



2010  
Winter Issue

## *MUSIC HALL Marks*

1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

A Publication Of The Society  
For The Preservation Of Music Hall

# SPMH - President's Message Happy New Year!!

The message I wish to convey to all is a warm thank you to everyone who has visited and supported everything that takes place in Music Hall, especially during the past year. The entire organization, the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, has been blessed to receive many generous gifts and special opportunities to fulfill our mission for the benefit of all of Greater Cincinnati. As well, it is an honor for me to send a special greeting on behalf of all the Directors of SPMH, wishing each of you a New Year filled with happiness, good health and prosperity.

Though the year 2009 has been an exciting and productive one for the SPMH volunteers, loss and sadness impacted our organization with the untimely deaths of Alberta Marsh in July, and Erich Kunzel in September. Both were dedicated, generous contributors to everything that took place in Music Hall. They



were also great ambassadors for all of the arts and education in our city. They will always be missed.

The greatest honor, opportunity and accomplishment for SPMH, occurred on November 28th with the "Dedication of the Albee Theater Mighty Wurlitzer" in the Music Hall Ballroom. The SPMH was chosen exclusively, by the very generous Anonymous Donor, to be the catalyst/partner in receiving the funds and bringing all of the individuals, organizations and Organ owner together. This team worked with great purpose for over two years to complete the restoration and installation of the historical instrument. Our deep gratitude and appreciation go to Ron Wehmeier for his magnificent restoration of The Mighty Wurlitzer! It is one more 'historical gem' which we are delighted to claim for our beautiful Music Hall.

- Norma Petersen

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## 2010 SPMH Board

### SPMH Mission Statement

*The mission of The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall is to preserve, promote, improve, and provide education about Music Hall, funding special projects in addition to Music Hall management's operational and maintenance obligations, and facilitating communications among Music Hall management, owner, and tenants, in order to perpetuate Music Hall as the premier cultural center of the Region, and as a National Historic Landmark of international significance.*

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**To get a unique look at Music Hall and to learn about its rich history call 744-3344 to schedule a Tour!**

**To purchase Music Hall: Cincinnati Finds its Voice  
On DVD or VHS call (513) 744-3293**

## SPMH Funded Projects -Foyer Ceiling

Undoubtedly, Music Hall is the most historically significant building owned by the City of Cincinnati. It is the mission of SPMH to preserve, promote, improve and provide education about this structure and, with the backing of generous donors, SPMH is enabled to fulfill this mission. Most recently, SPMH was approached by the Cincinnati Arts Association, the organization employed by the City to manage Music Hall, with a request to fund the repair of a panel in the coffered ceiling of the elegant foyer.

"One of the coffers in the foyer ceiling showed cracking in the plaster sometime in January of this year," said Scott Santangelo, CAA Director of Operations of Music Hall. "The aging wood joists dry and contract, causing the nails holding the lath to loosen and the plaster to crack." During the repair work, it was determined that the decorative plaster rosette was stable. In late October the plaster was restored and, after

curing, it was painted.

This is just one of many SPMH funded projects. Proudly, our organization orchestrated the restoration and installation of the Albee Mighty Wurlitzer Organ in the

Ballroom. Other SPMH projects include: the purchase of radios for Music Hall security guards to provide them a direct line to the Cincinnati Police, the purchase of chairs for the Critics' Club, the sponsorship of the CET produced documentary, Music Hall: Cincinnati Finds its Voice, the donation of DVDs of this production to the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County and to area schools. A complete list of SPMH funded projects can be found at [www.soc-pres-music-hall.com](http://www.soc-pres-music-hall.com).

You treasure Music Hall and every penny counts! An envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thanks so much for your continued financial support!

- Joanne Grueter



Second floor view of Music Hall's repaired coffered ceiling.

## One Proscenium, Two Prosceniums...

SPMH Vice President and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra violist, Robert Howes, recently made an important discovery that will impact the relationship between the CSO and its audience.

"We've always assumed that Music Hall's auditorium has one proscenium, the square shaped opening in which the curtain hangs, surrounded by the larger ornate structure usually called the proscenium arch." The assumption has proved to be false.

Further research was prompted by a document Bob discovered in a private Cincinnati collection. The document is Music Hall architect Samuel Hannaford's 1895 proposal to the Music Hall Association for renovating the auditorium. "Combining this proposal with other already known remodeling documents, it is clear that the Music Hall auditorium actually has two prosceniums. The smaller square structure is the opera house proscenium, and the larger ornate structure is the concert hall proscenium. When the auditorium is to be used as a concert hall, Hannaford intended the orchestra to set up in front of the opera house proscenium, which was to be closed off for the purpose, thus forming the back wall of the concert hall.

"Historical photographs of the

CSO on the Music Hall stage show that the opera house proscenium has always been assumed to be the concert hall proscenium. The orchestra ends up straddling this proscenium, one half behind it, the other half in front of it, dividing the orchestra into two acoustical environments. Over the decades, we have spent an awful lot of money on increasingly elaborate acoustical shells in an attempt to make this division less onerous. The results have always been unsatisfactory."

Bob is currently discussing with his CSO colleagues placing the back wall of the shell as close to the opera house proscenium as circumstances allow, and eliminating the two ceiling panels that hang over the front half of the orchestra. "We are experimenting" says Bob, "and so far the improvements are significant. The goal is to get as much as possible, the entire orchestra into the house with the audience, as the architect intended. This will allow the orchestra to "use" the hall and play more naturally. And most importantly, it will allow the audience to be more a part of the performance, so our concerts will be a more shared and intimate experience."

- Bob Howes



Bob Howes

## The Great Organ

Scott Santangelo, Cincinnati Arts Association Director of Operations at Music Hall, has a display on the wall of his office: five wooden, stopped-flute pipes from the original Music Hall pipe organ. Custom-built by Hook and Hastings of Boston, the organ made its debut, along with Music Hall itself, on opening night of the 1878 May Festival. At 50 feet wide, 60 feet tall and 30 feet deep, with four manuals, 6,237 pipes (the longest was 32 feet, the shortest ½ inch), and 94 stops, it was the largest organ in America and the fourth or fifth in size in the world. Today, it is but a distant memory.

The magnificent instrument, which stood against the back wall of Springer Auditorium, was dismembered in 1974 and literally consigned to the rubbish heap. “It was thrown away,” said Robert Schaffer, 87, retired organist at the Cathedral

Basilica of the Assumption in Covington who played the Music Hall organ for May Festival and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra concerts during the 1950s and 60s. “It was torn down to provide space for opera and dancing. It was simply a question of space – of taking it away because it was in the way.”

Panels from the organ’s elaborate hand-carved screen are all that survive of “The Cincinnati Organ” (the 1878 book of that name, edited by George Ward Nichols, has been digitized by Google and can be accessed online).

Cincinnati was a center for art-carved furniture in the late 19th-century. There was a wood-carving de-

partment at the University of Cincinnati School of Design (now the Art Academy) headed by Benn Pitman and a private school of carving and design run by William Fry and his son Henry. Pitman, the



Scott Santangelo with five wooden, stopped-flute pipes from original Music Hall pipe organ

Frys and their students – over 100 carvers, most of them women – undertook to make the organ screen. Reuben Springer, prime mover of Music Hall, offered cash prizes for the best of the women’s work. The theme was “music in form,” with panels of birds and insects, the times of day (morning, noon and night) and 15 composers represented by botanical imagery associated with them (laurel for Bach, oak for Beethoven, rose for Schumann, etc.). The screen was taken apart in 1971 and panels were moved to the back wall of the orchestra pit. There are three in the Cincinnati Wing of the Art Museum in Eden Park and a pair hanging at

the foot of the stairs in the North Wing of Music Hall. Some were auctioned off.

What brought down this fairy tale instrument? Size, placement in the auditorium, expanding uses of Music Hall, neglect and some unfortunate decisions, said Schaffer. “The organ was that large because Music Hall was just one building with the organ up there and nothing in front of it,” he said. That changed in 1895, when an attempt was made to convert Springer Auditorium from a choral festival hall into an all-purpose hall. A new stage and a double proscenium were built, the larger for symphony concerts, the smaller for opera and



Great Organ in Music Hall 1878

theatrical events. It was largely a fruitless endeavor, since the CSO moved into its own custom-built concert hall in 1912 (Emery Auditorium), and Cincinnati Opera, founded in 1920, performed in a pavilion at the Cincinnati Zoo until moving to Music Hall in 1972. The organ, its voice muted behind the proscenium, became a stepchild, still played for May Festivals, high school graduations and other events, but an object of controversy.

Historian/CSO violist Robert Howes recently located an April

1895 document giving a fuller picture of what happened -- or more precisely did not -- during the 1895 renovation: "The document," said Howes, "is a proposal by the Hanford firm (architects of Music Hall) regarding the remodeling, and it specifically states that the organ pipe chambers were to be relocated in a space at house left that was going to be designed and worked into the new proscenium. It did not happen because they ran out of time and/or money, or they realized when it came time to try to fit it into the space they thought

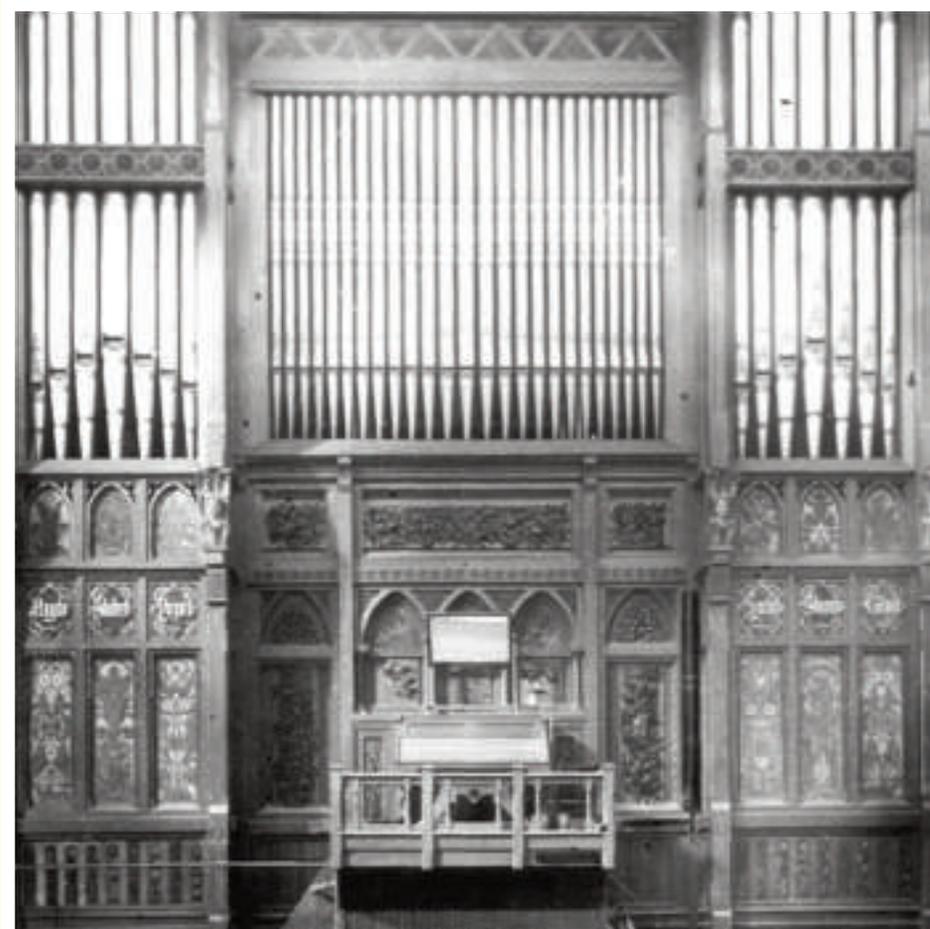
they could fit it into, they couldn't. So they decided just to leave it where it was." The organ was updated in the 1920s when the hydraulic pumps that drove the bellows were replaced by electrical ones. "They made it mechanically better, but it lost some of its zip in tonal quality," said organist Roger Heather, who practiced on the Music Hall organ when he was a student at the Cincinnati College of Music after World War II. The problem, said Schaffer, was that a

builder was hired to try to give it more of an "orchestral sound."

As the years went by, the organ languished behind the proscenium. Care and maintenance were neglected. There was inadequate temperature control, plus leakage from the roof and dust accumulation. When it was played with the orchestra, there were timing and tuning issues. Schaffer remembers having to be led from the wings by May Festival Chorus director Elmer Thomas to try to keep the later-



Music Hall's original organ in background with a car show setup in the auditorium.



Close up of Music Hall's original organ.

sounding organ in sync with the conductor. Former CSO violinist Rosemary Waller recalls how painfully flat it was compared to standard orchestra pitch. The final blow came when in the late 1960s J. Ralph Corbett, his wife Patricia and the Corbett Foundation funded a comprehensive renovation of Music Hall. Inevitably, the problem of the organ came up. Ralph Corbett, who was chairman of the Music Hall board of trustees, made one last attempt to save it. There were three concerns: COULD the organ be re-located without interfering with Music Hall's superior acoustics? SHOULD the old organ be saved or a new one installed? HOW MUCH would it cost? Consultants were called in and advice and estimates given: Repairs to the old organ would cost at least \$175,000, most of it for cleaning. Price tag for a new pipe organ was \$250,000-\$300,000. With the Corbett Foundation already committed to the hilt (ultimately \$6 million), Corbett looked to other sources. "We approached other patrons to see if anyone would be willing to pay for the organ and we met with stony silence. We couldn't get the money." The Corbett Foundation partly influenced by CSO music director Thomas Schippers, himself an organist, paid \$100,000 for a portable electronic organ. The dismantling of the Cincinnati Organ followed in

short order. "Some of the pipes went to churches around town," said Heather, who owns one himself. Others were sold or scavenged. "There were pipes laying right out on the street," said Schaffer, "great pipes that would have cost plenty of money and were top notch quality."

Highly touted at its 1974 debut, the brand new Baldwin electronic "Multi-Waveform" organ proved no substitute for the original. Schippers was soloist in Poulenc's Concerto for Organ, Strings and Timpani, simultaneously conducting the CSO. Enquirer music critic Gail Stockholm had this to say in her October 12 review: "As it now stands, I am conscious of the electronic basis of the sound, a quality that I believe is not desirable." Robert Schaffer, in commenting on the sad demise of the Cincinnati Organ and its electronic successor, takes a dim view of the replacement of pipe organs with electronic ones. (In 1970 he rescued the fine old pipe organ from St. Joseph's Church in Covington and had it installed in the gallery of the Cathedral Basilica). "Those things are not pipe organs. They're phony. I can see playing them on gigs and for skating rinks. They don't belong with the CSO. Something should be done to get some real (pipe organ) music sounds back into Music Hall."

- Mary Elynn Hutton

## *Erich Kunzel Memorial Concert: A Tribute to the Maestro and a Gift to Cincinnati*

Music Hall was filled with the spirit of revered Maestro Erich Kunzel on October 19, 2009 at the special concert honoring the Cincinnati Pops conductor, who died of cancer September 1st. CSO President, Trey Devey introduced the concert: "Eric loved his family, his country, his community, his Cincinnati Pops Orchestra and his audience. This concert is his gift to you." And what a gift it was. From the standing room only crowd at Music Hall to the throngs of fans watching the broadcast live at Fountain Square, the Cincinnati community was treated to a spectacular evening of music and remembrances. Kunzel and his wife, Brunhilde, helped plan the memorial program, select the music and the participants in the weeks before his passing.

The concert was a collection of Kunzel's favorites – songs, colleagues and performers – as well as a tribute to his 44 year affiliation with the CSO and Pops. Ten musical numbers were led by five conductors, including Kunzel's former protégés, Stephen Reineke and Keith Lockhart. The May Festival Chorus and The School for Creative & Performing Arts Chorale and Children's Choirs were included in the evening's program. Also featured was a video commemorating Kunzel, with footage of him throughout the years, including

the touching farewell concert at Riverbend.

The evening opened with a symbolic and poignant reminder of the collective loss of the Prince of Pops. A spotlight shone on an empty podium beneath the familiar, glittery "Pops" sign, as the CSO played Bach's "Air" from Suite No. 3. Few eyes were dry in the hall. Keith Lockhart, conductor of the Boston Pops, followed the opening Bach number with a moving "America the Beautiful", sung by the May Festival Chorus. He then led the orchestra in the lively theme from "The Magnificent Seven"-- replete with livestock sound effects in true Kunzel style.

CSO Music Director, Paavo Jarvi, conducted his players in a heartfelt performance of Elgar's "Nimrod" and concluded his turn at the podium with Strauss' "On the Beautiful Blue Danube". Kunzel loved waltz music and often centered his annual New Year's Eve concert on a Vienna theme.

May Festival Chorus Director, Robert Porco, who collaborated with Kunzel frequently on concerts and recordings, directed the May Festival Chorus and soprano Kathleen Brett, (filling in for an ill Frederica Von Stade), in an emotional, "You'll Never Walk Alone" from "Carousel". Ms. Brett, who sang with Erich at his last Riverbend

concert on August 1st, rejoined the orchestra later in the evening, this time with Assistant Conductor Vincent Lee. Lee was discovered by Kunzel when he was a student at the School for the Creative and Performing Arts. Brett delivered a soaring “Climb Ev’ry Mountain”, from the beloved “Sound of Music”.

Personal remembrances of Kunzel were shared throughout the evening by Lockhart and Reineke, by his lifelong friend Henry Coe, and by his nephew Stefan Davidson. His former protégé’s spoke of the great influence Kunzel had on their lives, both professionally and personally. Lockhart told the audience that Kunzel never missed his birthday and always signed his card, “Love, Dad.” He lauded Kunzel for fiercely pursuing his dream of making classical music accessible for all. Reineke spoke affectionately of Kunzel: “He was the greatest influence on my life, and the most precious lesson he taught me was the importance of love.” Coe, speaking of their college days recalled Erich’s prankish, fun loving nature, which carried into his performances. Davidson shared a personal story of a sailing escapade with his uncle, who remained unfazed when lost in the fog without radar.

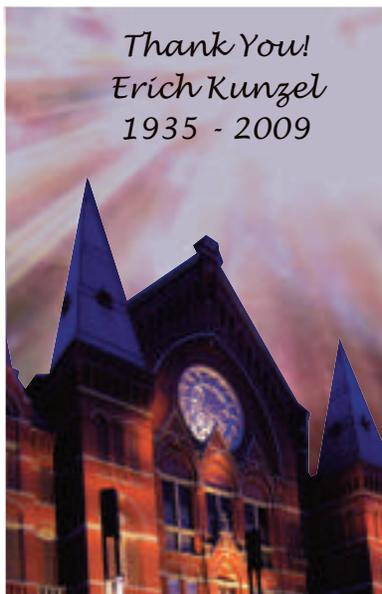
Reineke, newly appointed New York Pops Music Director led the audience in a sing along of childhood favorite “Sesame Street” and “I Believe in Music” with the SCPA choirs. He ended the evening with a rousing rendition of “The Stars and Stripes Forever” – a piece closely associated with Kunzel – with the audience and entire cast on stage clapping along.

It was an evening to remember and a fitting tribute to the man who touched so many lives worldwide with his passion for music and with his love. Perhaps the essence of the man and the maestro was best captured in Kunzel’s favorite quote from “The Sound of Music”, shared by Reineke: “A bell’s not a bell ‘til you ring it. A song’s not a song ‘til you sing it. Love in your heart wasn’t put there to stay. Love isn’t love ‘til you give it away”.

Thank you, Erich Kunzel, for giving your love to the people of Cincinnati.

*(Thanks to Mary Ellyn Hutton for her story Kunzel Memorial Concert a Testament to Love that ran on October 20, 2009 at [www.MusicinCincinnati.com](http://www.MusicinCincinnati.com))*

- Lisa Allison



## *Kunzel’s Vision*

Erich Kunzel was a visionary.

Over the last few months, many have honored this man and his 44 year leadership of the Cincinnati Pops during which time the orchestra gained international fame as a premier performing and recording Pops orchestra. Few are aware, however, of the vision Mr. Kunzel had for transforming Music Hall and the surrounding neighborhood into a vital arts and education community for Cincinnati. It was his love of the arts and passion to expand access to the community that drove him to establish the Greater Cincinnati Arts & Education Center.

“The vision of a new arts school located close to Music Hall in Over-the-Rhine came from Erich Kunzel, Conductor of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra and a longtime supporter of the School for the Creative and Performing Arts. Mr. Kunzel led the formation of the GCAEC to bring together other arts and education supporters to make the dream a reality”, stated the GCAEC press release in June, 2004. The new school, scheduled to open in 2010, will serve as anchor to Washington Park and to the Washington Park Revitalization Plan, which is part of the comprehensive redevelopment of Over-the-Rhine. “Our dream has been embraced by people all around the community,” Kunzel said. “With this interest and support have come new ideas that we welcome.

This dream belongs to all the children who will attend this new school, all the people who live and work around it — and it belongs to the arts, to Over-the-Rhine, Music Hall, downtown Cincinnati and everyone who makes Greater Cincinnati their home. We will now work to develop the exciting partnerships that will help this school reach its potential – partnerships with the Symphony, Ballet, Opera, CET, Children’s Theater and many more.” (On December 7, 2009 the Cincinnati School Board approved the naming of the new school building the Erich Kunzel Center for Arts and Education.)

Working toward his goal to the very end, Mr. Kunzel, just two days before he died, discussed with officials of the Public Library the transfer of music archives and memorabilia to Memorial Hall to create a research destination for those interested in music history. Additionally, he was exploring the possibility of relocating the Shakespeare Festival to a venue within the Music Hall vicinity.

His mental energy, never failing, and his selfless motivation ever strong, he consoled and counseled his dear friend and SPMH President, Norma Petersen, to “Continue to Dream and Do”. As SPMH is energized by its mission statement, the Society shall do just that!

- Lisa Allison

## From My Seat: Dedication Concert of the Mighty Albee Wurlitzer

For someone who considers herself digitally challenged, Ron Rhode's performance on the Mighty Wurlitzer, November 28th was a marvel inexplicable!! From my seat in the front row, I saw hands cross over hands, feet cross over feet, and fingers flip stops in a split second, with no indication of written music, notes, anything anywhere! He attempted to give a lesson to the audience in the operation of one amazing instrument that would give stiff competition to an entire orchestra and vocal ensemble. I cringed, imagining myself as a human pretzel! And then....I just chilled and enjoyed the Show. Wow is all I can say! Ron Wehmeier, to put it mildly, did his job! The Mighty Wurlitzer roared, bellowed, purred, whistled and bam, bam, bammed until I feared my seat companion (as we were packed into someone's idea of an acceptable space) would give me the proverbial elbow. This was pure fun! Ron Rhode did the full gamut of challenging tunes, stuff I never



Descendents of the Wurlitzer family attended enroute to getting married that same day!



(L to R) Ron Wehmeier, Ron Rhode, Norma Perterson and Joe Hollman

heard before like 'My Cutie's Due at Two to Two Today', uh....'Be Like the Kettle and Sing', 'See You in C\_U\_B\_A'. Songs from long ago on an organ from 1927 reborn---past meeting future. I loved it!! (Check out the website [\[pres-music-hall.org\]\(http://www.soc-pres-music-hall.org\) for a Fabulous Recap of the November 28th Wurlitzer.\)](http://www.soc-</a></p>
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It was sunny outside but oh how the sun shown in this Ballroom of our Music Hall! To say that the task is complete, from the contracts

signed, the first action of Ron Wehmeier, to the dedication on November 28th with Ron Rhode---this isn't the story, this isn't completion! This is about new beginnings---more reasons for more folks to desire to come to more events in Music Hall. One becomes aware that Springer Auditorium is not the only focus of our work here at SPMH.

I looked around at the artifacts in the Ballroom, the many 'refugees' from the Albee. The event Program recounts with history and photographs, downtown buildings, monuments, testaments to a past that many believe should not have been resigned to the rubbish heap. One looks at a 19th Century Music Hall and

sees possibilities, a future of past meeting present, as Beethoven or another Significant meets 2010. Music Hall is a behemoth, yes, but, while it is too large for some tenants and some performances, it is just right for others. It may not be

as intimate and patron friendly as modern venues, but---and here lies the treasure - Music Hall is one of a kind---there are no reproductions. To try to fashion a 19th Century icon into a 21st Century mold with utility for all is a precarious, if not impossible undertaking.

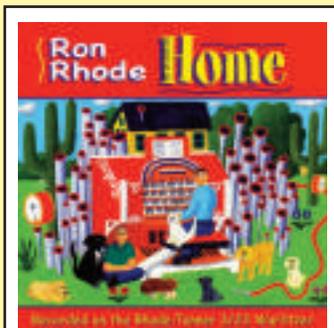
Thom Mariner says, in his article Music Hall: a delicate balance, "In spite of its challenges, Music Hall stirs our civic pride more than almost any other landmark. It is symbolic of our early growth and cultural sophistication. It is our secular cathedral, inspiring us to don our very best in honor of its grandeur. The question for everyone to consider is: How do

we most effectively balance the glories of our past with the necessities of our future?"

Surely, as members of SPMH, you are aware that there are various conversations about proposed plans to renovate Music Hall, and, of course you look to your Board for explanations. Be assured that we are involved and we shall

keep you abreast of significant developments as they occur. In this regard of considering the relevancy of Music Hall past meets Music Hall future, I like to think, and I am humming now, Ron Rhode's rendition, on our Mighty Wurlitzer 'Young at Heart'.

- Kathy Janson



Ron Rhode's current CD



The dedication concert for the Albee Wurlitzer Organ was a special night to remember.

## After the Show

The Mighty Albee Wurlitzer Dedication Concert was a thrilling success from all aspects! A sold out crowd of over 700 people, Ron Rhode in top form, telling the audience this was a highlight of his career, the Mighty Wurlitzer sounding wonderful and working to perfection! I was so proud of the entire presentation, and our audience felt the same way, judging from the tremendous applause after each selection, and encore by Ron. It is interesting to note, how well the Wurlitzer filled the giant space, with all the folks in the room. The design of the organ chambers, the size of the expression shades, and just plain power of the instrument, just projected the music to the back of the Ballroom. I was so pleased! We have Janelle Gelfand to thank in a big way, the two Enquirer articles were great and they exposed many to our Mighty Wurlitzer. Also, the two radio interviews on WMKV and WVXU were helpful.

Ron told me, while selling his CDs that many people wished to buy a CD of Ron playing the Ballroom installation. He wants to make a professional CD on the Albee Wurlitzer this summer, due to demand, the quality of the Wurlitzer, and the big sound in the Ballroom. This is great news, as all will profit from this venture, and people throughout the world will hear what a treasure we have in Music Hall.

As I spoke with many folks be-

fore the concert, during intermission, and after, the most asked question was "When is the next concert and who will play?" Too bad I was not prepared to say "Well it will be in the spring with Lyn Larsen at the Wurlitzer with 30 members of the Pops, playing big band favorites and great tunes from the 'American Song Book'! I am sure that SPMH can make something like that happen. How about Jelani Eddington, great Wurlitzer artist, with the Cincinnati Men's Chorus, or Ken Double with students from the School for the Creative and Performing Arts? There are just so many ways we can showcase the Wurlitzer, and we must keep this venue in the eyes of the public.

With my rebuilding and installation work completed, I will now tune and service the Wurlitzer four times per year, to keep everything in top condition. This is written in the Master Contract as the anonymous donor wanted only the best professional care to preserve his investment. Sadly this donor, the "Angel of Music" who gave the funds for the rebuild and installation, passed away just after all contracts were signed. We now are able to see his dream come true in one of the finest Wurlitzer installations anywhere, for all to enjoy!

- Ron Wehmeier

# 2009 SPMH Annual Meeting



Ken Double, President/CEO The American Theatre Organ Society

The SPMH Annual Meeting was held on Monday, September 21 in the Music Hall Ballroom. During the cocktail reception, everyone had an opportunity to admire the newly restored Albee Mighty Wurlitzer, sparkling under the lights. President Norma Petersen called the meeting to order, introduced new board members Lisa Allison, Bill Henrich, Mary Ellyn Hutton, Donald Siekmann and Ronald Wehmeier, and recognized newly-elected vice presidents Kathy Janson and Steven Monder. She acknowledged with sorrow the passing of two people very dear to SPMH: Alberta Marsh and Maestro Erich Kunzel.

Taking the podium, Ron Wehmeier, who restored the Mighty Wurlitzer, introduced Ken Double, president and CEO of the American Theatre Organ Society. An accomplished entertainer and organist, Ken was quite impressed with Music Hall, calling it an "unbelievable building" and he spoke of the



Terri Kidney and daughter, Anna



Maureen Dillon



(L to R) Ken Double, Norma Petersen, Norma's son Chris Petersen, Norma's daughter Julie Adair and son-in-law Rocky Adair

## - a Wurlitzer Treat

importance of preserving history through structures and instruments. Ken then performed a medley of songs chosen specifically to demonstrate the strength, beauty and wide range of this theatre organ. Selections ranged from "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" to "Sherry", the 1962 hit by Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons. For anyone familiar with the ghosts of Music Hall, Ken's performance of the Broadway theme from "The Phantom of the Opera" conjured up the shadowy figure from the original silent film. From his seat on the console, Ken gave a "tour" of the organ as he demonstrated many of the intricate and varied sounds featured in the Albee Wurlitzer, including the string family, reeds, percussion and special effects. He closed his performance by dedicating his rendition of "It Had to be You" to SPMH President Norma Petersen and he then received a much-deserved standing ovation.



President Norma Petersen, Barbara VanWye and Joyce Van Wye, SPMH co-founder



Patty Wagner and sister Nancy Wagner



Barbara Boyd (L), Lisa Allison (C) and Meredith Downton (R)



Don Siekmann and Bill Henrich with John T. Dominic, executive vice president of CET



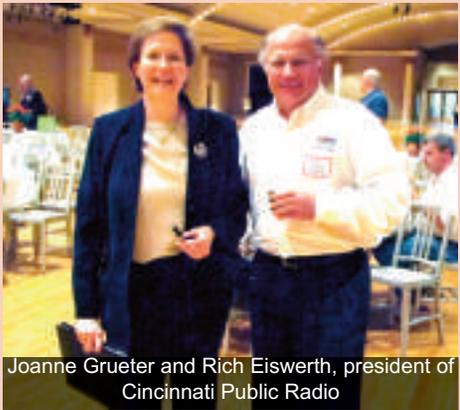
Kathy Janson and husband Mike

The annual meeting corresponds to the beginning of SPMH's fiscal year and board business conducted at that time is voted on by all members of SPMH. Motions passed included the reelection of the entire SPMH board.

Committee chairs presented their year-end reports on the following topics:

- SPMH Tour Guides conducted 32 tours, giving 918 people a "behind-the-scenes" look at Music Hall.

- "Music Hall Marks", the SPMH newsletter, was sent to all members in September, providing them with a review of the group's accomplishments.



Joanne Grueter and Rich Eiswerth, president of Cincinnati Public Radio



Janelle Gelfand, Cinci. Enquirer and Ron Wehmeier



Don Auberger, Phillip Long and Mike Veroni

- The Dedication Concert of the Albee Mighty Wurlitzer continued to receive positive media attention.

- SPMH continues to work with all parties involved in planning the renovation of Music Hall. In particular, the Historical Committee of SPMH (formerly the Archive Committee) has provided information during those planning meetings as to the nature of all previous structural renovations.

- Finally, a report was given regarding the stewardship of the Patricia Corbett Endowment to Music Hall.

- Joanne Grueter



Claire Phillips



Stacy Woolley



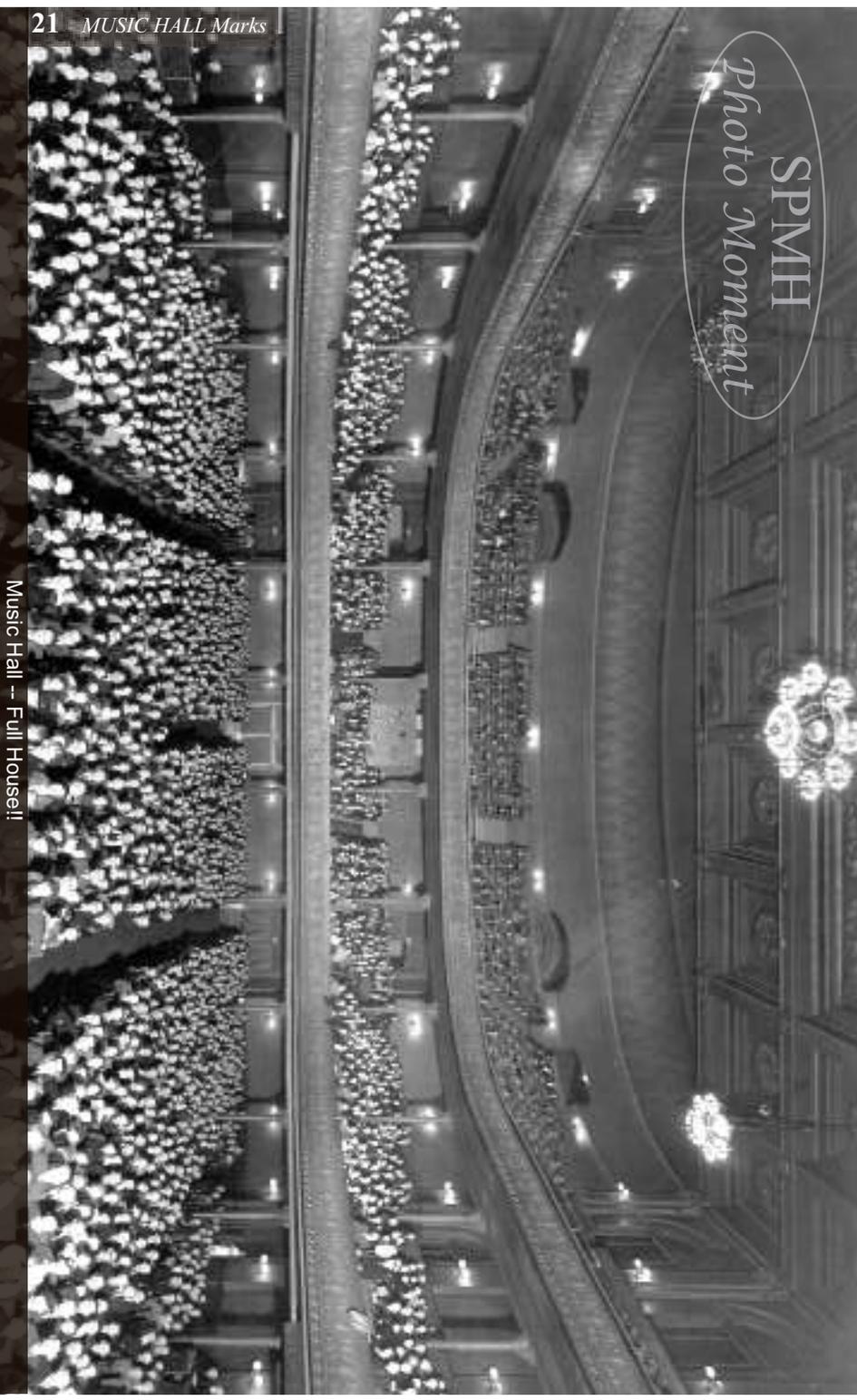
(L to R) Stacy Schmidt, Joanie Lotts, Bill Lotts and Sue Sommer



Betty and Dick Salzer as Marcella Hsiung looks on.



The refreshments were delicious!


 SPMH  
Photo Moment

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(January - December 2009)

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## Meet New SPMH Board Members

The SPMH takes pleasure in introducing three new Board members. Their talents and expertise will, no doubt enhance the Organization's strengths in meeting challenges and embracing opportunities for the good of Music Hall.

**Lisa Allison** is a 25 year veteran of the financial services industry. She is currently an executive with Kroger, where she leads credit card sales for their financial services division, Kroger Personal Finance. Lisa started her career in New York City in advertising, cut her teeth at American Express, and then spent nearly 15 years in leadership roles in marketing at GE Consumer Finance. It was GE who brought Lisa and her family to Cincinnati in 1994 from the East Coast. Lisa and her family, husband David, and sons Schafer (18), Reese (12) and Scott (10) reside in Montgomery. In addition to her work with SPMH, Lisa has held board positions for her local Kindervelt group, Montgomery Nursery School, and the greater Cincinnati Williams College Alumni Society.

**William E. Henrich** holds positions of Senior Vice President, Secretary Treasurer to the Board of Trustees, and Chief Financial Officer with the University of Cincinnati Foundation, managing a portfolio of over \$129 million in assets for the not-for-profit organization. He has also served as Director of Central De-

velopment, Regional Director of Development and Executive Director. He joined the Foundation as Chief Financial Officer in 1987 after a career with the Kroger Company in a series of financial positions most notably, as Director of Accounting for its 600 drugstores division. This results oriented leader is a seasoned professional not only in the financial sector but also in such areas as Information Systems, Organizational Governance, Human Resources and Facilities Management.

**Ronald Wehmeier**, owner operator of Ronald F. Wehmeier, Inc. Pipe Organ Service, is the master organ rebuilder who just completed the restoration/installation of the Albee Mighty Wurlitzer. "I was interested in pipe organs from an early age; my Pop played a Wurlitzer in Royal Theater, downtown Cincinnati in the early 1920s". Just out of high school in 1963, Ron began working for the Moller Pipe Organ Co, the world's largest pipe organ builder. In 1965 he started his own business which included the rebuilding of player pianos and reproducing grands. In 1972 Ron became the Moller representative for sales, installation and service in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and West Virginia. He has serviced instruments from all over the country and now does all rebuilding in his own shop at home. "When not thinking about and working on pipe organs", he

says "I love my big dog Rudy, named after Rudolph Wurlitzer, and I enjoy cutting my acre of grass. I also collect and restore fine antiques. I have been an audiophile

for years, with a collection of microphones and vintage McIntosh equipment, along with state of the art stereo gear".

- Kathy Janson

### A Quote to Remember

*"Cincinnati is fortunate to have one of the very greatest concert halls in the world in its beloved Music Hall. The Hall has special meaning for me, having heard most of the symphonic repertoire there when I was growing up in Cincinnati. And then during my years as May Festival Music Director, it was the scene of the first performances I conducted anywhere of such works as Mahler's Eighth Symphony, Haydn's "Creation" and Wagner's "Lohengrin". The only venerable halls in America that compare with Music Hall in acoustical quality are Boston's Symphony Hall and New York's Carnegie Hall – a most select company indeed."*

- James Levine,  
Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra  
and the Metropolitan Opera

### Acknowledgements

#### SPMH Newsletter

##### Editor

Kathy Janson

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Joanne Grueter  
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##### Design and Layout

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