

“In the Latin Church the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument which adds a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man's mind to God and to higher things.” Second Vatican Council: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, ¶116

The Organs of St. Mary's Church

Auburn, New York

THE GALLERY ORGAN

Carl Barckhoff, 1890

II/30 – OHS Citation №. 397

SPECIFICATION:

<p>Great Organ (unenclosed, 58 notes, C-a, 754 pipes)</p> <p>16' Open Diapason (<i>metal throughout, in facade</i>)</p> <p>8' Open Diapason (<i>partly in facade</i>)</p> <p>8' Doppel Flute (<i>wood, stopped</i>)</p> <p>8' Gamba</p> <p>8' Dulciana</p> <p>4' Principal</p> <p>4' Flute Traverso (<i>metal, harmonic</i>)</p> <p>3' Twelfth</p> <p>2' Fifteenth</p> <p>Mixture III Ranks</p> <p>8' Trumpet</p>	<p>Swell Organ (enclosed, 58 notes, C-a, 696 pipes)</p> <p>16' Bourdon (<i>wood, bottom 12 new 2017, tubed off main chest</i>)</p> <p>8' Open Diapason (<i>full-length basses, 1-12 tubed off chest</i>)</p> <p>8' Geigen Principal (<i>1-12 stopped</i>)</p> <p>8' Stopped Diapason</p> <p>8' Salicional (<i>1-12 stopped</i>)</p> <p>4' Fugara</p> <p>4' Flute Harmonic</p> <p>2' Piccolo (<i>harmonic</i>)</p> <p>Cornet III ranks (<i>no tierce, 12.15.19</i>)</p> <p>8' Oboe and Bassoon</p>
<p>Pedal Organ (unenclosed, 27 notes, C-d, 135 pipes)</p> <p>16' Open Diapason (<i>wood</i>)</p> <p>16' Bourdon</p> <p>8' Flute (<i>wood, open</i>)</p> <p>8' Violoncello (<i>metal, half-draw</i>)</p> <p>16' Trombone (<i>2017, on full draw of 8' Violoncello knob</i>)</p>	<p>Accessories</p> <p>Swell to Great</p> <p>Great to Pedal</p> <p>Swell to Pedal</p> <p>Tremulant to entire organ</p> <p>6 fixed combination pistons each to Great and Swell</p> <p>Balanced swell positioned above B2 of the pedalboard</p>

The contract for the gallery organ was signed with the Carl Barckhoff Organ Company of Salem, Ohio in 1885. The organ was delivered to the church in 1890 and installation was completed on November 29, 1890. The cost was around \$6,000. The new organ was dedicated a week later by Professor Isaac V. Flagler, the organist of First Presbyterian Church in Auburn. “A large and well-drilled chorus under the direction of Sam F. Reynolds rendered appropriate music. In the morning, a Solemn High Mass was sung. The sermon was preached by Father Dougherty.” So reads the bulletin entry of that week!

This is the largest surviving organ by the Barckhoff firm; the closest in size is the II/28 instrument in St. Joseph's Church, Lancaster, PA. The reader should note that in 1890, the church was configured in the traditional way, with pews in straight lines throughout the church, extending from the current narthex to a shallow sanctuary with an altar rail built

on the line between the current ambo and crucifix. Therefore, the church could hold approximately one thousand people, and was regularly full for many years. So, Barckhoff had to build an organ that would be pleasing in a near-empty church, with 4.2 seconds of reverberation (for funerals and other semi-private events), and yet remain majestic when the building was filled to capacity, and the acoustic diminished.

The listener will note the color and variety in the eight manual 8' foundations, a complete ensemble in themselves, so necessary for the *jeux des fonds* in the French repertory. A string chorus of various dynamic levels, from Dulciana and Salicional, through Gamba and Geigen, to Bourdon 16' and Fugara 4', gives a number of satisfying options in quiet moments. Each flute has a dynamic and individual character, and recommends itself for diverse solo use. The Great Doppel Flute is particularly unique, with a tremendous increase in power right to the top, such that it rivals the Diapason in strength, and sings easily above any accompaniment in the Swell. Drawn with the Gamba (Barckhoff's piston 5), it is a convincing ersatz-Klarinette in the tenor range. The Great's 16' plenum is monumental, and in Baroque music, compares favorably to newer instruments built in the Silbermann style. The two manual reeds do more than one could reasonably expect; the Oboe beautifully sings the melody of an ornamented chorale, blends seamlessly with the foundations in Franck, and provides a convincing "caged rage" under the choir with the 16' Bourdon, 8' Open, 4' Fugara, and Cornet. The Trumpet in the Great is of the German type, with a relatively consistent volume throughout. Barckhoff's piston 4 draws the Trumpet and 8' Open together, which rounds out the tone and strengthens the bass, but the Trumpet alone is splashy and bright. With principals 8', 4', and 2 2/3', it becomes a powerful solo that can stand above full swell. The pedal division has always provided a solid bass, and two lovely 8' solo voices; the addition of the Trombone 16' in 2017 has given it more independence from the manuals for the many pieces which place the *cantus firmus* in the pedal.

To briefly sum up the history of this organ, which by my estimation has accompanied about fifty thousand liturgies in this space: A single-phase Spencer Orgoblo (still in use) was installed by Viner & Sons in 1907, and a thorough cleaning and repair of the organ in 1957 saw the replacement of the original double-rise reservoir with three smaller reservoirs, one for each division. In 1979, A.R. Strauss, from Richard Strauss Organs, in Ithaca, tonally restored and regulated the instrument as part of a long-term maintenance contract with the church. An Organ Legacy Fund, founded in association with the 2014 Syracuse OHS convention to celebrate the organ's 125th anniversary, funded the removal and complete historical restoration of the organ in 2016 by the Parsons Organ Company of Canandaigua, NY.

Restoration included re-establishing wooden wind ducts and a single double-rise reservoir to feed both manuals (while the pedal continues to be supplied by a separate reservoir). The entire organ was re-leathered; cracked wood, damaged pipes, and other problems were repaired; the tremulant was restored to operation, and the structural integrity of the case and windchests were improved. The original mechanical key action, mechanical divisional presets and couplers, and pneumatic-assisted mechanical slider stop action were repaired where necessary and continue in their original state. The façade pipes, which had been gradually rendered unplayable due to a minor fire, a case collapse from c. pre-1950, and several careless painting jobs that had altered the façade from its Victorian stenciling to gold (c. 1950), to beige (1965), and to cigar-box stripes (2007), were replaced with new Stinkens pipework, and stenciled in a period-appropriate style, after the Lancaster Barckhoff.

Insofar as evidence permitted, the original voicing was carefully replicated by Duane Prill and Jonathan Ambrosino. Parsons also completed the 16' Swell Bourdon originally built only to tenor C and added a full-length wooden 16' pedal Trombone sourced from a contemporary local organ by extending the toeboard on the 8' Violoncello for a double-draw stop. At the suggestion of David Fedor, the Swell Cornet III was repaired and recomposed from 5.12.15 to 12.15.19, to permit its use in an 8' chorus, though original pipes of the 5 1/3' pitch have been safely stored. An automatic humidification system prevents damage from heating during the winter months.

THE CHANCEL ORGAN

Garret House, 1872

I/8 – OHS Citation №. 396

In 2006, through the efforts of David Correll, then St. Mary's music director, this 1872 organ by Garret House, of Buffalo, was moved from First Presbyterian, Ithaca, to the chancel of St. Mary's Church, where it replaced the 1884 House organ installed in 1979.

(The 1884 House organ, the first to be placed in the chancel of St. Mary's, arrived in 1979, when A. Richard Strauss of Ithaca began to maintain the Barckhoff organ. This instrument was originally built for the first Masonic Temple building in Ithaca, moved to the Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) lodge, and then to St. John's Episcopal Church, Ithaca, during construction of that parish's present organ in 1966-67. The organ was extensively rebuilt, and was installed temporarily at one or two other locations before coming to the chancel of St. Mary's in 1979, where it remained until 2006. A concert of music performed by George E. Damp and David Jackson on this organ and the gallery organ is available on the CD Organa Dupla at the parish office. This instrument is presently disassembled and in storage awaiting future use at Tyburn Academy, on Clymer St. in Auburn. The stoplist was originally similar to the 1872 House organ, but without a swell box. A mixture replaced the third 8', a Zimbelstern was added, and the pedal was unified and expanded to 16-8-4-2 2/3-2.)

The present chancel organ was first installed in Holy Family Church, Auburn, NY. When Holy Family installed a Tellers organ in 1923 (ultimately replaced by a Schlicker in 1987), the Garrett House organ eventually ended up at St. Patrick Church, Aurora, NY. Having fallen into a state of considerable physical neglect during the Aurora years, the organ was moved to Community Wesleyan Church, Horseheads, in 1977. For the next three years, the organ was lovingly restored by David Fedor, David Jackson and his father Alford Jackson. The restoration work involved the replacement of missing carvings, the refinishing of the case, replacing broken trackers, and constructing a new bench. In 1980, a dedicatory organ recital was given at this site by David Fedor and David Jackson. When a new church sanctuary was being considered for Community Wesleyan Church of Horseheads, the organ was moved by Richard Strauss, with the help of his colleague David Talbot, to First Presbyterian Church, Ithaca, in 2003. There it was refurbished (a new blower) and slightly expanded (the previously incomplete ranks of the 4' flute and the Pedal 16' had been extended to full-compass). The organ served as the temporary chancel organ, while the main 1969 Austin organ was being reconstituted, and then became the chapel organ until 2006 when it was determined to reuse the chapel space for other purposes.

SPECIFICATION:

Manual (56 notes, C-g) 8' Open Diapason (full-compass) 8' Melodia (TC) 8' Viol D'Amour (TC) 8' Stopped Diapason Bass (C1-B12) 4' Principal 4' Flute 2 2/3' Twelfth 2' Fifteenth	Pedal (25 notes, C-c) 16' Bourdon Manual to Pedal Tremulant to entire organ Bellows (formerly signaled the blower to begin his labor)
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The entire organ is enclosed, with the exception of the Pedal Bourdon and the bottom octave of the 8' Open Diapason (in facade). The vertical shutters of the swell are controlled by a ratchet lever at the far right of the pedalboard, with three notches where the swell can be held between piano and forte. The listener will notice the gentle singing

quality of the Melodia and the keen edge of the Viol, which respond particularly well to the motion of the swell box, and the rich power of the Diapason, the foundation of this organ, and more than adequate to fill the church with sound. The 4' flute is a lovely color by itself, and pairs well with the 8' flute, or the string, and can be used to slightly perk up the 8s in concert. The upperwork creates a pleasing plenum, and the twelfth and fifteenth provide lovely coloring in earlier music. It is noteworthy that when the Barckhoff was taken down for restoration, no electronic substitute was brought in; the House organ served for months as the only accompanying instrument at every Mass, capably supporting soloists, choir, and congregation.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

A few words concerning the current use of these instruments may be of interest. Owing to its greater versatility, the Barckhoff is used most frequently, at each of the four weekend Masses (5:30p Saturday and 12p Sunday with two hymns, sung ordinary of the Mass, psalm and alleluia; 7a Sunday said Mass with organ improvisations throughout, 9:45a Sung Mass with choir and Schola Gregoriana), and at weddings, funerals, and other liturgies. The House organ is played at evening Masses on holy days, for which the Schola chant in the chancel; for very small funerals or weddings, and on other occasions when the entire church will not be used, or when the choir is seated in the front of the church. The 1908 Steinway, a gift of Auburn Pro Musica, is used for concerts and for the weekly choir rehearsals .

On the greatest feast days and solemnities, particularly the Assumption of the B.V.M., the feast of title of this parish, both organs are used in alternation, with the Schola Gregoriana placed in the chancel with the House organ, and the choir placed in the gallery with the Barckhoff. For example, this coming Assumption, August 15th, Widor's Mass for two choirs and two organs, his *Quam dilecta* for the same forces, and the Gregorian *Te deum* will be performed in this way.

All who hear these organs should give thanks for the following individuals, who ensured their preservation and resisted the typical temptation of organists to create instruments "in our own image, and after our likeness". Gerald Conroy was organist, choirmaster, and teacher of music in St. Mary's School from 1926-1964 – four decades during which most organists would have successively begged for an E.M. Skinner, an Aeolian-Skinner, a Holtkamp, and a Flentrop! He evidently appreciated what he had in the Barckhoff, and carried on. His thirty-eight years here were surpassed by Muriel Hickey's forty-six, from 1971 until her retirement in 2017. She stayed the course in the turbulent years after Vatican II, and kept the organ at the forefront of music at St. Mary's, ensuring its maintenance and continued use, without modifications. Joel Morehouse, director of music from 2012-2016, established the Organ Legacy Fund, enabling the parish to fund the 2016-17 restoration, and insisted that the organ should indeed be restored, not rebuilt. Aaron James, choir organist and then director of music from 2014-2017, graciously guided the choir through the period without the Barckhoff, and played a triumphant rededication recital on May 21, 2017. David Fedor, a son of this parish, who was first inspired by the Barckhoff as played by Gerald Conroy, became an organist himself. For decades, including during his many busy years at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, NJ, he has been a tireless advocate for the instrument that first inspired him, graciously providing detailed information on the Barckhoff organ, at every stage in its life. His advice during the restoration process was invaluable, as he knew how it sounded in its healthiest years.

Above all, the Very Rev. Fr. Frank E. Lioi, pastor of this parish since 2004 and himself a musician, has energized the musical and liturgical life of the parish through his constant educating, personal dedication, and deep devotion to what is beautiful, holy, and true. A member of the Organ Historical Society, he personally sought out citations for the two instruments, urged the restoration, and motivated the parish to fund it fully.

A.M.D.G.

This document was compiled in 2018 by Philip Fillion, BM, MM, director of music and organist. Visiting organists are always warmly welcome to see and play the organs, from 9a-4p weekdays, following Sunday Masses, or at other times by appointment. For further information: philip.fillion@dor.org or 315-252-9545 x303. To learn about upcoming musical events at St. Mary's, visit www.facebook.com/SaintMaryMusic