



# *St. James' Episcopal Church*

Skaneateles, New York

**Ernest M. Skinner Organ**

Opus 644, 1927

**Restoration and additions**

Mann & Trupiano, 2004

Kerner & Merchant, 2006

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**Great**

16' Pedal Bourdon  
8' Diapason  
8' Principal (Pedal)  
8' Claribel Flute  
4' Octave (new)  
4' Flute  
2' Fifteen (new)  
IV Mixture (new)  
8' Tromba

**Choir**

8' Diapason  
8' Concert Flute  
8' Gamba  
8' Dulciana  
4' Harmonic Flute  
2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> Nazard (new)  
2' Piccolo (new)  
1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub> Tierce (new)  
8' Clarinet  
8' Tromba (Gt.)  
Tremolo

**Swell**

16' Bourdon  
8' Diapason  
8' Salicional  
8' Vox Celeste  
8' Chimney Flute  
8' Flute Celeste (II rks)  
4' Principal (revoiced from  
original Great Octave)  
4' Flute  
2' Piccolo  
III Mixture  
8' Cornopean  
8' Oboe d'Amour  
8' Vox Humana  
Tremolo

**Pedal**

16' Diapason  
16' Bourdon  
16' Sw. Echo Bass  
10<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> Bass Quint  
8' Octave (new)  
8' Bourdon  
8' Sw. Still Gedeckt  
4' Octave (extension of 8')  
16' Tromba (new extension of Gt)

Facade Construction:  
John Baker-Carpentry  
Bartolotta Bros.-Woodworking

The sanctuary at St. James' houses Ernest M. Skinner's opus 644 which was built and installed in 1927. It was a modest instrument and, as expected, the stoplist included a rich selection of 8' sounds. The swell and choir divisions are under expression. Their layout and that of the whole organ is oriented for projecting sound into the chancel area. For many years a curtain wall of light colored material stretched over wood frames comprised the area of the facade. In the 1980's, the 'guts' of the console were replaced.

In 1998, organist John Monkman, the Vestry and Rector Skip Adams engaged the New York City firm of Mann and Trupiano to begin the process of rebuilding the 71 year old instrument. The work consisted of relathering all chests and primaries, rebuilding reed stops, tremulants and swell engines. The Cornopean and Tromba were revoiced by Jack Steinkampf.

Additional work that was undertaken included the addition of:

- Great 2', and IV rank Mixture
- Choir 2<sup>2/3</sup> Nazard, 1<sup>3/5</sup> Tierce, 2' Piccolo
- Pedal 4' and 8' Octave (facade), Tromba extension
- Replacement of Great 4' Octave; original pipes were revoiced and added as 4' Principal to the Swell division

Some of the additional adjustments made during the project that made significant improvement to the sound projection and the tuning include:

- Removing 6 large wooden pedal pipes that were blocking the screen over the Peace altar on the west side of the front sanctuary wall and placing them horizontally above the chancel facade. This improved the sound projection into the room and air circulation during the heating months.
- A large fan that runs continuously was installed in an old stairwell that runs under the organ chamber and vent panels were installed in an access door in the basement level to improve circulation and heat flow throughout the chamber and blower room.
- The 8' Great chest was raised higher in the chamber and 2' chest was lowered to minimize heat inversion tuning problems.
- Air pressures were returned to original markings indicated on chests.
- The organ tuning was raised from A 427 to A 440. This was done to make it possible to use the organ with the bells and other instruments. It also had the effect of 'brightening' the sound somewhat.

## *A History of the Organs at St. James'*

The current Skinner organ is the fourth organ to “raise a joyful noise to the Lord” from St. James’ Episcopal. The first was bought for \$200 in 1828, built by Ellsworth Phelps, with a mahogany case and “gilt front show pipes.” A writer in 1831 noted that the organ had a “small but sweet tone.” Others recalled the first organ’s most memorable feature, an angel in a blue gown, floating amongst rose colored clouds and holding a trumpet, painted on the case by one Parley Cleaveland, perhaps a painter at one of the local carriage works.

All we know of the second organ is that it arrived in 1854, when the first organ was donated to a church in Owasco, and that it did not make the trip to our new and current church building.

The present church was completed in 1874. The architect was Horatio Nelson White who also designed the Gridley Building (1867) in downtown Syracuse, and the Hall of Languages (1873) at Syracuse University. The first instrument in this sanctuary was an organ built by Hilborne and Frank Roosevelt (first cousins of Theodore) and donated by members of the Roosevelt family to honor the memory of Lydia Roosevelt and Henry Latrobe Roosevelt. Lydia had served as the church’s organist for 30 years.

In 1927, the Roosevelt organ was sold to Emmanuel Church in East Syracuse where it is still in existence, and the present Ernest M. Skinner organ (Opus 644) was installed, with the console in the southwest corner of the sanctuary. In 1959, the organ console was moved to its present location on the east side of the chancel.

Restoration work and the addition of ten ranks of pipes was undertaken by Mann & Trupiano of New York City and Kerner & Merchant of Syracuse, New York. The new 8’ Octave pipes of the pedal serve as the major component of the new facade. The facade work was given by the McMaster family as a memorial to Andrew McMaster, a longtime member and former warden of the parish.