

The Organ

The organ is regarded as one of the finest and most historic in the area. Built originally in 1834 by Newburyporter Joseph Alley, it was enlarged in 1889 by George S. Hutchings, and rebuilt again in 1957 by the Andover Organ Co. In 2011 and 2012, the organ was restored by Vermont organ builder A. David Moore and was re-dedicated on Saturday September 15, 2012. Further details on its "pre-2011" form can be found at "Pipe Organs of the Merrimac Valley" (<http://www.tneorg.com/mv/mv4.html>). A summary of the renovated organ is attached.

The Organ

In 1834, a new pipe organ was built for the First Religious Society by the Newburyport organ builder Joseph Alley. It was considered the finest organ in the vicinity, and was in constant use until about 1889, when it was rebuilt by George S. Hutchings of Boston, who retained many of Alley's original pipes and greatly expanded the instrument.

In 1957, Andover Organ Company, then under Charles Fisk, rebuilt the organ. Some changes were made to the stop list at this time. The Oboe, Trumpet and Cremona shallots were enlarged and remain substantially the same today. Charles Fisk's and Robert Reich's names are written, in chalk, inside the organ case with the date 1957. In the fall of that year Dr. Melville Smith, organist of the First Church in Boston, who had served as the consultant for the project, re-dedicated the rebuilt organ with a recital.

For nearly forty (40) years, the organ was under the expert conservatorship of Barbara Owen, noted organ historian, consultant and FRS Director of Church Music. Barbara oversaw the re-tabling of the windchests by CB Fisk in 1972. Her tireless personal efforts to maintain the organ over this period ensured that the FRS had high quality music and preserved the instrument we hear today.

In 2008, a Steering Committee was established to study the condition of the organ and make recommendations. The work of the Committee was significantly enhanced by the able assistance of organ consultant Mark Brombaugh. In 2009, the firm of A. David Moore, Inc. was selected to rebuild the organ, consistent with the recommendations of the Committee. In this most recent renovation, the firm: installed a new, level hardwood floor under and around the organ to ensure stability of the instrument; moved the case forward in the gallery and rearranged the pedal pipes in order to increase the space inside the case and enhance future maintenance; built a new wind system, including double-fold bellows made from the ribs of the Alley bellows, and wood wind trunks; added swell shades at the rear of an enlarged swell box to improve tonal egress; replaced virtually all components of the mechanical action and installed a new electric combination action by Laukhuff of Germany; added new pedal stops, including a 16' Trombone and 8' Cello; and replaced the façade pipes, all of which now speak.

<i>Great (CC-g3)</i>		<i>Pedal (CC-f1)</i>		<i>Combination action</i>
Bourdon 16'	H	Double Open Diapason 16'	A/H	Laukhuff, Germany Sequencer, 300 levels 12 general pistons 6 divisionals each for Swell and Great 4 divisionals for Pedal Reversibles for Tremolo and couplers Generals and couplers duplicated as toe studs
Open Diapason 8'	A/M	Cello 8'	M	
Second Open Diapason 8'	A	Bourdon 16'	H	
Dulciana 8'	H	Flute 8' (ext)	H/M	
Stopped Diapason 8'	A	Melodia 4' (ext)	H/M	
Octave 4'	A	Trombone 16'	M	
Flute 4'	A	Trumpet 8' (ext)	M	
Twelfth	A	Clarion 4' (ext)	M	
Fifteenth	A/An			
Tierce	A/H			
Mixture IV	A/H/An	Total number of pipes: 1,652		Stop labels and pistons engraved by Donald Carbino, South Royalton, VT
Trumpet 8'	H			
<i>Swell (CC-g3)</i>		<i>Couplers</i>		
Open Diapason 8'	A	Swell-Great		The following people from A.D. Moore, Inc. worked on the organ renovation: A. David Moore John Atwood Tom Bowen Lubbert Gnodde Robert Lee Adams
Stopped Diapason 8'	A	Great-Pedal		
Salicional 8'	H?	Swell-Pedal		
Celeste 8'	H			
Principal 4'	A	A = Joseph Alley, 1834		
Flute 4'	A	H = Hutchings, 1889		
Fifteenth	A/H	An = Andover, 1957		
Nineteenth	A/H	M = A.D. Moore, 2011/12		
Sesquialtera II	A/H/M			
Cremona 8'	M/A	Temperament: Lubbert Gnodde I		
Oboe 8'	H			
Tremolo	M	Wind Pressure: 2 3/4"		