

ST. JOHN'S ORGAN SOCIETY

Annual Newsletter

JUNE 2015

ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH | 207 YORK STREET, BANGOR, MAINE 04401 | WWW.HOOKOPUS288.NET



E. & G. G. Hook, Opus 288 (1860)

Dear Friends of Opus 288!

Welcome to the 2015 edition of the St. John's Organ Society Annual Newsletter.

For nearly a quarter century the St. John's Organ Society has worked to further the stewardship and appreciation of E. & G. G. Hook's magnificent Opus 288, built for St. John's Catholic Church in 1860, through a program of public concerts, education and outreach.

Annual Summer and International Concerts feature artists from the United States, Europe and Japan. Community outreach includes guided tours, demonstration recitals, and collaborative projects with organizations including the Bangor and Portland Chapters of the American Guild of Organists, University of Maine's School of the Performing Arts,

All Saints Catholic School, The Way We Grow Program, Bangor Public Library Summer Reading Program and Penobscot Valley Senior College.

Read on to discover more about our 2015 Summer Organ Concerts, opportunities to support St. John's Organ Society through the Annual Giving Program, and excellent articles and photos contributed by our board members.

I am pleased to welcome two of my former students, Abraham Ross (College of the Holy Cross) and Sarah Johnson (Vassar College), to this season's roster of summer artists. Both Abe and Sarah took lessons on Opus 288 before beginning college studies. Seeing them flourish in their collegiate studies (both have recently won prizes in their local American Guild of Organists Young Artists Competitions) is a special joy and reminds me that the great organs are the greatest teachers.

My thanks to Fr. Timothy Nadeau, Pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, for his enduring support and encouragement. My thanks also to our excellent Board of Directors, to our many volunteers, to the many organists and instrumentalists for their beautiful performances, and, of course, to organ builders George Bozeman, David Wallace, and Robert Newton of the Andover Organ Company, and those who have worked with them for their expertise in caring so well for this cultural treasure. Finally, thank you to our generous donors. Your contributions encourage and inspire us as we further the mission of the St. John's Organ Society.

We look forward to seeing you this summer!

Kevin Birch
Executive Director

St. John's Organ Society Summer Organ Concerts 2015

23rd Annual Series
Thursday Evenings at 7:30

July 23

George Bozeman

Deerfield, New Hampshire

July 30

**Chris Pelonzi with
Nicole Pelonzi, flute**

Portland, Maine

August 6

Abraham Ross

Holden, Maine

August 13

Sarah Johnson

Garland, Maine

August 20

Susan Ferré

Gorham, New Hampshire

August 27

Kevin Birch

Bangor, Maine

*E. & G. G. Hook Organ, Opus 288 (1860)
St. John's Catholic Church
207 York Street, Bangor, Maine 04401*

With appreciation to our host hotel
The Charles Inn
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ST. JOHN'S
ORGAN SOCIETY
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*A nonprofit organization committed to the preservation and appreciation
of the historic E. & G. G. Hook pipe organ, opus #288 located at
St. John's Catholic Church, 207 York Street, Bangor, Maine.*

RECITALS, JUNE 2014-APRIL 2015: AN OVERVIEW

by Carlton T. Russell

With the enthusiasm and generosity of an ever-growing number of supporters and attendees, the St. John's Summer Organ Concert Series completed its 22nd season in 2014, while the International Concert Series presented its 9th event in March of this year. It was another rich musical feast, with E. & G. G. Hook Opus 288 sending its glorious sounds in seemingly infinite tonal variety through St. John's acoustically and visually splendid sanctuary.

Rudolf Innig, a concert organist from Bielefeld, Germany, opened the summer series on July 24 with a program of music by his countrymen Handel, Bach, Mendelssohn, and Rheinberger, and also a piece by Horatio Parker, an American student of Rheinberger. Herr Innig provided an extensive and scholarly program note on Parker's career and significance.

The July 31 program was the first of four in this season to feature two performers. Organists Naomi Shiga and Jonathan Wohlers, from Tacoma, Washington, played three organ duets, along with chorale preludes by Bach and Brahms. The stirring finale of their program was a four-hand arrangement by Ptaschnikoff of Jean Sibelius's orchestral tone poem "Finlandia".

The third program, on August 7, also featured two organists, Robert and Nancy Ludwig, who share organist-choirmaster duties at St. John's Episcopal Church in Bangor. Robert Ludwig played sets of variations by Böhm and Ahrens, and Nancy

performed Franck's *Cantabile*, a movement from Dupré's *Le Chemin de la Croix*, and the rarely-heard Samuel Barber variations on "Wondrous Love", one of the composer's few organ pieces. The Ludwigs ended with a long, complex, and also infrequently-played Duet for Organ by Samuel Wesley.

For those who associate the saxophone with jazz and big-band music, the August 21 concert may have caused some surprise. Beautifully blending with the organ - played discreetly by Jacques Boucher - Sophie Poulin de Courval showed us that the alto saxophone can also play classical music and bring to that repertoire a lovely, vibrato-less tone color. We heard music by French, Dutch, Canadian, German, and Italian composers, ending with Jacques Boucher's own delightful *Variations sur un thème de Gilles Vigneault*.

The summer series season finale on August 28 brought Kevin Birch, organ, and Anatole Wieck, violin, in a varied program spanning five centuries, from Renaissance dances to music of Fritz Kreisler. Drs. Birch and Wieck have performed together for many years, which shows in the precision and vitality of the music they make, and their enjoyment in it.

Returning to St. John's for the March 4, 2015 International Concert, Jacques Boucher performed this time with his wife, the distinguished violinist Anne Robert, who described the concert in her aural introductions as a several-nation musical tour. Indeed, we heard superbly-played selections from Italy, France, Germany, Sweden, and America, as well as the performers' native country, Canada. A smaller-than-usual audience was treated to an outstanding program by two world-class musicians who play as one.



International Organ Concert 2014
Organist Rieko Okamoto (Andover, MA and Yokosuka, Japan) with Hatsumi Miura (Yokohama, Japan)

Japanese organist Reiko Okamoto, temporarily residing in the United States while serving as associate organist at a large Episcopal church in Andover, Massachusetts, performed on August 14, her recital including a Mendelssohn sonata, a Buxtehude passacaglia, a piece on the hymntune *Kingsfold* by young Japanese organist and composer Hina Sakamoto, and two Bach pieces: a chorale prelude and the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 552.



Naomi Shiga and Jonathan Wohlers



Reiko Okamoto with her parents



Sophie Poulin and Jacques Boucher



Rudolf Innig

ORGAN STUDIES AND OPUS 288

by Kevin Birch

I've always believed that the great organs remain the greatest teachers. Week to week I marvel at the countless ways that Opus 288 informs and inspires the learning process. During the past school year I have had the privilege of teaching six students. Here they are!



Cathy Bruno - University of Maine



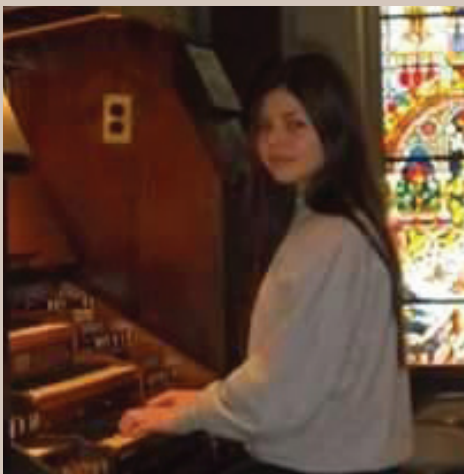
Jacob Gould - Hampden Academy



Paul Griffin - University of Maine



Johan Halvorsen - Home Schooler



Mallory Haney - Narraguagus High School



Anne Small - Music Teacher at Fruit Street School and Fourteenth School



ST. JOHN'S ORGAN SOCIETY ANNUAL FUND 2015

It is through the generous support of our donors that we are able to share the beauties of E. & G. G. Hook's Opus 288 through public concerts (Summer Organ Concert Series and a mid-winter International Artist Concert), education, and community outreach.

Your tax-deductible donation will enable us to continue and expand our efforts, and maintain the historic Opus 288. Donors will be listed by category in all concert programs.

Giving levels are:

- Benefactor (\$500+)
- Patron (\$250-\$499)
- Sponsor (\$150-\$249)
- Contributor (\$100-\$149)
- Friend (\$50-\$99)
- Supporter (\$20-\$49)

Gifts may be sent to: St. John's Organ Society, 207 York Street, Bangor, Maine 04401. Please include your name, address, and email address if you have one.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for considering a donation to St. John's Organ Society!

ST. JOHN'S ORGAN SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Kevin Birch - Executive Director
- Catherine Bruno - Secretary
- Karen Kydd - Treasurer
- Ruth Nelligan - Director
- Carlton Russell - Director
- Bonnie FitzPatrick - Director

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Stay on top of all that's going on with the Hook Opus 288, concerts, and more by searching and liking

HOOKOPUS288

PREPARATION FOR THE SEASON...

Robert Newton regulates the key action in preparation for the summer concerts.



INTERNATIONAL ORGAN CONCERT - 2015

by Ruth Nelligan

Jacques Boucher was born in 1945 in Saint Pascal, near Riviere du Loup, Quebec. He completed his classical studies at the College de Sainte-Anne-de-la Pocitiere, where he studied piano with Pierre Bouchard.

His attention turned to organ where he studied under the tutelage of French musician Antoine Reboulot at the the School of Music, University of Laval in Quebec City. While studying in Montreal he held the position of organist and choir director at the church in his native village, Saint Pascal.

In 1971-72 he attended the Institut de Musicologie and the Institut de Musique Sacre in Paris. It was at this time his interest also turned to broadcasting where his training led to work as a successful radio producer, host, sound engineer and program director. In 1972 he became the producer for the CBC in Montreal.

As a broadcaster, he has produced over 1,500 radio recitals featuring organ playing and building. He promoted live broadcasting, giving composers the opportunity to write works intended for broadcast.

From 1971-1986 he was principal organist at the Notre-Dame-Lourdes in Verdun (Montreal). In 1986 he was appointed resident organist at St. Jean-Baptiste Church in Montreal which houses the magnificent Casavant organ.

An active performer and recording artist, he has given concerts in major cathedrals and churches across Canada, the United States, as well as Paris, France. His next musical project will include performances in the United States and Europe, where he will also pursue his interest in organ building and writings about the organ.

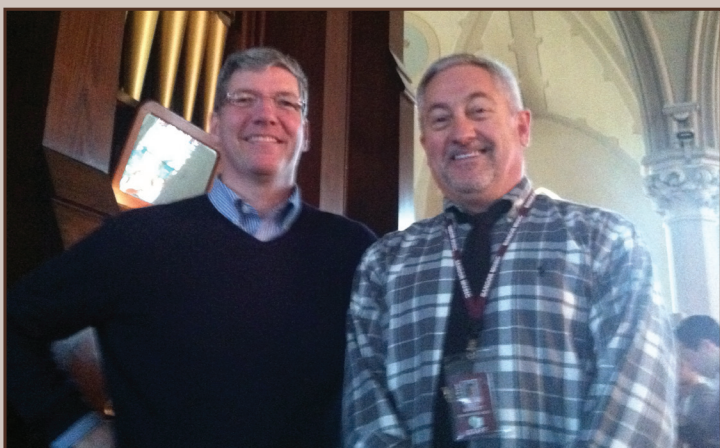
In 1994 he was awarded a professional development grant by the Conseil des Arts du Quebec.

Anne Robert, his wife, enjoys an active career as a chamber musician who regularly plays in Canada, Europe, Asia, and the United States. She received the highest diploma in interpretation from Indiana University, the Royal Academy of Music of London and Conservatoire de Musique de Montreal. She presently teaches at the Conservatoire de Musique de Montreal.

All who were fortunate to be at St. John's on March 4th will long remember the wonderful concert performed by Jacques and Anne!

OPUS 288 OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

In October we hosted a busload of wonderful music students from Bangor High School and their instructor (and one of Maine's finest horn players) Scott Burditt. An introduction to "The King of Instruments" included a guided tour of the organ, a performance of Bach arranged for Horn and Organ, and time for the students to play a few notes on E. & G. G. Hook's Opus 288.



Kevin Birch and Scott Burditt, Bangor High School Band Instructor



Students from Bangor High School experience Opus 288 first hand!