

**Andover Organ Company, Lawrence, Massachusetts
Opus R-345, Christ Episcopal Church, Charlottesville, Virginia**

From the builder

In projects, journeys, and lives, there are milestone events that mark progress or achievements. The dedication of Andover Opus R-345 at Christ Episcopal Church in Charlottesville, Virginia, was such an event. It was a milestone for three long journeys: the completion of a seven-year project for Andover; the culmination of a decade-long sanctuary renovation process for Christ Church; and the latest chapter in the 143-year odyssey of a resilient New England organ.

With their simplicity and durability, it is not unusual for well-made old tracker organs to outlast the buildings or congregations for which they were originally made. Happily, they can often be relocated and repurposed to fit the musical needs and budget of a new owner. At Andover, we tune and maintain a large number of 19th-century instruments which are now in their second, third, or fourth homes.

The saga of the Christ Church organ certainly illustrates this! The core of the instrument is a three-manual, 29-stop organ built in 1869 by E. & G. G. Hook of Boston as their Opus 472 and originally installed in Grace Episcopal Church in Chicago, Illinois. In 1902, it was moved to another Grace Episcopal Church, in Oak Park, Illinois. In 1922, it was sold to the Third Congregational Church of Oak Park, where it was rebuilt and electrified by Nicholas Doerr of Chicago. The organ was next moved to St. Ludmilla's Catholic Church in Chicago, probably in 1937 when the Third Congregational Church merged with another congregation. When St. Ludmilla's closed in 1991, the organ was put into storage. Andover's Robert C. Newton, a nationally recognized authority on Hook organs, learned of the organ's availability and purchased

it. Opus 472 then made the long journey back to Massachusetts, where it sat in storage, awaiting its fifth home.

Meanwhile, Christ Church in Charlottesville, Virginia, had formed an organ committee to find a replacement for their failing 50-year-old electro-pneumatic organ. That organ had been cobbled together from a variety of used and new parts, and the builder had gone out of business before the organ was finished. Concurrently, plans were begun for a complete renovation of the sanctuary. After much study, the committee determined that the best location for the new instrument would be at the front of the church, to speak directly towards the congregation. This was confirmed by each builder that the committee interviewed during the selection process.

Being responsible stewards of the church's resources, the organ committee also researched the option of installing a rebuilt used organ. They determined that if the original organ was a well-made, quality instrument, the end result could be equal, or in some cases superior, to a new organ—yet at significantly less cost. John Whiteside, who became Christ Church's music director in 2005, contacted us and learned of E. & G. G. Hook Opus 472. Built in 1869, the organ dated from the "golden period" (1850s–1870s) of the firm's instruments.

Because the organ had lost its original case, console, structure, action, and wind system during its travels, the surviving Hook pipes and windchests could easily be rearranged to fit the available space in Christ Church. The most essential parts of any organ are the pipes, which define its tonal signature, and the windchests, which influence how the pipes speak and blend.

The Hook firm was one of 19th-century America's premier organ builders. Their instruments, highly regarded for their mechanical and tonal excellence,



Pictured left to right, Don Glover, voicer; John Morlock, tonal director; Benjamin Mague, president of Andover; and Bruce Stevens, recitalist

were designed and voiced to work well in the dry acoustics of American churches. Though we at Andover build modern instruments designed to serve the needs of today's church musicians, we draw insight and inspiration from the surviving work of the brothers Elias (1805–1881) and George Greenleaf (1807–1880) Hook and their successor, Francis Hastings (1836–1916). We have been privileged to work on many of their important surviving instruments, including their monumental 101-rank 1875 masterpiece, Opus 801, at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, and the famous 1876 "Centennial Exposition" organ, Opus 828, now in St. Joseph Cathedral in Buffalo.

After careful deliberation, the committee recommended that Christ Church purchase and install Hook Opus 472—which would be completely renovated, rebuilt, and enlarged by Andover—at the front of the church surrounding the rose window. This proposal was approved by the church's vestry, and in April 2005 a contract was signed.

The rebuilding work started in 2007, with Ben Mague as project team leader. The Hook pipes were restored and the windchests rebuilt and enlarged to accommodate additional stops. New and vintage ranks, scaled and voiced to be compatible with the original Hook stops, were added to augment the organ's tonal palette. Ben Mague and Michael Eaton engineered a new console, structure, action, and wind system to fit the renovated chancel area. The new casework was designed by Donald Olson. Noted church architect Terry Eason prepared the plans for the sanctuary renovation.

The organ is laid out with the Swell on the left, the unenclosed Choir in the center, and the Great on the right. The Pedal stops are divided among these three locations. The bass of the Pedal reed is behind the Swell, its treble and all of the 16' Subbass are behind the Choir, and the Double Open Diapasons are behind the Great.

The organ's white oak casework was built in our shop. We take great care to



Andover Opus R-345 and remodeled chancel



Left stop jamb



Keyboards and pistons



Right stop jamb

design the exterior of each instrument to complement the architecture of its surroundings. Thus, the blind Byzantine arches of the lower casework were patterned after the existing chancel side wall woodwork. The polished tin façade pipes comprise the lowest notes of the Great 8' Open Diapason and the Pedal 8' Violoncello. The detached oak console has walnut interior woodwork and a walnut swirl veneered music rack. The pau ferro drawknobs, with 19th-century-style oblique heads with inset engraved labels, are arranged in stepped terraces. The center-pivoted manual keys have bone-plated naturals and ebony sharps.

The manual key action is mechanical, as are all the couplers. To facilitate the positioning of the Pedal pipes in the most advantageous spaces, all of the Pedal stops are on electro-pneumatic unit chests that we designed and built. The stop action is electric. The Solid State Organ Systems combination action, with 100 memory levels and a piston sequencer, affords the player seamless control of the organ's resources.

While the rebuilding was underway, Christ Church's rector departed for another parish. The church postponed the fund-raising for the sanctuary

renovations and turned its attention to finding a new rector. Thankfully, during this period a parish donor continued to fund the organ's rebuilding so the project would not lose momentum.

The completed instrument was unveiled at an open house at our shop on November 6, 2010. Although the organ was ready, the church was not. Bids had not yet been received for the chancel renovations. It was discovered that part of a rock ledge beneath the chancel would have to be removed to permit excavation for a basement to house HVAC equipment and the organ blower. This increased the scope of the project.

The organ sat, playable, in our shop until May 2011 when, needing that space for other projects, we shipped it to Charlottesville and stored it in the church parish hall. The chancel renovations were finally begun in the fall of that year and nearly finished when we started the organ's installation in January 2012. Parts of the organ were playable by Easter, when it was first used. The remaining flues and all the reeds were installed and regulated during the following months. On Friday evening, October 5, 2012, noted organ recitalist and recording artist Bruce Stevens

played the dedicatory program to a large and excited congregation. It was a milestone event, the happy ending to a long road!

Just as a great organ is the sum of its parts, a great organ company is the sum of its people. We are blessed to have a team of seventeen dedicated craftspeople who, collectively, have over 400 years of organbuilding experience. Those who worked on Opus R-345 were Ryan Bartosiewicz, Matthew Bellocchio, Anne Doré, Michael Eaton, Don Glover, Al Hosman, Lisa Lucius, Benjamin Mague, David Michaud, Tony Miscio, Fay Morlock, John Morlock, Robert Newton, Donald Olson, Casey Robertson, Jonathan Ross, Craig Seaman, and David Zarges.

—Matthew M. Bellocchio
Andover Organ Company

Photos © William T. Van Pelt

Testimonials

It really is a wonderful organ! I'm playing everything from Franck to Rheinberger to Bach . . . and all of these different-style pieces sound really very fine. I find the key action quite graceful to play. Because so many of the sounds are the golden-period Hook sounds we



Three levels of manual trackers exiting the console

love, we're thrilled to have such an organ in Virginia—at long last. Thanks for all that you have done to provide this special, magnificent instrument to a location in our state. The only big disappointment is that it's not here in Richmond!

—Bruce Stevens
University of Richmond

Thanks for the good work . . . and for giving Virginia an E. & G. G. Hook organ. I believe it is the only organ in the state to have most of its tonal components arising from the brothers Hook during their control of the company.

—William T. Van Pelt
Retired Executive Director
Organ Historical Society

Andover Organ Company

Opus R-345, 2012: E & G. G. Hook Opus 472, 1868
Christ Episcopal Church, Charlottesville, Virginia



Console

GREAT			
16'	Bourdon	H	58 pipes
8'	Open Diapason	H, N, 1	58 pipes
8'	Stopped Diapason	H	58 pipes
8'	Viol d'Amour	H, 2	46 pipes
4'	Octave	H	58 pipes
4'	Harmonic Flute	H	58 pipes
2½'	Twelfth	N	58 pipes
2'	Fifteenth	H	58 pipes
IV	Mixture	H, N, 3	232 pipes
8'	Trumpet	H	58 pipes
SWELL			
8'	Open Diapason	H	58 pipes
8'	Stopped Diapason	H	58 pipes
8'	Keraulophon	H	58 pipes
8'	Keraulophon Celeste	V	46 pipes
4'	Octave	H	58 pipes
4'	Violina	H	58 pipes
4'	Flauto Traverso	H	58 pipes
2'	Flautino	N	58 pipes
III	Mixture	N	174 pipes
8'	Trumpet	N	58 pipes
8'	Oboe	H	58 pipes
	Tremolo		
CHOIR			
8'	Geigen Principal	H	58 pipes
8'	Melodia	V	58 pipes
8'	Dulciana	H	58 pipes
4'	Fugara	H	58 pipes
4'	Flute d'Amour	H	58 pipes
2½'	Nazard	H, 4	58 pipes
2'	Piccolo	H	58 pipes
1½'	Tierce	V	58 pipes
8'	Clarionet	H, N, 5	58 pipes
	Tremolo		
PEDAL			
16'	Double Open Diapason	H	32 pipes
16'	Subbass	H	32 pipes
16'	Bourdon (Great)		32 notes
8'	Violoncello	H, N, 6	32 pipes
8'	Flutebass	V	12 pipes
4'	Choralbass	V	12 pipes
16'	Trombone	N	32 pipes
8'	Trumpet	N	12 pipes
Couplers			
	Swell to Great		
	Choir to Great		
	Swell to Choir		
	Great to Pedal		
	Swell to Pedal		
	Choir to Pedal		
	H = Hook		
	N = New		
	V = Vintage rank from Andover stock		
	Notes:		
	1 – Low 16 pipes new tin, in façade.		
	2 – From Hook Op. 371 to replace missing original; low 12 grooved from Stopped Diapason.		
	3 – Enlarged from III to IV with 1 new rank.		
	4 – Was Great Twelfth.		
	5 – Originally TC, new bottom octave added.		
	6 – Low 15 pipes new tin, in façade.		
	38 stops		
	39 ranks		
	2,170 pipes		