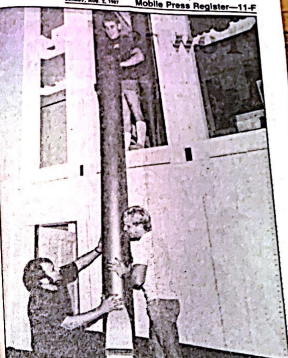


Godtfred Reck, Frank Burkhardt and Hanns Reck of Steiner-Reck Inc. in St. Louis show how a small pipe will be positioned in a rank. In the background, one of the large, old pipes is propped against the wall.



Godtfred and Hanns Reck take the bottom of one of the large pipes, as Mike Liston passes it down. Even the largest pipes aren't heavy — just unwieldy.

New sounds to resound in old Christ Church

BY CAMERIE GAST

Living Today Associate Editor

There's nothing like the sound of the wind going through a pipe," said Karen Morgan. "The way the sound starts, and the way the sound stops. It just makes the sound different."

That's why a crew of five people, under the direction of Godtfred Reck of Steiner-Reck Inc. of St. Louis, worked long days at Christ Episcopal Church, on the corner of Church and St. Emanuel streets. They were installing a \$250,000 organ. That's also why the tonal work — tuning the pipes with a multitude of delicate adjustments, such as fiddling with a tuning wire or adjusting the mouth of a pipe — continues for another 10 to 12 weeks. And that's why Ms. Morgan, the church's organist, said, "I have a dream... What I'd love to be able to do. On the first Sunday we use it, I want to do an improvisation, and go from the quietest sounds, through an exploration, from one sound to another, leading up to the first hymn." She expects that to happen sometime in September, she said.

Actually, the "new" organ isn't totally new. It incorporates some elements — including 1,543 old pipes — from the old Hook and Hastings instrument that was installed after the hurricane of 1906 blew down the church steeple and wrecked the organ. Reck spoke admiringly of these pieces of the old organ, explaining that the impurities in the metal used to make the old zinc pipes gave them a brighter sound that he still struggles to get from modern alloys. The massive pieces of poplar retrieved from the old organ's wind boxes, he said, were long and straight, and of an extraordinary quality. "You'll never find straighter," Reck said.

Reck's partner, Phares L. Steiner, wrote Bradley Byrne Sr., the church's senior warden, last January, addressing the question of blending the old and the new. Steiner wrote: "...in the work of determining what is best preserved, best discarded, how best an instrument may be updated... a very considerable amount of time must be spent in study

and contemplation of the previous instrument..."

"Substantially more time than for an all-new organ is required to make musical sense out of the blend of old and new which we are creating in the organ for Christ Church. The 10-week period (of installation) contemplated during the summer of 1987 may prove to be a bit inconvenient... A small inconvenience will be a small price to pay for the very long-term advantage of a carefully finished new organ."

The change in sound that is expected has been carefully calculated and labored over. The church thought it had found what it

wanted back in 1979, but the arrangements with the first organ-builders hired didn't work out. A committee then hired consultant Birmingham, organ professor at Samford University. They listened to organs all across the country, talked about what they liked and what might work for them, and Tibbs helped them draw up a specific list of sounds they wanted.

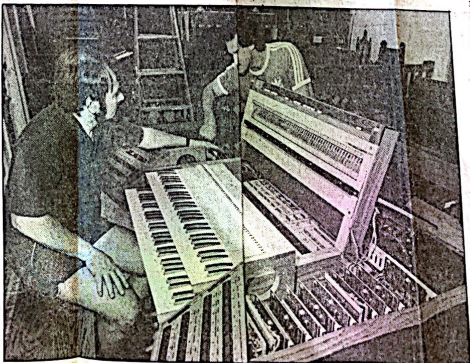
The old organ, Ms. Morgan said, "had no mixtures and no mutations... It had 16-foot and 8-foot pedal sounds only, and no pedal reed... The new sound will be brighter and clearer than the old sound," she said.

The contract with Steiner-Reck was signed Sept. 10, 1985. The truck bearing unassembled parts arrived the second week in July, and the process of installing and fine-tuning has continued since.

There will be 58 ranks of pipes, Ms. Morgan said, including 3,158 pipes in all. They fit into a redesigned facade, specially crafted to produce just the desired sound. The organ has three manual divisions — great, positive and swell — in addition to the pedal division. Its new console is lower than the old one, enabling the organist to look out and see the choir and congregation, and is a handsome piece of furniture made of oak, cherry and rosewood, complete with finely inlaid decoration. It also can be moved away from the walls of the choir section of the church, out between the lectern and pulpit for use, for example, in an organ concert.

Those who participate in services at the church are looking forward to hearing the new instrument. (While they've done without an organ this summer they've relied on "a wonderful, responsive Yamaha grand piano," and instrumental skills of church members — including some acquired in high school bands). The new organ will be formally introduced to the community in an organ concert scheduled for Nov. 1, All Saints Day at 4 p.m., with Michael Corzine of Florida State University in Tallahassee as the performer in the dedicatory recital. ("It's so nice to have somebody who's been able to practice ahead of time give the dedicatory concert," Ms. Morgan said with a grin.)

She spoke of the reasons the church has invested such extensive time and money in the search for the new organ. "We're a historic church. We're moving in two directions. We want to preserve and honor the past by upkeeping the building, but we're also moving in new directions. We're trying to keep alive the Anglican heritage and worship, and that includes a big pipe organ. We're also growing and adapting to the of the day."



Godtfred Reck and Burkhardt check out the console