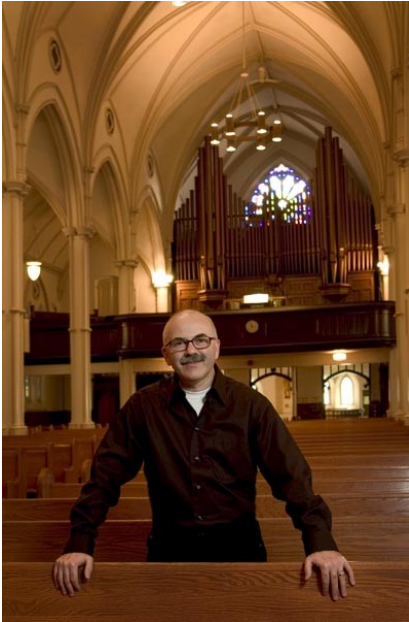


St. Basil's Organ History and Specifications



Historic Saint Basil's Church Founded 1856
50 St. Joseph Street, Toronto, M5S 1J4, CANADA
www.stbasiltoronto.org

Pre-1919 Tracker Organ, probably S. R. Warren
Casavant Frères Opus 800, 1919, Revised 1981

Music Director, Organist:
Gordon D. Mansell, August 2004 – August 2006

*From: **Organs of Toronto**, written by Alan T. Jackson and James Bailey, © RCCO, Toronto 2002.*

As late as 1850 there were only two Roman Catholic churches in Toronto, a city of some 25,000 inhabitants. When Father Armand-Francois-Marie, Comte de Charbonnel, was appointed second Bishop of Toronto, he

appealed to the Basilians in Annonay, France, to assist in establishing a third parish, today known as St. Basil's Church.

For their new edifice, to be located north of the town on property known as "Clover Hill," the Basilians selected the Scottish architect, William Hay. Hay had been recruited by the English architect, George Gilbert Scott to oversee the construction of his cathedral in St. John's, Newfoundland. He arrived in Toronto in 1852, and in 1855 prepared plans for St. Basil's Church and an adjoining St. Michael's College.

The building, dedicated in 1856, was one hundred feet in length and fifty feet wide. The architecture of the church at this point in history was definitively the Gothic. The design prepared by William Hay is strongly influenced by 13th century English churches and cathedrals, with their pointed arches and lancet windows, and their emphasis on thin linear articulation rather than on mass and volume. Eric Arthur, in his definitive architectural history, *Toronto, No Mean City*, is highly critical of the crudity of the junction between the college and church buildings, given that they were designed by a single architect. A cloister extending south easterly from the church has unfortunately never been realized. The cloister would have camouflaged this fault in composition.

In 1877 the north wall of the church was extended by 15.2 metres (50 feet), which provided additional space for the sanctuary and included the present set of stained glass windows of St. Michael, St. Basil and St. Charles Boromeo. The stations of the cross also date from the 1866 renovations. In 1886 a further lengthening, this time in the southward direction, provided the organ gallery and narthex.

The sexpartite plaster vaults were constructed in 1922. Previously, the timber construction of the roof was fully exposed and the dormer windows still visible from the outside provided additional daylight.

A hand-written list of the stops in the earlier tracker organ was submitted by L.E. Morel in 1919. It gives the scales of each stop and the wind pressure which was 3" water manometer. The name

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of the builder was not stated but was probably S. R. Warren. There is no indication on the letterhead that Morel was at that time an agent for Casavant. The letterhead pictures a wooden

organ blower of his own manufacture. As a "Church Organ Tuner and Repairer" he offered "Anything in the Pipe Organ Line – Organs kept in first-Class Order by Yearly Contract. Organ Blowers Supplied, Practically Noiseless, Small Generators for Electric Action, Specialty – Electric Organs – Tubular Organs."

The organist of St. Basil's Church in 1962 was Victor Togni. He was also Professor of Advanced Organ and Improvisation at St. Michael's Cathedral Schola Cantorum in Toronto. His efforts to raise the standard of church music, including organ building, were cut short in 1965 when he was killed in an auto accident. He once stopped this writer (Alan Jackson) during a telephone conversation and identified the church and organ on the record playing in the background.

Program notes for an evening of organ music and Gregorian chant at St. Basil's entitled "Victor Togni at the Great Organ of St. Basil's Church" include an unidentified quotation – "the loft of the great organ is this privileged place where man, half-way as it were between heaven and earth, makes us forget our trivial concerns in order to lead to Him those who are still moved by the pure Beauty of the Lord. "Togni's program of Frescobaldi, de Grigny, Tournemire and Langlais would suit well the organ as rebuilt 20 years later – even more with the acoustic enhanced by the clay-tiled floor.

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Casavant Opus 800, 1919
Revised 1981

Grand Organ				Récit (Enclosed)			
1	Montre	16	61	15	Bourdon	16	61
2	Montre	8	61	16*	Bourdon	8	61
3	Principal	8	61	17	Viola de gambe	8	61
4	Flute	8	61	18	Voix céleste	8	61
5*	Flute Harmonique	8	61	19	Octave	4	61
6	Cor de chamois	8	61	20	Flute traversiere	4	61
7*	Prestant	4	61	21	Nazard	2-2.3	61
8*	Flute Harmonique	4	61	22	Quarte de nazard	2	61
9*	Doublette	2	61	23	Tierce	1-3/5	61
10†	Cornet (Tenor F)	III	132	24	Plein jeu (new 1962)	III	183
11*	Fourniture	III	183	25	Cymbale (new 1962)	III	183
12†	Cymbale	III	183	26	Basson	8	61
13	Trompette (new tongues)	8	61	27	Trompette (new tongues)	8	61
14	Clarion (new tongues)	8	61	28	Hautbois	8	61
	Grand Orgue 4			29†	Clarion Tremblant Récit 16 Récit 4	4	61
Positif (Enclosed)				Pédale			
30	Contre gambe	16	61	42	Resultant	32	
31	Principal	8	61	43	Flute (wood)	16	32
32	Flute à cheminée	8	61	44	Montre (G.O. #1)	16	
33	Viola	8	61	45*	Soubasse	16	32
34	Viola céleste	8	61	46	Bourdon (Récit # 15)	8	61
35†	Prestant	4	61	47	Contre gambe (Positif # 30)	16	
36	Flute ouverte	4	61	48	Octave (20 from #1)	8	12
37	Flageolet	2	61	49	Flute (ext. # 45)	8	12
38†	Quinte	1- 1/3	61	50	Bombarde	16	32
39†	Fourniture	IV	244	51	Basson (Récit #26)	16	
40	Cromorne (new tongues)	8	61	52	Trompette (ext. #50)	8	12
41	Chalumeau (new 1962)	8	61				
	Tremblant Positif 16						

* Warren Pipes

† New Pipes

Couplers:

Grand Orgue, Récit, Positif à la Pedale 8, 4

Récit, Positif au Grand Orgue 16, 8, 4

Récit au Positif 16, 8, 4

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Adjustable Combinations (Capture Type)

Grand Orgue	1	2	3	4	5		Thumb
Récit	1	2	3	4	5		Thumb
Positif	1	2	3	4	5		Thumb
Pédale	1	2	3	4	5		Thumb & Toe
General	1	2	3	4	5	6	Thumb & Toe

General Cancel Adjuster

Reversible Pistons

Grand Orgue à la Pédale	Thumb & Toe
Récit à la Pédale	Thumb
Positif à la Pédale	Thumb
Récit au Grand Orgue	Thumb
Positif au Grand Orgue	Thumb
Récit au Positif	Thumb
Full Orgue	Toe

1960

A new Casavant console was installed

1962

Gabriel Knew installed new Swell Mixtures and a Chalumeau 4 for the Positif

1981

The organ was cleaned, re-leathered and tonally revised by Alan T. Jackson and Casavant Frères.

Analysis:

Revised Organ of 1981

	Stops	Ranks	Pipes	Real Stops
Grand Orgue	14	20	1169	14
Recit	15	19	1159	15
Positif	12	15	915	12
Pedale	11	3	132	3
TOTAL	52	57	3375	44