



THE NOACK ORGAN CO., INC.
MAIN & SCHOOL STREETS
GEORGETOWN, MA 01833
Telephone (978) 352-6266
Telefax (978) 352-8535
noackorgan@aol.com

REPORT

about the organ at McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church, Norman, OK

1. Condition

I found the organ to be in excellent condition. With the exception of some relatively minor and easily corrected items (listed below) all parts are essentially like new and with proper care the life expectancy of the instrument could well exceed this building in which it stands. The organ sounded nicely in tune. While musical tastes may change somewhat from one person to the other and from one year to the next, I feel strongly that this is a fine musical instrument that will be eminently suitable for the purpose for which it was conceived beyond such temporary fashion.

2. Long-Term Maintenance

In recent years the maintenance of the organ has not always been quite as consistent as may have been desirable, but the process of making up for some omissions is well under way. I suggest that at this time the items under #3 will be taken care of and a maintenance schedule then be enacted whereby the instrument will be thoroughly serviced - meaning checked and tuned (as may be required - the flues rarely need any attention) during a up to 12 hour visit each fall and reed tunings and minor action adjustments be done a couple of times a year before major events. During each of the annual service some project, as time allows, should be planned such as perhaps tightening the wedges on a reed stop or adjusting the speech of some pipes that are a bit off. Once the items in the following paragraph are properly done, I do not expect any major additional work for many years to come.

3. Some "do now" issues

a. With 20/20 hindsight we admit that using high lead content for the entire resonator on the 16' Trombone and providing only "standard" racking allowed the largest resonators to bend. At some time an additional upper rack had been made for the lowest resonators, but this had not been properly aligned (actually confirming an already existing deformation). Low C# is now in acute need of straightening - it might ultimately collapse left unattended. I suggest that this resonator be taken out and be straightened (it may well be possible to do that on a flat, carpeted floor without mandrels). The other low octave resonators can be straightened in place and at least two additional (split, full-circle type) properly aligned racks should be provided. The OU organ shop has all means to do this properly.

[b. FYI: In an effort to make the front particularly attractive we dared making embossed front pipes that are larger than any we have seen - with the result that feet started collapsing. We provided hangers for these (I seem to recall at our expense even after the guaranty period) hoping that this corrected this problem. We suggest this being monitored, just to make sure.]

c. I have left instructions on how to adjust the key action. If this is properly done (this does not take more than fifteen minutes per division) the occurrence of ciphers is highly unlikely, even when the organ is first turned on and only a small stop is drawn. I feel sorry that apparently the church has suffered with unnecessary cipher problems in the recent past, where a simple phone call to us would have provided help. (Please: never hesitate to call for help! Our maintenance supervisor is David Rooney 978 352 6266 noackorgandavid@aol.com)

d. It appears that a couple of tracker pull-offs from the pedal fingers had loosened up and become unglued under extreme dry conditions. I assume that by now the entire row has been re-glued. It is always proper maintenance procedure to thoroughly check an entire row where one item needs attention. This, too, was a easily accessed half-hour job and any fear that this might be the beginning of the demise of the organ is like fearing a house may collapse because a doorknob pulled off.

e. Just a friendly advice to tuners: when a flue pipe is quite flat one must not just force it to pitch but examine the cause. That bent ear on a coned-out pipe was an obvious mistake (one never cones "out", as that is ineffective and, I feel, ugly).

f. I realize the good intent of whoever cut "tuning" slots into a few of the resonators of the GR Trumpet. I assume that some tongues had relaxed slightly and - not wanting to "mess with" the tongues this was done to keep them from flipping into a harmonic. To make this again as pretty as new, I request these slots to be neatly soldered shut and Cavaille-Coll tytype slots be cut into the low octave precisely as we did on the Cornopean. These then can be opened as may be needed to regulate this hard-to tame Trumpet.

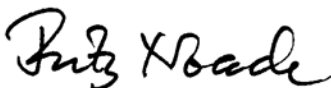
g. The removal of the back panels of the GR enclosure appears to have helped air circulation and thereby tuning stability. I would suggest, though, to limit the removal, as was done on the Swell, to the lower row. This will be just as effective and still may restore a margin of "tonal togetherness" - the original purpose of the enclosure. I suggest the Swell panels be reinserted, but leaving much of the back open during the week.

4. Possible enhancements

a. Sam Porter and I already had concluded some years ago that the Bassoon in the Pedal is less useful as a 16' stop than it would be at 32'. There is sufficient space on the windchest to accomplish this; a 32' Bassoon could be made in which the smaller pipes would be modified from the existing stop. The cost of this, including installation and all related on-site work would be \$38,000. We would need at least 9 months of lead time to make and install this stop.

b. The couplers at present are operated by hitch-down levers. This is a reliable system that, however, makes it impossible to include them in the combination action. In recent years we have always used regular stop knobs for the couplers (and stop motors to engage them in the console). It would, of course, make sense to upgrade the couplers to our present system. If that is done it also would make sense to extend the scope of the combination action to a large, multi-level system of the kind we use in large organs today. The cost of this modified stop action, which may be between \$60,000 and \$80,000, may or not be justifiable at this time. I could work out a more precise price if requested.

Respectfully submitted
April 16, 2009



Fritz Noack, FAIO
The Noack Organ Co., Inc.