

THE DETROIT THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Lansing Organist Scott Smith Performs October 18th

Scott Smith is a native and lifelong resident of Lansing, Michigan. He is the owner of Scott Smith Pipe Organs, LLC, a full service pipe organ business that services and restores both theatre and church/classical pipe organs. He has worked extensively in the field of pipe organ maintenance and restoration since high school, beginning when he joined the volunteer crew that restored and maintained the Barton organ in downtown Lansing's Michigan Theatre.

Smith is also a professional organist, who has performed concerts and accompanied silent films across the country. He first performed regularly at the

Michigan Theatre in Lansing as its last staff organist, from 1972 to 1980. When the organ's new home was secured at the Grand Ledge Opera House in Grand Ledge, Michigan, he was responsible for the organ's redesign and oversaw its installation and tonal refinement, and he has been the House Organist since 1995. Each year around the holidays, Smith entertains shoppers on the 2/6 Barton organ at the Mole Hole of Marshall, Michigan, where he has played now for 20 years. Smith is also a recording artist, with recordings produced at the Michigan Theatre (Lansing), The Mole Hole (Marshall) and Century II Convention Center (Wichita, KS). Another

recording is currently in the works.

Beginning while still in his teens, Smith has become well known as an author of numerous articles relating to the organ, published both in the *Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society*, and the former *Console* magazine. One of his articles, initially written when he was only eighteen, was selected for publication in the A.T.O.S. technical guide book, "Theatre Organ Shop Notes," first published in 1988 and still in print today. In 2002, Smith was awarded the Simonton Literary Award by the A.T.O.S. for his article, "The Butterfield Specials."

COMING TO THE SENATE:

- ◆ Scott Smith - Oct. 18th
- ◆ Board Meeting
Oct. 27th at 7pm
- ◆ John Lauter - Nov. 15th
- ◆ Board Meeting
Nov. 24th at 7pm
- ◆ Lance Luce - Dec. 6th

Another New look for the Newsletter

As we continue to look for new and exciting ways to communicate with our membership and supporters, one way is to change the appearance of the newsletter.

While we understand that there have seen many versions of our newsletter in past years, we hope that we finally have something that we can stick with for years to come.

The only way to gauge if a change like this is good or bad, is to get feedback. We

need feedback not only from the Board of Directors, but from the membership reading the material.. Whether it is positive or negative, we would love to hear from you.

If we are not giving you enough information or you have a question that needs clarification, we would like to hear from you.

Have some information about one of our members? Send it along and we will publish it on the Membership page. Celebrating a

Birthday or Anniversary?

Let us know so we can keep the Members informed.

Send your inquiries to the Senate Theater at 6424 Michigan Avenue Detroit, Michigan 48220.

We hope to get some good questions or some good stories for future editions of our Newsletter.

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From The President's Desk

Dear Members,

For those who are not members of the American Theater Organ Society, you missed an Article in the September/October issue of the Journal. It featured DTOS in a story explaining our current situation with regard to ending our concerts at the Senate Theater in December.

It brought back a lot of memories about how things used to be when the organization started and with our first concert in 1961. It also reminded some of our members who are still with us today the years of hard work,

dedication and late nights to get us started and going for 45 years. I salute every member who had a hand in not only getting us started, but keeping the excitement alive for so many years and giving me the opportunity to play a one-of-a kind instrument like our Wurlitzer. Without these pioneers of the organization, it never would have happened.

For the last 10 years, the organization has had changes. Most of the pioneers have long passed on or taken a turn onto another path in life. Out with the old and in with the new (and few).

There are only a handful of individuals who continue the fight every month to bring great programs to the membership and keep the lights on. I appreciate the loyalty to the organization and most importantly, I appreciate every member that has continued to support us over the years. We will continue the fight to find a great new location for our organization to spark new life into a unique 80 year old instrument.

Christopher Dengate

“CHANGE IS
DIFFICULT BUT
OFTEN ESSENTIAL
TO SURVIVAL”

Pipes and Chests

On May 30th and 31st, about 15 volunteers from the organization met at the house of the late R. David Brewer. No, it was not for one of his famous “Brewer Bashes” but it was to remove the pipe organ from the basement.

The Society was notified by the family that they wanted to donate the instrument to the Soci-

ety which also included the player piano and piano rolls. Prior to these dates, Scott Smith, Ken Holden, Jeff Slabaugh and Stephen Warner donated several days preparing the instrument for it's removal.

The instrument was removed and transported to storage and parts of the instrument have

been selling since. While the console still remains in the lobby of the Senate, most of the instrument has found a new home in New York and Ohio.

By selling off parts and recycling the old wire from the relay, the Society has generated funds over \$14,500.00 after subtracting moving and storage costs.

Board Room News

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors was held on September 29, 2009 and many things were discussed.

The meeting starting an hour earlier for the purpose of clearing up some Policy and Procedural problems that will occur as we move into 2010.

Because of a decreased concert schedule in 2010 at the Redford Theatre, a motion was made and had unanimous support from the Board to decrease member-

ship dues for next year. For 2010, Associate Members dues was decreased to \$80 for the year and Playing Members dues was decreased to \$105. While not approved by the MCTOS Board yet, a proposed schedule will bring Organists Mark Herman, Ken Double, Scott Foppiano and Paul Roberts to the Barton console. Several open console dates are proposed for the playing membership as well with the option to turn these into concert dates should the finances allow.

Bob Weil informed the Board that the boiler in the building has been checked by a contractor and minor repairs were completed to prepare it for the heating season.

Three bids for the packing and moving of the Wurlitzer were reviewed. The highest bid came in at \$86,500 and the lowest bid came in at \$68,000. No action was taken on the bids however the details were discussed.

(Continued on page 3)

Financially Speaking

At the Regular Board meeting held on September 29th, our treasurer Bob Weil distributed the monthly financial reports which reflected the following income and expenses from September 1 through September 28, 2009.

Total Income for this time period was \$1,022.04 which is made up of a pipe organ fund donation of \$330.00 and concert income of \$692.04.

Total Expenses for this time period were \$6,930.85 which is made up of building maintenance expenses of \$205.00, or-

gan maintenance of \$3,799.00, concession counter expenses of \$173.00. Administration expenses for the month totaled \$86.75. Utility expenses for the building for the time period were \$2,165.00 for electrical service, \$150.92 for telephone service and \$212.18 for water usage. Alarm company monthly fee is \$139.00.

Bob explained that at this time of our fiscal year, all of the membership dues should have been paid by now and the only revenue that the Society sees are donations that come in and income that our monthly concert

generates for us. The utility expenses remain the same from month to month because he was able to enroll in the budget plans that the utility's have offered to local businesses.

The Balance sheet for the Society showed a total of \$183,386.39 in the checking and savings accounts. This includes \$1000,000 which is reserved for moving expenses at the end of this year and a certificate of deposit that has not matured at this time.

The Boardroom News (Continued from page two)

All bids estimated a completion time of 5 weeks. A lengthy discussion took place with regard to the wiring. National Electrical Code stipulates that it would have to be replaced due to age however other organizations have received variances from this code. Some on the Board wish to retain the wiring for

historical value and believe replacing it would take away from the historical value of the instrument. The argument does have value because we have the only instrument left from that era that has not been converted to an electronic relay and is for the most part untouched from the factory.

Discussion took place with regard to properly recording our 45 year history in a Historical Library. The Board granted Steven Ball permission to contact the Bentley Historical Library on the campus of the University of Michigan to research the possibilities.

The meeting adjourned at 10pm

Around Town

There are a number of fine theaters to visit in the Metro Detroit area and here are just a couple of them along with their activities:

REDFORD THEATRE continues their movie series in October with *Werewolf of London* and *House of Dracula* showing on October 16th and 17th starting at 8pm. There is a Saturday matinee starting at 2pm as well. The 1921 silent film *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* comes to the Redford

screen on October 23rd and 24th which will be accompanied by organist Tony O'Brien. Show time is 8pm but there is no Saturday matinee for this movie. Lastly, Redford Theatre is hosting a Three Stooges Halloween Festival on October 30th and 31st. Show times are 8pm with a Saturday Matinee starting at 2pm. www.redfordtheatre.com

MICHIGAN THEATER in Ann Arbor this month brings

David Cross on October 13th starting at 7:30pm, Serenade for Strings on October 17th starting at 8pm presented by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, Emmylou Harris on October 23rd starting at 8pm, Click, Clack, Moo on October 25th starting at 1:30pm and An Evening with Richard Thompson & Loudon Wainwright III on October 27th starting at 7:30pm. www.michtheater.org

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Executive Board

Christopher Dengate, President
Dick Leichtamer, Vice President
David Calendine, Secretary
Robert Weil, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Steven Ball, Director
Jeff Cushing, Director
Gil Francis, Director
Tom Iwankovitsch, Director
Lance Luce, Director
George Orbits, Director

The Recording Booth

Did you know that we have a library of over 650 recordings on our wonderful instrument? Did you know that over 500 of these are on 10 inch reel-to-reel and date back to the early 1960's?

DTOS member Bob Vigne under the supervision of Fred Brufloodt has been working very hard transferring all of these recordings over to compact disc. This is a very time consuming process

because every concert has to be listened to at regular speed to make the transfer. As these recordings are completed, they are being stored in a fire/water proof safe at the Senate. Thanks Bob and Fred for spending all those hours in the booth.

We are also proud to announce the finding of an old recording that we are putting on sale. Since it is not available on Compact

Disc and only on vinyl, we are selling "By Members Only Volume II" for \$10. Of course, we still have a few copies of "By Members Only Volume III" on Compact Disc, we also have several copies of "Tom Hazelton Live at the Senate" available. The "By Members Only Volume III" also sells for \$10 and the "Tom Hazelton Live" compact disc sells for \$20.

Membership Information

On September 26th, longtime Member Richard Dengate and his Wife Maxine celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

A celebration luncheon was hosted by their children Patrick of Ferndale, Mark of Augusta Ga, Christopher of Ferndale and Linda Sepe of Woodhaven.

Congratulations Dick and Maxine on 50 years!

The Society has lost a couple of great individuals over the last several months. Past President and longtime supporter James Teevin passed away on June 14th and the wife of Past President and current Corporate Secretary Gil Francis passed away in July. Penny was also very active in the Society making sure that the artists had everything that they needed in the dressing room before the concert and kept them company during intermission. You could always find Penny and

her longtime friend Edie Teevin behind the concession counter playing cards in between getting you your snacks. Jim and Penny will both be missed dearly.

Please keep members Jeff Slabough, Don Jenks and the Daughter of Gil Francis Nancy in your thoughts and prayers as they all recover at home from recent illnesses.

Know of a members birthday or anniversary? We want to know about it! Drop us a note at the office or call and leave us a message.

Want to take a guess at who this organist is?



TRIVIA QUESTION

Which of the following organists performed more times for DTOS between 1970 and 1980?

- A. Bill Thompson
- B. John Muri
- C. Lyn Larsen
- D. Don Baker

The answer will be published in next months issue of the newsletter.

NOTICE TO PLAYING MEMBERS

A friendly reminder that you should have received a user name and password for the new reservation system. A link to the system is on the Home Page of the DTOS web site and you are encouraged to use the system to schedule private practice time. By doing so could eliminate the possibility of someone else playing the organ when you arrive to play yourself.

