

Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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Strand Weekly Newsletter: 3/2/2018

Written by David on March, 2 2018

Dear Strand Fan,

This is the final weekend for the Shelby County Players' production of MURDER INN. There are tickets available for tonight, Saturday, and the Sunday matinee. You will have a good time with this mystery. We hope to see you at one of the three remaining performances. Tonight and Saturday at 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:00pm.

Last week we wondered what the Harrison Street road closure would be about, this week we know. On Thursday night crews aided by the Indiana State Police put the closure in place. Today they worked in front of the Strand continuing that process. The contractor for this work is Milestone. The Strand met with Project Superintendent Kyle Shireman last week. We arranged to meet today to discuss future plans. As promised, Kyle met the volunteers of the Strand this morning to go over the impact to the Strand, and the future of the project.

With major road rebuilds the news is never all good. For us, we are pleased with the plan of action with Milestone. Starting immediately the traffic is limited on State Road 9 southbound in front of the theater. The good part is you will still be able to drop off and pick up patrons at our front door. It is anticipated that this will remain for several months. This is good news for us. You will need to be careful, as there is only one lane of traffic southbound.

The project will include the removal and upgrading of our sidewalk. As that time gets closer we will be in good contact to minimize the negative impact. There are several upgrades that will benefit the Strand, so it will be worth the short term (although it won't seem short) disruption. Thank you to Kyle and his Milestone crew for helping us with this difficult project. Also thank you to the Indiana Department of Transportation for investing in Shelbyville's infrastructure.

This week our pipe organ project had some interesting activity. As we prepare to start the organ project there are several items that we hope to still find. By chance Strand volunteer David F. was contacted by a church in Kentucky concerning a Louisville Pipe Organ Company organ (LPO). He took a look and sure enough it was an original installation that was still playing and sounded great. It had all the components and sounds of a theater organ even though it was in a church. This organ was installed in 1926. It is Opus 520. (The opus number is like a serial number). We own Opus 519 from the Oak Theatre in Louisville! It got David thinking what other unknown LPO organs are around?

Finding the original "Opus List", or list of organs manufactured, came to the top of the to-do list. Maybe there were others? Maybe some were abandoned? After consulting with Jeff Weiler of JL Weiler, Inc of Chicago, he advised that the original list might be in the Organ Historical Society archives in Philadelphia. This is where the research material for David Juncheon's book Encyclopedia of the American Theater Organ is housed. David sadly passed away over 25 years ago.

A trip to Philadelphia was necessary. With the help of Bynum Petty, archivist of the Organ Historical Society, the research documents of Mr. Juncheon were made available. Strand volunteers David F. and Kurt S. spent this week at the archives. While the "smoking gun" document was not found, they have an excellent understanding how Juncheon researched LPO and have images of source documents used in the development of the opus list published.

There was a letter from Sylvester Kohler of Louisville Kentucky sent to Mr. Juncheon in 1982. This letter contained his memories of LPO and a list of installations. This included 6 church locations. While we know the theater installations, the church installations are what we are hoping to find. Mr. Kohler (he went by Sly), was a former voicer at Pilcher Organ Company in Louisville. He knew the principles of LPO and his letter brought to light information that we did not have.

There was a reference as to the location of the opus list. There will be a trip to Milwaukee if that lead pans out. As we are doing our organ project, we are preparing a book on the Louisville Pipe Organ Company. Very few document or even remember these small firms. The Strand will be home to 4 of their organs! Our current research material is being copied and sent to the Organ Historical Archives for their files.

This Tuesday March 6th starts our four part lecture series INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSTITUTION. Each will start at 7:00pm and is Free. This is an excellent opportunity to study our Constitution in depth. Our volunteers are looking forward

to learning too! Thank you to Hillsdale College who gave the Strand permission to share these lectures.

We have a busy March, so does Milestone Construction. We'll see how both fit together! Until then, the Strand is always a house of artistic freedom, engaging thought, humility, and fun because of you, thank you. See you at the Strand!

Images on this post:

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