

CAROUSEL *Organ*



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**THE JOURNAL
OF THE
CAROUSEL ORGAN
ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA**

CAROUSEL ORGAN

The Official Journal of the
Carousel Organ Association of America (COAA)

Devoted to enjoying, preserving and sharing knowledge of all outdoor mechanical musical instruments, including band, fair and street organs, calliopes, and hand-cranked organs of all sizes.

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President’s Message . . .

Wintertime is always a challenge for organ rally enthusiasts as it offers no opportunities to gather, crank and enjoy...fortunately, spring is near and now we can begin to imagine the rallies and all the camaraderie and fun they bring.

The one advantage of winter is that it offers time to tune and tweak the instruments that bring us much joy.. Hopefully, as there was this year, we will have at least one rally scheduled during the winter of 2020 in one of the sunshine states. It would surely be successful as we have many COAA members in the South and many more spend time there during winter months. Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed and encouraged.

The rally schedule as of March 1:

Dates	Name	Location	Hosts
May 3-4	Iris Festival	Mountain View, AR	Doug & Danell Mauldin
May 25-27	Lake Winnie	Rossville, GA	Bob Buckler
June 29-30	Shupps Grove		
	Antique Market	Reinhold, PA	Sally Craig & Wally Venable
July 27-28	German Fest	Milwaukee, WI	Marc & Debe Dannecker
November 1-2	Soule Live		
	Steam Festival	Meridian, MS	Greg Hatcher



Continued on page 3 . . .

**LOOK
 at the ad
 pages
 for new ads
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 messages!**

Front cover: *Big Cindy*, a beautiful Artizan D band organ, was one of many interesting organs in the Miles Mountain Musical Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Read more about the museum and it’s disposal on page four. Photo: Ron Bopp

Permanent Member Name Badge:

Permanent COAA name badges (\$10 each postpaid) are available from “Mr. Ken” Badges ‘N Signs. Contact Ken at 800-398-8307 or email mrkenbadges@aol.com for more information.

Memberships & Directory:

Membership to the Carousel Organ Association of America is \$40.00 USD for U.S. domestic, \$45.00 USD for Canadian members and \$55.00 USD for all others overseas countries.

Membership Applications can be E-mailed upon request from the Membership Chairman, to be mailed in, or application information may be sent through the COAA website www.coaa.us. Please consider, if payments are made through PayPal, please add \$2.00 to cover PayPal Fees.

Mailed applications, with appropriate remittance, may be sent to the COAA Treasurer: Gregory Swanson, 209 Circle Lane, Webster, NY 14580-1303

Membership questions can be addressed by the COAA Membership Chairman: Gary Stevenson, 801 Eichelberger St., St. Louis, MO, 63111, USA. Or by Email To: garyg@studio801.com .

In mid-November a digital version (PDF file) of the 2017 COAA Membership Directory was sent to all COAA members who had email addresses on file. If you did not receive it, you may have an incorrect email address on file. If you have email and want a copy, contact the Secretary at wallace.venable@mail.wvu.edu

If you do not have an email address and want a copy, send \$5.00 to the COAA Treasurer, and he will instruct the Secretary to mail you a paper copy.

Items available from the Merchandise Chair:

Logo Decal: This beautiful logo is now available for use on your trailer or windshield. The large decal is 10" high x 14" wide. This decal sells for \$21.00 each or two for \$33.00. Shipping and handling is \$3.50. The small decal is 2¾" high x 4" wide and can be ordered for either inside or outside application (please specify). These are \$6.00 each or two for \$10.00 and shipping and handling is \$1.50 for these unless combined with the large decals/then there is no extra charge.

COAA License Plate: Introduced in 2007 this colorful license plate displays the COAA logo on white background. The plate sells for \$12.00 or two for \$17.00 plus \$5.00 postage.

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- T-shirts (S - XL) \$ 7.50
- T-shirts (2X - 3X) \$ 8.50
- Sweatshirts (S - XL) \$12.50
- Tote bags Royal/Navy \$ 6.00
- Ball Cap \$ 5.00

Note: a limited amount of COAA merchandise is available at discounted prices. Contact Suzie Hendricks at 651-247-5638 shhendricks@stkate.edu for prices and current inventory. Note: prices listed are 50% of previous listings.

Development:

You can help to continue the improvements and future security of the COAA and its journal, the *Carousel Organ*, by funding one of several initiatives with your monetary gift. We have in place both the *Memorial Donation* (used for special projects) as well as *Friend of the Carousel Organ* (used to enhance the journal or the website). The COAA has obtained it's 501(c)3 (non-for-profit) status. All donations are much appreciated and, are tax-deductible. All monetary gifts should be sent to: PayPal at coaa.account@yahoo.com or Greg Swanson 209 Circle Lane Webster, NY 14580

... continued from page 2

I want to thank all of our rally hosts, especially those who, like Bob Buckler and the Mauldins, are either hosting for the first time or at a new venue.

There are two more potential rallies, please check the COAA website often for details and other information.

Kind Regards — Angelo

From the Editor . . .

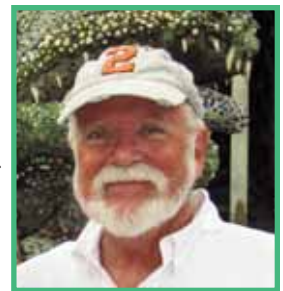
This turns out to be another great issue of the *Carousel Organ*. While you will see only three articles they are of major and interesting importance in the field of mechanical organs. First is my article on the now-defunct museum of Floyd Miles in Eureka Springs, AR. While living in NE Oklahoma this was a major source of organs, both large and small, to enjoy.

Dan Robinson has done a bang-up job of summarizing the history and locations of all of the Wurlitzer 165 Military Band Organs. This is a piece of history that is complete until the eventual sale facilitates another move of ownership. Tracy Tolzmann finishes his article on the trials and tribulations of duo ownership and restoration of their fine Ruth-Artizan band organ.

We have more exciting articles for you in the upcoming issues of this journal. Articles on the small hand organs like seen and heard at our rallies are especially needed. All you have to do is write it up, send some photos and I will make it look good in the journal.

Speaking of rallies, Mary Jo and I are on the way to the Mid-Winter meeting in Dahlonga, GA where we will be participating in a day rally on the streets of this historic town. Hope to see you there!

Enjoy reading—Ron



Remember the COAA

Consider the COAA in your estate planning, or if you wish, make a contribution now. Donations help continue to make the organization and the journal a first class association. Easy—use PayPal at coaa.account@yahoo.com

Miles Mountain Musical Museum—“The Pride of the Ozarks”

Ron Bopp

The Museum

Living in Southwest Missouri and Northeast Oklahoma for over 55 years gave the author many opportunities to visit and enjoy Floyd Miles’ Miles Mountain Musical Museum in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. **Figure 1**



Figure 1. Miles Mountain Musical Museum, located on Hwy 62, at the west end of Eureka Springs, AR.

Often our local AMICA chapter would hold meetings in that area and then, in 1997, it all ended with the demise of Mr. Miles and the subsequent auction of the museum’s possessions.



Figure 2. Floyd dancing with a customer, Maggie Brown,



Figure 3. Floyd Miles headlines the news article appearing in the *Joplin Globe* in June, 1976.

Floyd Miles was a colorful man with distinctive moustache and goatee. When our AMICA groups, or Mary Jo and I, would visit it would not be uncommon for him to drop what he was doing and dance with any women close enough for him to grab. **Figure 2** Floyd was honored to be “Man of the Year” in 1984 by the Eureka Springs Chamber of Commerce. He was inducted into the Arkansas Tourism Hall of Fame in 1987.



Figure 4. The museum’s promotional brochure.

According to his daughter, Marlene, Floyd became interested in musical instruments in mid-1950s. His life in Eureka Springs began in 1946 after leaving a auditor and manager position at General Electric in Chicago, IL. He and his family moved to Eureka Springs where he entered the real estate market and opened up a gift shop. He eventually bought 100 acres on the north side of US 62 and another on the south side. These were at the very west end of Eureka Springs—he opened up a gift shop and ice cream shop at that location. He had other activities there as well including re-opening the Onyx Cave and buying a defunct hospital building.

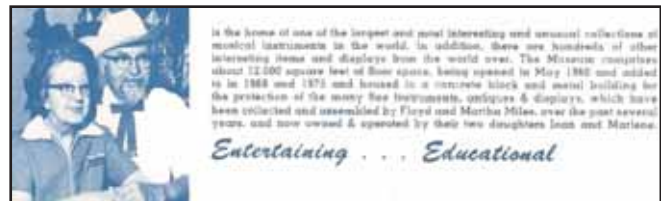


Figure 5. The reverse side of the above brochure featured a photo of Floyd and Martha Miles along with a statement of purpose.

By 1960 his interest in musical instruments had blossomed past a hobby and he opened a small museum. Marlene Coiner noted:

He didn’t play an instrument—maybe that’s what got his attention about instruments – he could just run on and play. But he loved music. Two rooms were opened to start, three later, one in 1968, another in 1975 and the last in 1983.



Figure 6. The Miles Mountain Musical Museum’s Circus Calliope truck, appearing in an Eureka Springs parade (date unknown).

Marlene Coiner went on to note:

Items in this vast collection included a variety of string and brass instruments, drums, organs, standard and player pianos, music boxes and calliopes and many, many other items. My father’s most beloved was a Circus Calliope, which was always the grand finale of every Eureka Springs parade. **Figure 6**

The museum was one of seven museums written up in 1995, in the 25th Anniversary issue of *The Smithsonian*, the Eureka Springs *The Morning News* noted:

The Smithsonian magazine once described it as “chock-block with machines, big and little, that tweetle, ting, oompah and bombombom all by themselves,” among them everything from a “skating rink Wurlitzer to a Coinola nickelodeon.” **Figure 7**



Figure 7. An interior view of the museum showing the numerous phonographs on the right and at the very end are two Belgium dance organs.



Figure 8. One of several roadside advertising signs.

The museum was advertised not only in the usual state attraction brochures but also with large signs upon entering both sides of Eureka Springs, AR. **Figure 8**



Figure 9. The highlight of the museum (instruments and otherwise) was the 90-key Mortier dance organ named the *Golden Eagle*.

Of interest to the *Carousel Organ* readers is the inventory of mechanical musical instruments which included barrel organs; calliopes; Artizan and Wurlitzer band organs, European (Mortier, Bursens) dance organs, calliopes (Tangley and National), a Wurlitzer Caliola as well as numerous self-made band organs and calliopes. **Figures 9 to 20** But this was not all as the museum held other items including a miniature circus, Java and Sumatra items, animated figures from the 1904 St. Louis World's fair, antique Christmas figures from a Joplin, MO warehouse, stereopticans, clocks of all kinds, religious items and a large collection of stringed instruments. The list goes on and on.

organ. They likened Miles to the famous showman, Buffalo Bill, with his white hair and trimmed goatee.



Figure 11. A 77-key Bursens, *Lula Mae*, spent time in the author's collection.



Figure 12. The Artizan D band organ, known as *Big Cindy*, was purchased by Ron Connors of Rogers, AR. Ron has since passed and it remains in the estate of a friend he bequeathed it to.

Figures 13 & 14 (below). Interior views of *Big Cindy* reveal the original double roll frame with slotted rollers over the tracker bar as well as the cone device for speed control.

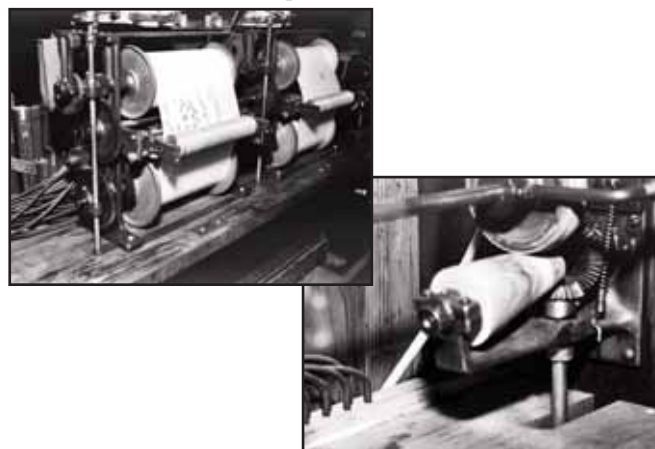


Figure 10. The *Diamond Lil* was a 90-key Bursens dance organ.

Southern Living magazine noted while Miles guided tours through the museum he enjoyed seeing the crowd's reactions when he stopped to play a band



Figure 15. Above is a beautiful 50-key Gebr. Salomon barrel organ. The organ is currently for sale.



Figure 18. An altered Wurlitzer 103 was the *Little Princess*.



Figure 16. The *Midway Queen* is a Wurlitzer Style 105 Band Organ.



Figure 17. A Wurlitzer Style 125 Military Band Organ, the *Golden Trumpeter*, was easily heard over its companion organs.



Figure 19. The *Queen of the Ozarks* was a Model A National Calliope, complete with its 43 brass pipes.



Figure 20. The 43-note Tangley Calliope, *Susie-Q*, was Floyd Miles' favorite and was featured in his calliope truck, seen to the right in Figure 21.



The Passing of Floyd Miles

Floyd Miles died in August, 1995 at the age of 88. The Eureka Springs Chamber of Commerce newsletter, *The Morning News*, noted: "Many of us will always keep the image of the white-haired Mr. Miles dancing and smiling with the ladies touring his museum." His prized possession, the truck-mounted Circus Calliope, led his funeral procession. **Figures 20 & 21**

Miles Musical Museum's dream finally ends

Becca Bacon Martin
The Morning News

Smithsonian magazine once described it as "chock-a-block with machines, big and little, that tweetle, ting, oompah and bombomb all by themselves," among them everything from a "skating rink Wurlitzer to a Coinola Nickelodeon."

But come June 20-21, the contents of Miles Musical Museum will be on the auction block, ending a dream that Floyd Miles turned into reality in 1960.

"I know a lot of people think we're selling it just for the money," said Miles' daughter, Marlene Miles Coiner, who has been proprietor of the museum on U.S. 62 west of Eureka Springs since 1977. "It's not that — we just want to do something different. Life is short, and we want to enjoy it."

Coiner said she and her sister, Joan Ticer, who lives in Tulsa, based the decision they made last winter on several factors. The past couple of years have not seen the bus tours that were so good for the museum, she said, and it's been increasingly difficult to find repairmen to keep the musical instruments in running order.

"And when you have this kind of an investment, it just comes time to make a decision," Coiner said. "We hated it. But once you've made the decision, it's not so hard."

Coiner wouldn't even speculate on the value of the museum's contents. Neither would auctioneer Preston Evans of Conyers,



Marlene Miles Coiner will 'do something different' after the contents of Miles Musical Museum go up for auction next month.

Ga., a longtime acquaintance who agreed to conduct the sale.

"I can't say what an auction like this is going to do. It's according to how many people show up, who they are and what they like.

"There will be a lot of people who will buy a little bit and a few people who will buy a lot. If those few don't show up, the auction won't be as successful."

Please see **MUSEUM**, Page C2

Figure 22. The museum ends as reported in the May, 1997 issue of *The Morning News of Northwest Arkansas*.

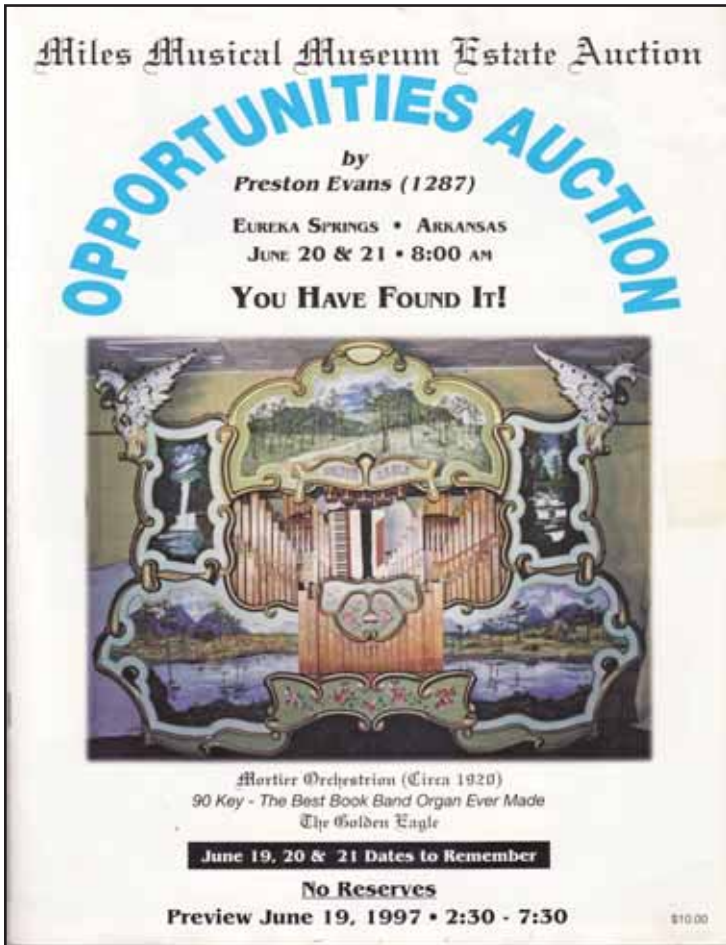


Figure 23. The sale catalog issued by the Preston Evans auction house.

The decision was to put the contents of Miles Musical Museum up for auction. The descents, Floyd Miles' daughters, Marlene Miles Coiner and Joan Ticer, wanted to do something different than run a museum. They had commented that it was increasingly difficult to find repair people to keep the musical instruments in running order. **Figure 22**

The Auction

The family kept Floyd's calliope and the building. The auction was scheduled for June 20 and 21, 1997. Auctioneer company, Preston Evans, of Conyers, GA handled the auction. **Figures 23 to 25** Like all auctions of this type the crowd was large and the anticipation great. One disenchanted MMDer, however, commented:

Whatever else this sale of the Miles Mechanical Music Museum is, it is maybe the most disorganized mess that ever happened. There is no catalog, and there is no effort made to follow the item numbers. So everyone was really frustrated while the auctioneers dinked around with an hour of buttons.



Figure 24. A page from the catalog detailing organs and Floyd's favorites. Circled are some of the mechanical organs and calliopes in the auction.



Figure 25. The auction as advertised in the *Antique Trader* on June 4, 1997.

Needless to say, the auction proceeded on. The author bought several small items including a set of carved, nude Polynesian bookends made of some exotic wood. Later, melancholy (or lack of judgement) set in and a large dance organ was purchased by the author and his wife. There didn't seem to be any real bargains but the good news was that there was a variety of organs and calliopes for many lucky buyers. Prices realized for some instruments are in the table in **Figure 26**.

Final Thoughts

Floyd Miles Moutain Musical Museum lasted 50 years, all the time bringing exposure to mechanical music as well as other interesting items to the visiting public. Not many privately owned museums last that long.

His collection was varied and somewhat 'hokey' with the 'dog patch' type names applied to the organs, but the machines were real and gave visitors something that even today we try to do with our collections and rallies—an education and chance to relive the past.



Figure 27. The author with Floyd Miles in December, 1993. Behind is *Big Cindy*, an Artizan D band organ.

Auction Prices Realized			
Keith Prowse Barrel Piano	\$1,000	Unifon	\$2,000
46-key Molinari Barrel Organ	\$8,000	42-key Barrel Organ (maker unknown)	\$3,500
National Calliope (red)	\$8,000	National Calliope (green)	\$5,000
50-key Salomon Barrel Organ	\$6,000	Wurlitzer Caliola	\$3,900
Wurlitzer 125 Band Organ (replica)	\$12,500	Wurlitzer 105 Band Organ (<i>Midway Queen</i>)	\$13,000
90-key Mortier (<i>Double Eagle</i>)	\$32,500	90-key Bursens (<i>Diamond Lil</i>)	\$22,500
77-key Bursens (<i>Lula Mae</i>)	\$16,500	Artizan D (<i>Big Cindy</i>)	\$30,000
other items included			
Homemade Caliola	\$1,450	<i>Madam Maren</i> Band Organ	\$11,750
?Molinari Hand Organ	\$3,250	New Calliope	\$1,400
New Calliope with Drums	\$2,700	Small Circus Book Organ	\$3,800
Nice Hand Organ	\$5,250		

Figure 26. A table listing the sales prices of organs and calliopes realized at the June 21 and 22, 1997 auction. There was a 10% premium charge for bidders as well

DeBence Antique Music World Organ Grinder's Rally

Another Organ Grinders Rally will be held in Franklin, PA, on August 3 & 4, 2019. As usual, the event will be held along the downtown Liberty Street sidewalks and in Fountain Park. In the event that the weather does not cooperate, the rally will be moved to DeBence Antique Music World. Organ grinders are also welcome at the museum on Friday.

The annual Taste of Franklin will take place late Sunday Morning and afternoon. This has always given us an attentive audience.

Saturday evening there will be a dinner at the museum, with instrument demonstrations, of course.

There is no registration fee, but they would like registration in advance. If you have not received an invitation already, you can contact them at 814-432-8350 or by email at debencemuseum@verizon.net. They will be happy to send both a registration form and lodging information.

The Mortier Story

Tom Meijer

The coming year will feature the publication of the long-awaited book about dance organs and orchestrions built by the firm of Theofiel Mortier from Antwerp, Belgium. The intention is to release the book at a special event in June, to be held in the southern part in The Netherlands, on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the Dutch Organ Society KDV.

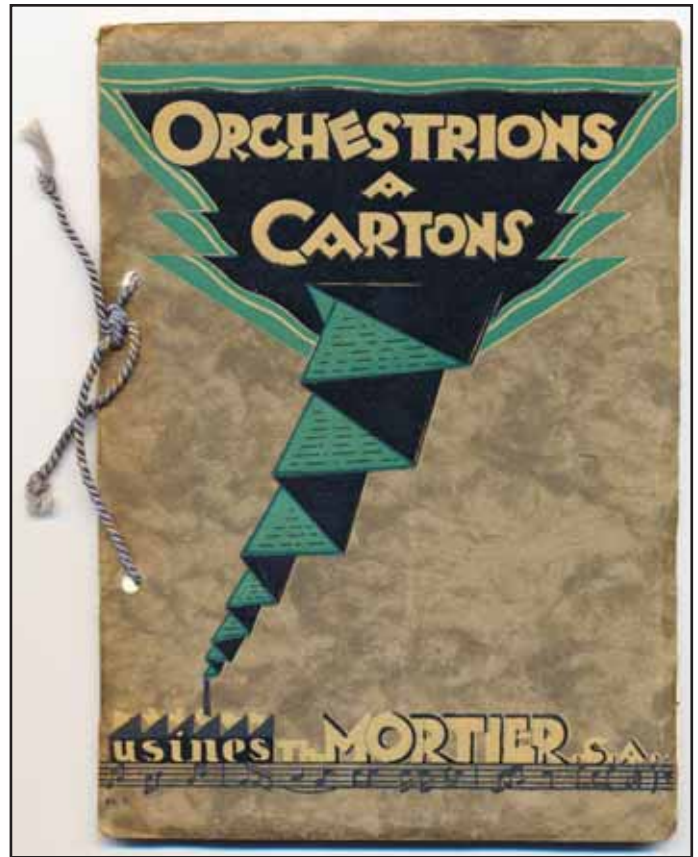
It will be a reference book of 300 – 400 pages with photos and descriptions of Mortier organs and orchestrions with known serial numbers, supplemented with photos of those without a number. The history of the firm will also receive attention. The photographs, many previously unpublished, come from various collections.

The book will be the first complete research on the history of the Mortier Company and the instruments that the firm has built. The text is based on information collected by Karel Beunis and Gustave Mathot, plus the extensive documentation gathered by Roger Duerinck. This material will be complemented and updated with more recently discovered details and photos.

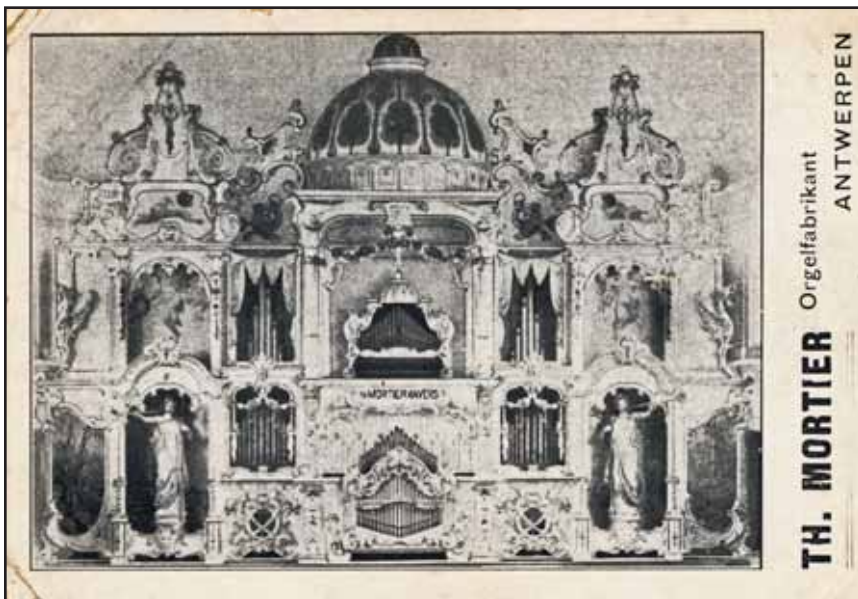
Many Mortier organs were imported to the USA from Belgium and The Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s. We expect that the book will be interesting for American readers as well. Therefore the text will be written in both Dutch and English, to make it as widely accessible as possible.

Although much information has already been published about the Mortier Company, a comprehensive survey of this material has been lacking. This book will seek to document historical details and musical changes, enabling future generations to understand the alterations which have been made to organ pipes, scales and façades etc. since the organs left the factory. The book, which fully encompasses the aims of the KDV, will assist the identification of existing instruments which may not be easily recognised otherwise.

Ruud Brien (coordination) and Tom Meijer (editor and graphic design) will lead this project. Björn Isebaert, Jack Jacobs, Jan Kees de Ruijter and Maarten van der Vlugt will co-operate. Various collectors have agreed to make their collections available for the book. If you have photos or any other information that may assist in the preparation of this book, please email the editor: tommanda@zeelandnet.nl.



A vintage Mortier catalog.



A Mortier dance organ built circa 1911.

A Dozen Wurlitzer Style 165 Band Organs (Extant plus One)

Dan Robinson

For many fans of American band organs, the holy grail is the Wurlitzer Style 165. This powerful but mellow organ, with 256 pipes, 22 bell bars and a variety of percussion effects, plays its namesake roll which has a larger musical scale than the Style 125 or Style 150 roll (nearly all existing Wurlitzer band organs play one of the three). Of the twenty-four Style 165 organs shipped between 1914 and 1939, eleven are known to have survived. Two play for carousels and one is coin-operated in a museum. The remaining eight are in six collections with varying degrees of access. Much has been written about the Style 165, but a run-down of the existing ones had not appeared in this journal. The organs are presented in serial number order, except that the three in one collection are together and detailed in the order that they joined that collection. The lost Seabreeze Park organ is also included.

To briefly summarize Style 165 roll production, most rolls had ten tunes each from the start of the 6500 series in 1914 until roll #6672 ushered in the six-tune roll era in 1934. Wurlitzer's production ended in 1945 with #6690. The Allan Herschell Company, builders of carousels and other rides (and, like Wurlitzer, based in North Tonawanda, New York), then produced one roll, #6691. Ralph Tussing (T.R.T. Mfg. Co., also in North Tonawanda) then arranged and produced six-tune rolls #6692 to #6724, up until 1967. Production of numbered rolls by at least six modern-day arrangers commenced in 1990 with #6820 and is now approaching 80 rolls (at the time of this writing, the 6900 series is about to be launched). For much more on Style 165 music, see Matthew Caulfield's website at wurlitzer-rolls.com and Glenn Thomas' major article in *Carousel Organ* #56.

1. Sanfilippo Collection

The earliest surviving Style 165, serial #2943, first went to Aurora, Illinois, in September 1915, where it played for basement-level skaters and ground-floor dancers at the Sylvandell Skating Rink and Dance Hall (the organ was mounted on an elevator). Factory ledgers show subsequent shipment of the organ to Wurlitzer in Rochester, New York, in June 1922, then to Bean Amusement Co., Washington, Pennsylvania, in December 1923.

Organ #2943 was later bought by Jim Wells, Fairfax, Virginia, who played it in Washington, D.C., at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History in the early

1960s. Wells sold the organ to Jasper Sanfilippo, Barrington Hills, Illinois, in 1988. After its 1991 restoration by John Hovancak and Dan Meuer, Dodgeville, Wisconsin, as well as at least once beforehand, it appeared at band organ rallies in a red 1962 Ford box truck also purchased from Wells. This is the only Style 165 to ever be brought to rallies. **Figure 1**



Figure 1. Organ #2943 while in a 1962 Ford truck. Photo: Ron Bopp

This Style 165, being an early example, includes raised panels on its façade. The statues on the organ are not believed to be original, although early Style 165s did have statues. The design of the façade's top crest is different than that on any other Style 165, and the bell bars, slightly ovoid in shape rather than rectangular, have a sound unlike those on other Style 165s. However, an old photo of the organ taken during a Washington, D.C., playing engagement reveals standard bell bars.

The Style 165, removed from the box truck, is now in the carousel building at the Sanfilippo collection (**Figure 2** along with Style 157 #3444, Style 180 #3439 (one of three surviving of five built and the only one still playing Style 180 rolls) and many other American and European organs, all maintained by Art Reblitz. The 1890 Eden Palais salon carousel was built by M. König of the Netherlands with horses by Josef Hübner of Germany, and sports a massive and ornate entrance façade. The Sanfilippo estate has hosted numerous mechanical music gatherings (sanfilippofoundation.org).



Figure 2. Organ #2943 in the Sanfilippo collection.

Photo: Steve Ahrens

2 / 3 / 4. American Treasure Tour

A former tire factory just outside of Philadelphia now houses one man's eclectic collection of treasures at the appropriately named American Treasure Tour. Inside are over thirty band organs—including three Wurlitzer Style 165s—more than a hundred other automatic instruments, mostly player pianos and nickelodeons, and hundreds of vintage, animated automatons (see *Carousel Organ* #51 for a report on Matthew Caulfield's and this author's 2011 visit).

The first Style 165 to become part of this collection was the last one that Wurlitzer sold. Organ #4338 was shipped in June 1939 to Ross Davis for his 1926 Spillman Engineering/Looff/Carmel carousel at Griffith Park, Los Angeles, California (carousels.org/psp/GriffithPark). By this time the Davis family had owned and operated carousels up and down the California coast for decades, and Ross was a selling agent for Wurlitzer and for Spillman Engineering. Style 165 #3629 was already at his Lincoln Park carousel, a similar Spillman Engineering park model and also in Los Angeles. Organ #4338 was

sold and shipped in 1939 but was almost certainly built earlier. It was fitted with a Style 157 front (**Figure 3**) since a proper Style 165 façade was not available—see Ron Bopp's *The American Carousel Organ* (hereafter "*Bopp*"), p135, for sales bill. The organ was adjacent to the ride in the Griffith Park carousel building.

The Lincoln Park carousel was lost in a 1976 fire. Fortunately, Style 165 #3629 was offsite and was purchased that same year by Don Rand and Ed Openshaw along with #4338 and the Griffith Park carousel. They elected to use #3629 at the carousel, the organ's lighted façade complementing the lights of the ride, so #4338 moved to Rand's home in Thomaston, Maine. He sold it in 1997, long since back in good playing condition, to the owner of what is now the American Treasure Tour, where the organs are maintained by Joe Hilferty of York, Pennsylvania. The Style 157 façade still has its original paint.

The second Style 165 to join the American Treasure Tour collection was #3106, originally shipped to Pittsburgh in January 1918. It played at West View Park's carousel, a T. M. Harton-built ride with mostly D. C.

Müller & Bro. figures. Jake DeBence acquired the organ as a basket case upon the 1977 closing of the amusement park. Steve Lanick later bought the parts, and they were ultimately purchased for the American Treasure Tour to be made back into a complete Style 165. Restoration by Joe Hilferty was completed in 2011. Listening to the organ now, one would never imagine that it came out of West View Park as a pile of parts with no case or façade. Bob Yorburg, Yorktown Heights, New York, carved the replica front, and it was painted by Joan Fay. **Figure 4**

Organ #2992, the third Style 165 to become part of the collection, was earlier brought back to life from a similar basket case condition by Mike Kitner and Dr. Bill Black. This organ first went to Wurlitzer in Rochester, New York, in April 1916. Entries in Wurlitzer ledgers show shipment back to Rochester and then to Boston, both in March 1921. Fred Dahlinger found evidence that the organ was later in the center of a carousel at the Police Benevolent Association Park in Miami. #2992 would be discovered as part of Erwin Heller's band organ collection in Macedonia, Ohio, by Jim Wells, who purchased the entire "Heller Hoard" in 1977. Dr. Black purchased the Style 165 the next year.

Measurements for the case and other missing parts were taken from Glen Echo Park's Style 165 at Durward Center's shop in Baltimore, MD. Black brought pieces home to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, to install them



Figure 3. Organ #4338 in the American Treasure Tour.

Photo: Ron Bopp

after restoration at Kitner's shop in Carlisle, PA. Most of the 88 missing pipes that needed to be made were melody pipes. Tops of some of the six trombone pipes showed evidence of fire damage, and pieces of ride tickets from the Miami park were found in the pressure pump, believed to have been brought in by rodents.



Figure 4. Organ #3106 in the American Treasure Tour.

Photo: Author's collection



Figure 5. Organ #2992 in the American Treasure Tour.

Photo: Mikey Mills

Dr. Black celebrated the restoration's completion in 1994 with the first recording of the organ on his *Carrousel Music* label. By 2000 it would be used for almost a dozen different recordings (music.carouselstores.com). The façade, including its raised panels, is a combination of original and replica pieces. It is currently unpainted, and statues have been added. **Figure 5** #2992 joined the American Treasure Tour in 2011. Next to it is the only Style 175 built, #3200, and next to that organ is Style 165 #3106. All three organs now have non-invasive MIDI systems and can play in tandem.

The American Treasure Tour hosts guided tram tours as well as organized mechanical music groups.

See at americantreasuretour.com.

Jim Kenney's YouTube channel has videos of all three Style 165s, plus other organs in the collection including the only surviving Style 164, #4329 (see *Carousel Organ* #72, #73). Go to youtube.com/wurly164 and click on "videos." (Note—Kenney's Style 146-B featured there, #4149, is now at Sonny's Place, Somers, Connecticut, with Philadelphia Toboggan Co. carousel #72.)

5. Circus World Museum

Organ #3030 was first shipped in March 1917 to Toledo and was shipped back there in April 1923 after repairs. It accompanied a D. C. Müller & Bro. carousel at Walbridge Park. The amusement park closed in 1957 and the organ was purchased for \$300.00 by Robert House, Manistee, Michigan. It was then bought by Skerbeck Shows of Wisconsin in 1962. Although they painted their name on its façade (which includes raised panels), Skerbeck did not use the organ. **Figure 6** They loaned it to Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin, who later purchased it.

After being rebuilt by Stan Peters, the organ was recorded by Cuca Records for *Circus World Band Organ* (#3030—also the organ's serial number—and #3060). Even before the major restoration he completed of it in 1985, Dick Lokemoen thought it was "a good sounding instrument" (*Carousel Organ* #66, p26)—quite an understatement about any Style 165, in this author's opinion (Peters and Lokemoen can be seen with it in *Carousel Organ* #70, p21). Today this publicly operating Style 165 can be enjoyed by any Circus World Museum visitor who deposits quarters in its coin box (search YouTube for "Circus World Wurlitzer"). The museum's other band organs include the ex-Royal American Shows 89-key Gavioli, also restored by Lokemoen, and a North



Figure 6. Organ #3030 at Circus World Museum.

Photo: Ron Bopp

Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works Style 137 with added drums. The latter organ, which plays for the c. 1917 Herschell-Spillman carousel, was originally a cylinder organ and now plays Wurlitzer Style 125 rolls.



Figure 7. Organ #3124 while at Playland-at-the-Beach
Photo: Robert Smit collection

6. Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Organ #3124 is the only Style 165 to go from private hands back to carousel duty. It was shipped to San Francisco at the end of 1918 to be installed at the center of the 1906 Loeff carousel then at Playland-at-the-Beach. **Figure 7** This was one of several band organs at the amusement park. Others included a rare Artizan Style D currently in a California collection and at least one Wurlitzer Style 153. Two tall statues acquired in Europe were at some point added to the Style 165. Playland closed in 1972 and the organ was sold to Mike Roberts, Lafayette, California. The Loeff carousel, which includes camels, giraffes and rams, is now back in operation in San Francisco at the Children's Creativity Museum in Yerba Buena Gardens (see carousels.org/psp/YerbaBuena).

Roberts sold the Style 165 to

Terry Hathaway and Dave Bowers in the late 1970s. It was restored by Hayes McClaran, Fresno, California, who then purchased the organ around 1981 and sold the non-original statues. McClaran hired an MGM movie studio painter to create scenes depicting California history on the façade since the original paint was gone. The third incarnation of San Francisco's Cliff House, which burned in 1907, is shown at the top.

McClaran later moved to Batesville, Indiana, taking #3124 with him. In 2006 the organ was sold to the family-owned amusement park Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, (**Figure 8**) fulfilling McClaran's longtime dream for the organ to return to public use in California (see Matthew Caulfield's article in *Carousel Organ* #32). It was gone over by Don Stinson (Stinson Band Organ Company, Bellefontaine, Ohio) and a MIDI system was added. On March 31, 2007, the Style 165 began playing for the Santa Cruz carousel, a 1911 Loeff machine similar to the one that the organ accompanied at Playland (see carousels.org/psp/SantaCruz). Also with the Santa Cruz carousel are a Wurlitzer Style 146-A (late-style, which for years was at the park's miniature golf course) and the park's original A. Ruth & Sohn, restored by Stinson and sporting a Stinson façade in lieu of the long-lost original. The three organs, all adjacent to the carousel, play by MIDI, with the Ruth playing 96-keyless Ruth scale music as well as Wurlitzer Style 165 arrangements. One organ plays a few tunes and then another organ plays. All three are behind glass, but a sound system transmits their music throughout the building.

7. Arnold Chase Collection



Figure 8. Organ #3124 at Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Photo: Yelp collection

Style 165 #3358 was originally shipped in April 1921 to Sunnyside Park, Toronto, Ontario. It served not on the amusement park's Dentzel carousel but at the center of the Prior & Church Racing Derby (see *Bopp*, p134). **Figure 9** Sunnyside closed in 1955 to make way for expressway construction. The Racing Derby went to the Canadian National Exhibition and was later broken up. The Dentzel carousel and its Style 157 band organ, #3454, went to a new park in Anaheim, California, called Disneyland, a place Walt Disney was inspired to create from Ross Davis' Griffith Park carousel in Los Angeles. It was Davis who arranged the Sunnyside carousel's sale to Disney. The sale of the Racing Derby was presumably also arranged by Davis, as he retained the Style 165.

The Style 165 was purchased by John Malone (Play-

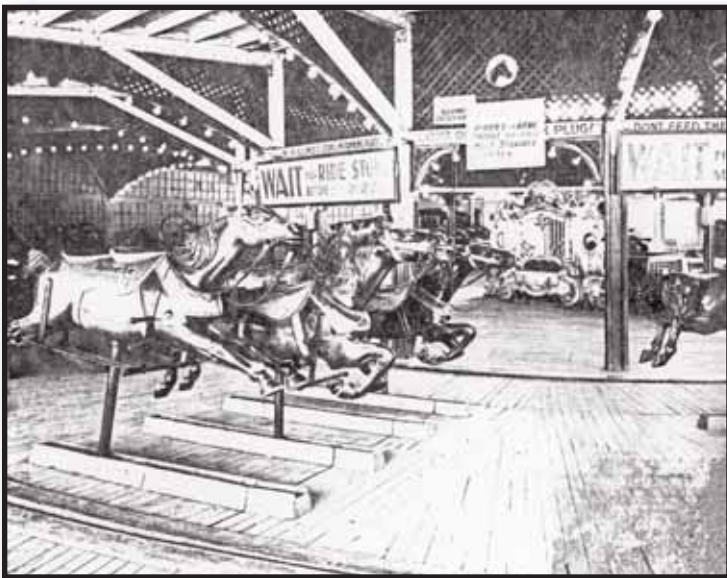


Figure 9. Organ 3358 while at Sunnyside park, Toronto.
Photo: Don Rand collection

Rite Music Rolls), Turlock, California, “in millions of pieces” in the late 1960s. “It took him years to get it all back together, but when he did, he had the most magnificent mechanical music machine right there in his own home” (Marc Elbasani, *Mechanical Music Digest*, mmdigest.com). With the addition of

auxiliary Style 125 and Style 150 roll frames, the organ was able to audition any Wurlitzer band organ roll that Play-Rite was cutting. Style 150 rolls “sounded so much richer and fuller on the 165 than on a 146 or even a 153—solely because of the pipe complement they were driving in the 165” (Matthew Caulfield, *Mechanical Music Digest*). According to Wurlitzer roll mogul Ray Siou, this Style 165 was recorded at the Oakland Coliseum by Klavier Records for both volumes of *Catch the Brass Ring*. Interestingly, the LP jacket of the first volume (1975) showed the Style 165 then in the Hathaway & Bowers collection, while the second (1978) showed the Griffith Park carousel, which had still another Style 165 (the combined CD release of *Catch the Brass Ring* contains 31 of the original 39 tunes; klavier-records.com/circus.htm).

Malone sold the organ to Arnold Chase, West Hartford, Connecticut, in 2006. It was restored by Tim Westman, Woodsville, New Hampshire. The façade, one of three extant Style 165 façades with lights, was restored by Rosa Patton, Saxapahaw, North Carolina (see *Carousel Organ* #52, centerfold). **Figure 10** The organ is now a featured attraction of the large mechanical music collection in the hilltop mansion of Mr. Chase, who has hosted mechanical music groups and, most recently, a visit by the National Carousel Association 2018 convention. Alongside the Style 165 is the Style 157, long sold from Disneyland and also original to Sunnyside Park (see *Carousel Organ* #65 centerfold). Malone, meanwhile, missing the Style 165, commissioned a replica from Belgian organ builder Johnny Verbeeck, who had built one year earlier for Seabreeze Park, Rochester, New York. Both replica organs have façades by the carving firm Herreria Artistica Rodriguez in Tijuana, Mexico, who used Santa Cruz's Style 165 as a model (Malone's is lighted like the original Style 165 he owned).



Figure 10. Organ #3358 in the Arnold Chase collection.

Photo: Arnold Chase

8. Midwest Collection

In Baldwin, New York, on Long Island, the c. 1910–12 Murphy/Stein & Goldstein carousel at Nunley’s Carousel and Amusements had Style 165 #3378 at its center for decades. **Figure 11** The Wurlitzer ledgers offer no detail on this organ beyond its initial shipment to Wurlitzer’s New York City office in June 1921. Nunley’s opened in 1939, the carousel coming from Golden City Park, Brooklyn, so presumably the organ also came from there. At Nunley’s, the carousel’s Wurlitzer Style 153 was the organ that was usually, if not always, played. Gavin McDonough purchased the Style 165 in 1979—but already owned the Ruth Model 36X (playing Wurlitzer Style 165 rolls) from nearby Nunley’s Happyland, which had closed the previous year. Shortly after buying the Style 165, McDonough sold it to a Midwest collector.

The new owner had the instrument restored by Durward Center, and the façade was restored by Rosa Patton. **Figure 12** The project finished in 1987. After experiencing the results in person, McDonough wrote, “That organ came a long way in both sound and sight since it left Nunley’s seven years ago.” It is this Style 165 on Klavier Records’ 1990 release *Catch Another Brass*



Figure 11. Organ #3378 while on Nunley’s carousel.

Photo: Gavin McDonough

Ring, per Ray Siou. The statues now on the organ were probably patterned from ones in a Gebrüder Bruder *Elite Orchestra Apollo* illustration (a 65-keyless *Elite Orchestra Apollo* façade was copied by Wurlitzer for their Style 165).

Nunley’s Carousel and Amusements closed in 1995. The carousel and its Style 153 are now both restored and operating, still on Long Island, at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City (see carousels.org/psp/Nunleys).



Figure 12. Organ #3378 in a midwest collection.

From *The Golden Age of Automatic Musical Instruments*, copyright © Arthur A. Reblitz 2001. Used with permission

9. Rhode Island Collection

First shipped to St. Louis in April 1922, organ #3437 was soon rebuilt for the amusement park Coney Island in Cincinnati, where it arrived in April 1925. It's unknown whether it played for the park's carousel, Philadelphia Toboggan Co. #79, or served some other purpose. The organ left Cincinnati in 1953 when Ralph Tussing rebuilt the park's Wurlitzer Style 157 and took the Style 165 in trade. (That Style 157 is now in a private collection. The carousel moved to nearby Kings Island [see carousels.org/psp/KingsIsland] and now has the ex-Paul Eakins Wurlitzer Style 157, #3833. Kings Island was intended to replace Cincinnati's Coney Island, but Coney still exists as a small amusement park).

Tussing would sell the Style 165 to the late Howard Walton for his roller skating rink near Painesville, Ohio, in Mentor-on-the-Lake. About a one-foot strip was cut from the middle of the façade's top crest to clear the ceiling, and at some point the lighted façade was painted an off-white with accents of pink and baby blue. **Figure 13** Walton would play the same roll, #6510, every night near closing time to let the skaters know that they couldn't stay much longer. The four-waltz medley (*Good Night Ladies, We Won't Go Home Till Morning, Auld Lang Syne, Then*



Figure 13. Organ #3437 at Howard Walton's roller rink.

Photo: Don Rand collection

We'll Go Home) is today among extant Style 165 rolls because Walton loaned the original for recutting. He also had custom rolls cut by Ralph Tussing from existing masters (one such roll in the author's collection is missing its first tune, suggesting a lot of play at the roller rink).

Walton retained the Style 165 beyond the closing of the roller rink but later sold it to Don Rand and Ed Openshaw, owners of the Lincoln Park and Griffith Park (Los Angeles) Style 165s. The bulk of their payment to Walton for the Style 165 was a freshly restored Style 153. Rand wrote, "Upon delivery (Walton) immediately threw a three-day celebration that continued as we left, the organ and its music fading in the summer night" (*AMICA Bulletin*, Vol. 26, No. 6). Rand and Openshaw would soon sell the Style 165 they obtained from Walton to a collector in Rhode Island, who did his own mechanical work on it but had them restore the façade, with Rand handling the paintwork and Openshaw replacing the strip removed for the roller rink. **Figure 14** This owner, who also added statues to the Style 165, passed away at age 90 in 2008, but his daughter and grandson keep his memory alive by maintaining and enjoying the Wurlitzer band organs that he loved so much. His grandson even recalls childhood memories of helping with the organs.



Figure 14. Organ #3437 in a Rhode Island Collection.

Photo: Don Rand collection.

10. Glenn Thomas Collection

Style 165 #3629 was purchased by the aforementioned Ross Davis for Lincoln Park, Los Angeles, in 1924. At the time a 1915 Herschell-Spillman park model carousel operated there (it moved in 1931 and wound up in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park—see carousels.org/psp/GoldenGate). Its successor at Lincoln Park, the Spillman Engineering park model, is the carousel most associated with organ #3629. Davis knew how important it was that a carousel have good band organ music, hence the purchase of this Style 165 and, 15 years later, its sister organ for Griffith Park (#4338). He said in an interview, "Some operators pay no attention to the music that goes with the ride, but I don't feel that way at all." Gary Watkins of Sun Valley, California, originator of the Style 165 roll catalog, wrote, "I was one of a number of people who visited the [two] parks each Sunday just to hear the fine Wurlitzer arrangements on the well-maintained organs."

Style 165 #3629 "played faithfully year in and year out, entertaining throngs of happy riders for 50 years ... at Lincoln Park" (Don Rand, *AMICA Bulletin*, Vol. 26, No. 6). The organ was also used for a number of LP records, including *Merry-Go-Round Music for Adults and Children Too!* (Fairlane Records, 1959), *75 Key Wurlitzer Fair Organ* (Crystal Records, U.K. issue, 1972) and various Concert Recording releases, plus "singles" like the two Capitol children's records *Bozo's Merry-Go-Round Music* (1954) and at least nine on the Vega label. There was also the Bel Canto reel-to-reel *Carousselle Band Organ*.

A Concert Recording album jacket noted that the organ "is serviced and tuned regularly and is one of the very few Wurlitzer Concert Band Organs still playing." The Style 165, which was adjacent to the carousel, underwent a partial restoration by organ mechanic Herb Vincent in the mid-1950s.



Figure 16. Organ #3629 in the Glenn Thomas collection.

Photo: Author's collection



Figure 15. Organ 3629 at Griffith Park.

Photo: Don Rand collection

Davis acquired a sizable number of rolls, including some from organ rebuilder Stan Peters (per Dick Lokemoen, *Carousel Organ* #67). Much of this collection was later used to produce recuts. But Davis gave away rolls he didn't particularly like, including ones to San Francisco's Playland-at-the-Beach, some of which, Watkins wrote, "occasionally made their way [back] to the Davis carousels for a rare playing."

As noted previously, a fire in 1976 claimed the Lincoln Park carousel, but Style 165 #3629 and its rolls were not onsite. About that same time, the Griffith Park operation was sold to Don Rand and Ed Openshaw, who decided to replace #4338 with #3629.

So after its rebuilding in their restora-

tion shop, the carousel service of the ex-Lincoln Park organ continued, beginning in May 1977. **Figure 15** Rand had restored the lighted façade’s original paint, in the process removing several layers of varnish applied by Davis. In the same *AMICA Bulletin* quoted earlier, Rand wrote, “We played the 165 organ every weekend for nine years (weekdays, Style 150 rolls on the North Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works Style 188—author) and it held up remarkably under continual playing and it was ... featured in TV commercials and film work whenever we rented the carousel to the movie studios (the Lincoln Park carousel had been used similarly—author).”

The Style 165 quit playing when the bellows gave out in 1986. The carousel was sold around the same time to Warren Deasy and Rosemary West (who purchased a new Style 165 roll-playing organ, a Stinson Model 87). Style 165 #3629 went with Openshaw to Maine and then New Hampshire and was silent for almost 30 years. In late 2013, the organ was purchased by Glenn Thomas, Belle Mead, New Jersey, who had grown up listening to it at Lincoln Park. Following restoration by Joe Hilferty and cosmetic restoration to the façade by Pam Hessey, Kingman, Arizona (**Figure 16**), #3629 was unveiled to a group of enthusiasts in October 2014. Thomas has since hosted several mechanical music gatherings (and has CDs available at wurlitzer165.net).

It is appropriate to note here that Wurlitzer converted numerous European organs to Style 165 rolls and sold them as Style 165 organs, as one such example is also owned by Thomas (see *Carousel Organ* #41, #44). Assigned Wurlitzer serial #4591, the Gebr. Bruder was restored by Joe Hilferty to use all of the registers and percussion effects of the Style 165 roll (unlike any Style 165 organs). Its replica Style 165 façade was carved by Bob Yorburg and painted by Marguerite Chadwick-Juner of

New York and by Pam Hessey, and now includes two original Gebr. Bruder or Wurlitzer statues (see nick-elodeonhouse.net).

11. Glen Echo Park

The 1921 Dentzel menagerie carousel at Glen Echo Park, Glen Echo, Maryland, originally had a Wurlitzer Style 153 band organ. Style 165 #3779, shipped there in April 1926, took the Style 153’s place in the alcove facing the carousel. The Style 165 was converted to less expensive and more plentiful Caliola rolls, probably by T.R.T., in the late 1940s or early 1950s. When Glen Echo Park’s amusement rides closed for good in 1968 and Jim Wells purchased the carousel and organ, a community organization raised \$80,000 to buy them from Wells and keep them at the park. Both were gifted to the National Park Service (NPS), which now operates the park as a cultural and arts center.

Restoration of the carousel under the direction of NPS soon began, and the organ went to Durward Center for full restoration in 1978. In the process it was converted back to Style 165 rolls, readily available by this time from Play-Rite Music Rolls. Center also crafted new pipes to replace ten changed out for the Caliola conversion. Matthew Caulfield noted that the organ had been “wheezing along” for years and wrote after hearing the restored version, “Durward Center worked a miracle with that organ.” Carrousel Music produced two recordings of the freshly restored Style 165 in 1979, and the LP record *Ride the Carousel!* was produced on the Artacus label in 1984. A number of YouTube videos feature the organ—search for “Glen Echo Wurlitzer.”

Glen Echo Park now has nearly all surviving vintage Style 165 rolls in the form of recuts, as well as many modern-day rolls. Rosa Patton has restored the organ’s façade to its original paint, which had been covered decades earlier. **Figure 17** She also restored the entire carousel to original condition over the course of 20 years (see carousels.org/psp/GlenEcho). Durward Center still visits twice per year for tuning and service and took the organ to his shop for repairs in 2007. The organ’s day-to-day operation and maintenance were handled for several years by TJ Fisher, now of San Francisco. He is still involved with historical interpretation for NPS and returns as scheduling allows.



Figure 17. Organ #3779 at Glen Echo Park.

Photo: Bruce Douglas

12. Seabreeze Park (Lost)

Organ #4292 spent its life at the Rochester, New York, amusement park Seabreeze with Philadelphia Toboggan Co. carousel #36. The 1915 ride was first at nearby Seneca Park and moved to Seabreeze, reportedly in 1926, switching places with an earlier carousel built by the Long family. The Style 165 was shipped in May 1931 to George Long, Jr., at Seabreeze (in 1946 he purchased the park, where his family had arrived as concessionaires in 1904). The Seabreeze organ was long thought to be #3349, but that Style 165 went to a small park around the bend from Seabreeze in 1921—Andrew Bornkessel, named in Wurlitzer records for #3349, owned Karnival Kourt, where #3349 is thought to have perished in a 1932 fire.

Many will remember the Seabreeze organ on a platform adjacent to the carousel, but it was first installed at the center of the ride and a majority of its existence was spent there. Tuning and minor repairs were done each spring during the 1940s and 1950s by Ralph Tussing. Other maintenance was handled by Long and son-in-law Merrick Price. The first major rebuild of the Style 165

was performed in the basement workshop under the carousel by Price and Long in 1973–74. Back at ground level, the organ was placed on its new platform near the ride. Around this same period, Price also repainted the façade to more closely resemble its original appearance after stripping paint applied earlier by Long.

Figure 18 The LP record *Band Organ Memories* was released soon after through Price's "Ermek Corp."

Seabreeze owned the only known copies of a few original Wurlitzer rolls. These were recut in the 1980s, although Price had given away one unique roll which turned up years later and was finally recut—see Matthew Caulfield's article in *Carousel Organ* #11. Dynamic Recording recorded the Style 165 in the 1980s and '90s and released *Carousel Christmas* (1992) and two volumes of *Carousel Breezes* (1989 and 1994). These followed Dynamic's not widely marketed ten-cassette series. The organ was rebuilt again in the spring of 1991, a job that had to be redone the very next year due to a roof leak.

Alan Mueller, who performed both rebuilds with Nick Rosica and Price, recalls Price remarking, "Wouldn't you know it would leak on the organ and not on the floor!" Mueller and Price had built a new stop mechanism in 1988, and Mueller rebuilt the bell unit in 1993.

On March 31, 1994, workers were repairing another roof leak when wind spread the blowtorch's flames. The carousel, organ, rolls and the two miniature carousels built by Long were soon gone, a loss felt not just locally but nationally. Rather than simply purchasing a fiberglass carousel, the Long/Price/Norris family commissioned thirty-eight horses from California carver Ed Roth to join the four surviving PTC originals and two Longs on a refurbished PTC frame (#31). And there would be no canned band organ music at this park—the ride would have a new organ alongside, a replica Style 165 by Johnny Verbeeck, who used Style 165 #3378 (Midwest collection) as a model and incorporated an original Wurlitzer duplex roll frame.

The carousel and organ debuted in 1996 (see carousels.org/psp/SeabreezePark). Matthew Caulfield, who had worked at the park decades earlier, donated his collection of recut rolls, then ran the ride and maintained



Figure 18. Organ #4292 adjacent to the Seabreeze carousel.

Photo: Steve Nowakowski

the organ for years. Joe Hilferty now tunes up the Verbeeck each spring. Seabreeze has recuts of all surviving vintage Style 165 rolls plus many newer rolls. 2013 saw the addition of a replica façade from Herreria Artistica Rodriguez (painted by Rochester-area artists, as were the carousel horses), and the organ was elevated on a platform in 2015. Dynamic's *Carousel Memories* (2001) was recorded from the Verbeeck.

Sources (not noted in text)

Caulfield, Matthew: personal correspondence from Fred Dahlinger, Gavin McDonough, Alan Mueller, and Ray Siou.

Also Mechanical Music Press: Wurlitzer band organ ledger reports, and mechanicalmusicpress.com

Robinson, Dan: personal correspondence from Dr. Bill Black, Matthew Caulfield, Durward Center, Mark Chester, Fred Dahlinger, Alan Erb, Joe Hilferty, Dick Lokemoen, Gavin McDonough, Alan Mueller, Marty Persky, and Art Reblitz.

Decisions, Decisions . . .

Rebuilding a Band Organ in a Unique Partnership

Part 2

Tracy M. Tolzmann

Three trumpets pipes had to be built from scratch along with twelve flute pipes. **Figure 27** Mike’s library of research books included one on pipe building which he used in creating the pipes, interpolating the scale from the existing pipes and extending it to discern accurate dimensions for the missing pipes. Continuing the correct scale through the ranks maintained the same timbre in the newly-built pipes and helped preserve what we would eventually call the “Ruth” sound that the organ extolled. Robert Stanoszek’s *Wurlitzer 105 Plans* offered many ideas and examples on the construction and winding of pipes that also were very helpful in our endeavor.

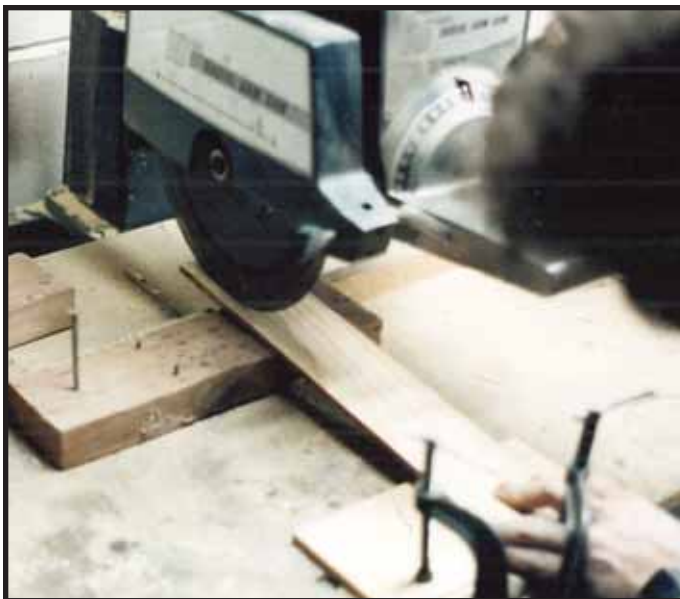


Figure 27. Cutting a new pipe front’s chamfer using a radial arm saw. Improvising restoration procedures like this was a frequent undertaking.

With the unknown original scale and the decision to utilize the 46-key scale to maximize the use of existing original pipes and keep the new “from-scratch” pipes to a minimum, there were several new pipes with no vacancy on the wind chest. We puzzled over how to mount and wind the orphan pipes, finally creating offsets which positioned them for satisfactory speaking ability and tuning convenience. Other new pipes were mounted to the ceiling of the case and wound from the chest through cloth-covered rubber hoses.

With the trumpets shaping up nicely, we pondered what to do about the mismatched reeds and shallots in the boots of the pipes. After substantial conversation, we

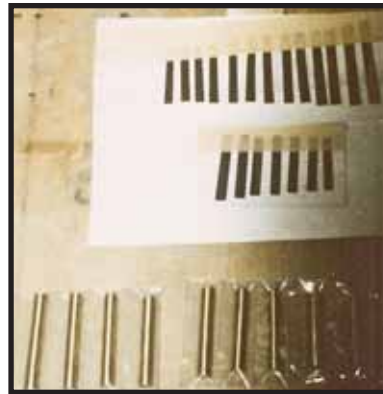


Figure 28. New reeds and shallots for the trumpet pipes matched the originals but took months to get.

decided to order replica parts based on what we believed to be the “most original” reeds and shallots within the 13 pipes. We sent the originals to the Arndt Organ Company of Iowa and waited...and waited...and waited. Six months later we finally received the duplicate parts and they were a perfect match. **Figure 28** The

delay had been a result of Arndt having to acquire the reeds and shallots from a European source (exactly where is unknown to us).



Figure 29. Foot block for the new trumpet pipe replicates the Ruth original.



Figure 30. Replica and original Ruth trumpet boots.

Once the new parts had arrived, the trumpet restoration continued with the making of duplicate blocks, tuning slides, and boots where needed. **Figures 29 & 30** Being a little hesitant to voice the trumpets ourselves—we didn't want to ruin the reeds that took so-o-o-o long to obtain—we consulted with pipe organ builder/restorer Lance Johnson of Fargo, North Dakota, a band organ buff who had commercially produced the *Bandola*, his own version of a Wurlitzer 125. Unfortunately, he said he was too busy to do the work, so we passed the pipes to another organ firm for voicing, the same company that had provided us with the old church organ pipes. The project's end was in sight.



Figure 31. Original wooden Ruth piccolo pipes with threaded ebony “acorn” tuning caps and newly-turned acorns to replace missing parts, all stripped of faded paint and awaiting finishing.

While waiting for the reeds and shallots, there were plenty of other projects to face. The three trombone pipes were in good shape but needed a thorough cleaning and re-voicing. The piccolo rank needed some attention, with several pipes missing their tuning “acorn” tops. **Figure 31** The pipes were wooden tubes and not brass, and upon stripping numerous layers of paint, we found that the original acorns were made from ebony. Mike replicated the missing acorns and repaired the damaged pipes' mouths. We debated how to finish the piccolos, finally deciding to carry the green from the scrolly Ruth decorative painting onto the pipes. Their blocks were painted gold, and the acorns a gloss black.

The simple façade that framed the front of the organ hadn't been stripped and repainted when the case was refurbished. We expected to find the decorative painting around the frame to be the same ebony veneer, as stripping the multiple layers of paint ultimately revealed. During the stripping process a perplexing discovery was made. While waiting for the chemical paint stripper to take effect, I absentmindedly scraped a little at one area with a putty knife. The surface wasn't really ready to be cleared of the stripper, but I noticed something on the wood. We hurriedly removed the stripper from the surface to reveal very faint lettering: “Ignatz & Sohn Baden

Baden”. We presumed that the name was a previous owner of the instrument, and again confirms the German origin of the organ. Consulting organ history expert Fred Dahlinger, Jr. about our discovery, he quizzed us on the spacing of the lettering, suggesting that the mystery name was Ignatz Bruder, but there was no space between “Ignatz” and the ampersand (&). “Ignatz” was apparently the owner's sir name. Further research has not led to additional information on the Ignatz connection. Unfortunately, the image was so faint, we couldn't discern the lettering in the photo we took of the area. (This was before “instant” digital photography that would certainly have captured the image.) The facade was finished in the same color scheme of cream base with red and green in-painting. Faded red cloth filled-in three panels on the façade. New, brighter material was placed in each panel, and a new panel was fashioned to stand behind the piccolos to mask the pipework behind and carry the color scheme throughout the facade. **Figure 32** Fred has subsequently told us that he believes our organ to be the oldest Ruth-based instrument in the U.S.



Figure 32. The painted piccolos with cloth masking panel installed.

The organ as purchased from Tom Wurdeman did not have drum side wings, although there were wooden hooks on the case sides. The *Salon Orgeln* in the Ruth catalogue that most-resembles this organ did not have drum side wings, indicating that drums were probably added in the NTMIW/Artizan Factories conversion and were since lost. In the 1920s conversion, valves were added to the chest's end cheeks for the addition of drums. We took a considerable amount of time designing new wings that would be compatible with the organ's simple design. The drums themselves were a slight problem as we did not have antique drums to use. Since this was not a historic restoration, we used a modern Ludwig snare drum and bass drum that had been part of a trap drum set. As the bass drum was very wide, it necessitated a creative way to narrow it without compromising the head surfaces. Removing the tuning lugs, we cut a large section out of the middle, fastened the narrowed drum together, and

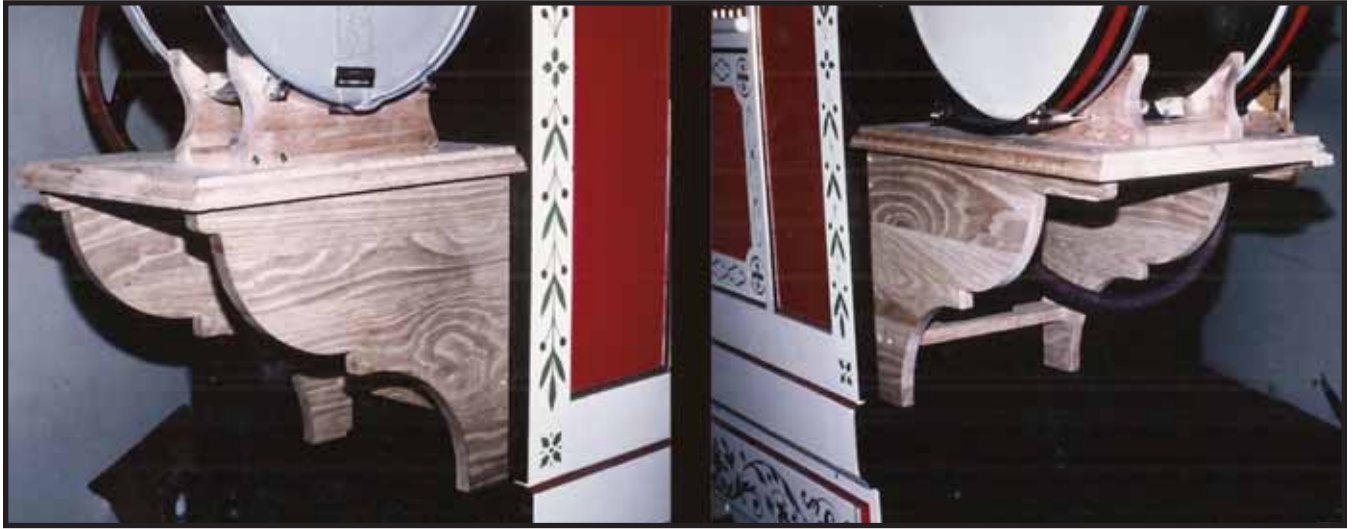


Figure 33. The new oak snare and bass drum wings replicate curves used on Ruth cases.

resurfaced the entire circumference with oak veneer. The use of modern drums has been an advantage in getting good sound from the drums as the modern lugs allow for independent tuning of each head.

The new wings were made from solid oak and stained and painted to match the rest of the casework. **Figure 33** A decorative scroll was in order for the wing fronts. It struck us that we could enlarge the small decorative scroll used above the piccolos and reverse their positions. Modifying a method from the Ruth case builders, we cut the design through two layers of Masonite using a scroll saw. Gluing each piece to a beveled panel, we used a belt sander to reduce the pattern to a veneer-thin layer. The red and green in-painting was easy to copy from the original designs. **Figure 34**



Figure 34. Ruth piccolo fram scroll designs were enlarged and added to drum wings.

With pressure at a premium due to the reservoir’s half size, but ample vacuum available, Mike designed vacuum-operated mechanisms to beat the drums. Solid drum

sticks were used for the snare drum rather than the customary spring steel method. Properly adjusted, this gave the snare drum a very crisp and snappy sound. **Figure 35** With some trial and error, the mechanisms were ultimately tweaked to outstanding performance—organ builder Don Stinson subsequently took great interest in Mike’s vacuum beater designs.

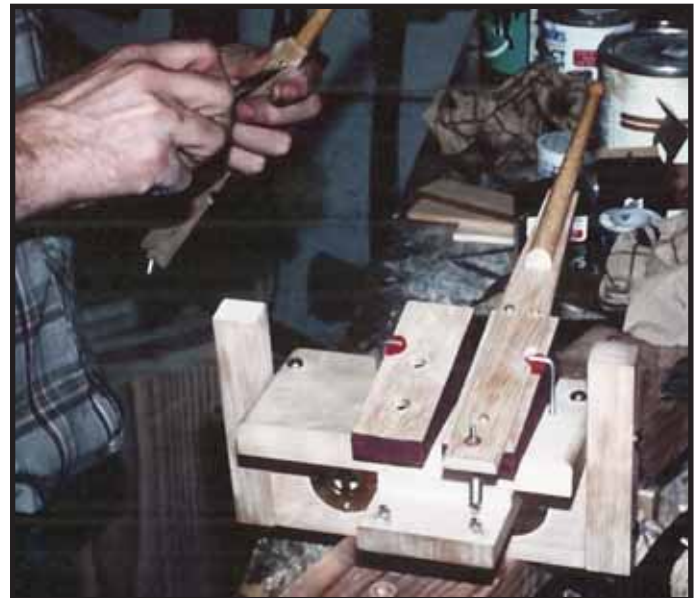


Figure 35. Mike’s vacuum-operated snare beater design uses wooden drumsticks.

While awaiting the trumpet voicing work, we felt that a crown would be a fitting addition to the organ. After significant discussion, we came up with a design that extrapolated curves from the existing façade and created a new decorative scroll design patterned after the Ruth original on the front of the base. We transferred the design to a double layer of Masonite, once again cutting the pattern with a scroll saw, then placing the halves together on the



Figure 36. The crown design using Ruth curves was routed in pieces to allow for inside corners, then assembled.



Figure 37. Assembled with added scroll design, the new crown is primed and ready for finish painting.

beveled panel, sanding it, and finish painting. A particular challenge in this process was the routing of a quarter-round bevel on the panel. Inside corners could not be routed as an assembled panel, so it had to be made in pieces, routed, glued together, and sanded smooth at the seams.

Figures 36 & 37

Frequent telephone inquiries into the progress of the trumpet voicing brought reassuring words that the project would soon be done. Finally, after three months of waiting and unanswered telephone messages, we took a chance

that someone might be at the organ technician's shop. Stopping by unannounced, we found the shop to be occupied and we said we'd like to pick up our 13 pipes. There they were, in the same box exactly where we left them, now covered with three-months-worth of dust and organ shop grime! We beat a hasty retreat with untouched pipes in hand. With the organ restoration nearly complete, we contacted Lance Johnson again and, with the many months that had passed, he thought he could squeeze in the job, but it would be a week or two before he could get around to it. We built a shipping container with plenty of padding and sent the box off to Fargo via UPS.

After the many months of waiting, we were pleasantly surprised to get a phone call from Lance just a few days later. The voicing was done! When Lance opened the package, the pipes so intrigued him that he went right to work on them. We had informed Lance that they would be blown at 7-1/2-inches of wind, and he told us that he thought they were the loudest pipes he had ever voiced. He said he would box them up and return them to us, but we had waited so long, we decided to take the four-hour road trip to Fargo to retrieve the pipes. We arrived at the Johnson Organ Company in the late morning and were very pleased with the results as we heard the pipes on the voicing chest. **Figure 38**



Figure 38. The trumpet pipes on Lance Johnson's voicing chest, Fargo, ND.

That Saturday corresponded with the Fargo Theater's spring silent movie night, and Lance invited us to attend the presentation. We had an early dinner and arrived at the theater for a tour of the vintage facility. The Wurlitzer pipe organ-accompanied program was enjoyable, but we needed to return to the Twin Cities that evening. Departing Fargo quite late, we drove through the night arriving at Mike's technically five hours later – it was the April night we set the clocks ahead for Daylight Saving Time—and Tracy had another half hour drive beyond Mike's!

With the voiced trumpets finally in our possession, a frenzy of activity began. Some wind conveyances had to be made in the Ruth style to connect the pipes. The trum-



Figure 39. Mike sands smooth an extended trumpet resonator after pipe voicer, Lance Johnson, instructed him to remove half an inch of length.



Figure 40. Lance Johnson regulates the trumpet pipes that are shaded by the organ case skid.

pets were installed in the organ and on Sunday, May 13, 1984 (Mother’s Day), the instrument played in its entirety for the first time. The project had taken three-and-one-half years. There was still some tweaking to be done. With the trumpet resonators extending down the front of the case toward the floor, the longer pipes were close to the skids and the proximity was shading them, making tuning impossible. Leary of doing voicing of these pipes ourselves, we contacted Lance Johnson for advice. As luck would have it, he would be in the Twin Cities area shortly to work on a local church organ. He would gladly come to the Merrick’s home to voice the effected pipes on the organ.

The day arrived and Lance set to work. With his expertise in pipe voicing, he told Mike to take half an inch off one resonator. With a little trepidation, Mike cut off the suggested amount, sanded the resonator end smooth, and handed the pipe back to Lance for reinstallation and testing. **Figures 39 & 40** Each of the effected trumpets were handled this way and we were glad to have added length to some of the pipes earlier in the restoration process as it definitely effected their voicing. Lance was so delighted with hearing the organ he refused payment for the on-site voicing.

One of our projects was related to the marketing of the organ and the creation of our own “trademark” identity. Taking our last names—Merrick and Tolzmann—we coined the contraction *MerriTolz*, creating a logo using the “Wurlitzer” insignia, flipping the “W” to make an

four boxes were built that would contain everything we would need in taking the band organ on the road. One box was for the snare drum wing, crown, and tool box. A second box was for the bass drum wing, the third for the motor board, spare flat belt, and extension cords. A fourth box held our library of organ rolls.

“M” and adding an “o” to complete the design. Several perceptive organ buffs noted the (slightly plagiarized) similarity **Figure 41** (Coincidentally, Tracy met his future wife in 1984 and her first name happened to be “Merrie,” so the *MerriTolz* moniker has a secondary meaning.

Not exactly sure how we eventually would transport the organ to events, we planned to use Tracy’s pick-up truck. We acquired a large shipping blanket and fashioned a custom sewn cover for the main organ case. We decided to design shipping boxes for the side wings and motor board. After careful consideration,



Figure 41. Mike and Tracy’s reworking of the Wurlitzer logo on their promotional brochure.

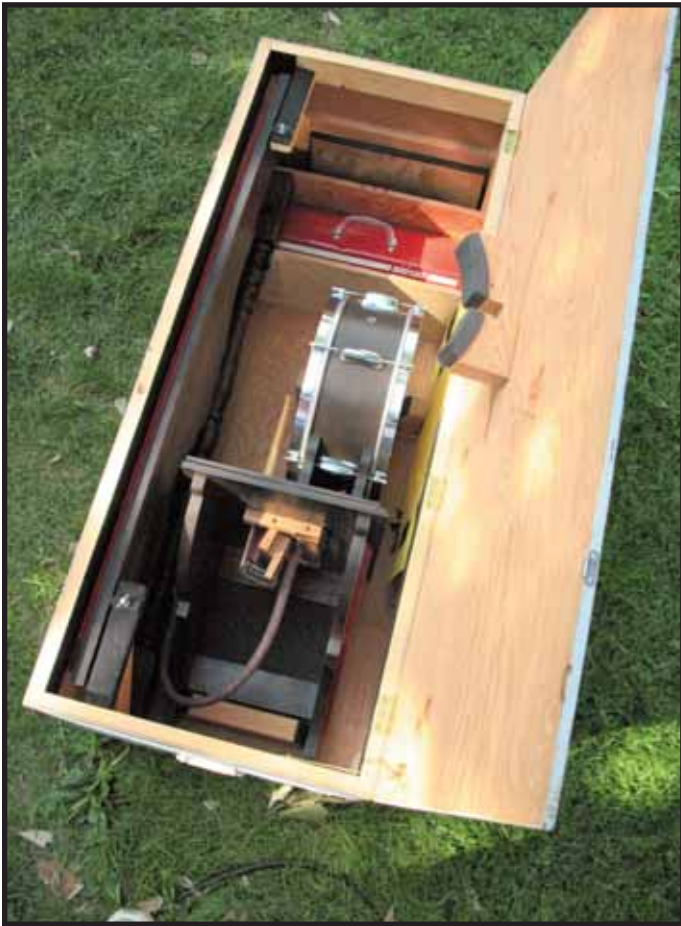


Figure 42. Shipping box with snare drum, crown, sign post, tool box, and promotional signs.



Figure 43. Bass drum, “Now Playing” display sign, and pedestal neatly tucked into one shipping box.

Figures 42 & 43 Everything packed together neatly in the well-thought-out designs, and fit well in the eight-foot pick-up truck box.

The organ’s first public appearance almost turned out to be its last! The date was July 4th, 1984, and with the help of our fathers, the four of us hoisted the organ into the pick-up truck and loaded the shipping boxes. Arriving in Tracy’s hometown shortly after a gigantic parade, we off-loaded the boxes and looked for assistance in lifting the organ out of the truck—Mike’s dad had remained at home. Stopping an acquaintance who was passing by, Tracy asked if he would give us a hand. We warned him of the weight of the organ and he remarked that it was okay. We reiterated that it was VERY heavy, and he assured us that he understood. We took the leading end off the truck tailgate and Tracy’s dad and the passerby were on the back side. As the casters left the tailgate, the organ lurched violently down on the passerby’s corner and our hearts stopped! Fortunately, we all countered to regain balance and gingerly set the instrument down on the pavement as the volunteer muttered “That was heavy.” Our only response as he hastily moved on was “Thank you” and “We warned you.” **Figure 44**

As we played an afternoon concert of patriotic marches along with polkas, waltzes, and the snappy novelty

tunes to an appreciative audience of Independence Day revelers, we discussed the next project for the cause: Building a ramp for easier—and safer—loading. This was achieved in time for our next big outing, taking the organ to the 10th Annual MBSI Mid-Am Organ Rally in Fremont, Ohio. Since this was some 14 hours away, we thought it best to build a protective case in which to place the organ. Putting our amateur engineering skills to work, we were able to construct a “travel box” to save the organ from buffeting winds, bugs, and whatever else we might encounter on the road. Due to work and other commitments, we couldn’t depart for Fremont until 1:00 AM.



Figure 44. The organ’s public debut, July 4, 1984, draws an appreciative crowd.

This design was put to the test when we encountered a monsoon of rain between Rockford and Chicago, Illinois (we later learned it was a 15-inch deluge). We feared that water was certainly penetrating the case and the shipping pad cover was probably wicking-up water and soaking the case’s finish. Arriving at Dan Slack’s

home late that afternoon, we were awed to see many fine and large organs set up and playing around his property. This was on Thursday, a “preview” party. Dan urged us to set up between Ken Smith’s Gavioli replica and Carl Tucker’s Carl Frei organ. As newcomers, we had quite a few eyes watching our operation. Our biggest fear was allayed when we removed the cover of the travel box to see the organ and shipping blanket were totally dry.

Our second biggest fear was assuaged when the crowd of band organ enthusiasts listened in approval of our contribution to the gathering. **Figure 45** Our only critique from someone with “band organ savvy” so far had been a “Yeah, that’s okay”—high praise from Tom Wurdeman. The weekend went on to be a most successful and enjoyable event, and spurred several ideas that would become future projects to improve our endeavors. We adopted the practice of removing the organ’s façade at events as some spectators would ask “How many speakers are in there?” or “How big are the speakers?” We’d reply, “There are 114 ‘speakers’ (pipes) in there.” Seeing the pipes added to the experience and showed that the organ was not an electronic device.



Figure 45. The organ’s first appearance at a rally, the 10th annual MBSI Mid-Am event hosted by the late Dan Slack in Fremont, Ohio, 1984.

One interesting idea was attempted during the organ rally. Dick Leis had the only other 46-key B.A.B.-music-playing organ at the rally, an Artizan instrument. Since Dick and we had some of the same rolls, we thought it would be fun to place the organs side by side and try to synchronize the speed of our rolls to play a duet. **Figure 46** We achieved synchronization, but it sounded awful,



Figure 46. Two band organs—the MerriTolz instrument and Dick Leis’ Artizan – attempted music synchronization with odd results at the 1984 Ohio rally.

not unlike the cacophony of numerous instruments playing too close together and all at once. It finally dawned on us as to why the “concert” sounded so bad: Our organ played 2-1/2 steps lower than similar 46-key organs!

Another discovery came to light as a result of the Fremont rally. Many of the B.A.B. rolls that had been custom cut by Tom Wurdeman per our special orders had been transposed to the Wurlitzer 125 scale. As we walked around the rally grounds, we would hear the familiar tunes and instinctively know what the next song on the roll would be. This was a testament to the popularity of the B.A.B. arrangements. The problem was, however, that the tunes just didn’t sound the same. Something was lost in the translation. We knew that part of the problem was that the B.A.B. recuts—made from the original factory masters—contained quite a few errors. The arrangers corrected some errors using cellophane tape to cover the wrong note and punching the correction, which was usually an adjacent hole. In their haste to get new music out to the public, many errors were ignored and the rolls were issued with note mistakes. As we witnessed in-person while watching some of our recuts being made, the cellophane tape used to correct the masters was so dry it fell off the master rolls as they went through the Acme Perforator, so that both the errors and corrections were punched. We edited all the mistakes in our copies while the roll masters and all the other Wurdeman copies (and by association, Wurlitzer transcriptions), have the punching errors built in.

One new project that we pursued was building a display that would identify what tune was playing. We would have a listener ask what tune was playing, and we would have to consult the roll box and sometimes wait until the



Figure 47. The automatic “Now Playing” display sign with interchangeable title cards. The organ roll’s coin trip perforation advances the lighted arrow.

next tune began—seeing its number stamped on the roll—before we could answer. Mike recalled a tuning system that was used on the Gooding Amusement’s large organ: An arrow pointing to the tune number with a corresponding card listing the tunes. We reasoned, “Why not go one better and have an arrow point at the apropos tune title?” Mike put his electronic, pneumatic, and woodworking skills to work designing just such a display. With ample holes on our tracker bar and the rolls punched with a coin trip hole, it was simple to assign the otherwise unused coin trip hole to a new pneumatic that would trip a micro-switch that activated a stepping relay that would light-up an arrow on the display. Cards were printed for each roll and could be inserted in the display with ease. **Figure 47** An extension was made on the roll storage box to accommodate the pile of tune cards, and the three-piece display unit was easily dismantled and stored for shipping. We modified the snare drum box to carry the display’s post and the bass drum box to hold the post base and the lighted display box itself. The “tune box” has saved us from plenty of “What song is that?” queries, and many people listen longer as they await a favorite tune that is coming-up on the playlist.

The best idea to come from the Fremont rally took quite a while before coming to fruition, but has undoubtedly been the best and most-helpful addition to our display. We “stole” the idea from Capt. John Leonard, whose North Tonawanda Military Band Organ had a very nice display. One item that caught our eyes was a static, cut-away view of how the organ works, showing tracker bar, hose, pneumatic, pallet, etc. The display answered many questions for the public on the operation of such an instrument. We knew we should build a similar display, and I

wanted to go one better by making an operating model. The idea was batted around for quite a while, until Mike finally agreed. Mike built a one-note replica of the system using a spare original “G” pipe. We tubed it to a “Y” in the melody rank, and tapped into the reservoir for winding the display. The length of hose leading to the display (which was usually placed within eight feet of the organ), resulted in a sluggish response, but Mike was able to solve the situation by adding a booster pneumatic (hidden from the public’s view as it was not part of the regular system), making the note play in precision with the rest of the organ. Folks looking at the display are often startled when the little “G” note starts tweeting away. Descriptive text adds to the experience making the working replica an educational display that has answered innumerable questions about how a band organ works. **Figure 48**

Figure 48. The operational “How it Works” display has answered innumerable questions from fascinated observers.



Figure 48. The operational “How it Works” display has answered innumerable questions from fascinated observers.

Small projects have been undertaken throughout our co-ownership of the organ. The road trip to Fremont was educational as we needed more storage room for luggage and other odds and ends we’d need to bring along. Since the blunt travel box projected well above the top of the truck cab, it was plastered with dead bugs and resulted in

our getting pitiful gas mileage. Our solution was to build a curved “wind wing” that would fasten to the front of the box, over the truck cab, and deflect the wind while giving valuable storage space with its roomy interior. It improved our mileage substantially on our next long-distance adventure. The summer sun tended to bake the organ’s finish during our outings and would even throw the pipes out of tune. We fabricated a framework of lightweight aluminum and conduit and sewed a canvas awning to shield the instrument from the direct sunlight. The canopy also served to protect the organ when light rain was falling. We pulled-out a heavier tarp when harder rains fell. At one engagement, we were soaked to the skin when we stood on either side of the truck holding the tarp over the organ during high winds and a deluge of rain as a tornado skirted the area...but that’s another story. **Figure 49**

Forgetting the triangular framework for one rally found us scrambling to locate a lumber yard so we could buy materials to improvise the missing parts. We succeeded, and thereafter created a check list to make sure no important



Figure 50. Laurel & Hardy impersonators Jim Mulleague and Rick Underwood have fun with the “Artizan” at the 1984 Minnesota State Fair.



Figure 49. The “wind wing” greatly improved gas mileage and the canopy saves the organ from the sun’s harsh rays.

part of our set-up was left behind again!

Fearful of theft, we would always carry the shipping boxes into our hotel rooms when safe storage was not guaranteed at rally sites. Perhaps our admiration of the comedies of Laurel and Hardy had been influencing us, particularly their Academy Award-winning 1932 short *The Music Box*,

wherein they laboriously move a player piano up an enormous flight of stairs. After years of lugging the heavy boxes in and out of innumerable facilities, we finally put large casters on the bass drum box and could stack the snare, motor, and roll boxes on top for relative ease in rolling the irreplaceable parts inside for safekeeping! (“Remember how dumb I used to be? Well I’m better now.” Stan Laurel. “You’re better now! Hmmp” Oliver Hardy.) **Figure 50**

During the joint MBSI-AMICA Annual Meeting of 1987 held in Saint Paul, Minnesota, an organ rally was staged in the beautiful downtown Rice Park. We were displaying and playing our “Artizan” organ near the renowned Ordway Music Center when meeting guest Arthur Prinsen left that building and began walking across the street toward our display. As he approached, we noticed him pointing his finger at the organ and shaking his head. When he was within earshot, we heard him saying “This is not an American organ” pointing at the “Artizan Factories, Inc. North Tonawanda, NY USA” decal on the facade, adding, “This is a German organ!” We were astounded that one of Europe’s top organ experts could hear the difference in the original Ruth pipes (this in spite of the fact that the organ was playing American music as we have no European arrangements for the organ). We were pleased with Arthur’s reaction to our restoration as he closely examined the Ruth pipes and reviewed our scrapbook. **Figure 51** Following Arthur’s response, we started referring to the organ as a “Ruth-Artizan,” although we have no plans to add the Ruth name to the façade.



Figure 51. European expert Arthur Prinsen recognized the “Artizan” organ’s “Ruth” heritage.

We never acquired a trailer to transport and display the instrument, finding that using the pick-up truck as a platform for the organ kept probing fingers at a safe distance and gave an excellent view for gathered audiences while also allowing for up-close examination. We still occasionally offloaded the organ and displayed it at ground level, but our preferred method was the use of a pick-up truck. Now, with aching backs and bad hips and knees, a trailer seems like a pretty good idea. As we are finally beginning to investigate the acquisition of a trailer, we are once again examining every aspect of the project,



Figure 52. A youngster’s mischievous fingers can’t reach the flat drive pulley thanks to the newly-installed belt guard.

wanting to customize the unit for maximum appeal and ease of use.

After years of playing the organ with the public very near the display—whether on the truck or on the ground—we finally acted on a project that had long been on our minds: A belt guard to prevent a potential serious accident. We were often amused to see other organs displaying a humorous, quasi-German “Nicht der fingerpoken” card on or about their instruments. We always watched the open, flat leather belt-operated crankshaft wheel like hawks, but knew that a moment’s distraction could result in horror, and a nasty lawsuit for us or the rally hosts! At the 2013 Milwaukee German Fest rally, we had a particularly large crowd gathered around the organ as noted band organ aficionado Ron Bopp stood nearby taking photos. Observing the hectic situation of both of us interacting with the gathering, he noticed a youngster getting precariously close to the drive wheel. We noticed this too, and agreed with Ron that a belt guard should be installed before our next COAA outing (the COAA carries insurance for sanctioned rallies, but there’s no sense in tempting fate).



Figure 53. An astute passerby takes great interest in the “Ruth-Artizan” organ.

With those age-related handicaps mentioned earlier, our next public outing with the organ wasn't scheduled until the 2015 German Fest in Milwaukee. With this date on our calendar and expecting Ron Bopp to be present, we set forth in designing a belt guard that would achieve its goal of preventing disaster while not detracting from the esthetics of the antique instrument. It should be easy to install and remove for use, shipping, and storage. We arrived at a good design and fabricated it ourselves, the project meeting our standards and accomplishing the important goal of protecting the public, and ourselves, from potential calamity. **Figures 52 & 53** We needed an apropos name for the device, and made a special plaque to identify the unit. We were pleased when Ron Bopp made his way to our display and reacted in his inimitable wry way upon seeing the one and only *MerriTolz Bopp-o-Gard*. **Figure 54**

We still come up with ideas to enhance the band organ and our handling of the instrument, but for the time being, haven't started any new projects. We're contented to know that our Ruth-Artizan may make a rare public appearance now and then, and that when it does, it remains a popular contribution to the event.



Figure 54. The belt guard is named in honor of a renowned organ enthusiast.

A two-page spread featuring the *MerriTolz* Ruth-Artizan organ may be found as a centerfold in issue #78 of the *Carousel Organ*

Tracy M. Tolzmann has loved band organ music since first hearing a Wurlitzer 105 on a traveling carnival's 4th of July midway as a small child in the early 1960s in his hometown in rural Minnesota. He has been the "Grand Sheik" (president) of the Block-Heads, the Twin Cities' chapter of the international Laurel & Hardy club, for the past 39 years.

... *Meet your Member* continued from page 39

I discovered Knoebels in 1989, and despite living closer to several other major parks, I always preferred to make the trip to Knoebels when occasion to spend time at an amusement park permits. I also love Lake Winnie and other family-owned traditional parks, preferring them over corporate theme parks.

By 1992, I had decided that I wanted to have an organ like the Wurlitzer 165 at Glen Echo Park, Maryland, which I finally saw in person a week before Christmas, 1998. Since then, I have accumulated most of the pipework and many other parts, and a near complete collection of Wurlitzer and TRT music on 165 rolls. When Whalom Park was forced to auction the carousel to satisfy a bank debt on April 15, 2000, I purchased the frame (complete with rounding boards and all) and kept it set up at Whalom, operating the carousel there for the park's final season. Allyson Bowen (whose family had controlled the park since 1935) and I received the Phoenix Award that year from IAAPA. The carousel is now in storage, with a lifelong dream to get it set up and operating with a Wurlitzer 165 organ replica and hopefully a large Ruth or Bruder for more serious music. I have been a member of NCA for many years, and when not attending rallies or traditional amusement parks, I am a full-time faculty member at Reading Area Community College in Reading, PA where I teach economics, accounting and business law. I have resided in an overcrowded house in Phoenixville, PA since 1986 where I still try to tend to my collections of disc and cylinder records and phonographs, player piano and rolls, and sheet music, among other things.

In Memoriam . . . Leroy Schumacher

Joan and I met Leroy and Betty as well as his brother, Dave and Barb at an organ rally in Findlay, OH in the mid-1990s. There were driving through Findlay and heard a strange noise. They followed the noise and ended up at their first organ rally. As they wandered the park they met Mary Pollock who explained what the COAA organization was about. She then brought the two couples over to our organ. Leroy and Dave were asking all kinds of questions: where did the organs come from; where could they get one; and what did they cost? We advised them to join the organization to get more information and they did so that afternoon.



A month later two fellows walked into my shop—it was Leroy and Dave. They were smiling ear to ear; they wanted to show me something they had bought at auction. We walked to a beat-up single axle trailer and inside was a barn-find Wurlitzer 146. It didn't play a note.

This was the start of a very special relationship. I could tell you many things we did together over the years—the memories are many. In your lifetime you have many friends and in that group are a few very special ones. Leroy was in this very special group. Thank you, Leroy, for all the great memories.

Leroy H. Schumacher, of Massillon, OH was 89 at the time of his death.

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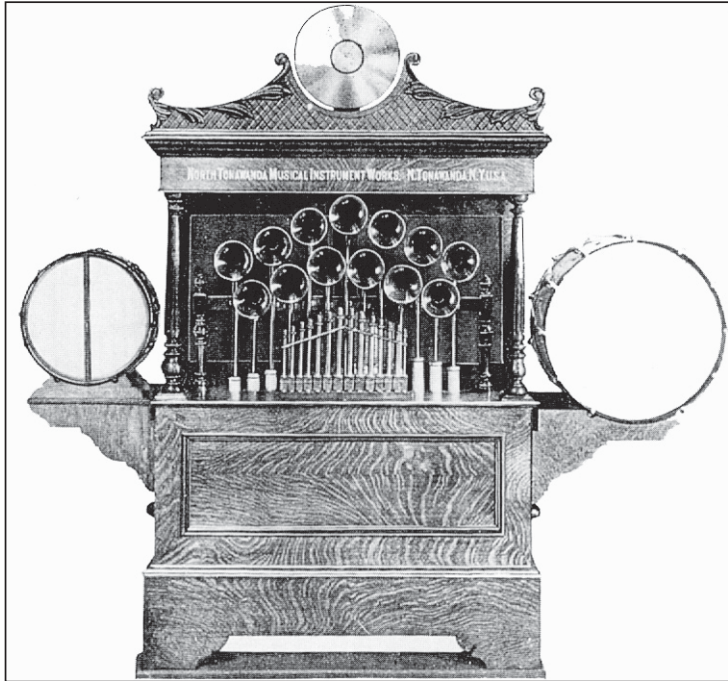
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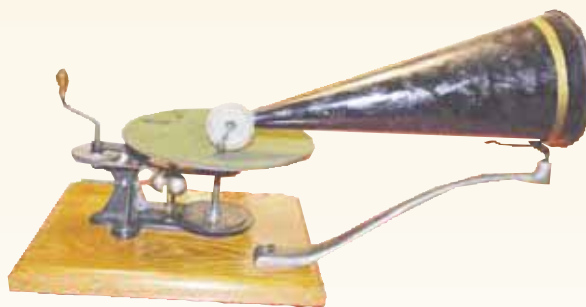


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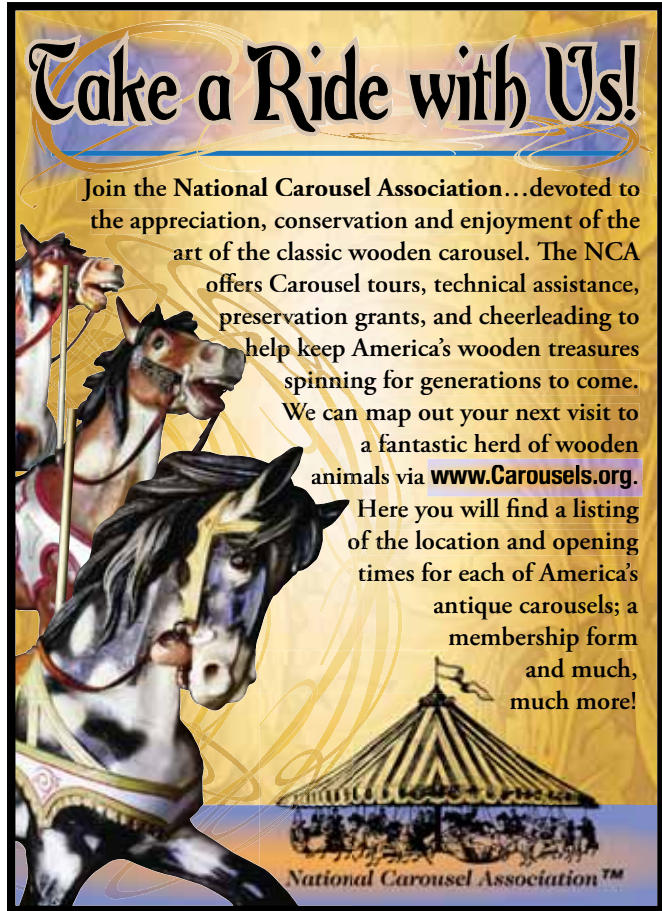
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Contact the Editor at bopp@peoplepc.com

Meet Your Member—Mark Chester

I have been a COAA member since pretty much the beginning, and am perhaps best known to many COAA members as organizer of the Knoebels rallies since 2012 and the Lake Winnie rally in 2017. I was born in Fitchburg, Massachusetts and grew up on the shore of Lake Whalom, within a half mile of Whalom Park. My early years included several trips per year to Whalom Park.

I also enjoy watching old movies on television, particularly Laurel and Hardy and Our Gang comedies. I was captivated by the background music and wanted to hear more. At age 13, I started to collect 78 RPM phonograph records of the pre-1930s era, in search of more of the "Hal Roach" sound, which was best approximated by then-contemporary dance band music. By high school I had amassed quite a collection of Tin-Pan-Alley era popular music on record and sheet music.

I also began working at Whalom Park, first as a sweeper, then as a costumed character. It was during his stint as a costumed character that I was permitted to ride some of the park rides, and frequently accompanied young children on the park's 1890s vintage Looff carousel. The band organ had vanished decades earlier, but the ride was accompanied by Baptist cartridge tapes of



Mark with Glenn Thomas' Wurlitzer 165.

band organ music, and it was here that I discovered the world of automatic musical instruments. In particular, I noticed that many of the tunes were songs I recognized from my record collection, played on some sort of instrument I had never heard before. From my second year at the park to my departure, I operated the carousel.

During my first year at Whalom, the park management took the employees on the annual outing to another amusement park, Canobie Lake Park in Salem, NH. Canobie has a 1902 vintage Looff-

Dentzel mix which is accompanied by one of the finest-sounding Wurlitzer 153s I have ever heard. My first impression when entering the park and hearing the organ from the carousel pavilion off in the distance was "Wow - they really have a great sound system for their carousel." When my friends and I eventually went to the carousel for a ride, I learned why the sound was so much better than at Whalom with its monaural tapes and single tin-horn PA speaker. It was the first live band organ I ever saw and heard. After that, I had to learn and experience more. I discovered Vestal Press books by Dave Bowers and Harvey Roehl in the library and started receiving its catalogs. From those, I ordered many books and recordings on LP and tape, beginning while in college.

Continued on page 33 . . .

2019 Organ Rally Dates

COAA Organ Rally	Iris Festival Mountain View, AR	Doug & Danell Mauldin 501-920-1828	May 3-4, 2019 Cathe7451@hotmail.com
COAA Organ Rally	Lake Winnepesaukah Rossville, GA	Bob Buckler 201-344-9957	May 25-27, 2019 bucklerjc@aol.com
COAA Organ Rally	Shupp's Grove Antique Market Reinhold, PA	Sally Craig 717-295-9188 and Wally Venable 304-328-5128	June 29-30, 2019 rosebud441@juno.com wallace.venable@mail.wvu
COAA Organ Rally	German Fest Milwaukee, WI	Marc Dannecker 414-617-6172	July 27-28, 2019 mddannecker@yahoo.com
Organ Grinders Rally	DeBence Antique Music World Franklin, PA	DeBence 814-432-8350	August 3-4, 2019 debencemuseum@verizon.net
COAA Organ Rally	Soule Live Steam Festival Meridian, MS	Greg Hatcher 601-917-3471	November 1-2, 2019 soulelivesteam@comcast.net



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