

*David E. Wallace
& Co., L.L.C.*

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Celebrating the Pipe Organ

What a treasure we have in the pipe organ: a “living,” breathing source of musical delight which, even in its most modest of forms, can amaze, thrill, and satisfy like few others! Despite its complexity, a well made pipe organ becomes an instrument for the ages, one of the most durable and astonishing of humankind’s clever inventions. With simple maintenance, and only occasional repairs, a pipe organ will sing for generations—even for centuries—its sonic splendor undiminished.

The small Maine firm of David E. Wallace & Co. exists not only to help keep wonderful pipe organs sounding wonderful, but also to help good ones sound better, and older ones sound as good as new.

We specialize in the restoration and renovation of older organs with mechanical (“tracker”) playing action, particularly those from the 19th century, the zenith of American organ-building. But we also bring many years of experience to the repair and modernization of instruments with electro-pneumatic action: for example, Maine’s largest and most famous organ, the century-old Kotzschmar Memorial Organ in Portland’s City Hall, a major symphonic instrument (Austin’s Opus 323, 1912) extensively redone by Wallace & Company in the 1990’s. In short, no pipe organ is too old for us and none too modern.



Austin Opus 323, 1912; Merrill Auditorium, City Hall, Portland, Maine

Our History

David E. Wallace (BS, MSBA) apprenticed with the Andover Organ Company of Methuen, Massachusetts, and eventually founded his own company in Portland, Maine, in 1982. Two years later he moved the growing firm to Gorham, Maine. There he has concentrated for more than two decades on the restoration and renovation of pipe organs for delivery throughout New England and the United States. Today, Wallace instruments serve the music community in churches, colleges, and private homes from northern Maine to the Midwest, and as far away as California and the state of Washington.



Hook and Hastings, Opus 1782; St John the Evangelist Church, West Chester, Ohio

David is regarded by his peers as one of the nation's most skilled and knowledgeable small builders. He maintains active membership in the American Institute of Organ Builders, The Organ Historical Society, and the American Guild of Organists (a past Dean of the Portland chapter).

In the Wallace shop, a small but dedicated staff works under David's leadership. Recent additions to the team include Anton Warde, Ph.D., a retired Professor of German who, like David, has enjoyed a life-long fascination with the pipe organ, and Roy Stephenson, an expert organ builder newly recruited from the United Kingdom, where his experience included 16 years with England's oldest continuously operating organ company, Bishop & Son, Organ Builders, of Ipswich and London, founded in 1795. Wallace & Co. also provides interesting and challenging internships to Gorham area students.



An enthusiastic crew

Restore, Renovate, or simply Repair?

Since each pipe organ is unique in its original construction, present condition, and current location and application, we consider a number of factors before proposing a course of renovation. In most instances, however, our approach starts with the admonition, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it." We believe that no historic, rare, or even still-unaltered instrument should ever be changed simply for the sake of changing it. As a window on the past, it likely provides a clear glimpse of the original builder's art.

If an organ of historical significance has not yet been altered, we recommend a cautious approach to any changes that may be proposed. How real is the need for them? Can they someday be reversed? Is there an original precedent for such changes in other organs by the same builder? Are suitable materials

available? Will the changes have only minimal effect on the frame, case, chests, and actions?



George Stevens, 1872; East Machias Congregational Church, East Machias, Maine

If tonal changes are proposed, would the new specification share a basis in other organs by that builder? Will the new pipe-work follow scale and voicing of the existing pipe-work? Will the changes result in a seamless and positive augmentation of the organ?



Builder undetermined, circa 1830; Community Church of East Eddington, Maine

If an organ of historical significance has already been changed, we ask whether there may be value in returning the instrument to its original form

and specification. Should measures be taken to allow it again to represent the original builder's style and philosophy? If the answer is no, then the accomplished changes should be embraced, especially if their retention may be vital for the practical survival of the instrument.

We think this Johnson & Son organ (below), which we removed from a church that was closing its doors in Saco, Maine, and renovated for installation in a stunning new space in the Midwest (where it was in fact to serve as the architectural centerpiece!) presents an excellent example of our philosophy of organ conservation. Our renovation included several



Exciting new life for Johnson & Son, Opus 603, 1883

entirely reversible modifications to make the Johnson a better match for its new setting in the Christian Reformed Church of South Bend, Indiana.

In our view, "right stewardship" in organ preservation can accommodate change when change is undertaken in accordance with the spirit and intent of the original builder, that is to say, when it clearly serves to reinforce the original "direction" of the instrument. No builders want their work to become quaint and dusty artifacts, but by the same token neither would they want their creations to become altered beyond recognition. Whether we are restoring an organ in the strictest sense or only judiciously

updating it, the spirit of the original esthetic, within the context of the organ's current or planned application, serves as our primary directive.



George Hutchings, 1893, in new case of Wallace design; St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Newton Highlands, Mass.

Wallace & Co. Services:

In addition to expert pipe organ tuning, maintenance, renovation, and repair, we are pleased to provide historical information, technical support, friendly consultation, and forthright appraisal services.

We welcome inquiries about the purchase of organs and pipe organ parts. Please visit the "For Sale" section of our website at www.wallacepipeorgans.com for our own current offerings. Furthermore, working with The Organ Clearing House of Lexington, Massachusetts, we can provide good counsel about existing organs of any size that will usually cost much less than a new one.

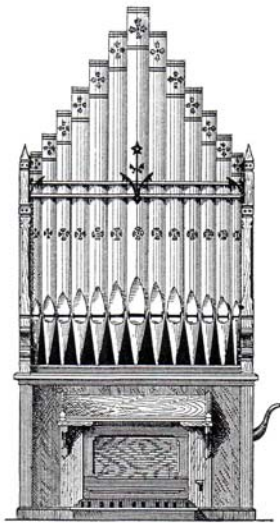
A new pipe organ is a wonderful thing, but—in the words of one young Wallace associate—"It can't beat the coolness of an old pipe organ made new again."

David E. Wallace & Co., L. L. C.
Pipe Organ Builders
147 County Road
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E. & G. G. Hook & Hastings,
Opus 845, 1876

Old Organs made as good as new . . .



. . . Which is to say: as good as old!