



# The Brooklyn Bombarde

(Temporary Internet Edition)

Christmas 2012

Brooklyn Chapter, American Guild of Organists...Raymond C. Trapp, Dean

## *Editorial note*

*Hurricane Sandy knocked our Chapter for a particularly nasty loop. Worst of all, from a selfish standpoint, was the loss of Tim Chun's membership data...and just about everything else he had. In the future, we'll work on redundant data storage. But between this and the awful fire at the Brooklyn Baptist Temple, our chapter has lost some of its tangible heritage.*

*This brief Bombarde is a down payment on our return to full functionality. Enjoy, and may your holidays be wonderfully happy and fulfilling. No matter how hard we have to work, we also have a right—even an obligation—to celebrate as well. Our prayers are with our affected members and friends.*

*Blessings,  
your editor*

FROM THE DEAN:

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Greetings. I hope that you are all well. Due to Hurricane Sandy, we had to adjust our regularly scheduled publishing date of the *Bombarde*. Some of our members were greatly affected by the hurricane, but all are making progress towards full recovery.

Whether or not you suffered any loss, we all empathized with others and their loss. However, as one who lost much due to flooding, I still find reasons to be grateful. Shortly after learning about my situation, my pastor was kind enough to inform me that I could take whatever time off I deemed necessary to deal with the damage to my home. Although I was very much appreciative, it was important to me that the organ was heard that Sunday morning following the storm. I usually arrive at church about 7:00 am and prepare for the choir's arrival at 7:30 am. After that, I would proceed to the organ and begin the prelude. That Sunday morning I went to the organ early and just started playing. As congregants arrived and were seated, they seemed encouraged and consoled by the music of the organ.

This in turn inspired me. Although we are challenged in many ways in this profession as organists, it is important that we never lose sight of our value and purpose. We will never realize how much our music has touched the lives of others. That morning in my church, the organ represented hope. As I played hymns such as "This Is My Father's World", "Be Thou My Vision" and "Great is thy Faithfulness," people were reminded that even in the midst of all these trials we are still a blessed people.

Never allow the darkness of the night to block the light of the morning. Like all of you, I have heard many debates about organs and their relevance. I have also witnessed the great reduction in the number of Houses of Worship with organs as well as the replacement of good organists. I have decided to sum up my view on this topic in this way. When the day arrives that the world no longer needs hope, that is the day when they can take all the organs out. My hope for you in this holiday season is that through your music the joy of the season will come to everyone.

Peace,

Raymond

American Guild of Organists,  
The Brooklyn Chapter  
Raymond Trapp, Dean

Would like to invite you to attend our  
annual



# Holiday Banquet



Sunday, January 6, 2013 at 5:00pm

Cost: \$35.00 per person

Pacificana Restaurant  
813 55<sup>th</sup> Street, (between 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Aves)  
Borough Park, Brooklyn  
*This is convenient to the subway via the N to 8 ave/62<sup>nd</sup> street.*

*Join your chapter for a time to celebrate the holidays and share  
the joys of our musical efforts*

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**Holiday Banquet 2013 – American Guild Of Organists, The Brooklyn Chapter**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_ (Made payable to AGO Brooklyn Chapter, please return by January 3, 2013)

SEND FORM WITH PAYMENT TO:

**STEPHEN DANZIGER, TREASURER  
35 PROSPECT PARK WEST, APT. 12D  
BROOKLYN, NY 11215-0126**

# Crisis at Christ Church

As organists, we are at the mercy of our instruments. Singers, string and wood players -- even brass players can carry their instruments with them, but we have to deal with the pipes and consoles where they are. Even a pianist can carry people to move their 9' concert grands. Because of this, most of us spend a lot of time in religious institutions where our instruments live. We are also at the mercy of the viability of these institutions to maintain these instruments.

There is an advantage to this also, if one chooses to see it in this way. We lead the worship of the congregations through leading the singing by playing their instruments and inspiring their members by the beauty of our solo and choral offerings. For a small congregation it can be a real struggle to maintain these instruments, and we often have to work around many deferred maintenance problems.

Occasionally, a cataclysmic, divine intervention can change all of this. Such an event happened at the end of July at Christ Episcopal Church, Cobble Hill, when, in the middle of a severe thunderstorm, a bolt of lightning struck the northwest pinnacle of the church tower. The tower is made of sandstone, and, while there was a lightning rod in the middle of the tower, metal scaffolding had recently been set up to inspect the tower, to see about the stability of the tower, which had suffered an earlier strike. Whether the tubular steel of the scaffold had helped attract the electricity is unknown, but the stonework, which was rainsoaked, blew apart as the electric energy immediately vaporized the moisture and blew the stones apart, to tumble through the roof and into the nave, some of which fell through a large stained glass window into the church garden, sidewalk and street. Unfortunately, a local resident, Richard Schwartz, was walking by at the time, and was struck by a falling of the scaffolding, and died shortly afterwards at Long Island College Hospital.

It is truly a shame to have lost a life in such an instance, and we continue to pray for the soul of Mr. Schwartz, but this had forced action of the parish and the Cobble Hill community. The parish has insurance on the structure, so there is some money available to prepare for the future. Because of the instability of the stonework left standing after the collapse of the corner, the building is under the control of the city of New York, and can not be entered by non professional constructing workers, until after the department of buildings has attested to the stability of the remaining structures. It was immediately determined that most of the tower would have to be carefully disassembled.

Brooklyn AGO Board member, John Klauder, was allowed to go in with supervision and inspect the organ and console. He gave instructions to the tower demolition crew to seal off the chambers in thick plastic sheets, as well as wrapping the console in plastic and tape. The insurance company will cover damage to the organ from the collapse of the tower and elements after the collapse.

So far I have only mentioned what people would expect in an event of this sort, but, in fact, much more of a positive note has happened. Immediately, neighbors and non parishioners who use the building stepped up to ask what they could do and promised support to rebuild, restore and open the church as soon as possible. It will be a slow process, since the the disassembly of the tower has to be done slowly stone by stone, so the rest of the tower does not collapse and destroy more of the church and injure or kill more people. In fact, with a full crew working 12 hours a day, seven days a week, the tower is still not brought down to a safe level. So, at the moment, the parish is worshipping in a donated space at the Kane Street Synagogue, a half block away. This means there are no instruments to accompany the service, but the congregation has continued to sing a capella. The choir was off for the summer when this happened, and has now returned, and leads the singing by singing the chants fully and the hymns in four parts. They also enhance the service with a cappella motets. The members of the Kane Street Synagogue have been fascinated by what we do, as our group has been by what they do. Both groups have learned and grown by the experience, to the point that the musical groups from both places are planning a joint Chanukah/Christmas concert in December, centered around excerpts from Handel's Judas Maccabaeus.

As mentioned before, there are other groups that use the building that have been displaced. The largest in terms of time and space is the Linden School Pre School, which has found a temporary home, donated by the Parish of Sacred Hearts/St. Stephens.\* Msgr. Massey has been extremely generous in welcoming the group in, and has said that they can stay as long as need be to get them properly back into the Christ Church Parish Hall space. Because of his generosity, the choir has offered a Christmastime concert, which will probably take the form of Advent Lessons and carols. AA and the Ballet School have temporarily moved to St. Paul's Episcopal Church at Clinton and Carroll Sts, the food co-op has moved to St. Ann and the Holy Trinity. Both St. Paul's and St. Ann's have mentioned how much they have enjoyed getting to know these people, and how much life it has brought into their own parishes' lives. *(over)*

Crisis at Christ Church, continued...

The point of all of this is that what at first appears to be a tragedy (and still is with the death of Mr. Schwartz) has become a blessing in the spiritual growth of all the communities involved, as well as the physical renewal of the buildings and fabric of Christ Church. They will get a new roof, and hopefully, new ceiling in the nave, with a chance to add skylights to lighten a rather dark building. The stained glass will be replaced, perhaps recycling stained glass from a nearby closed church. Many of the pews were smashed by falling stones, so there are plans afoot to replace the pews with chairs, which will make for a much more flexible worship and performing space, as well as improve the acoustics (which the new ceiling will also do).

And for us as organists, we will get a wonderful Richard Whiteleg Moller restored to its former glory by a competent organ firm, with a solid state rebuilt console, and restored expression shades, and all releathered and cleaned. It is a beautiful instrument with refined voicing that will be maintained, and perfect for the Anglican services that Christ Church does. We look forward to the Brooklyn Chapter holding member recitals here on it, as well as chapter services. Soon we will all be able to say and sing, with full organ, brass, tympani and choir, "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord!"

—Donald C. Barnum, Jr., Past Dean

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO SEND YOUR RESERVATION IN FOR THE HOLIDAY DINNER!

This concludes the emergency 2012 holiday post-hurricane Bombarde....we close with a scene of your editor's Christmas tree....

