



# Windlines

a newsletter of the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma

September 2008 (Volume 2, Number 1)

<http://aoi.ou.edu/>



Please join us for an

## Open House American Organ Institute Pipe Organ Shop

6-8 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 1, 2008

2101 West Tecumseh Road, Suite C  
(Northeast Corner of Tecumseh Road and Flood Street)  
Norman, Oklahoma

Tour the AOI shop, learn more about the projects, meet student technicians and see their work from Summer '08.

Light refreshments will be served.

For additional information or accommodations on the basis of disability, please call (405) 325-7829.



### Diping In...

When it came to the objective of the American Organ Institute, I didn't need convincing. The renaissance of the pipe organ in our culture has been gradually under way for a number of years and it only needs strong proponents to propel it further into the public consciousness. However, I was mystified by the idea that the University of Oklahoma could again, as in the days of Mildred Andrews, become a center of that consciousness. I'm a proud sixth-generation Oklahoman, but I have come to terms with the idea that certain of my passions in life are not necessarily going to find their fulfillment here on my native soil. Silly me. I didn't foresee that President Boren would set forth a vision and that John Schwandt would pick up that ball and run with it in the manner to which we Sooners are accustomed.

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### Principal Chorus

The summer has literally flown by and we are ready to start a new semester. I hope that our dear readers will have experienced some rest and relaxation during the summer. We live in busy times and I am increasingly reminded how important it is to make the time to get some rest and take care of oneself. Besides, with our momentum, we need to be fortified and ready to forge ahead with our important objective at full speed!

I am humbled and excited to report that we are welcoming a number of new students to the department this fall. They will no doubt each bring a unique presence and energy to our organ family. The organ area at OU is bursting at the seams with growth, new energy, and creative activity — nothing could make me more pleased.

The students, staff and faculty of the American Organ Institute will, indeed, be busy this fall. Of course, you will be reading (and seeing) more about the installation of "Mini-Mo" in Sharp Hall.

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## At the AOI — Fall 2008

Sept. 1, 6-8 p.m., American Organ Institute Shop. Open House (see information within newsletter)

Oct. 5, 3 p.m., Sharp Hall. Accademia Filarmonica Collegium Musicum, J.S. Bach Brandenburg Concerto #5

Oct. 9, 12:30 p.m., Gothic Hall. The noontime recital series continues with performances by AOI students and community organists

Oct. 17, 10:30 a.m., Gothic Hall. Dr. Schwandt will perform a short concert for OU Alumni Day festivities

Nov. 6, 12:30 p.m., Gothic Hall. Noontime recital by AOI students and community organists

Dec. 12, 8 p.m., Gothic Hall. "Holiday Pipes": Dr. Schwandt will improvise on audience-submitted holiday favorites

Events are free and open to the public, unless otherwise noted. Accommodations on the basis of disability are available by calling the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts Box Office at (405) 325-4101.

**Principal Chorus** Continued from Page 1

Those of you who will attend the open house at the shop in a few weeks will see first hand some of the amazing work being done by our students, volunteers and staff. I am proud of our staff and students in the incredible progress they have made over the past year in developing a professional-grade shop operation. It is particularly inspiring to see students from so many different disciplines truly excited to be working on pipe organs. Some of them didn't really know what a pipe organ was, or why they should care about one before becoming involved with the AOI. Their lives have now been changed. They are all enthused about coming to work at the shop, and their enthusiasm and commitment shows in the output of their work. With the careful guidance of our staff and visiting professionals, the students are learning a work ethic to the highest standards.

Our goal at the AOI is to provide unparalleled opportunities for interested students to experience the magic and majesty of the pipe organ in all its dimensions. These students will, in turn, share the passion and love for the instrument they learned here wherever life takes them. Although we have a ways to go in reaching all of our goals, I am very pleased with the significant progress we have made in such a relatively short time period. I hope you will join me in supporting and affirming this important work on behalf of the future of the pipe organ in America!

Our work on curriculum revision continues in earnest this fall. I plan to submit a series of articles in ensuing newsletters that I hope will begin to illuminate the rationale and methodology behind our broad-based curriculum and its cultural relevance for contemporary students. Stay tuned for these and I will welcome your comments and input.



Of course, our momentum cannot be sustained without significant financial support. Although President Boren and the Board of Regents have generously provided substantial funds that have allowed setting up the AOI shop and beginning work on Op. 5819, we must continue in our development quest to ensure the future of the Institute's scholarships and projects. I challenge each of you to consider how you might take part in supporting this unique and important vision to restore the arts of pipe organ performance, construction and restoration to the forefront of our society. Our future success depends on the continuing (and growing) help and support of many.

We're off and running for another great year at OU!

—John Schwandt, AOI Director



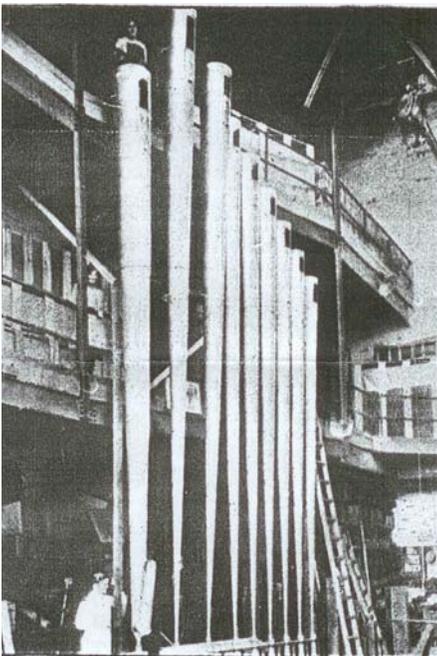
(Above) Student technician Jeremy Wance cleaning nearly 80 years of dirt and grime to uncover a beautiful amber shellac sheen on a chest to be utilized for the Mini-Möller installation.

**Diping In...** Continued from Page 1

It only took one glance for me to see that something exciting and groundbreaking was indeed happening right here at home and it didn't take me any longer to sign on. In a matter of days I decided to apply to join the AOI team and, thankfully, it wasn't difficult to convince John Schwandt and John Riester to find a place for me. It was one of those no-brainer moments when a long-standing passion finds its outlet and fulfillment. Now I spend my days learning about the multitude of tiny details that cause the king of instruments to breathe and have its being.

At the AOI shop I am currently focusing in the restoration of windchests – those boxes that contain the mysterious mechanisms that cause the pipes to speak. While Möller's Opus 5819 was in very good condition, it still needed to be relieved of 80 years of Philadelphia coal dust and the general problems that come with age. As I write this, almost all of the windchests for the Mini-Mo project have been completely cleaned, repaired, reathered and rewired. In a matter of weeks they will breathe once again in testament to the glory of the instrument and the vision that lives here at the American Organ Institute. I, for one, can't wait.

—Jeremy Wance (BM Vocal Performance '02, Master of Liberal Studies in Organ Technology student)



(Left) Recently uncovered archival picture from the *Boston Herald* on April 26, 1931, of the 32' Bombarde (M. P. Möller's first set of metal 32' pipes). The pipe on the left has a miter at the bottom so the pipe can fit under the 25' ceiling in the Philadelphia Municipal Auditorium. (Thank you to Barbara Owen for providing a copy of the clipping.)

(Right) Master organbuilder John Goulding (right) worked with student employees at the AOI, including student carpenter Dan Sliger, in the racking of the façade for the Mini-Möller. The largest pipe is over 18 feet long and weighs 160 pounds.



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Contact the AOI by phone at (405) 325-7829 or e-mail [aoi@ou.edu](mailto:aoi@ou.edu)