

METROLINA ORGAN QUARTERLY

A Publication of the
METROLINA THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Charlotte, N. C.

August 1995

Vol. 6, No. 3

OUR NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

will be on MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1995, at 6:30 p.m.

At the home of

KARL COLE

140 Quiet Cove Road
(near Lake Norman)
704/664-7925

Take Exit 36 (N.C. 150) off I-77, turn left toward the lake.
Go 3½ miles to Spring Acres, on the left.
Turn left onto Quiet Cove Road.
(There may not be a street sign, but turn anyway.)
Go to the second house on right.

Karl moved to our area about two years ago, after having been organist at the Springdale Music Palace in Cincinnati. He gives concerts with his keyboards all over the United States, including one recently in Mooresville.

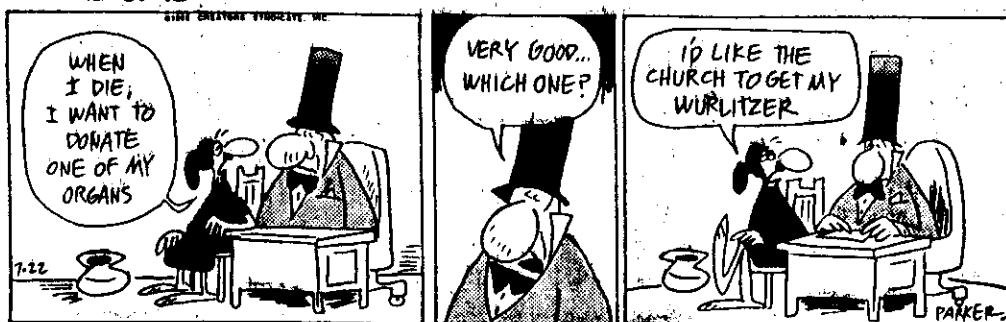
After a covered dish dinner, Karl will perform for us on his Conn organ and Ampico reproducing piano. Please call to let us know what covered dish you will be bringing.

334-0366

Bobby Ray

[sometime called Rod Glasgow]

WIZARD OF ID



Fair Detroit

The FOX

made Detroit.

By itself.

The theatre alone made the trip worthwhile. And then there is the organ inside. There's no point trying to describe it. Indescribable is the only word that comes to mind. Go and look for yourself.

There were two concerts at the Fox: Saturday morning, with Jonas Nordwall; and Wednesday morning, with Ron Rhode. The organ of course is one of the fabulous 4/36 Specials. The combination action works. So does the lift. The theatre techs like to send the pit elevator down as the console comes up. This is impressive from the audience, but scary from the bench. (In all of the concerts of the convention, only Ron Rhode was brave enough to stand for bows and chat. Everybody else just turned around on the bench.) Musically and mechanically the instrument is much improved since the last Detroit convention in 1989. But Roger Mumbrue, its friend and caretaker, says a lot remains to be done to make up for sixty-five years of wear, tear and neglect.

For all its splendor, the Fox received us graciously. Doors opened early, and we were free to explore the vastness of the house. The roll player for the lobby Möller was down on Saturday, so Jack Moelmann came through with a live performance. By Wednesday the player was working, and they were good enough to take the cover off so we could watch it work.

The finest surprise of the week was at the Young Organists concert Sunday afternoon at the Redford. The competitors were Kylie Mallett, 21, from Australia; Sean Henderson, 16, from New Zealand, Australia and Phoenix; and Richard Hills, 14, from England. The older kids, as extraordinary as they were, proved to be no match for Richard, who looks like he might be almost 12. His technique is stunning. But in mastery of styling, his obvious self-confidence, his apparent complete lack of nervousness or strain, and his mature musicianship — all these combined to make him a clear winner, as evidenced by the sustained, enthusiastic applause.

The word on the street was that he would play at the Fox, before the feature Wednesday evening, which was to be part of an ongoing James Dean festival. It would have been worth missing the plane to hear him play there, but the plane refused to be missed, and we had to come home.

We also visited Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, Royal Oak, Flint, Warren and beautiful Ann Arbor. Side trips to the Henry Ford Museum and the Motown Museum were rewarding, but too rushed.

Detroit itself is not nearly as bad as it's made out to be. The detractors apparently do not look at anything good, and there is a lot: the river front is sparkling, with new buildings, parks, public sculpture (by such as Rodin, Daniel Chester French, H. H. Richardson, Isamu Noguchi), a monorail to nearby areas, and a bridge and tunnel south to Windsor. Belle Isle, just to the east, is a large municipal park (about 70 acres, with a nine hole golf course) in the middle of the river. The vast older downtown has a lot of vacant space (offering great, perhaps insurmountable opportunities).

Woodward Avenue, the main street, heads north from the river, a broad boulevard lined with great old buildings (some handsomely renovated), many new buildings (including apartments and condominiums), thriving old churches, and a few grand mansions. The main library and the Art Institute, both large white beaux-arts buildings, face each other across the avenue, each set back into its own two-block-square park. Much to be explored, too little time. I was not as charmed by New Orleans as I was expected to be. Liked Detroit better.

[Bobby Ray]

oooooooooooooooo

The 1995 ATOS Convention in Detroit was a wonderful experience, with over 600 in attendance. Everything was well organized by the Motor City Chapter. All the events will be reviewed in the next issue of *Theatre Organ*.

A highlight for me were the concerts by Jonas Nordwall and Ron Rhode at the Fox. There is nothing like hearing these organs in a large room that reflects the opulence of an era, when going to a theatre was an event.

Another highlight was the showing of two silent films by Buster Keaton, whose 100th anniversary is this year. Lee Erwin, at the age of 87 and still going strong, gave a masterful accompaniment to *The Three Ages* at the Redford. Dennis James showed a very different approach in accompanying *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*

If you can, plan to go to a convention. You will meet people from all walks of life and get to talk about your interests in the theatre organ.

[John Apple]

oooooooooooooooo

MORE NEWS

During First Night Charlotte on December 31, The Carolina Theatre will be open for tours. Those who have not seen it recently should plan on attending. There will be organ music (recorded) and, we hope, a short silent film. Volunteers are needed to help with the tours between 7:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. Please contact John Apple at 567-1066 for more information.

The Save the Carolina committee has met several times, with good success. Charles Kuralt and Loonis McGlohan have volunteered to help us. So far, all is positive in our efforts.

There are still several members who have not paid their 1995 dues — \$15.00. Remember that your national ATOS membership of \$25.00 must be kept current. Contact John Apple if you have questions.

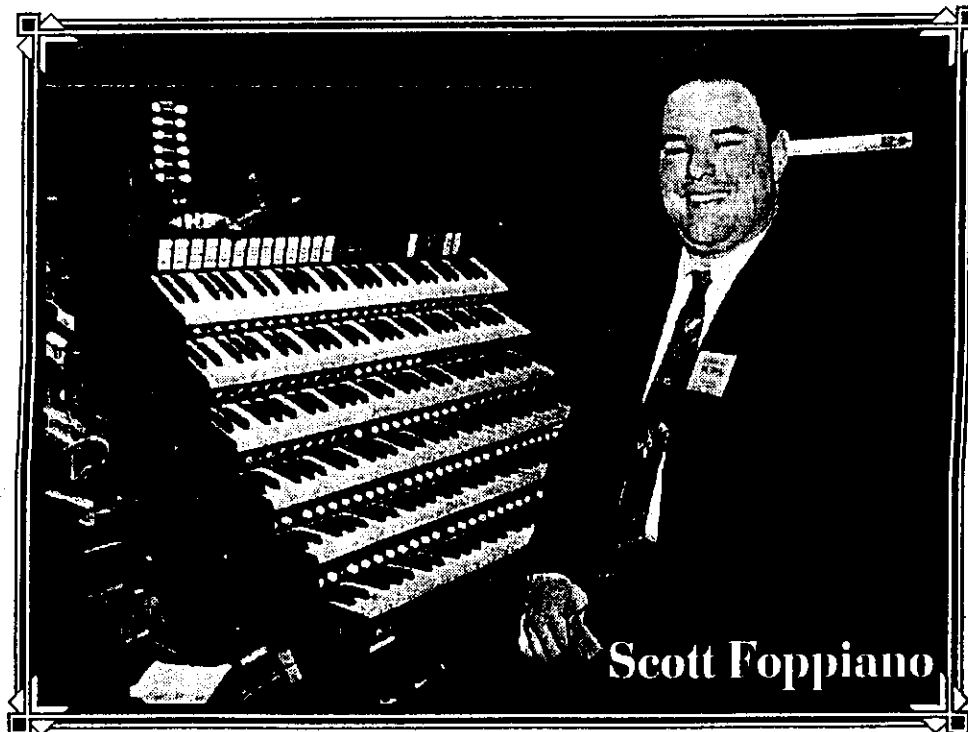
.....

UPCOMING

The 1996 American Guild of Organists convention will be held in New York on July 7 - 11. Rumor has it that the final program will be at Radio City Music Hall, with its recently renovated 4/58 Wurlitzer (the largest theatre organ built during the company's prime). More details will be forthcoming.

On another front, the Organ Historical Society will convene in Philadelphia next summer, and will participate in the July 3 gala concert at Wanamaker's, celebrating the completion of a 5-year restoration of the 6/458 organ. (Yes, that's 458 ranks of pipes. As recently as the summer of 1994, they were having to make do with only 320 ranks.) Wanamaker Stores was recently bought by the May Company, and rumors are rampant. The former owner, Woodward & Lothrop, supported the organ restoration, even in bankruptcy.

[Scott Foppiano at the Wanamaker console, with all the stop tabs missing]



OPENING OF THE THEATRE ORGAN

at Williams High School, Burlington, N. C.

by Don MacDonald

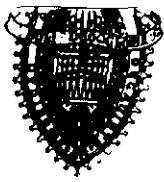
Over 200 people assembled in the Williams High School Auditorium on April 15, 1995, for the opening of the 3/15 Theatre Organ by the distinguished theatre organist, Lee Erwin. The organ, installed by a work crew headed by Mac Abernethy and Buddy Boyd, comprises 15 ranks by various manufacturers, including WurliTzer, and includes some unusual ranks, such as a Quint, Orchestral Oboe and Oboe Horn, along with more standard ranks, such as Trumpet, Tuba and Tibia.

It is installed in right and left chambers in the front of the auditorium, which formerly housed a non-theatrical concert organ. At present the organ is played from a 3-manual, single stop-rail WurliTzer console, but ultimately it is planned to utilize a 3-manual double stop-rail Barton console which will permit expansion of the organ as additional ranks become available. A computer-based relay and combination action has been installed.

The Williams High School Auditorium is unique in that it serves as the civic auditorium for the city of Burlington, and as such it possesses features not usually found in such a facility, including a complete working backstage area. The auditorium has an upper balcony area as well as the lower level seating, and I would estimate the number of seats at around 1,000.

Lee Erwin devoted most of his program to an expert demonstration of the art of silent film accompaniment, at which he is an acknowledged master. The film was the feature length Buster Keaton production entitled *The General*, the name being derived from the steam locomotive which appears in the film. After the movie, Lee played a short selection of Gershwin numbers, including his signature tune, *But Not For Me*.

The organ sounded well in its new home, with a real "theatrical" tone quality. It has been described as having the potential of becoming one of the best in the Southeast. Based on the performance on April 15, I can well believe this may prove to be the case.



American Guild of Organists

Charlotte Chapter

SEPTEMBER, 1995

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1995

PROGRESSIVE DINNER

Always a crowd-pleaser and a lot of fun. Please feel free to bring guests. Non-members will be MOST WELCOME (just make your reservations in time!).

St. Peter's Catholic Church, 507 South Tryon
VIRGINIA HOLT, organist; MARION LOVELACE, hostess

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, North Tryon & 7th St.
BEN OUTEN, host and organist

First United Methodist Church, 501 North Tryon St.
Theater organ music with GIL PIROVANO, organist,
and JOHN-PALMER SMITH, host

APPETIZERS:

Shrimp Mousse
Boursin Cheese
Fresh Vegetables & Dips
Punch

MAIN COURSE:

Stuffed Chicken Breast
with White Wine Mushroom Sauce
Green Beans with New Potatoes and Pesto
Spicy Almond Rice
French Bread
Drink

DESSERTS:

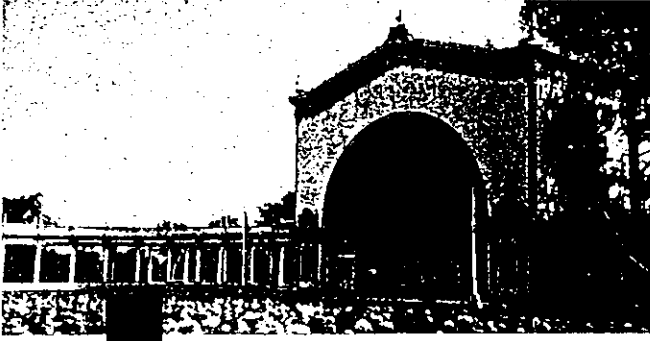
Triple Layer Double Chocolate Torte
Caramel Apple Granny Pie
Coffee

TIMETABLE:

6:15 P.M. Appetizers at St. Peter's Catholic
6:45 P.M. Lecture on fresco; organ recital
7:30 P.M. Dinner at St. Peter's Episcopal
8:15 P.M. Organ recital
8:45 P.M. Theater organ recital at First United Methodist
9:15 P.M. Dessert

REGARDING PARKING: After leaving St. Peter's Catholic Church, please drive to First United Methodist Church parking lot. We will walk the brief distance to and from St. Peter's Episcopal, and thus avoid moving cars another time.

REGISTRATION in the form of a check for \$9/person, payable to the Charlotte Chapter AGO, is due by September 20, 1995. Send checks to: Larry Stratemeyer, 5135-E Strawberry Hill Dr., Charlotte, N.C. 28211.



THE FUTURE IS YOU!

AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE SPRECKELS ORGAN SOCIETY

The vision of John D. Spreckels and his brother Adolph was to create a totally unique musical instrument, a great outdoor pipe organ capable of producing the full range of musical masterworks, an inspiration to the human soul. First played on the evening of December 31, 1914 preceding the formal opening of the Panama-California Exposition, the Organ and Pavilion were dedicated to "the people of San Diego, the people of all the world."

The Spreckels Organ is one of the great concert organs of the world, one of the few municipally owned and operated organs in continuous use for the benefit of the public, the only installation of its kind in the entire world. Built by the Austin Organ Company of Hartford, Connecticut, the Spreckels Organ contains 4,415 pipes ranging in size from over 32' to a speaking length of less than 1/4 inch. The organ is maintained by Lyle Blackinton and Associates.

Free public concerts are given from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. every Sunday of the year. A major Organ Festival is presented on Monday evenings during July and August, presenting some of the world's leading concert organists. During the school year demonstration concerts are given weekly for students from San Diego and nearby schools. Additional concerts are scheduled throughout the year, including customized programs for conventions, weddings, school groups and community events.

As San Diegans over the years have cherished this unique world treasure, we of the present are committed to ensuring that its future is more glorious than its past.

SPRECKELS ORGAN SOCIETY *Building the future on the heritage of the past*

The Spreckels Organ Society was founded in February, 1988 for the purpose of expanding the use and appreciation of the Spreckels Organ and securing its financial future. The Society has

- nearly doubled the number of free organ concerts
- presented many of the world's leading organists;
- annually reached over 10,000 students and developed a "study guide" introducing them to the organ;
- increased annual attendance to over 100,000;
- raised over \$75,000 for capital improvements to the organ;
- vigorously publicized the organ locally and nationally;
- published a book on the history of the organ;
- issued recordings and other memorabilia about the organ;
- established an endowment fund to ensure the future of the Organ and the position of Civic Organist.
- worked closely with San Diego's Park and Recreation Department in numerous community events.

The Spreckels Organ Society is governed by an all-volunteer Board of Trustees and is committed to preserving, programming and promoting this unique cultural asset and world treasure. The Society shares the vision of the Spreckels brothers to bring the inspiration, joy and uplift of great music to all people. The Society is made up of 1200 members from around the world; people like you who want to build the future on the heritage of the past! Your tax-deductible contribution ensures the future of this great instrument and enables us to present music free to all!

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Discounts on all recordings, books, and memorabilia sold by the Society
- Periodic newsletter **Stoptab**
- Invitations to members events and parties
- The privilege of creating the future of this world treasure and its ever-expanding audience

*For information on membership, programs,
or sales items, contact:*

SPRECKELS ORGAN SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 6726
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92166
(619) 226-0819

*The Spreckels Organ Society is funded in part by the
the City of San Diego Commission for Arts & Culture
and the California Arts Council*

[from Historic Preservation]

New Deal

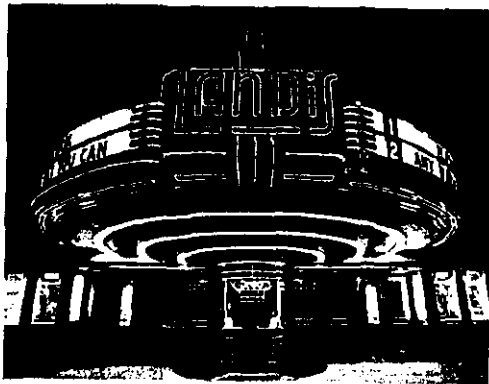
You can fight city hall. Given the choice of keeping their 1937 Art Deco movie house or replacing it with a new drugstore and parking lot, the citi-

zens of Vineland, New Jersey, chose the former—much to the surprise of local elected leaders who had already announced plans to demolish the Landis Theatre. But after confronting outraged citizens at council meetings and receiving a petition signed by 2,000 theater supporters, the mayor and the city council have

come around to supporting a private venture to restore their downtown landmark—and not a minute too soon.

"People feel so emotionally about this building that many of them actually cried at the council meetings," says Holly Boyer of the Landis Theatre Redevelopment Association, a local group formed to save the movie house.

For half a century the Landis Theatre and its eye-popping streamlined marquee defined the focal point of downtown Vineland. The theater closed in 1987 and fell into the hands of the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC) after a savings and loan bank failed. Last year the RTC agreed to deed the property to the town for a dollar, but Vineland officials declined the offer because of the theater's estimated million-dollar restoration cost.



The Landis Theatre glowed in 1983.

The RTC then gave Boyer's group six weeks to come up with a viable proposal. At press time the group was "extremely close to finalizing a contract with a theater owner who wants to reopen the Landis as a multiscreen movie theater," says Boyer, whose group received technical assistance from the National Trust's Mid-Atlantic Regional Office.

[from VTOS Theatre Organ News]

NOTRE DAME ORGANIST MEETS THEATRE ORGAN ...FOR FIRST TIME

Olivier Latry, one of the best organist in the world and from one of the most famous organs in the world, paid a visit to the Byrd Theatre on June 21, 1995. Mr. Latry, house organist of the Cathedral of Notra Dame in Paris, had never seen or heard a live theatre organ before. But thanks to Lin Lunde, he not only was able to see and hear one, but got a chance to play one as well. Known as one of the best improvised organist, the 32 year old quickly caught on fast and began to "swing it." Afterwards there was a tour of the chambers, "Amazing..." according to Olivier.

-Miles J. Rudisill



From PipOrg-L

Subj: Re: 1996 ATOS Convention
Date: 95-08-07 12:03:10 EDT
From: matrix@CLARK.NET (Maureen Jais-Mick)
Sender: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
Reply-to: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

On Mon, 7 Aug 1995, John Ledwon wrote:

> Scott Foppiano said the following in his August 6 post about the Radio City
> Music Hall:
> >I am excited to see the finished product and, according to Ron >Bishop,
> the organ is projected to be finished and in great
> >shape for the ATOS National Convention in New York next >summer.
>
> I believe that the 1996 ATOS NATIONAL Convention is in Los Angeles!

Yes, but the AGO National is in New York next summer. Oh, please, please,
please, do we get to go to Radio City Music Hall? And will the Rockettes
take part?

Maureen
(fixing up her blond wig and sharpening her heels)

Subj: atos 1996 WHERE?!?
Date: 95-08-07 19:32:55 EDT
From: 76766.3512@COMPUSERVE.COM (Scott F. Foppiano)
Sender: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
Reply-to: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

Ok, sorry everyone. The 1996 ATOS convention is in Pasadena, CA and the 1996
AGO convention is in Manhattan. (I was typing that article about Radio City
Music Hall so quickly that I probably just got the two confused).

Scotty

From: BRUCE.HAGER@OFFICE.WANG.COM (Bruce Hager)
Sender: PIPORG-L@CNSIBM.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
Reply-to: PIPORG-L@CNSIBM.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@CNSIBM.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

<Chris Anderson and Dave Schutt commented on Waller having played at the Lincoln Theatre in Harlem>

The Lincoln was on 135th St., but I have no information whether the organ was a Wurli or not. According to the biographical info, in 1919 the 15-year-old Fats was taken under the wing of Mazie Mullins, the Lincoln's staff organist, who allowed him to play some intermissions. Soon he was accompanying the vaudeville acts, and later moved up to a higher paying job at the Lafayette Theatre on 7th Ave.

Fats supposedly gave "Count" Basie organ lessons at the Lincoln in 1921 (he had met Basie in Boston, while touring with a vaudeville troupe).

Re the Estey at the Victor studio in Camden NJ (former Trinity Church): Fats made his first recordings there in 1926. About a dozen tracks of 1927-28 vintage on the Bluebird (BMG) CD 61005-2, "Fats Waller/Fats and His Buddies" feature Fats at the Estey; half of these include James P. Johnson (Fats' mentor) on piano. Highly recommended. Fats also plays Estey or Hammond on a handful of tracks in the series of multi-CD sets, "Fats Waller and His Rhythm," also on Bluebird. I posted the specification of the Victor studio Estey in April, and I believe the Osiris Maven has put this in the archive.

Junchen (vol. 1) claims that this Estey was custom built for Victor, and is a different instrument than that originally installed in Trinity Church. Paul Machlin (in "Stride: the Music of Fats Waller" -- see my April posting) states that Victor had the original church Estey respec-ed and enlarged. Both Junchen and Machlin cite Estey records as source material, so go figure!

Joe Smith's description of a photo showing an Estey in a protective crate sounds like the photo in Junchen Vol. 1 of the United Artists Studio Estey, rather than the Victor Studio organ.

--Bruce <bruce.hager@office.wang.com / bhager@ultranet.com>

Reply-to: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

Scott Foppiano replied today about my recent post:

>>Well, about the relay room access, you are correct. But I have heard horror stories about organ technicians trying to get in there during shows, etc. and having to deal with angry Rockettes. NOT a pretty picture!<<

Well, perhaps those technicians entered under the most flimsy of pretenses:

"Ahh, we gotta get da pipes out so's dey can be toon'd."

"The air pressure is building at a dangerous rate. To avoid suffocation, remove all constricting garments immediately. Please allow us to help."
(college-trained tech)

"Liebert hoid some unauthorized sounds - we gotta check da machine."

"Lube, oil, filter. Every three months. Jeez, you goils got awful memories!"

Jim ("So you want to see a big combination action, eh???") Riggs

Subj: Welcome to a new Piporg-L member
Date: 95-08-23 18:23:52 EDT
From: 76766.3512@COMPUSERVE.COM (Scott F. Foppiano)
Sender: PIPORG-L@CNSIBM.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
Reply-to: PIPORG-L@CNSIBM.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@CNSIBM.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

I would like to notify everyone that Mr. Steve Schlesing is now among the ranks (ha-ha) of Piporg-L subscribers. Many of you who attended the ATOS convention in Detroit in July will remember him for the top-rate program (and artists) he provided. Steve is one of my very best friends and colleagues and is a wonderful organist, no-musician, as well. I have known him for over five years now and we played at the Fox Theatre together as house organists.

Steve was the last official staff organist for the Detroit Tigers baseball team (before the canned rock and roll that now blasts forth across Michigan and Trumbull) and has been at the Church of Today in Warren for over ten years now. He has played concerts all over the country and always puts on one hell of a show. His audiences always leave very happy and having gotten much more than they ever expected.

I am glad that he finally joins us here on Piporg-L and know that he will make not only a welcomed addition to the list but will provide us with exciting insights and wonderful postings from time to time. Welcome Steve!

Scott Foppiano

Subj: New Theatre Organ WWW page
Date: 95-08-08 07:09:46 EDT
From: sgroves@EXTRO.UCC.SU.OZ.AU (Sacha Groves)
Sender: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
Reply-to: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

Hi everyone,

I have created a WWW page for The Theatre Organ Society of Australia.

The URL is <http://www.usyd.edu.au/~sgroves/tosa/home>

It is still under construction, but it has basically at the moment the general idea. Please give it a look in, and mail me any suggestions you might have.

If anyone wants me to add anything (URL's, messages, reports... basically anything you might want to see on the TOSA page) please email me at :

sgroves@extro.ucc.su.oz.au.

I will appreciate all suggestions, even if they are criticisms.

Regards,

Sacha Groves

Subj: Re: Wanamaker sale
Date: 95-08-17 15:39:17 EDT
From: fastcat@PACIFIER.COM (David Aeschliman)
Sender: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
Reply-to: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Pipe Organs and Related Topics)
To: PIPORG-L@UACSC2.ALBANY.EDU (Multiple recipients of list PIPORG-L)

Well, perhaps it is time that they put this piece of crap out to pasture and scrapped it. Times change. So do tastes about organs. It was never finished. Melt the pipes down. Burn the console. It was a "cinema" organ at best. No particular loss to the organ world. Who in the hell wants to go to a department store to hear a wooly-sounding organ anyway. I heard it a couple times. That was enough.

Aesch

pacifier.com - Vancouver's Public access Internet (206) 693-0325
telnet or dial the above and type "new" at the prompt to register

On Thu, 17 Aug 1995, Dave Whitmore wrote:

> Ray asked me to forward this to the group. Minor deletion by me.
>
> Dr. Dave
>
> >From: RAYBJOHN@aol.com
> >Date: Wed, 16 Aug 1995 22:03:22 -0400
> >To: whitmore@gmpvt.com
> >Subject: Wanamaker sale
> >
> >The business section of today's POST had a large photo of the grand court
at
> >Wanamakers showing the organ with the caption that people listen to the
> >world's largest pipe organ twice a day. Wanamakers will become Hechts in
> >October or November now that it has been sold. God what a f**ing shame!!
> > All of our Woodward & Lothrop's will become J.C. Penneys, Hechts or Lord
and
> >Taylors. What are they going to call it, the Hecht's organ! I can well
> >imagine those bastards saying, junk the organ we need that space for
retail.
> > Philadelphia according to the papers is up in arms over changing the name.
> > Put this on the organ internet and see what happens. Yuck, Yuck and more
> >Yuck!!! Ray
> >
>