

# HOMELESS: 1915 WORLD'S FAIR ORGAN

AUSTIN OPUS 500 SPENDS 20 YEARS IN SAN FRANCISCO'S UNDERGROUND

BY JUSTIN KIELTY



**B**ENEATH THE HUGE PLAZA IN FRONT OF ARTHUR BROWN JR.'S BEAUX ARTS MASTERPIECE, San Francisco City Hall, a dimly lit bunker<sup>1</sup> hides a magnificent treasure in 12,000 cubic feet of crates and boxes under what seems like acres of dusty black visqueen. For 20 years, the restored 114-rank, 40-ton Austin pipe organ of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, affectionately known as "Opus 500," has lain forgotten, merely yards away from the home built for it.



Once the world's seventh-largest pipe organ, played by dozens of world famous organists,<sup>2</sup> it now faces an uncertain, if any, future. In this article, I will trace the instrument's history in the hope of stirring interest and support for its cause.

The story begins with the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) held in San Francisco in 1915, the centenary celebration of which began this past February.

Music was an important component in world expositions but too often left to the final stages of preparation. In late 1914, with the Exposition buildings well under construction in what is today's Marina District of San Francisco, Exposition President C.C. Moore

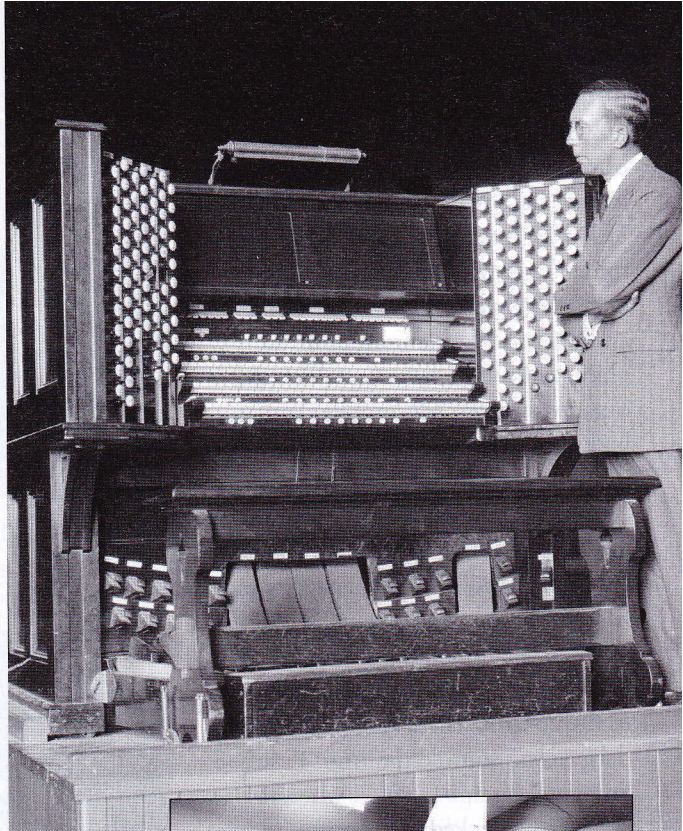
... turned aside from his other cares long enough to appoint J.B. Levison chief of the music department. A better choice could hardly have been made. For more than two decades, Mr. Levison, an able amateur in music and a businessman of high standing, had been identified with all of San Francisco's larger efforts in its musical life. But Mr. Levison's grasp of the importance of such a post was more comprehensive than President Moore's, for he refused the position. Fortunately, however, he had his attention directed to George W. Stewart of Boston, a former artist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, a man technically equipped, who had made a great success of the music at the St. Louis Exposition.<sup>3</sup>

The music department's budget was the second-highest expense of the Exposition: \$566,300 out of a total \$5 million outlay.<sup>4</sup>

A pipe organ being de rigueur, Stewart and his committee<sup>5</sup> of prominent San Francisco organists began contacting organ firms—31 in all, of which 13 returned designs and/or bids. The committee eliminated any submissions that lacked either a specific design or price, which brought the number to eight.<sup>6</sup> The eight were finally narrowed to two: E.M. Skinner and Austin.<sup>7</sup>

On February 19, 1914, H.D.H. Connick, director of works for the Exposition, signed a \$40,000 contract with Austin Organs Inc., and an additional sum of \$3,900 for subsequent removal of the instrument to the newly constructed Civic Auditorium<sup>8</sup> (known now as Bill Graham Civic Auditorium).<sup>9</sup>

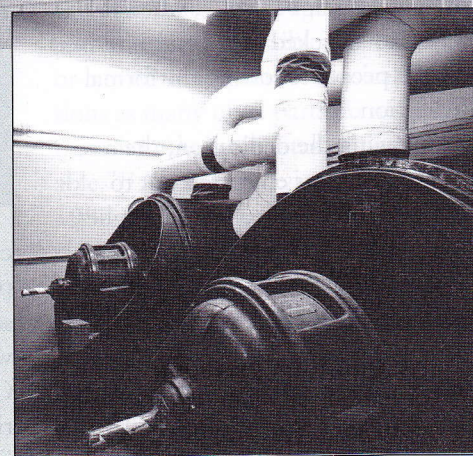
Edwin H. Lemare, world famous as an organist, had been invited to come to the Exposition by musical director Stewart



*Above:* the 1914 console with Uda Waldrop, who succeeded Edwin Lemare as San Francisco's municipal organist. The Lemare-designed console was modeled after that of Liverpool Cathedral, though smaller. The Pedal division drawknobs were located on the right, the Choir division drawknobs on the left. The Crescendo pedal, never used by Lemare, was located at the far right. There was considerable discussion regarding whether to include or exclude the Crescendo pedal.

*Right:* twin 20-hp Spencer turbine blowers supplied wind at 10, 15, and 25 inches. The organ could play with only one blower operating; but for heavy use, both were required. Each delivered 6,500 c.f./minute.

*Opposite:* exposition organ shortly after dedication. Note console in loft (podium); it was later removed to the auditorium floor. (photos: Moulin Studios)



to play 100 recitals, over six weeks, for a fee of \$5,000. Lemare was also to act as final arbiter of the organ's design.<sup>10</sup> Austin had less than a year to complete and install the instrument by opening day, February 20, 1915. Each day after that date would cost the Schoenstein organ company \$100 dollars per day.<sup>11</sup>

The organ began shipping from the Austin shops on October 15, 1914,<sup>12</sup> and the installation by their local representatives, Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons, began on November 7. Working conditions at Festival Hall were poor, as much scaffolding and debris were still in the building. The Schoensteins began working 24-hour shifts for two

weeks prior to the opening in order to be able to tune the organ at night when quiet prevailed.<sup>13</sup> On February 21, 1915, Wallace Sabin, official Exposition organist, inaugurated the organ with chorus and orchestra in Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus."<sup>14</sup>

Organist Lemare, scheduled to begin his 100 recitals in June, was delayed in his arrival in San Francisco by the wartime dangers of the Atlantic. His first concert was on August 25 and was to end the first week of November.<sup>15</sup> Because of the enormous popularity of his concerts, his contract was extended from November 8 to the closing of the Exposition on December 4, at \$50 per concert.<sup>16</sup> During the ten-month Exposition, 60 different organists played 187 recitals.



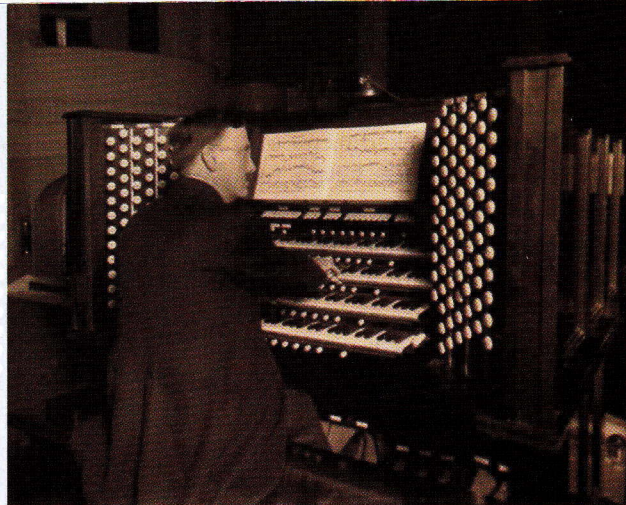
## OPUS 500 MOVES TO EXPOSITION AUDITORIUM

Following the closing of the Exposition, the Schoenstein company removed the organ from Festival Hall. H.D.H Connick reported to his committee on January 18, 1916, that the organ had been taken to the municipal auditorium basement awaiting completion of the podium on which the organ would sit. Meanwhile, Lemare had recommended many tonal changes to the organ so that it would be successful in the much larger auditorium. On October 2, 1916, installation began.<sup>17</sup> The auditorium management had scheduled many events, so continuous installation was not possible. Lemare's constant demand for changes to the console wiring and tonal palette delayed the completion until Easter Sunday, March 11, 1917, when he played to a packed auditorium of over 10,000 people following the formal dedication.<sup>18</sup>

Following the dedication, the care of the organ was entrusted not to Schoenstein's but to a Mr. Gallagher, who worked under the Schoensteins on the installation.<sup>19</sup> It was not until 1924 that the Schoensteins undertook the care of the organ again.<sup>20</sup> Many deficiencies in its care became apparent, both tonally and mechanically. By October 1925, the console combination action was replaced.<sup>21</sup> In March 1928, 125 feet of cable, which connected the console to the organ, needed replacing because of broken wires.<sup>22</sup>

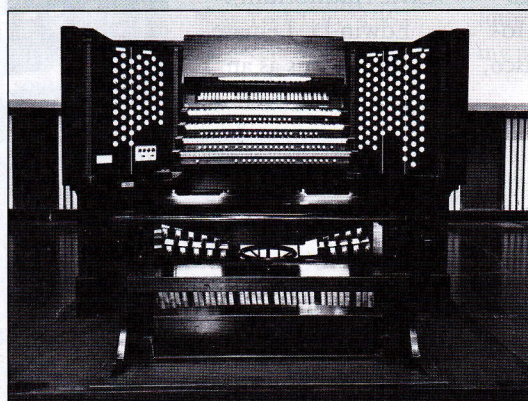
## INCENDIARY RATS

On Friday afternoon, May 18, 1934, Erwin Schoenstein met noted local organist Paul Carson who requested practice time in preparation for a Sunday program that was to be broadcast. While Carson stood by the canvas-covered console, Erwin ascended the loft where the motor switches were located. Throwing the switches that brought to life the behemoth twin 20-horsepower blowers and generator, Erwin returned to the auditorium floor to hear Carson shouting, "It's on fire! It's on fire!" Erwin ran back and



*Above:* Festival Hall organ recitalist Will C. Macfarlane (photo: California State Capitol archives)

*Below:* 1963 Austin console (photo: Moulin Studios)



cut the power while Carson frantically pulled the canvas cover from the console. Returning again—now armed with a fire extinguisher—Erwin, with Carson's help, quickly removed the right side panel and extinguished the fire. The cause: rodents, bringing candy foil found on the auditorium floor into the base of the console, caused shorts where the positive and negative terminals were exposed.

Temporary repair made possible Carson's Sunday broadcast; but Monday morning, the console was on its way to Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons for evaluation and repair. With city bureaucratic delays and the need for Austin to manufacture parts, it would be early August before the organ could be played again. The damage required rebuilding parts of the combination action and installation of barriers to prevent rodents' access to the interior.<sup>23</sup>

After Lemare's departure from San Francisco in July 1921, Uda Waldrop became the official organist. However, the regular series of concerts was no

longer continued. The organ was used for many civic functions and conventions, boxing matches, symphony concerts, and even the circus. Major recitalists including Virgil Fox, Marcel Dupré, Alfred Hollins, Charles Courboin, and Alexander McCurdy periodically played at the auditorium. Local organists Ludwig Altman and Richard Purvis were guest soloists with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra.

## THE 1963 RENOVATION

While Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons continued to maintain the organ, time and environment took its toll. In 1962, a \$20 million bond was passed to rehabilitate the Civic Auditorium, and part of that sum

was dedicated to making improvements to the organ.<sup>24</sup> A committee of the American Guild of Organists—headed by Harold Mueller, at the request of the Schoensteins—drew up a list of 19 changes to be made. In order of importance was cleaning and re-leathering of the entire organ, repairing or replacing all defective reeds, and replacing the 1914 console with a new one.<sup>25</sup> The other 16 changes were eliminated because of cost.

## THE CLANCY "CONSOLE WAGON"

An unusual feature of the new console was the inclusion of both an adjustable bench and pedalboard elevator. Donald Austin, president of Austin Organs, had serious reservations about the pedalboard elevator, and subsequent events proved him prescient.<sup>26</sup> Harold Mueller and his committee's requirement for a vertically adjustable pedalboard was an unusual feature, as the only other one was at the Washington National Ca-



thedral. As events turned out with all parties pointing fingers, what became known as the “console wagon” was never built according to the specifications and, had it been delivered, would never have permitted the pedalboard elevator to be installed because the steel substructure precluded space for the pedalboard to descend. A temporary platform with wheels was built by the Schoensteins and holds the console, sans elevator, to this day.<sup>27</sup>

In the renovation of the auditorium, one of the driving issues was the relocation of the Echo organ (350 feet from the main organ). It was to be moved up one story in order to provide room for followspots. The Echo’s blower had shorted out a few years earlier and had been disconnected because funds for a new motor for the blower seemed never to materialize.

#### RAINING ON THE PARADE

In the renovation of the auditorium, the contractor, apparently thinking his employees were visually impaired, cut large holes in the roof so his workers could see better; however, some of the holes were directly over the organ, and in December it rained.<sup>28</sup> Not surprisingly, major water damage occurred to the instrument. To add insult to injury, the contractor’s workers, instead of replacing the Echo blower’s motor, threw the entire blower assembly down an elevator shaft. Additionally,

they pulled out the special 100-wire cable and conduit between the main organ and the Echo organ and discarded all 350 feet of it.<sup>29</sup> The damage had to be rectified, and caused complications and ill feelings between all parties involved.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the project being a financial loss to the Schoensteins, the contractor lowered the ceiling above where the organ sat into the style of a Las Vegas casino that drastically

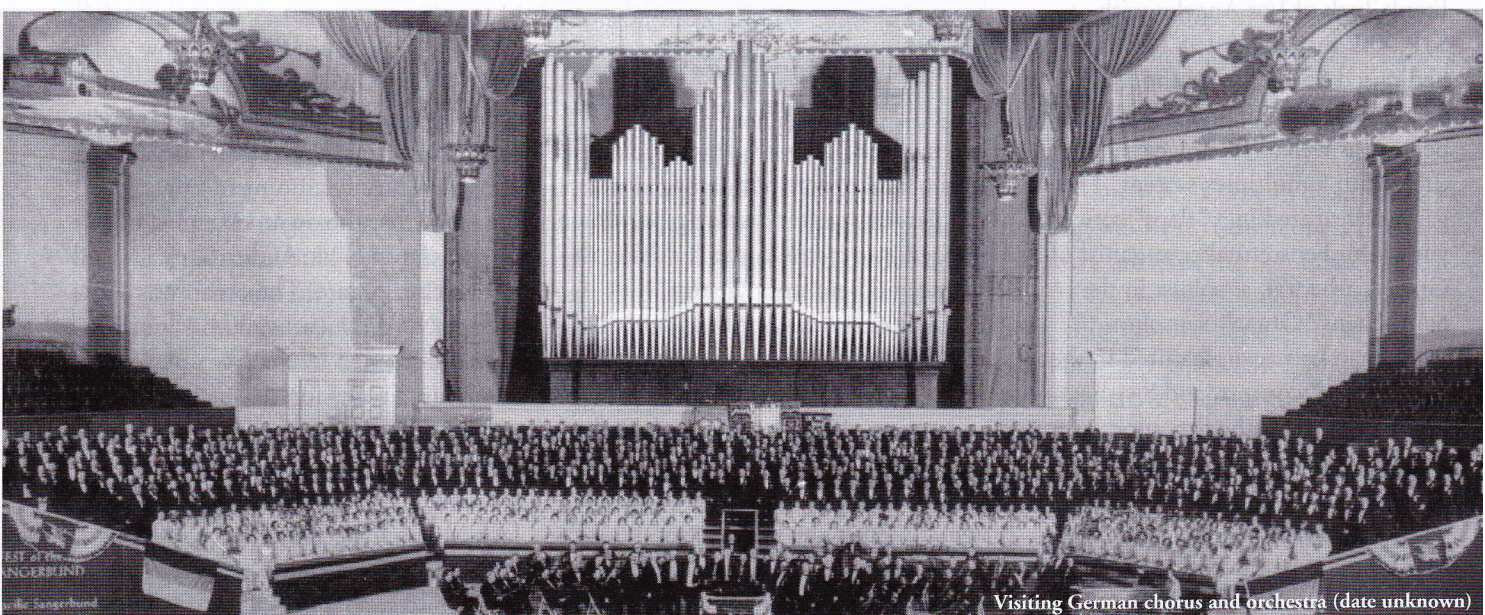
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changed the acoustics, making the musical result less than satisfying. As Edward Millington Stout III, who knew the organ and tuned it often, put it, “. . . San Francisco, this pretentious fishing village, has never respected its own heritage or history. The cable cars would all be gone if some ladies hadn’t made a big squawk. It’s an old story.”<sup>31</sup>

#### SLOW DECLINE

During the late 1960s and early ’70s, the use of the organ for auditorium functions continued to decline.

The City of San Francisco was unwilling to budget monies for follow-up improvements not completed in 1963—including recovering the wind regulators, replacing the main cable, reconditioning or replacing the unenclosed reeds with hooded resonators to keep them cleaner, and rebuilding or replacing the Tuba chest that had never worked correctly. Jack Bethards, who became owner of the Schoenstein company in 1977, pointed out to the auditorium management these needs in a December 1977 letter. With the passage of California’s budget-cutting Proposition 13 in 1978, maintenance of the organ ceased altogether, its condition becoming more critical in 1980 and 1981 when roof leaks, once again, caused serious damage. In May 1981, Bethards notified the auditorium management that, “although the organ is playable, it is impossible for recital use or any other important musical functions as many of its parts do not function and others are totally unreliable.”<sup>32</sup> Appeals to civic leaders in 1982 and 1983 went unheeded. Their claim: the organ is not used much, and there is no money. On July 11, 1983, Bethards informed the general manager of the auditorium that the organ should not be used any further and that Schoenstein & Co. should no longer service the organ until adequate funds were found for the minimal repairs needed to make it reliable.<sup>33</sup>



Visiting German chorus and orchestra (date unknown)



On August 24, 1983, the vice president and general manager of the convention facilities, Richard H. Shaff, responded that, until capital improvements could be made, the organ would no longer be available to rent. He asked that every influence possible be brought to bear on the mayor's office for budget improvements.

## CHARLES TO THE RESCUE!

In November 1983, Charles Swisher, a sound designer and engineer, formed a Citizen's Committee to Preserve the San Francisco Municipal Pipe Organ and served as its chair. He addressed a letter to "Friends of Music in San Francisco" in order to stimulate interest in preserving the Exposition Organ and announced there would be a non-profit holiday festival, "Let There Be Light," on the weekend of December 10–11, 1983, to raise funds.<sup>34</sup> He asked for immediate support of \$20,000, and additional support of \$14,000 to create a recording of the instrument that could be used to promote interest in its preservation and support its maintenance. An additional \$50,000 would be held in escrow for rebuilding the Tuba chest, swell motors, and Harp and Chime actions, and for revoicing the reed pipes.

In December 1984, Swisher reported gifts of \$19,000. A matching grant from the Hewlett Foundation for \$9,000 was graciously matched from Frank Tack of Los Angeles with \$10,000. By August 1987, Swisher had raised \$50,000 and the funds had been used to repair and reather the bellows as well as to replace the main cable with a multiplex system. The organ was featured in a "Pops" concert with John Fenstermaker, organist of Grace Cathedral, as soloist in the Saint-Saëns "Organ" Symphony.<sup>35</sup> The organ was again featured in the 1988 "Pops" concert, and Swisher announced that for the first time in decades, every note worked.<sup>36</sup>

## DISASTER STRIKES

A Christmas season fundraising in December 1989 was not to be. On

October 17, 1989, the Loma Prieta 7.1 magnitude earthquake brought a plaster-and-brick wall behind the organ crashing down with great devastation. "The entire instrument was shifted slightly, due to the impact, and the most significant damage was done to the Pedal division . . . several large swell shades were dislodged . . . plaster in the large Pedal pipes . . . the huge



Earthquake damage destroyed the Tuba as well as some upper Pedal division pipes. (photo: Victor Hoyt, Austin Organs Inc.)

ON OCTOBER 17, 1989, THE LOMA PRIETA 7.1 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE BROUGHT A PLASTER-AND-BRICK WALL BEHIND THE ORGAN CRASHING DOWN WITH GREAT DEVASTATION. THE ENTIRE INSTRUMENT WAS SHIFTED SLIGHTLY, DUE TO THE IMPACT, AND THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE WAS DONE TO THE PEDAL DIVISION.

pipes of the 32-foot Contra Violone in the facade were not damaged except the (largest) center display pipe, which banged into a steel catwalk during the quake and bent near the top."<sup>37</sup>

It was not until April 1, 1990, that the city had cleared enough debris around the organ to allow a thorough inspection of the damage. Jack Bethards reported that the blowers, console, and Echo organ suffered no damage. To repair the main organ, he outlined seven steps and estimated a low of \$525,000 to a high of \$1,125,000

if new chests had to be made.<sup>38</sup>

In 1993, the city began repairing Civic Auditorium and, as part of the project, pledged to overhaul the instrument completely, using FEMA funds.

On May 26, 1994, Austin Organs Inc. entered into an agreement with the city to repair and reinstall the Exposition Organ for \$1,293,747. They acted as sub-contractor to S.J. Amoroso Con-

struction of Foster City, California.<sup>39</sup>

In June 1994, the organ was completely dismantled and shipped in three 40-foot moving vans back to Hartford, Connecticut, for repairs. The only parts left onsite were the two 20-horsepower blowers, the facade pipes, and the Echo chest and blower.<sup>40</sup>

## THE CIRCLING VULTURES

No sooner was the organ on its way to Hartford than the vultures began circling. The city administration saw the space that the organ occupied on its podium in Civic Auditorium as valuable real estate. The organ was used only infrequently and had not been maintained by the city squeezed for funds. Discussions ensued about possible alternative placements for the organ. Charles Swisher, the savior of the organ in the '80s, had proposed to Jack Moerschbaeher, director of convention facilities, that FEMA and the city would seek approvals to donate



the organ to Swisher's "National Museum of the American Organ" that Swisher planned to establish in Oregon.<sup>41</sup> At Moerschbaecher's suggestion, Swisher wrote on June 28, 1994, to Tony Flores, city attorney, a justification for the city to donate or lease the organ, stating that, "The organ's continuance as a reminder of the Exposition and public benefit would be much better served today in a dedicated museum setting where it would be properly cared for and displayed on a daily basis to an international audience."<sup>42</sup> No response to the proposal was ever received, but a few years later, in 1996, a "Construction Review Civic Auditorium Upgrade," prepared by Page & Turnbull and Joseph Chow & Associates, pointed out the historic significance of the Exposition Organ and its association with the Civic Auditorium from 1917 onward. The report stated that, under FEMA guidelines, the city could be allowed to store the organ in Brooks Hall or elsewhere in the Civic Center District without creating what FEMA calls an "Adverse Effect" (legal term) that would preclude the use of their funds.<sup>43</sup> Sending the organ to Oregon appeared out of the question.

## STOP!

Out of the blue, on January 6, 1995, Amoroso's Craig Bjorkman, resident engineer, issued an order to Aldo Di-Belardino, project manager, to issue a "stop work order"<sup>44</sup> to Austin Organs Inc., requiring immediate cessation of all work, and on January 13, 1995, Don Austin acknowledged receipt of that order. Austin offered that, should the city change its mind in the following weeks, Austin could bring the project in on time and on budget. The company, however, would insist on a no-cancellation provision going forward. He also warned that the condition of the organ

at the present time would probably be impossible for anyone other than Austin Organs Inc. to ever get the instrument put back together properly and complete

the balance of the work of installation. If the organ is shipped out to you in its present condition or put into commercial storage anywhere in its present condition it is very unlikely that even Austin Organs Inc. would be interested in commencing operations again on this instrument. It is at a very critical point and any decisions made now are decisions that will be permanent.<sup>45</sup>

In a subsequent letter to Amoroso representatives acknowledging termination of insurance coverage, Austin gave a rough estimate of savings the city would realize from the work stoppage at \$332,747. Don Austin made clear in the letter that, if the work was to cease, he wanted the organ out of the factory as soon as possible.<sup>46</sup> Some

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weeks later, in a documentary video interview, Don Austin explained the demoralizing effect the stop-work order had on his staff. As the 31.9 tons of organ occupied every bit of space in the factory, he was anxious to return it to San Francisco as quickly as possible to free up space for other work.<sup>47</sup>

The official reason given by the city for ceasing work on the organ concerned the discovery of lead paint that needed to be removed. By ceasing the organ work, the city hoped to free up funds for removal of the lead paint. Few people really believe that the city could have been that far into the renovation without knowing that a lead problem existed. More likely, the driving force appears to have been the Opera, which needed to use the Auditorium for its 1996–97 season and knew that the only logical place to put the orchestra was on the vacant organ


podium. If the organ were in place, the opera would have had serious staging problems.

With the stop-work order, the local AGO chapter went into crisis mode. Letters to save the organ came from all over the country, noting that sending the organ back in thousands of pieces would doom it forever. Perhaps the most direct letter came from Ray Biswanger, president of Friends of the Wanamaker Organ Inc., when he called what was about to happen "cultural vandalism, a barbarous deed that will reflect very poorly on the leadership of San Francisco."<sup>48</sup> Other less-strident voices, such as Philip Hahn, secretary-treasurer of the national American Guild of Organists; William T. Van Pelt, executive director of the Organ Historical Society; and Stephen Adams, president of the American Theatre Organ Society, all begged the city to refrain from demanding that the organ be sent back in an incomplete condition. Meanwhile, concerned local members of the organ community were busy finding possible alternative sites for the organ. Cheryl Arnold, sub-dean of the San Francisco AGO, urged the president of the board of supervisors to consider placing the organ in one of the hangers on Treasure Island, an old US Navy base in the middle of San Francisco Bay, which could be used as a musical venue for community groups. John Fenstermaker, on the executive committee of the San Francisco AGO Chapter, suggested consideration given to Treasure Island, or the DeYoung Museum about to undergo reconstruction.

On March 17, 1995, an emergency meeting was held at the request of the executive board of the San Francisco AGO Chapter with Rudolph Nothenberg, chief administrative officer of San Francisco, and Mark Dorian, project manager of the auditorium's refurbishing. To best illustrate that the organ was in various stages of completion and spread out all over the Austin factory, Jack Bethards had disassembled a small reed pipe into its components

*continued on page 66*





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Homeless: 1915 World's Fair Organ,  
*continued from page 53*

and wrapped them in his handkerchief. Standing over Nothenberg's desk, Bethards let loose the handkerchief while reed parts rained down, all the while calmly explaining that, if the organ were to be packed and shipped back to San Francisco in that state, it would never be able to be installed again anywhere. Nothenberg readily agreed that Austin would be allowed to complete the restoration of works in process in an orderly manner. The city agreed that it would send a representative to visit the Austin factory, to assess the situation.<sup>49</sup>

Confirming what most citizens of the city already knew—that squeaky wheels get the grease—the project manager sent a letter to Donald Austin, acknowledging the “concern” the stop-work order created with the local AGO. “After the city’s compliance with the interests of ‘the community,’” he lamely went on, “we feel it incumbent upon you to inform us in greater detail of the repair status.”<sup>50</sup>

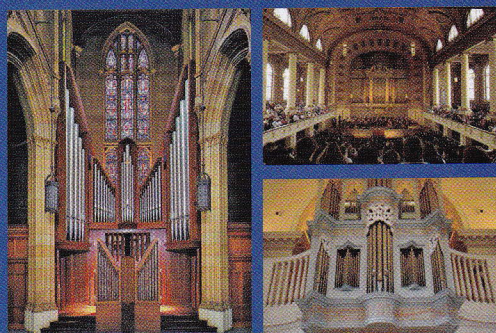
In a letter of April 4, 1995, Austin detailed four separate aspects related to the status of the organ in the Austin shops: (1) completed components, ready for shipping; (2) components that are (were) in the process of repair, in a state of disassembly; (3) components that had not yet begun to be repaired, such as those completely damaged that need design and reconstruction; and (4) costs, spent to date and proposed, associated with each category. Austin believed that the original contract price of \$1,293,747 could be reduced to \$841,335, or a savings of about 35%.<sup>51</sup> In essence, the city would have approximately \$450,000 of FEMA money for their own use, lead paint or anything else.

A letter dated May 30, 1995, from Mark Dorian confirmed acceptance of Donald Austin's proposal and stated that a contract amendment from Amoroso would be forthcoming. He also extended the contract period to end on November 30. Because of the

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anxiety in the organ community, Dorian also wanted Austin to determine the cost of a future installation if a new facility were to be found.<sup>52</sup>

On June 5, Austin employees were apprised of the restarting of the contract and informed of the conditions the reinstated contract did and did not include.

Answering Dorian's request for future costs of finishing and installing the organ in some location would, at best, be difficult. With the \$450,000 FEMA money removed from the original bid, adding price increases over time and local costs of preparing a site for the organ would be significantly more expensive.<sup>53</sup> On August 14, 1995, Donald Austin signed a revised contract.<sup>54</sup>

In a letter to John Fenstermaker, then dean of the San Francisco AGO Chapter, Austin provided a progress report and sent pictures of the work in progress. He noted that there was never a time when people were not working on the project, and he sent photographs of various phases of the work. Finishing of the work was still months away, but as soon as a trailer load of finished material could be assembled, it would be shipped to San Francisco to make room in the shop. Austin noted that, as three trailer loads were first delivered to Hartford, the space crunch at the factory would be greatly relieved.<sup>55</sup>

### THE OTHER SUNSHINE STATE

At that juncture, inquiries from Jacksonville, Florida, and the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, arrived in the Austin offices. Jeff Weiler, representing the symphony and knowing that San Francisco's Exposition Organ was headed for storage, wanted to know what it would cost to install Opus 500 in the about-to-be built Jacoby Hall in Jacksonville, an 1,800-seat venue. Kim Austin, vice president of Austin Organs, gave a tentative figure of \$514,628, including new Echo chests, high-pressure reeds, Harp and Chimes. Shipping of parts remaining in San Francisco, the blowers, large 32' wood pipes and facade pipes would be

additional. She also expressed reservations about being able to adapt the organ to the smaller room.<sup>56</sup>

In a letter to the city of San Francisco dated January 3, 1996, the City of Jacksonville made a formal proposal for "the accession, care, and utilization of the Panama-Pacific Exposition Organ formerly located in the San Francisco Civic Auditorium." The proposal stated that the organ would still be considered the property of San Francisco, leased for 99 years at one dollar

10,000 TO 12,000 CUBIC FEET OF SPACE WOULD BE REQUIRED TO STORE THE ORGAN, AND, WHILE TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY WERE NOT OF GREAT CONCERN, A DUST AND MOISTURE-FREE ENVIRONMENT WAS ESSENTIAL.

per year. "A permanent inscription will be placed in a highly visible part of the Performing Arts Center expressing gratitude of the people of Jacksonville to the people of San Francisco."

All of the necessary items mentioned by Kim Austin would be undertaken and paid for by Jacksonville. Additionally, a permanent endowment for the maintenance of the organ and for a yearly series of recitals would be guaranteed.<sup>57</sup>

The city of San Francisco's board of supervisors, led by Sue Bierman and a prominent member of the SFAGO, voiced strong opposition, and the proposal was turned down. In the years that followed, many people in the organ community would regret that unfortunate decision.<sup>58</sup>

With the scuttling of the Jacksonville proposal, plans to send the organ to San Francisco and into storage proceeded, and in a letter to Kim Austin, Schoenstein design director Chuck Primich passed word from Mark Dorian that the city and contractor needed to know how much space was needed to store the organ. Austin reported that 10,000 to 12,000 cubic feet of space would be

required and that, while temperature and humidity were not of great concern, a dust and moisture-free environment was essential.<sup>59</sup>

The first of what Donald Austin planned as four shipments to San Francisco arrived around the first week of April. Mike Childs, area manager of Amoroso, fired off a letter to Don Austin on April 5, 1996, complaining that the "... delivery of the organ equipment was poorly coordinated and extremely inconvenient for the owner.<sup>60</sup> The owner has asked that Austin Organs commit to a schedule that includes one final delivery date for all of the remaining equipment." He asked that the schedule be provided no later than April 16, 1996.<sup>61</sup>

Mike Childs of Amoroso, Jack Bethards of Schoenstein, John Fenstermaker, and all Austin personnel were informed on July 19, 1996, that on Monday, August 19, the remainder of the organ would be loaded for San Francisco. Kim Austin said that this notice was being spread far and wide so that no one could complain that they were given insufficient notice.<sup>62</sup>

An interoffice memorandum to Donald Austin and Jack Bethards by Kim Austin on August 13, 1996, states that at 10:30 A.M. that morning, she had spoken to Childs, and he said that the city was ready to accept the shipment. Childs reported to her that Dorian made the comment that the money owed Austin was tied up in an escrow account and that the city was trying to release it.<sup>63</sup>

The organ denied to Jacksonville gave impetus to the San Francisco music community to find a home in San Francisco for the organ. Thus was born the Embarcadero Music Course and Exposition Organ Project.

A final letter with attached invoice was sent by Kim Austin on September 10, 1996, stating that no payment had been made on several outstanding invoices, and while she did not recall the exact amount "... perhaps if you hit a button on your computer you could come up with this figure and produce



a check for it?" She concluded that she hoped all was well with the organ in its storage facility and that the city would find a home for it.<sup>64</sup>

### THE EMBARCADERO PAVILION PROPOSAL

Meanwhile, city officials, civic leaders, and members of the organ community actively worked to find a home for the organ. When the central free-way fronting the bay—the Embarcadero—was torn down, a huge open space was created, and plans for the use of that space in a new configuration were quickly promulgated. While supervisor Bierman was an enthusiastic organ supporter, she and members of the board had turned down a reasonable offer of a home for the Exposition Organ in Jacksonville and, having done so, put pressure on all interested parties to find a local home for the instrument. Bierman informed land-use attorney James W. Haas in 1998 of the organ's fate. As quoted by Mark Athitakis of *SF Weekly*, Haas said, "We had two orphans, in a way. . . . an orphaned park and an orphaned organ. Why not bring the two together?"<sup>65</sup> It didn't take long for a Committee for Waterfront Pavilion Organ to be formed, with James W. Haas as its chair. At a meeting of the Board of Supervisor's Recreation and Park Commission on July 7, 1998, a formal request for approval was sought and obtained.<sup>66</sup>

Mayor Willy Brown, in a 1999 press conference, officially endorsed the concept when he proclaimed, "The organ will be the centerpiece of the Music Concourse and will be there for all to enjoy in perpetuity . . . It is an incredible achievement, frankly, and it's something we're going to be very proud of."<sup>67</sup>

Not all members of the music community shared the enthusiasm of John Fenstermaker and Cheryl Arnold, sub-dean of the San Francisco AGO Chapter. Obvious reservations were that the ambient noise on the Embarcadero—as measured by a Haas-commissioned acoustical study at 63 to 65 decibels—and the fact that the organ

was outside, instead of in a room, would not be easily heard. Expecting the same success as the Balboa Park organ in San Diego would be a tall order. Besides the noise, the often-foggy weather in San Francisco would play havoc with the tuning of the organ, as temperature changes of only a few degrees greatly affect an organ's tuning. Edward Millington Stout III, well-known and respected organ expert, typically did not mince words: "I think it's a *stupid* idea. There are some organ weenies who are salivating at the idea of 118 ranks [*sic*] of pipes outdoors, but 30 pipes in a good room would be more effective. The room is part of the instrument. It *is* the instrument. Without a room, it'll sound like an old band organ wheezing away without acoustical support, with those chilling fogs and traffic.

"THERE ARE SOME ORGAN WEENIES WHO ARE SALIVATING AT THE IDEA OF 118 RANKS OF PIPES OUTDOORS, BUT 30 PIPES IN A GOOD ROOM WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE. THE ROOM IS PART OF THE INSTRUMENT. IT IS THE INSTRUMENT."

And they're insisting that the listening area be grass (which would deaden the acoustics).<sup>68</sup>

The Waterfront Pavilion Organ and Music Green were to be a public/private public partnership. The city would spend \$1 million from the Downtown Park Fund to build the music green. In addition to providing the organ, they would add an additional \$500,000 in art enhancement funds. A fundraising goal of \$5 million was established to cover the \$3 million cost of the Pavilion plus a \$2 million endowment to cover maintenance and operations. Roma Design Group was selected to design the Park and Pavilion.<sup>69</sup>

Lanny Hochhalter, West Coast representative of Austin Organs, priced out the cost of erecting the Exposition organ in a new setting at the outdoor

pavilion in a contract proposal presented to the Committee for the Waterfront Pavilion, dated August 2002. The cost for installing the instrument "as is" from storage, without any additions, revoicing, etc., would be \$546,735. For \$1,909,865, the console would be updated, the Tuba 16 in the pedal and a Solo division Tuba 8 in addition to ten stops replacing the old Echo, a Tibia, a Tuba Urbana (on 50" wind), and reconfigured new facade allowing more tone egress would be included. Hochhalter also provided additional options and prices, if a new console, either four manuals or five, were desired. He also suggested reversing some Lemare-inspired modifications made to the chests when valve tremulants were installed.<sup>70</sup>

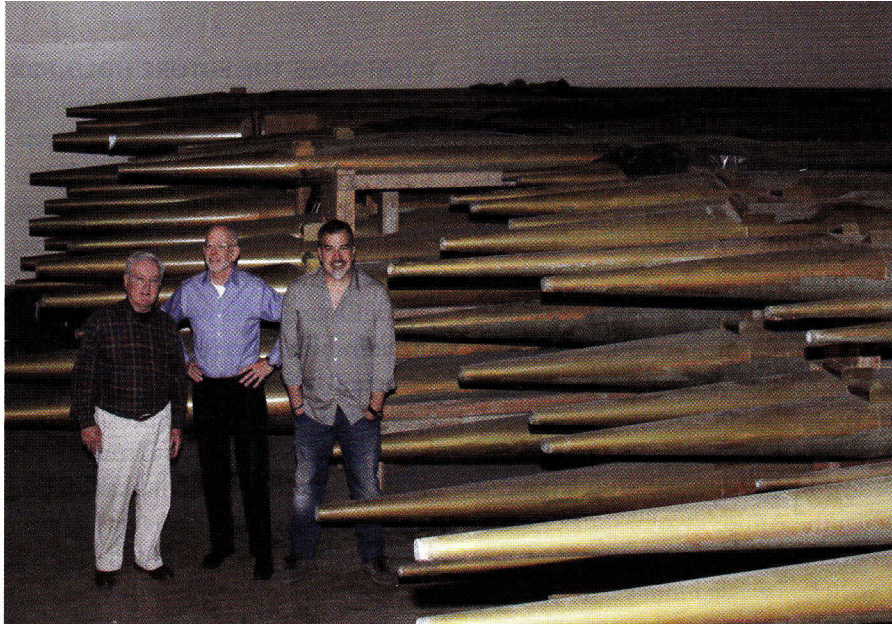
The economic outlook in November 2004 did not bode well for passage of bonds that, in California, require a two-thirds majority to be enacted. Indeed, the measure was approved by 56.33% of the voting public but short of the two-thirds needed.<sup>71</sup>

Clearly frustrated by the election results as well as silence on the part of a new mayor, Cheryl Arnold and eight prominent organists of San Francisco, in a remarkably blunt letter of October 1, 2005, pointedly quoted the mayor's "government serves everyone, not just the powerful and politically connected" speech in reminding the notoriously insular mayor that three previously delivered letters in January, March, and July had received no response. "Each was written with great respect for you and your position, has offered our expertise, counsel, and hard work on a problem which you inherited . . . but embraced during your campaign: the relocation of the city's historic Pan-Pacific Exposition Organ."<sup>72</sup>

The letter recalled the difficulties working with chairman Haas, the calls to the mayor's staff that were rebuffed or simply not returned. The writers opined that many community leaders were alienated by the chair's assertion that the only way the project would ever be built was by public funds.

The letter was sent to all supervi-





Justin Kieltly, Michael Evje, and Vic Ferrer with the Brooks Hall "torpedoes" (photo: Vic Ferrer Productions)

sors, California Assembly members, California senators, and members of the House of Representatives. Although no immediate response was forthcoming from the mayor's office, discussions in November 2005 finally brought a response from a representative of the mayor, indicating that some discussion had taken place regarding the possible relocation of the organ in the Palace of Fine Arts.

In a March 27, 2006, email to Cheryl Arnold and other AGO interested parties, the mayor's liaison thanked everyone for their continued hard work and said the mayor's senior staff needed updated financial numbers in 2006 dollars. He stated that based on 1997 dollar figures, the total repair and reinstallation cost (by construction bid and FEMA) was \$1,593,747—of which \$951,737 represented bond expenditures to date, leaving \$642,010 remaining. He wanted documents that would verify that FEMA money was on hand as well as verification of bond dollars on hand.<sup>73</sup>

The mayor's request for the considerable research needed to ferret out the figures he wanted and the lack of clear interest on the part of the administration may well have been too much for continued interest in the project on the part of AGO members and the chapter.

Sensing this lack of interest, Jack Bethards wrote a letter to SFAGO

Dean Susan Matthews on April 21, 2006, noting that the future of Opus 500 would be discussed at a meeting that evening and urging the chapter board to continue the effort to find a home for the organ, even if not the perfect venue. Long-term storage would not serve the organ well. He urged the AGO to lead the city toward making an intelligent decision.<sup>74</sup>

At the annual SFAGO board meeting on August 21, 2006, Vic Ferrer,

THEY URGED THE BOARD TO "BECOME  
THE STEWARDS OF THE PPIE ORGAN.  
NO ONE ELSE IS GOING TO STEP UP  
TO THE PLATE AND TAKE THE LEAD  
IN SAVING AND RETURNING THIS  
INSTRUMENT TO PUBLIC USE."

Paul Motter, and Gerard Montana reviewed the history of the Exposition Organ and its historical value to the city. They urged the board to "become the stewards of the PPIE organ. No one else is going to step up to the plate and take the lead in saving and returning this instrument to public use. Who better to administer its future than the San Francisco Chapter of the American Guild of Organists?" The leadership decided by vote that the SFAGO board would no longer be willing to continue helping the city find a new home for the Exposition

Organ. Ferrer, Montana, Justin Kieltly, and Steve Adams decided that they would continue to work with the city to find a home for the instrument.<sup>75</sup>

### DAMN THE TORPEDOES!

In the closing months of 2006, the group of individuals who continued to work with the city would adopt the name Friends of the Exposition Organ (FEO).

Concluding that the only viable site available for the organ was the home built for it—the Civic Auditorium—FEO, with the assistance of Austin Organs and Jack Bethards, carefully prepared a flexible proposal for the mayor. Several attempts for a brief meeting with the mayor and his senior staff were rebuffed. A senior aide of the mayor did accept the bound and illustrated binders, with the promise that they would be brought to the attention of the mayor's staff. These binders would later reappear.

The FEO did have one opportunity to present its case to the auditorium management, which was in the process of seeking a long-term tenant that would be willing to make major improvements to the aging building in return for tax benefits, reduced rent, and long-term lease arrangements. The tenant ultimately chosen had no interest in the organ, its history, or the fact that the very building they were leasing was, in fact, built for the organ and given by the Exposition Commission for all time to the citizens of San Francisco.

Some months after, Gerard Montana received a phone call from Rob Reiter, newly in charge of all city campus buildings. Reiter explained that he had found Montana's card in one of the aforementioned binders about the organ in the trash of the now-departed mayor's aide. He further explained that, during his initial inspection of the darkened Brooks Hall with a flashlight, he was stunned to come upon what felt like *torpedoes*! (in fact, huge organ facade pipes stored in cradles). When the lights were fixed, Reiter and his staff inspected the organ in stor-



age, and some suggested it could be sold for scrap at quite a sum. Reiter recognized the difference between organ pipes and torpedoes and stopped a staff member's proposal to call 1-800-GOT-JUNK. Montana thanked him for stopping the organ's destruction, and thus the organ was saved once more.

As FEO explored other city-owned buildings as sites for Opus 500, it became clear that these buildings all needed to pay their own way. Taxes paid by citizens no longer supported city properties. The museums could be rented out for parties that help pay for their upkeep. Even City Hall could be rented! All you needed is money. FEO proposed placing Opus 500 in the 1915 Palace of Fine Arts, surveyed the surrounding community and visiting tourists with positive results, but received little encouragement from City Hall. Once again, like Civic, the Palace of Fine Arts was accepting proposals

for long-term lease if a prospective tenant could guarantee investment upward of \$70 million in improvements.

FEO faced some of the same problems when they turned their attention to privately owned buildings where Opus 500 might be reinstalled. Both its size and scale require a generous cubic space, which eliminates many buildings; the footprint of its Universal Air Chest eliminates others. However, two years ago, FEO and the city believed that a solution was at hand when the Armory Community Center, located in San Francisco's Mission District, expressed interest in having Opus 500 as the focal point of the remodeled 2.1-million-cubic-foot auditorium. Subsequent changes in how the Community Center will operate may jeopardize the organ's adaptation in that space. There are two other sites in San Francisco that FEO currently is exploring, but those sites will be several years in development.

## WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE EXPOSITION ORGAN?

The priority of Friends of the Exposition Organ is to save the organ by re-installing it at the earliest possible time.

They are charged by the city to inspect and oversee the safety and storage of Opus 500 as well as to advise the administration regarding its placement and care. They visit its storage area on a regular basis, especially after heavy rains or reports of intrusion. The instrument is in remarkably good condition despite 20 years of storage. However, FEO is not so foolish as to believe that longtime storage is in the instrument's best interest or that its luck won't run out as fire, flood, or vandalism threaten to destroy it.

During the 2015 centenary celebration of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE100.org), FEO has joined with the city, the California Historical Society, and the Palace of Fine Arts to provide an in-



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formation exhibit about Opus 500, highlighting the console (1963), an Austin parts board that was on display at the 1915 Exposition, and sample organ pipes—all loaned to FEO by Jack Bethards of Schoenstein & Co. Since February 20, the exhibit has been located in the Palace of Fine Arts building in San Francisco, where it will remain through the end of the year. Austin Organs generously helped FEO offset the cost of the exhibit, as have others who contributed to an Indiegogo campaign. Vic Ferrer's documentary video *Behind the Velvet Curtain* plays in a continuous loop, and museum posters and pictures describe its history.

## CONCLUSION

William Howard Taft toasted the citizens of San Francisco at the groundbreaking of the 1915 Exposition as "The City That Knows How." The Friends of the Exposition Organ hopes that the spirit that motivated the rugged individualist survivors of the 1906 quake is still alive in their descendants, and that the most important musical artifact of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915—a technological marvel of its time, heard by more than a million people, and a part of San Francisco's musical culture for 100 years—will be heard again in San Francisco.

Meanwhile, FEO is open to other options, including placing the organ in some other community in the country where it will be appreciated. Opus 500 has an advantage over other large silent organs today because of the quality of its materials—which could never be replicated today—and, most importantly, it is essentially restored.

Both the city of San Francisco and FEO agree that the organ must have a home where it will be reinstalled such that its historical character is preserved in an unaltered state.

## Additional Information

ExpositionOrgan.org has a wealth of information about Opus 500, including Vic Ferrer's video *Behind the Velvet*

*Curtain*, and a media section where videos of Richard Purvis and John Balka playing the organ may be found.

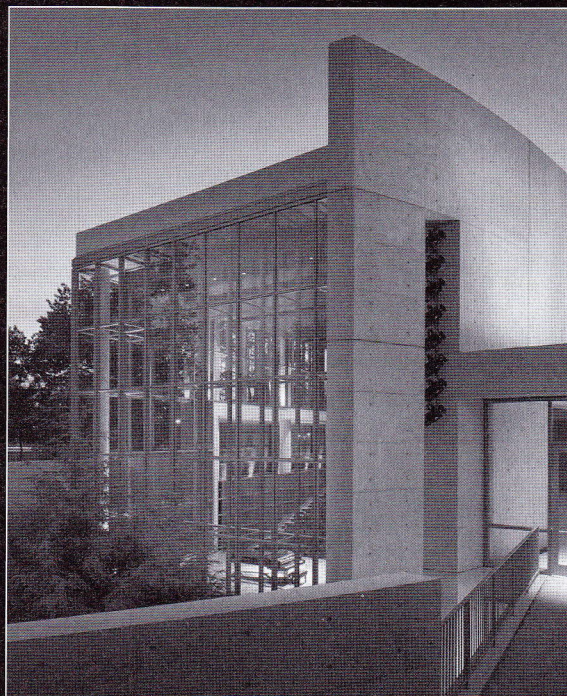
Special thanks is also due James Aylward, Jack Bethards of Schoenstein and Co., Rollin Smith, Gerard Montana, Rob Reiter of the City and County of San Francisco, Lanny Hochhalter, West Coast representative of Austin Organs Inc., the staff of Austin Organs in Hartford, Conn., Joyce Robinson of *The Diapason*,

Charles Swisher, and Nelson Barden, the staff of the University of California Bancroft Library, and the research staff of San Francisco Public Library.

## NOTES

The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, holds the official records of the PPiE: BANC MSS C – A 190, Panama Pacific International Exposition Records, 1893–1929, bulk 1911–1916. References below for Bancroft documents will be in the form of: Bancroft 85: 6. 85 is the carton number,

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and 6 is the folder number within the carton.

**Schoenstein Archives (SA):** Refers to the extensive organ archive at the Schoenstein & Co., now in Benicia, Calif. The Exposition Organ files, Austin Organs, Opus 500 for the period 1958–65 are in a separate file drawer. Documents are in a large binder by date.

1. Brooks Hall.
2. Frank Morton Todd, *The Story of the Exposition*, Vol. 2 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), p. 409. Wallace Sabin, Clarence Eddy, Alfred Chaplin-Bayley, John Doane, Otto Fleissner, Uda Waldrop, Annette Stoddard, Archibald Sessions, Ray Hastings, F. Percival Davis, Bruce Gordon Kingsley, Robert W. Stevens, Louis Eaton, Frank W. Chase, Warren D. Allen, John J. McClellan, Richard Keys Biggs, Fredrick Chubb, Wallace Goodrich, Harry Benjamin Jepson, James T. Quarles, Palmer Christian, Albert D. Jordan, Sydney Durst, Arthur Blakely, Archibald T. Davison, Hamlin Hunt, George W. Andrews, Samuel Baldwin, Clarence Dickinson, Ernest R. Kroeger, Charles Heinroth, W.J. Gomph, M.W. O'Connell, Charles Galloway, Daniel Philippi, J. Warren Andrews, Sumner Salter, T. Tertius Noble, James D.D. Comey, Lucien Becker, Harold Gregson, Lynnwood Farnam, Frank Stewart Adams, Harry L. Vibbard, Edwin H. Lemare, Harry F. Schenuit, Arthur S. Hyde, Benjamin Moore, and Will C. Macfarlane.
3. Ben Macomber, *The Jewel City: Its Planning and Achievement; Its Architecture, Sculpture, Symbolism, and Music; Its Gardens, Palaces, and Exhibits* (San Francisco: John H. Williams, 1915, Chapter XIV, "Music at the Exposition")
4. "Budget for the Exposition Period—February 20 to December 4 adopted at a meeting of the Executive Council of the Finance Committee of January 28, 1915," Bancroft 53:27.
5. H.J. Stewart (no relation to George W. Stewart), Wallace Sabin, Otto Fleissner, J.B. Struble, Warren D. Allen.
6. Austin, Casavant, Felgemaker, Murray M. Harris, Möller, Skinner, Wirching, and Kimball.
7. There is some mystery as to the final selection of Austin. In the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting Minutes (Bancroft Library) of Jan. 2 and 8, Feb. 5 and 13, references are made to recommendations of the organists' committee narrowing the selection to Austin and Skinner, then the organists being told to report either unanimous consensus or a majority and minority report back to Building and Grounds. The organists reported a unanimous selection of Skinner. However, the minutes of Feb. 13 indicate that the organists' report "be not adopted." On Feb. 19, the director of works reported that a contract was signed with

Austin. Louis Schoenstein, in his book *Memoirs of a San Francisco Organ Builder*, states that it was the salesmanship of the local Austin representative, Fletcher Tilton, that won the day.

8. The auditorium constructed by the Exposition Corporation in the Civic Center was first referred to as the "Municipal" auditorium, later as the "Exposition" auditorium, and still later as the "Civic" auditorium until it was relabeled as the "Bill Graham Civic Auditorium" in 1991. All references to this building will be referred to as "Civic Auditorium" or "Civic."
9. H.D.H. Connick Report to Buildings and Grounds Committee Feb. 19, 1914, Bancroft 52:15.
10. Letter from George W. Stewart to Edwin Lemare, July 10, 1913, Bancroft 83:27. Stewart's selection of Lemare, a noncitizen, stirred immediate controversy that appeared in the pages of *The Diapason*. Lemare's dislike of Crescendo pedals brought fears that the Exposition organ would not have one (it did . . . placed at the extreme right of pedalboard). Even Ernest Skinner became embroiled in the controversy, to his later regret. Lemare saw to every detail of the design as this writer noted when viewing the console drawing at the Austin factory. Interestingly, Lemare placed the pedal drawstops on the right outside jamb instead of the traditional American left-side placement. Louis Schoenstein remarked in later years in an address to the SFAGO that some organists found the 1914 console took some "getting used to."
11. Louis J. Schoenstein, *Memoirs of a San Francisco Organ Builder* (San Francisco: Cue Publications, 1977), p. 348.
12. Letter from John Spencer Camp (Austin treasurer) to George W. Stewart, Sept. 28, 1914, Bancroft 85: 11.
13. Schoenstein, op. cit., pp. 349–50.
14. Ibid., 350–51.
15. Letter from George W. Stewart to Edwin Lemare, August 23, 1915, Bancroft 83: 27.
16. Contract dated Oct. 30, 1915, Bancroft 60:24.
17. Meeting minutes of Buildings and Grounds Committee, paragraph 8, Jan. 18, 1916, Bancroft Box 24:10.
18. Letters from Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to Austin Organs, (last paragraph), Jan. 29, 1917, and Feb. 14, 1917, SA.
19. Ibid., 5/17/17.
20. Letter from James Donahue (managing superintendent of auditorium) to Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons, June 7, 1924, SA.
21. Letter of Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to Austin Organs, Feb. 4, 1925, SA.
22. Letter of Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to James B. McSheehy, supervisor and chair of

- Auditorium Committee, March 15, 1928, SA.
23. Schoenstein, op. cit. pp. 358–59.
24. Ibid., p. 361.
25. Letter from Harold Mueller to Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons, July 12, 1960, SA.
26. Letter from Donald Austin to Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons, July 18, 1962, SA.
27. Letter from Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to Austin Organs, Jan. 30, 1965, SA.
28. Letter from Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to Perini Corporation, Feb. 3, 1963, SA.
29. Letter from Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to H.V. Oliver, Perini Corporation, Jan. 13, 1964, SA.
30. Letter from Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons to H.V. Oliver, Perini Corporation, April 14, 1964, SA.
31. Ben Marks, "Pulling Out All The Stops To Save a 40-Ton, 100-Year-Old World's Fair Pipe Organ." *Collectorsweekly.com*, Jan. 17, 2014.
32. Letter from Jack Bethards to auditorium management, May 27, 1981, SA.
33. Letter from Jack Bethards to Richard Shaff, general manager of Civic Auditorium, July 11, 1983, SA.
34. Dwight Chapin, "A Gift of Music," *San Francisco Examiner* (Dec. 5, 1983).
35. Al Morch, "Engineer Clears His Pipes for an Organ," *San Francisco Examiner* (August 4, 1987).
36. David Moore, "Pipe Organ Wonder Restored to Glory for Symphony Pops," *San Francisco Chronicle Datebook* (July 17, 1988).
37. Charles Swisher, "Civic Auditorium Organ Hit Hard in October's 7.1 Earthquake," *San Francisco American Guild of Organist's Chapter Newsletter* (Nov. 1989).
38. Letter from Jack Bethards to Jack Moesbaecher, director of convention facilities, April 1, 1990, SA.
39. Subcontract agreement between Austin Organs and S.J. Amoroso Construction Company, dated May 1994, SA.
40. "Panama-Pacific Exposition Organ Restored: A Symphonic Treasure in Limbo," *THE AMERICAN ORGANIST* (Nov. 1995).
41. Letter from Jack Moerschbaecher to Charles Swisher, June 13, 1994, SA.
42. Letter from Charles Swisher to Tony Flores, city attorney, June 28, 1994, SA.
43. Page & Turnbull, Joseph Chow & Associates, *Construction Review, Civic Auditorium Seismic Upgrade: San Francisco Civic Center*, June 1996, SA.
44. Letter from Craig Bjorkman, resident engineer to Aldo DiBelardino, project manager, Jan. 6, 1995, SA.
45. Letter from Donald B. Austin, president, Austin Organs, to Aldo DiBelardino, S.J. Amoroso, project manager, Jan. 13, 1995, SA.



46. Letter from Donald Austin to Aldo Di-Belardino, Jan. 16, 1995, SA.
47. Vic Ferrer Productions, *Behind the Velvet Curtain*, video, no date.
48. Letter from Ray Biswanger to Rudolph Nothenberg, March 15, 1995, SA.
49. Letter from John Fenstermaker to Rudolph Nothenberg, March 20, 1995, SA.
50. Letter from Mark Dorian, project manager to Donald Austin, March 22, 1995, SA.
51. Letter from Donald Austin to Mark Dorian, April 4, 1995, SA.
52. Letter from Mark Dorian to Donald Austin, May 30, 1995, SA.
53. Letter from Donald Austin to Mark Dorian, June 5, 1995, SA.
54. Contract Change Order, S.J. Amoroso Co. Inc., dated August 8, 1995, SA.
55. Letter from Donald Austin to John Fenstermaker, Oct. 30, 1995, SA.
56. Letter from Kim Austin to Jeff Weiler, Dec. 8, 1995, SA.
57. *Proposal to City of San Francisco for Panama-Pacific Exposition Organ*, Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, Jacksonville, Florida, Jan. 3, 1996, SA.
58. Vic Ferrer Productions, *Behind the Velvet Curtain*, video, no date.
59. FAX from Chuck Primich to Kim Austin, March 19, 1996, SA.
60. City of San Francisco as legal owner.
61. Letter from Mike Childs to Donald Austin, April 5, 1996, SA.
62. Letter from Kim Austin to Mike Childs, July 19, 1996, SA.
63. Kim Austin interoffice memorandum, August 13, 1996, SA.
64. Letter from Kim Austin to Mike Childs, Sept. 10, 1996, SA.
65. Mark Athitakis, "Organ Failure: An Ambitious Plan to Relocate a Historic Pipe Organ to the Embarcadero Threatens Nothing But Sour Notes," *SF Weekly*, Dec. 26, 2001.
66. Board of Supervisor's Recreation & Park Committee Meeting, July 7, 1998, video recording, *CityWatch*.
67. Athitakis, op. cit.
68. Ibid.
69. Pacific Gas & Electric Brochure Underwriter, "Be Part of the Joy," no date.
70. Memorandum of Agreement and Appendix, Austin Organs Inc., August 2002, personal file.
71. City and County of San Francisco Department of Elections Result Summary Nov. 2004, Consolidated General Election Results, Sfgov2.org.
72. Letter from SFAGO Chapter representatives to the Honorable Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco, Oct. 1, 2005, personal file.
73. Email letter from Justin Roja to Cheryl Arnold, March 27, 2006, 19:10 P.M., personal file.
74. Letter from Jack Bethards to Susan Matthews, April 21, 2006, personal file.
75. Panama Pacific Exposition Organ Committee Presentation notes, August 21, 2006, personal file.

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**Justin Kielty** (justinkielty@mac.com) is a member of the San Francisco AGO Chapter and a retired San Francisco church organist. He is a founding member of Friends of the Exposition Organ along with Vic Ferrer and Michael Evje, both of whom assisted in the preparation of this article.

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