



THE ROYAL CANADIAN
COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

**Vancouver Centre
Newsletter**



Spring Edition

May, 2016



★ Summer organ maintenance tips

By: Michael Molnar

With summer approaching, it is helpful to be mindful of how we can best look after our expensive and valuable instruments.

Pipe organs are usually most comfortable between 15-22 degrees Celsius, but ensuring the happiness of your pipe organ is much more than a number. The influence of humidity is often underestimated or overlooked. Almost all central heating and some cooling systems have a large impact on humidity. Most organists lament how ruinous carpets can be to acoustics, but not as many know how naturally adept they are at sucking up moisture in the air.

Maintaining humidity loosely around 60% will help most organs to be comfortable. Shifts in percentage (in the small double digits) will not likely be burdensome, but too much change is certainly problematic. Altering the humidity in a sanctuary is harder than the temperature, as humidifiers are not typically part of church temperature systems. Fortunately, very simple solutions can sometimes be applied to particular instruments, depending on their placement and sensitivity. For example, the grand piano at St. Paul's is fairly close to some very dry air near a heating system, so has a nondescript bowl that rests out of sight in the centre of the keyboard dolly, filled with water (that usefully evaporates ever so slowly). Musical instruments rarely need to be fed, but some do occasionally need to be watered (of course, never directly!).

If you have at your church a journal with a log of maintenance activities, keep it safe and do not underestimate its usefulness and value. There are many important little things that go beyond the re-fuel and oil-change equivalents of organ maintenance (*i.e.* the transmission/brake fluid equivalents). In an organ, consider the lubrication needed for the fan shaft and bearings in a blower. It is always helpful to have a log of what has been done (and when) in your instrument.

Lastly, although most of us know about the unwritten rules and maintenance expectations as organists ("Thou shalt open the swell box before leaving", "Thou shalt cancel all stops before turning off thy organ", etc.), it is good also to remember to make sure the instrument isn't neglected. Although every time it is played does cause a little bit of wear and tear, leaving it alone for extended periods is far more detrimental to its health. Even if there will be no organ all summer at your church, make sure to come in a few times and let it ring and resound!

★ Upcoming Concerts and Events

Saturday, May 28, 7:00pm, St. Mary's Kerrisdale

RCCO Members' Recital

Music by J.S. Bach, Denis Bédard, Michael Blais, Michel Blavet, Henry Coleman, César Franck, Johann Pachelbel, Stephen Smith and Antonio Vivaldi.

With performers Haruyo Abramson, Tamar Genossar, Cindy Leung, Cindy Ma, Gail Ovington, Susan Ohannesian and flautist Laurie Kienlen

Reception and used organ music sale following the recital.

Admission by donation.

Saturday, June 18, 10:00am – 3pm North and West Vancouver

RCCO Organ Crawl

10 am - 11 am, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

11:30am - 12:30 pm, St. Catherine's Anglican Church

Lunch in or near Dunderave Village (more info will be sent out later)

2pm - 3pm, West Vancouver United Church

Free admission for RCCO members, \$10.00 for the day or \$5.00 per church for non-members.

Friday, October 28, 7:30pm, St. Andrew's Wesley United Church

RCCO Halloween Concert

An evening of spooky music by various ghosts and ghouls!

Free admission, donations accepted.

★ Pipe Organ Spotlight

By: Susan Ohannesian

The feature for this Spring Newsletter is the organ of St. Mary's Kerrisdale, which will be played in the upcoming RCCO Members' Recital.

St. Mary's Kerrisdale Anglican Church has a three manual Casavant organ built in 1964. Many of the Casavant organs in Vancouver installed in the late 1950s and early 1960s were commissioned as memorial organs in order to remember those who lost their lives in the two world wars of the twentieth century and to avoid paying taxes. The dedication plaque on St. Mary's organ reads as follows. "The Memorial Organ is dedicated to the Glory of God and in thankful remembrance of the members of this Parish who gave their lives in service of their country from 1914 to the time of the installation of the organ in 1964."

When the organ was installed in 1964 they used a console from 1959. In the early 2000s springs on the combination action started breaking, keys and pedals started wearing out, rollers stopped making contact, the Trompette on the swell started sagging and once I pulled the Hautbois stop and it came out in my hand and flew across the chancel! In 2010 thanks to the generous support of the Peter and Joanne Brown Foundation the innards of the console and Trompette were sent back to mother in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec and thoroughly renovated with new pedals, solid state combination action with 100 levels of memory, manuals switched sides to middle and the Trompette refurbished. Steve Miller came from Calgary when the console was returned and he set everything up and revoiced the Sesquialtera.

Stop List:

Great: Quintaton 16, Principal 8, Rohrflöte 8, Gemshorn 8, Octave 4, Spitzflöte 4, Quinte 2 2/3, Waldflöte 2, II Sesquialtera 2 2/3, IV Mixture 2, Solo Trumpet 8

Pedal: Resultant 32, Contrabass 16, Subbass 16, Octave 8, Pommer Gedect 8, Choral Bass 4, IV Mixture 2 3/3, Bombarde 16, Great Solo Trumpet 8, Clarion 16

Swell: Quintadena 8, Nachthorn 8, Salicional 8, Voix Celeste 8, Geigen Principal 4, Rohrflöte 4, Gemshorn 2, III Mixture 1 1/3, Bassoon 16, Trompette 8, Hautbois 8

Choir: Gedackt 8, Erzähler 8, Prestant 4, Koppelflöte 4, Bachflöte 2, Quinte 1 1/3, Cymbal 1/3, Cromorne 8, Great Solo Trumpet 8.



★ In Memoriam

Passed away suddenly at his home in Vancouver, BC, on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, Robert Gordon Batt, aged 64 years. Robert grew up in Montreal where he developed his deep love of music, attaining his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from McGill University and a PhD in musicology at the UBC School of Music. Aside from his accomplished career in music his greatest achievement is in the number of students he imbued with his own love of and excellence in music. In his spare time, Robert enjoyed the great wide wilderness, hiking, camping and fighting off bears when the occasion arose. Robert is survived by his best friend and lifelong business partner, Marie Cahill of Vancouver, BC, his brother, Gerry and nephew Chris of Victoria, BC and many friends and relatives in NL, PQ and BC.



Reflections on the life of Robert Batt, by Roy Campbell and other friends can be viewed in: <http://www.rcco.bc.ca/wp/blog/category/rcco-vancouver-updates/>

★ Useful Information

Vancouver Centre Teachers List:

Rachel ALFLATT (Queens Avenue United Church, New Westminster)

Phone number: 604 322 5995

Email: cheldar@cheldar.com

Michael DIRK (St. John's Shaughnessy)

Phone number: 604 562 5052

Email: mjdirk@hotmail.com

Frank EZINGA (Canadian Reformed Church, Langley)

Phone number: 604 807 5246

Email: frank.ezinga@langleycanrc.org

Vancouver Centre Executive 2015-2016

President	Michael Molnar	(604) 987 3451
Vice-president	Frank Ezinga	(604) 807 5246
Past-president	Rachel Alflatt	(604) 322 5995
Secretary	Haruyo Shikano Abramson	(604) 921 1820
Treasurer	Tamar Genossar	(604) 982 9212
Member	Michael Dirk	(604) 562 5052
Member	Marianne Huestis	(604) 946 3952
Member	Susan Ohannesian	(604) 732 5162