



# DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY

December 2010

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## Happy Holidays!

It is hard to believe that the holiday season is in full swing. In a few short days we hope to see everyone at the Redford Theatre for Lance Luce's Christmas concert. Information on his concert can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

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I am happy to announce a new series of articles that will be appearing in the newsletter. Scott Smith is writing about the history of our one-of-a-kind Wurlitzer organ. His introductory article can be found on page three.

We are still in the process of finding a new home for our Wurlitzer, and are also looking at re-opening the Senate for concerts later this year if we are still there. More information on all of this will be forthcoming as we work on all the details.

Speaking of details, the board is hard at work making sure that the organization is moving forward in the right direction. Please see two important articles written by Fred Brufloft on page two and three of this newsletter.

On behalf of the entire board of directors, we wish you the best throughout this holiday season. See you at the Redford for our Christmas Concert!

*Dave Calendine*  
Corporate Secretary, DTOS



### Important Dates

- December 12–3pm  
*Lance Luce in concert at the Redford Theatre*
- January 4–7pm  
*Board Meeting—open to all members*
- January 25–7pm  
*Board Meeting—open to all members*

## The Paul Roberts Concert Nov 21, 2010

*by Gil Francis*

The audience obviously enjoyed Paul's upbeat presentation of medleys of "good memories" songs. About the third set I started to scribble song names down, but many titles just would not come to me quick enough before he was on to the next song. I probably missed 20 songs that were just as good as the ones listed here.

My Buddy, My Blue Heaven, Makin' Whoopee.  
 Has Anybody Seen My Gal, When I Take My Sugar To Tea, Mr. Sandman, I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover, The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise.  
 At Last, Lullaby of Broadway, The Lady Is A Tramp.  
 I'm Getting Sentimental Over You, Saving All My Love For You, Bye Bye Blues.  
 Ain't She Sweet, Bye Bye Blackbird, If You Knew Suzy.  
 Autumn In New York, If You Believe In Me, It's Only A Paper Moon, Moon River, Blue Moon.  
 Jingle Bells, White Christmas.  
 Encore - E-I-E-I-O, Cabaret.

Lots of good memories were recalled by all these good songs, many that are seldom heard anymore.

Paul really enjoyed playing Redford's Grand Barton Theatre Organ, which sounded wonderful, as usual.

Paul Roberts lives and operates his entertainment agency business in Somerset, England. He is deeply involved in the organ groups there, as well as piano, electronic and digital instrument groups that are a growing part of the music scene in England.

### From the DTOS BOARD

Many things are happening with our organization that many members may not know about as they do not attend the board meetings. The broad focus of your board is to move the DTOS organization forward. Make no mistake, this broad focus has many dimensions. The following outlines the Board's continuing responsibilities and requirements.

- I. Preservation of the historic Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. (Mandated by our bylaws and terms of the agreement which allows DTOS to utilize the 4/34 Wurlitzer.)
- II. Providing a suitable environment to BOTH preserve the instrument and allow it to be played and enjoyed.
- III. Housing of the instrument and DTOS activities – this involves two challenges-
  - A. Maintain the existing facility (Senate Theatre), where the instrument now resides.
  - B. Attempt to locate a new venue that meets the needs of DTOS activities – including installing the instrument for playing and public performances. (A Search Committee is investigating possible venues.)
- IV. Maintain the financial viability of DTOS – including (at a minimum) these points
  - A. Maintain financial support from present and future members
  - B. Wisely manage DTOS resources in a manner that will make a new facility possible and keep DTOS solvent
  - C. Manage sale of DTOS' Senate Theater properties
  - D. Fund raising
- V. Maintain public performances for DTOS
  - A. Performances as an important feature/benefit for DTOS members
  - B. Agreement with MCTOS (Redford Theatre/Barton organ)
  - C. Possible future performances at the Senate

#### Where we are...

Although the focus during most of the past 12 months has been on a new venue and preparing to move the instrument, it should be noted that many details and other matters have been included in the Board's work. The failure to sell the Senate properties and the unfortunate escalating cost estimates to acquire and modify the Combermere site, plus the lack of available funds, created a potentially dire (catastrophic?) situation for DTOS. A venture that seemed possible at the outset, unfortunately, became questionable. In summary, sinking the majority of DTOS's financial resources into the Combermere venture did not seem prudent to the majority of the Board members. Putting the organization in financial jeopardy does not seem like a wise path to follow, then or now.

At this time the Board will continue its focus on maintaining the viability of DTOS, continue to seek a suitable venue for DTOS activities, and continue to present public performances by top-notch artists at the Redford.

#### So what is next...

First there is a potentially viable offer for the Senate properties which is being evaluated and will be considered. How this will impact future Board actions is unknown at this time. *(All past offers for the Senate properties have fizzled. Even offers far below the asking price have not worked out.)* A committee was formed in September to investigate potential sites where the instrument could be properly installed and played for public performances. Such a "shared-use" venture seems worthwhile to consider, although such possibilities have been previously considered by DTOS. The Board is actively trying to involve more of our members in DTOS activities and encourages new ideas from members. Board meetings are open to ALL DTOS members, and opportunities are available for members to be heard during the Board meetings.

***DTOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

**FOR MEMBERS ONLY...**

The DTOS Board values and wants to thank every DTOS member for their continuing interest and support of our organization.

We want ALL members to become active members! Please enjoy the DTOS concerts at the Redford, as they are a benefit to members. Please VOLUNTEER to help out. There are many, many opportunities for members to pitch in. Hands-on activities include hosting visiting artists, greeters at Redford events, clean-up after the Redford concerts, maintenance work at the Senate, clean-up at the Senate (if/when a concert is presented), and more, too. There are opportunities for members skilled in fund raising, public communication, public relations, news writing, audio recording, just to list a few possibilities.

“Playing” members are needed to fill Board vacancies and to stand for election in 2011. Board work may have its challenges, but it is essential to preserving not only DTOS but the theatre pipe organ and its enjoyment for future generations.

Membership does have its privileges. Present DTOS members are encouraged to ATTEND and to BRING GUESTS to our DTOS public concerts. How else to share the enjoyment of music for the theatre pipe organ? – “the more the merrier.” And, members can bring a guest to the Redford for no additional fee. The DTOS concerts at the Redford are a means of outreach by us and for theatre pipe organ enjoyment in general. These concerts, funded by membership support, are in addition to the regular activities of the Redford/MCTOS folks.

Members who have the “playing” privilege can come to the Senate Theatre to enjoy the Wurlitzer. If you are a playing member but don’t play yourself, bring a friend who does and share a truly unique privilege. (Where else in the whole, wide world can you have this unique opportunity? And it is still available to you.)

Participation can be enjoyable! You’ll meet nice folks with a common interest and you can help move DTOS forward, perhaps in new ways. New members, new ideas, more participation are welcome!

*From DTOS Board*



## *From the Bench*



Beginning in January, you'll be seeing a regular column under that title in the pages of the *DTOS News*. A wide range of topics will be covered from technical to historic to artistic to the unknown, but every column will have something to do with our wonderful Wurlitzer. We'll go from the work bench to the organ bench, and maybe even find some other types of benches along the way. Some will be brief, and some will be lengthy, but, if

nothing else, I hope you'll find the content of this new column to be interesting and thought-provoking.

Just as a hint as to what's coming, our first essay will delve into the many mysteries regarding the origins of the fabulous Fisher Wurlitzer. We all know that it's unique in form and one-of-a-kind in creation, but what does that all mean? I'll try to cover what we know for sure, what we think we

know, and what we can only guess. There's already enough to cover more than one issue with that story, so I hope you'll all stay tuned for a truly fascinating story that continues to reveal itself over eighty years after it happened.

Happy holidays!

*Scott Smith*

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.DTOS.ORG

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Address correction requested.

Dated material within. Please do not delay!

## Christmas Concert With Lance Luce

DTOS is excited to once again present Lance Luce to perform the Christmas concert at the Redford Theatre on Sunday, December 13 at 3pm.

Lance is no stranger to us here at DTOS. Not only is he a member of the board of directors, but he has also performed many concerts for us at the Senate Theatre.

Lance has also been staff organist at New York City's famed Radio City Music Hall. He also is

one of the staff organists at the Detroit Fox Theatre.

Lance currently works at Evola Music where he is the representative for Allen Organs.

Not only is Lance known to us here in the Detroit area, but Lance is also well known throughout the world. He has performed on most major theatre organ installations throughout the United States and Canada. He has also toured overseas.

Some may remember Lance during his time at the bench of one of the pizza parlors that had theatre pipe organs installed. Most notably was his nine-year stint as resident organist at the Organ Grinder Restaurant that was located in Toronto, Ontario.

Make sure you set aside time for this magical holiday concert with Lance. The doors open at 2pm. Concert starts at 3pm. Goodies will be provided!

