



Greene Memorial United Methodist Church
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

A HISTORY OF THE ORGANS

1903 - 1980

From the beginning, Methodists worshipping in the gray stone gothic church on the corner of Church Avenue and Second Street have had pipe organs to lead in the musical portions of worship.

The first organ was a gift of Mr. Rueben H. Fishburne. While the specifications are not available, we know it cost \$3000 and was built by the E. C. Malarkey Organ Company located in Basic, Virginia (near Waynesboro). The instrument was a two manual organ with mechanical (tracker) action of about twelve stops. The exact date of installation is unknown but probably it was around 1903. Located in the south transept of the church, this instrument had a facade of richly decorated pipes, popular at the turn of the century. (see photo on inside of front cover). Around 1912 the choir and organ were moved from the south transept to a specially constructed niche at the rear of the chancel.

In 1926 the two manual organ was given to the Thrasher Memorial Methodist Church in Vinton. That same year a new three manual organ, built by the most celebrated of American builders, Ernest M. Skinner (1866-1960), was installed in newly added chambers on either side of the chancel. The console was located on the right front side of the nave floor. Since this instrument used electro-pneumatic action, it was possible to separate the console from the organ proper. This E. M. Skinner is actually the only one in the area. In 1931 the Skinner Organ Company bought out the organ division of the Aeolian Company and formed the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company. It was this new firm which built the organs for St. John's Episcopal and Calvary Baptist Churches in Roanoke many years later. The 1926 E. M. Skinner organ at Greene Memorial was the gift of Lucy Williamson Lukens in memory of her husband, C. T. Lukens and Mrs. Nancy Williamson. Mr. Skinner's

remarkable genius was evidenced in the fine instruments he would eventually build for such prominent places as Rockefeller Chapel at the University of Chicago; National Cathedral, Washington; Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City; Grace Cathedral, San Francisco and Girard College, Philadelphia. The contract for the Skinner at Greene Memorial has been lost so we do not know the cost of this installation. The specification which follows was assembled from the memories of Lois Ayers, organist for forty-three years at Greene Memorial and William B. Patat, Roanoke sales representative for M. P. Moller, Inc. for more than fifty years.

ERNEST M. SKINNER ORGAN 1926

BOSTON, MASS.

GREAT

Bourdon 16
Diapason 8
Gross Flute 8
Concert Flute 8
Erzähler 8
Flute 4
Trumpet 8
Tremolo
Chimes

CHOIR

Melodia 8
Dulciana 8
Flute d'Amour 4
Piccolo 2
Tremolo
Harp

SWELL

Bourdon 16
Open Diapason 8
Gedeckt 8
Aeoline 8
Salicional 8
Vox Celeste 8
Harmonic Flute 4
Cornopean 8
Flugel Horn 8
Vox Humana 8
Tremolo

PEDAL

Open Diapason 16
Bourdon 16
Gedeckt 16
Gedeckt 8
Flute 4



In 1960 the M. P. Moller Organ Company of Hagerstown, Maryland was engaged to renovate and enlarge the E. M. Skinner instrument. While some of the best pipe work and much of the action were retained, the size of the original instrument was greatly increased with Moller additions. A new three manual Moller console was added at this time and located in the same position as the old Skinner console. Later this console would be moved up in the chancel with the choir and when the sanctuary was renovated in 1970, it would again be moved, this time to the position shown in the cover photograph. For the inaugural recital one of the world's most celebrated organists was invited to perform. E. Power Biggs (1906-1977) played to a packed church on Tuesday, 18 October 1960. (see reproduction of the program on inside rear cover). Following are the specifications of the 1960 enlargement and renovation.

E. M. SKINNER, 1926, Boston, Mass.
rebuilt and enlarged by
M. P. MOLLER, 1960, Hagerstown, Md.

GREAT

Quintaton 16
Bourdon 8
Principal 8
Octave 4
Rohrflote 4
Waldflote 2
Mixture IV
Tremolo
Carillonic Bells

PEDAL

Contra Bass 16
*Bourdon 16
*Gedeckt 16
Principal 8
*Bourdon 8
*Still Gedeckt 8
Octave 4
*Bourdon 4
Quinte 5 1/3
Octave Quint 2 2/3
Octavin 2
Contra Trompette 16
Trompette 8
Clarion 4

CHOIR

*Erzähler 8
*Unda Maris 8
Nason Gedeckt 8
Nachthorn 4
Principal 2
Tierce 1 3/5
Larigot 1 1/3
Tremolo
Harp

SWELL

*Bourdon 16
*Gedeckt 8
Salicional 8
*Voix Celeste 8
*Flute 4
Geigen Octave 4
*Flautino 2
Plein Jeu III
Bassoon 16
Trompette 8
*Flugel Horn 8
Rohr Schalmey 4
Tremolo



In the summer of 1979 it was felt the time had come for further renovations and additions to the existing organ. After much careful study and planning a contract for renovations and additional ranks of pipes was signed with the M. P. Moller Organ Company in January 1980. Aside from additional stops to increase and expand the organ's tonal spectrum, the console would be totally rebuilt with new stopknobs and couplers numerically numbered from left to right. It was also decided to carry out a proposal which had been unsuccessfully suggested in 1960; namely that the console be mounted on a dolly that it might be rolled to the center of the chancel for recitals and other musical events. Recitalists would then be fully visible to those hearing the music. This further necessitated the installation of a lift to raise the otherwise sunken console to the chancel floor level. Completing the work, a voicer from the Moller Company will have gone over all the pipe work, new and old, for best tonal results. Cost of the organ project along with remodeling the choir area, plastering the ceiling of the swell organ chamber and certain other work on the Schulerich Carillon necessitated by making the console movable, is projected at \$50,000; of that figure, \$40,000 for the organ work alone.

The organ as rebuilt and enlarged in 1980 has 2438 hand-made pipes of wood and metal, ranging in size from sixteen feet long to the contrasting dimensions of an ordinary lead pencil. The new specifications of forty ranks, listed below, creates an ensemble in which every manual stop is completely independent of the other.

* stops from 1926 E. M. SKINNER

E. M. SKINNER, 1926, Boston, Mass.

rebuilt and enlarged by

M. P. MOLLER, 1960 & 1980, Hagerstown, Md.

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GREAT

Quintaton 16
Principal 8
Bourdon 8
Rohrflote 4
Octave 4
Waldflote 2
Furniture IV
*Festival Trumpet 8
Tremolo
Flemish Bells

SWELL

Bourdon 16
Gedeckt 8
Salicional 8
Voix Celeste 8
Principal 4
Harmonic Flute 4
Flautino 2
Plein Jeu III
Bassoon 16
Trompette 8
Flugel Horn 8
*Vox Humana 8
Tremolo
Zimbelstern

CHOIR

Gedeckt 8
*Flauto Dolce Celeste II 8
Nachthorn 4
*Principal 4
*Nazard 2 2/3
Octave 2
Tierce 1 3/5
**Rohr Schalmey 8
*Festival Trumpet 8
Tremolo
Harp

PEDAL

*Acoustic Bass 32
Principal 16
***Quintaton 16
Bourdon 16
Subbass 16
Bourdon 8
Octave 8
Flute 4
Super Octave 4
*Mixture III
*Cornet IV 32
***Bassoon 16
Bombarde 16
Trompette 8
Clairon 4

* stops added in 1980.

** this reed stop played at 4' pitch in the Swell in 1960. In 1980, twelve new bass pipes were added making it an 8' stop. It was also moved to the Choir.

*** stops added in 1960 to Swell and Great but not made available as pedal stops until 1980.

Musicians Who Have Served Greene Memorial Church Since 1908

1908-1909

Miss Winifred Burnett, organist; Mrs. Raymond Young, assistant organist

1912-

Mrs. Eileen Parrish, organist; Mr. C. A. Woodrum, director

1919

Mrs. J. H. Williamson, organist; Professor E. J. Calthrop, director

1922

Mrs. Claude L. Guerrant, organist; Mr. Herman F. Larson, director

1929

Mr. George Grant, organist & director

1930

Mr. O. W. Stapleton, director; Miss Lois Breeden, organist. (Miss Breeden married Ernest Ayers, one of the choir members and remained as organist until 1973.)

1930-1939

Mr. Harry E. Nash, director; Mrs. Lois B. Ayers, organist

1940-1941

Mr. Robert Griffey, director; Mrs. Lois B. Ayers, organist

1942

Mr. Charles Cook, director; Mrs. Lois B. Ayers, organist

1943

Miss Jean Birchall, director; Mrs. Lois B. Ayers, organist

1944-1963

Mrs. Eula T. Ligon, director; Mrs. Lois B. Ayers, organist

1963-1973

Mr. H. Caleb Cushing, director; Mrs. Lois B. Ayers, organist

1973-1975

Mr. Donald C. Clapp, organist & director

1975-1979

Mr. Robert R. Sinclair, organist & director

1979

Mr. Richard Cummins, organist & director

Greene Memorial Methodist Church

Presents

E. Power Biggs

OCTOBER 18, 1960

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL

Concerto No. 2, in B flat
A tempo ordinario e staccato
Allegro
Recitative
Allegro moderato

In organ literature there are few works so splendidly vigorous and attractive as the concertos of George Frederick Handel, which he wrote and performed for the London public during the first half of the 18th century. Handel treats the organ with fine orchestral verve and effectiveness.

ANTONIO SOLER

Concerto No. 3, in G major
Allegro Vivace
Minuet with Variations

The double concerti by the 18th century Spanish composer, Padre Antonio Soler, have survived only in manuscript. They were designed to be played on two portative organs, though some are adaptable for solo performances. The music is of the utmost spirit and gaiety. This arrangement for solo organ by Mr. Biggs is published by Associated Music.

JAN PIETERZOOM SWEELINCK

Balletto del Granduca
Five Variations

For forty years, until 1621, Sweelinck was organist at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam. The Pilgrims may have listened to this famous Dutch musician during the years they spent in nearby Leiden, before embarking on the historic Mayflower voyage. Based on a popular tune of the day, the Balletto is a set of variations, each ending with the same refrain.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

Chorale Prelude
"Deck Thyself, O Soul, with Gladness"

Which Schumann described as . . . "A Fantasy on the Chorale . . . as priceless, deep, and full of soul as any piece of music that ever sprang from a true artist's imagination."

Fantasia and Fugue in G minor

The "G minor" is justly esteemed one of Bach's finest works for the organ. It was probably composed in 1721 at Weimar, where Bach held the position of Court Organist. The Fantasia moves with all the freedom of an improvisation, and notable features are the richness of the harmonies and the bold modulations, contrasted with the most florid running passages. On a splendid subject, the Fugue is in strict four-part style, and holds the attention to the end and by its unflagging movement and energy.

(INTERMISSION)

JEHAN ALAIN

Litanies

In this remarkable modern treatment of an ancient plainsong theme, Alain prefaces the music with these words:

"When the Christian soul in its distress cannot find words to implore God's mercy, it repeats ceaselessly and with a vehement faith the same invocation. Reason has reached its limit, faith alone can go further."

CESAR FRANCK

Pastorale in E major

A characteristic little leaping figure is contrasted with a chorale-like melody. Some fugal elaboration follows, and the piece closes in reflective mood.

MARCEL DUPRE

Variations on a Noel
Moderato—Larghetto—Poco animato
Cantabile—Vif—Vivace—Plus modere
—Vivace—Cantabile—Anime—
Fugato—Presto

This brilliant modern work of Dupre uses every device of canon and imitation in the treatment of the melody, and culminates in a magnificent fugue and toccata, with the theme in the pedals.