

Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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Articles prior to December 5, 2018

Theatre Organ Work Continues

Written by David on May, 17 2008

The Oriental Theatre in Indianapolis, Indiana had a pipe organ manufactured by the Louisville Pipe Organ Company. This instrument, Opus 512, was installed in 1926. The Oriental was located on South Meridian Street in Indianapolis.

The instrument remained in the theatre until it was moved to Calvery Lutheran Church on South Shelby Street, Indianapolis in 1942. Calvery Lutheran sold the church in 1964 and it was renamed Tallwood Chapel. Unfortunately this organ fell into disrepair and by the 1970's fell silent.

In 2005 David M. Finkel purchased this organ for inclusion in the Strand Theatre project. Before the organ was to be removed David, Kurt Schakel, Carlton Smith and Jim Alton spent two days doing repair work to the instrument. The result was a playable organ. Although many notes did not work, it was sufficient to make an archival recording.

On May 15, 2008 David, Maurice Finkel, Kurt Schakel, Jim Alton and Bob Schlick traveled to Tallwood Chapel to start the process of removing the instrument. The first day was spent carefully crating the five ranks of pipes. The following Saturday May 17th, this same crew was joined by Terry Ogden, Norman Jackman, Gordon Hood and Elizabeth Finkel for the removal of the instrument. Below is Elizabeth unwiring the unique "underwear snap" disconnects on the bottom of the Oboe Horn chest:

The Oriental Organ was vital to the success of the Strand project because it still had its complete Harp. This is a percussion with metal bars struck by soft mallets. Louisville built very few instruments, and the organ for the Strand was missing its harp. Below is the harp being removed. From left to right are Bob Schlick, Gordon Hood, Norman Jackman, Terry Ogden and David Finkel:

Images on this post:

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