

DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY

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Dave Wickerham Pops Concert

Sunday, April 27, 2014 3:00 p.m.

The April concert for the Detroit Theater Organ Society brings back a favorite in the theater organ world, Dave Wickerham.

Dave Wickerham was born in Encino, California in 1962. He began playing the electronic organ at the age of four and had his first pipe organ experience at age ten. His musical education started at age seven.

When he moved to Arizona in 1976, he became Associate Organist at the famous Organ Stop Pizza Restaurants in Phoenix, Mesa and Tucson. While in Arizona, he continued his musical studies with Roseamond Crowley, one of the few remaining descendants of the Louis Vierne line of organists. He attended the University of Arizona in Tucson on a full scholarship, pursuing classical organ studies for six years with Dr. Roy Johnson.

In 1984, Dave moved to the Chicago area to become Staff Organist at Pipes and Pizza in Lansing, Illinois. In addition to his performance there, he concertized frequently, as well as ministering musically and serving at various churches.

August of 1990 found the Wickerham family - Dave, his wife and two young children - moving to Wisconsin, where he was one of the featured Staff Organists at the Piper Music Palace in Greenfield, a position he held for ten years.



In the spring of 2000, Dave ushered in the new millennium with a limited special engagement, as a featured organist at "Roxy's Pipe Organ Pizzeria", part of a \$26,000,000 expansion phase at the FIESTA Casino and Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Wickerham's, Dave, Rhonda, and now three great kids, spent a year and a half there before returning back home to Wisconsin in August of 2001. For the next three years, Dave resumed his position at the Piper Music Palace and was also the Principal Organist at Williams Bay Lutheran Church in Lake Geneva, WI.

He enjoys concertizing frequently to many audiences including various chapters of the American Theatre Organ Society. In April of 1999, he took great pleasure being a feature artist in Melbourne,

Australia for the convention of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia for which he received rave reviews. He returned "Down Under" for a six-week concert tour in Australia and New Zealand during the summer of 2003 and very recently has completed a similar tour concluding November of 2012.

Dave also enjoys recording and has recently "sold out" his fourth CD "Sounds of Music" recorded on the famous five-manual, 80-rank theatre organ at the Sanfilippo Residence in Barrington, IL. There are two NEW recording projects that are soon to be completed and released.

After seven years as Organist - Curator with the legendary Milhous Collection in South Florida, Dave and his family currently enjoy living in Upper Michigan where he has accepted the position of Co-Manager and Organist in Residence at Crystal Theatre in Crystal Falls. This 1927 theatre is now a regional Performing Arts Center and houses a three-manual, 21-rank Moller theatre organ that Dave also looks after. Additionally, his wife Rhonda - at his side - works as Co-Manager of this beautiful and historic venue.

Welcome Dave back to the Senate on Sunday, April 27. Doors to the theater open at 2:00 p.m., with the concert starting at 3:00 p.m.

M

usic Archival Process—One Year Later

Christopher Dengate
DTOS Music Archivist

April will mark one year since I began the process of transferring the entire library of concerts performed in our great history as an organization. Currently the library is stored in several formats and my task is to update the oldest concerts onto the most up to date format as well as putting all 680 concerts onto an external computer hard drive in wave format that was approved by the board of directors.

I am pleased to report that over 160 of these concerts are now in digital format and on an external hard drive for safe keeping. In addition,

these concerts are also now on compact disc as well as DVD. These 160 concerts are original from when they were recorded and date back to the 60's, 70's and eighties. We no longer have to worry about the condition of these reel to reel recordings and we are well on the way of not having to worry about the condition of the equipment for playback purposes. The last concert that was recorded in this format was our very own Scott Smith and the date was February 16, 1992. We then starting using the DAT format of recording which was state of the art at

the time.

At the same time that I am going through the process of updating the oldest concerts, our recording engineer Fred Brufloft has already been using the most up to date recording device starting with the 2013 concert series. These recordings have also been added to the hard drive in a much easier fashion of transferring the wave files onto the drive. The earlier concerts have to be played back in real time onto the digital machine before the wave files can be transferred. No high speed transferring here folks.

With the exception of a few spots here and there, the condition of the reel to reel tapes are great and the ampex machine is performing up to its name. We have nine more years of concerts before we can breathe a sigh of relief when we don't have to worry about the machine anymore. The original purchase receipt for the ampex machine was located and dates back to July of 1967.

I am currently on track to be done with this project within the next two years.

D

TOS—The Early Years

Gil Francis, DTOS Board of Directors

The early years were exciting times for the young men and women who became interested in the disposition of the Fisher Theater 4/34 Wurlitzer, opus 1953.

When the possibility of obtaining the instrument became a reality, the question of what to do with it became a real challenge.

George and Muriel Orbits purchased the organ in February 1961. The enormity of the removal and re-installation project caused them to involve the ideas, expertise and labor of a group of people who were drawn together by a mutual interest in theater pipe organs.

This group would soon become the Detroit Theater Organ Club.

The brainstormed the

possible disposition of the organ, and found a vacant theater just a few blocks down Grand Boulevard from the Fisher, the old Iris Theater, which they leased.

Many days and weeks of frantic disassembly at the Fisher, temporary storage, extensive modifications to the Iris interior, and then re-assembly at the Iris followed.

A joyous and exciting open house for members, tentative members and guests, was held in August 1961 to show off the progress of the installation and the theater.

On September 25, 1961, Fred Bayne played the first sounds to be heard from the newly installed instrument. It was an exciting moment when he played a very rough rendi-

tion of Valencia on just six ranks of untuned pipes.

In October 1961, he great John Muri played the first concert for members. Twenty concerts were held at the Iris, ending May 3, 1963. The owners of the Iris Theater raised the rent, causing the club to look for another place.

The Club's first newsletter was published on May 27, 1962, and continues today, 44 years later, providing us with a printed record of the club's continuing pipe organ activities.

The Senate Theater on Michigan Avenue was discovered and purchased from the City of Detroit / State of Michigan when the DTOC sealed bid of \$1,000 was accepted on December 13, 1962.

The Senate was an abandoned hulk with a lake in the basement and a hole in the roof. Members made repairs and re-installed the organ during the rest of 1963 and into 1964. During this time concerts were held using various electronic organs and visiting other organ venues.

Moving the organ parts many miles from the Iris to the Senate, bringing in electricity, fixing the roof, pumping out the basement, building organ chambers, installing seats, repairing plumbing, plastering and painting, installing a furnace and much more. In the process they had to raise funds and attend to all the legal details accompanying such a project.

How Our Wurlitzer Works

Dave Calendine, DTOS Board of Directors

How does the organ work? How does it get all of its air? What does this sound like? Why is there metal and wood things in there? What are those things under the pipes? Those are just some of the questions that are asked from people regarding our Wurlitzer

organ.

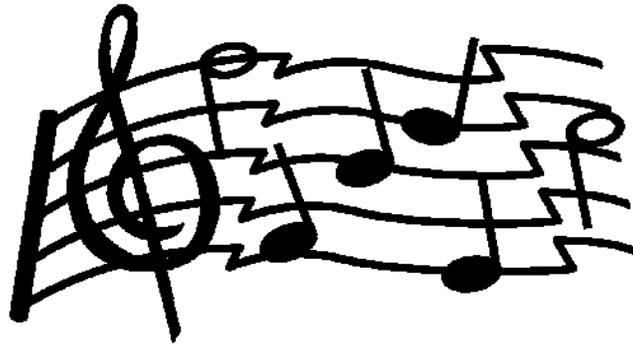
Over the next few months, I will be doing a series of articles breaking down the inner workings of our Wurlitzer organ to give you a better understanding of just how the organ works. From the blower, to regulators, to

pipe chests, to clarinets, tibia clausas, tuba horns and trumpets to Chinese gongs, glockenspiels and xylophones, the various parts of our Wurlitzer will be broken down and explained as to how and what they are.

Have a particular part of

the organ that you are interested in? Let me know! I'll do my best to get all of the parts of our organ covered in an article.

Next month the first part to be covered will be the blower that is down in the basement.



UPCOMING MOVIE SCHEDULE FOR THE SENATE THEATER

The next set of movies is currently being booked for the Senate.

Visit our web site for the full schedule of events,
including concerts and films.

WWW.DTOS.ORG

Visit our friends at the Redford Theatre for their classic film series.

April 11 & 12—Ben-Hur

April 25 & 26—Three Stooges Film Festival

May 16 & 17—Raiders of the Lost Ark

Full schedule of events, including times and prices, can be found on the web site

WWW.REDFORDTHEATRE.COM

DETROIT THEATER
ORGAN SOCIETY

Over 50 Years of Entertainment!

Detroit Theater Organ Society

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.DTOS.ORG

2014 Concert Series

April 27—Dave Wickerham

May 18—Justin Lavoie

June 22—Tom Hoehn

September 21—Nathan Avakian

October 19—Tom Fortier

November 16—Melissa

Ambrose-Eidson

December 7—Donnie Rankin

All concerts are held at the Senate Theater.

Doors open at 2:00 p.m., concerts start at 3:00 p.m.



photo: Lance Luce