

The Schantz Organ at Grand View Lutheran Church

13th and Hull, Des Moines, IA

History of the organ (from notes by Marvin L. Johns) --

Each time Pastor Rueben Spong met a choir member or a director, he would always thank them for their beautiful music and faithfulness in serving the church.

In 1955, four years after moving into the new sanctuary, Pastor Spong was again telling Marv how he appreciated the music program. Marv's response was, "Now, what kind of organist presently playing a Hammond organ would let an opportunity like that slip by! It was the beginning of the 'Pipe Organ Fund.'"

Pastor Spong left for a new position at the Madrid Home in 1958, and Pastor Clarence Leslie became the new pastor. He immediately became very interested in the pipe organ fund, and, at his first congregational meeting in January 1959, he requested the remodeling of the educational wing and the purchase of a new pipe organ. The request passed with only one "no" vote for the organ.

An organ committee was formed. Bids were taken from six companies. However, only three actually visited our church to make a proposal. Two of the firms said we must build space above the sacristy and above the staircase on the east side of the altar. There were no heat ducts in the altar area. The Schantz representative recommended placing the organ in the balcony for economic reasons.

The church, (at Marv's direction), asked the opinions of Dr. Frank Jordan, Dean of Fine Arts, Drake University, Dr. Russell Saunders, Professor of Organ, Drake University, and Professor Robert M. Speed of Grand View College. Each recommended the balcony location, because of the heating and cost of building two additional chambers at the front of the church. Marv Johns was asked to prepare a stop list, and with the advice of Dr. Jordan and the Schantz representative, he came up with the desired stops.

The Schantz organ was originally installed in February of 1963 by the Schantz Company of Orville, Ohio, and the dedicatory recital was held on May 6, 1963, with Mr. Robert M. Speed at the console. Subsequently, Bob Speed has performed a re-dedicatory concert in 1997, and an anniversary concert in 2003.

The instrument has three manuals of four separate divisions: Great, Swell, Choir, and Pedal. Tonal design is American Classic, possessing Baroque and Romantic designs. The organ, in keeping with the trends of the time, is designed to be brilliant and clear-cut in tone quality and texture, but capable of softness and mellowness when such effects are desired.

The final two ranks of the organ, namely, the Oboe and Unda Maris, completed the instrument as originally designed. Manufactured by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Conn., these two ranks were installed by Mr. John Hansen, of Council Bluffs, IA.

Since the installation of the solid state, the organ now has a combination action with twelve levels of memory and ten general pistons, both thumb and toe; eight pistons for each manual; and five toe studs for the pedal division.

The organ was installed at a cost of \$25,000. The cost of adding new ranks, solid state and repairs between 1995 and 2000, was \$28,000. However, according to Marv Johns in 2001, the appraised replacement value was \$450,000.

The present curator of the organ is Mr. Robert Arndt, of the Arndt Organ Company, Ankeny, Iowa.

Grand View Lutheran Organ Specifications

The organ consists of 24 ranks, 1285 pipes, 35 stops, 25 pistons, and 21 couplers.

Great Organ (unenclosed)

Principal 8'
Hohlfloete 8'
Octave 4'
Fifteenth 2'
Furniture IV ranks

Choir Organ (enclosed)

Lochgedackt 8'
Dulciana 8'
Unda Maris 8' **
Gemshorn 4'
Nazat 2 2/3'
Gemshorn 2'
Tierce 1 3/5'
Chimes
Tremelo

Swell Organ (enclosed)

Rohrgedackt 16'
Rohrfloete 8'
Viole 8'
Viole Celeste 8'
Principal 4'
Rohrfloete 4'
Nazard 2 2/3'
Flautino 2'
Oboe 8' **
Trompette 8'
Clarion 4'
Tremelo

Pedal Organ

Subbass 16'
Rohrgedackt 16'
Principal 8'
Rohrgedackt 8'
Bass Flute 8'
Choral Bass 4'
Rohrfloete 4'
Quint 5 1/3'
Contra-Trompette 16'

**Installed February 1997