
Bassoon-D	16
Trompette-D	8
Festival Trumpet-P	8
Shawm-D	4
MIDI	

COUPLERS

Great to Pedal	8-4
Swell to Pedal	8-4
Choir to Pedal	8-4
Swell to Great	16-8-4
Choir to Great	16-8-4
Choir to Swell	8
Swell to Choir	16-8-4

Antiphonal on Swell

Antiphonal on Great

Antiphonal on Choir

Antiphonal to Swell Expression

Choir to Swell Expression

Great/Choir Manual Transfer

REVERSIBLES

Tutti I	Piston-Toe
Tutti II	Piston-Toe
Contra Bass	Piston-Toe
Contra Bombard	Piston-Toe
Great to Pedal	Piston-Toe
Swell to Pedal	Piston-Toe
Choir to Pedal	Piston-Toe
Memory Up/Down	Piston
Bank Up/Down	Toe

ACCESSORIES

Transposer: +/- 6 semitones

Sequencer: In/Out/Through

MIDI: In/Out/Through

Swell, Choir, Antiphonal, and

Crescendo expression shoes

144 Memory levels

SUMMARY

73 ranks total: 27 Pipe Ranks-1577 pipes; 46 Digital Ranks

5 divisions; 66 stops; 40 couplers; 37 pistons; 21 toe studs

Digital ranks and console control system

by Walker Technical Company, Zionsville, Pennsylvania