



From the Associate Director:

It is with great sadness that we learned of the death, following a short illness, of David Rumsey in Basel, Switzerland, where he had lived for 16 years in what could well be called Act III of his remarkable life. He was a talented organist and pedagogue, and a source of an almost infinite wealth of knowledge and experience. In just the last two years, David had collaborated with us here at the AOI on the crucial elements of the Möller Master Roll project. David and his associate, Daniel Debrunner of the Bern Institute of Applied Sciences, were responsible for the complete digitization of the master roll collection of the Welte company, containing perhaps the greatest treasure trove of performances by organists and composers of the 19th and early 20th Centuries. All of this was accomplished at the Museum für Musikautomaten in Seewen, just outside Basel. There, they married their digitization project with a restored Welte organ that was built for the *Brittanic*, the sister-ship of the *Titanic*, and produced no less than 10 CD sets of performances. The project is summed up in a collection of monographs titled *Wie von Geisterhand*.

In January of 2016, David, after much coaxing, agreed to come to Oklahoma, where he huddled with the AOI team (including Sean O'Donnell and Charles Kegg) working on the Master Roll project. Over the course of several days, we focused on the intricate details of the project. In return, we visited him in Basel just this past October to see for ourselves the system upon which ours is to be based. We enjoyed not only unfettered access to the collection at the Museum, but David had also laid on a very full schedule of visits to important instruments throughout the northwest of Switzerland, from Biel to Zürich, and all parts in between. It was a marvelous cross-section of European organbuilding from the late Gothic to the present. David's special interest in the medieval organ was extremely enlightening to these Americans abroad, and the kindness that he and his wife, Liz, radiated made for one of the most memorable experiences of my life thus far. It was exhausting to try and keep up with his quick and lengthy stride, and that energy will be greatly missed. In my last message from him just on the 23rd of January, he displayed the most sentimentality I'd known from him as he ended his e-mail with "I often think back on things and one thing keeps repeating: that lovely visit from you guys in late 2016, and especially our 'steam day.'"

Thank you, David, for your good cheer, for your omnivorous musicianship, for sharing your knowledge, and, most of all, for your warm friendship. Au revoir!

*Jeremy*

