

From: "Don Springer" <don.springer@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: [Theatreorgans-L] Chicago Stadium Barton - Where is the rest of it?
Date: Wed, January 28, 2009 11:47 am
To: Theatreorgans-L@theatreorgans.com

The blower motor actually had to be rebuilt in the very late 60s.

It was a "synchronous DC motor" that would start in 3 steps controlled by "dashpots"
Step 1 was to get the thing turning utilizing resistors to control the torque.
Step 2 was full power to get it up to speed.
Step 3 was to engage the synchronous control system.

As the story goes, one night Melgard had already shut the organ down, and decided he wanted to play again.

The blower was still spinning, and when he pushed the key down to restart the blower, the starter system apparently refused. Not being a patient person he held the key down until the blower was running, and this circumvented the dashpots, and damaged the motor. No-one knows for sure, but this is the story I heard from someone else who worked on the organ.

I remember that as the motor deteriorated, it was necessary to clean the armature in order to get the thing to start at all. Also, it seemed to hum louder and louder prior to completely failing. Charlie Weiner who was the senior organ technician, fashioned a sliding "gate" that would restrict the air intake on the blower to theoretically reduce the load on the motor while starting up. Can't say that I noticed much improvement... Charlie was there the night it "gave up the ghost" and apparently there was some delay in pushing the stop button. In the mean time the motor generated its fair share of smoke.

Rebuilding the motor was not cheap. Al called Arthur Wirtz and told him the organ needed some work. They were good friends over many years. Wirtz told him to get it fixed.

After the motor was rebuilt, it was decreed that the blower should only be started from up in the loft, and not from the console.

-----Original Message-----

From: TOListserv@theatreorgans.com [mailto:TOListserv@theatreorgans.com] On Behalf Of Mighty Wurlitzer
Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 2009 8:15 AM
To: Theatreorgans-L@theatreorgans.com
Subject: [Theatreorgans-L] Chicago Stadium Barton - Where is the rest of it?

List:

I know Phil Maloof has the Chicago Stadium console but where is the rest of that organ? With that pipe work being of such large scale, I'd imagine it has a limited number of applications. I heard someone got the massive blower and stored it outside in the elements and it's now a rust bucket. Wasn't it the largest blower ever built by Spencer Turbine Co.?

Steven

--Theatreorgans-L-----

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