

**AN HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF EVENTS
CONCERNING THE
BOSTON MUSIC HALL, THE "GREAT ORGAN"
AND THE METHUEN MEMORIAL MUSIC HALL**

1837 The initial development of the organization that was later to become known as "The Harvard Musical Association" was started by a group of Harvard College graduates in July. As students, these graduates had been members of the Pierian Sodality, established in 1808. The graduates met with some fifty prominent citizens of Boston to form a new society, the chief goals of which were to be "...the promotion of musical taste and science in the University, ...to enrich the walls of Harvard with a complete musical library, ...and to prepare the way for regular musical instruction in the College". The new society was initially known as "The General Association of Past and Present Members of the Pierian Sodality".

1840 The society known as "The General Association of Past and Present Members of the Pierian Sodality" changed its name to "The Harvard Musical Association".

1851 The need for a large and centrally-located concert hall for Boston was discussed at the annual meeting of The Harvard Musical Association on Friday, January 31. A Music Hall Committee, comprised of members Robert E. Apthorp, George Derby, John Sullivan Dwight, Charles Callahan Perkins and Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham, was appointed to address the matter.

The Music Hall Committee of The Harvard Musical Association selected a site for the proposed hall in the center of the block bounded by Tremont Street, Washington Street, Winter Street and Bromfield Street in February.

The Music Hall Committee of The Harvard Musical Association engaged architect George Snell to draw up plans for the proposed hall in April.

Also, in April, The Harvard Musical Association issued a circular signed by members Jonas Chickering, George Derby, George Stillman Hillard and Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham, soliciting the contribution of funds to underwrite the Music Hall project.

Within sixty days of the announcement of the appeal, \$100,000 was raised.

The Boston Music-Hall Association was established.

The Boston Music-Hall Association adopted a seal and motto. The Saint Cecilia figure of the seal was drawn by Miss Jane M. Clarke of the New England School of Design for Women. The seal was engraved on brass by Mitchell. The motto "*Cælo venit aurea dextro*" was furnished by the Reverend Theodore Parker. The source of the motto was the *Astronomica*, Liber Quintus, phrase 539, of the Roman author, Marcus Manilius. The motto was translated as "She comes, resplendent, from auspicious skies". The seal was impressed on the tickets of the "Opening Festival, and was embossed on the certificates of stock.

The desired lot of land was purchased, and construction of the four-story structure began.

- 1852** The Boston Music-Hall Association, Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham, President, opened the Boston Music Hall to the public with a concert on Friday, November 20. The net proceeds of the event were "to form the nucleus of a fund, which, at some future day, might furnish the Hall with an Organ of the first class". The net proceeds realized were approximately \$920.
- 1853** The Handel and Haydn Society, organized in 1815 in Boston, moved to the Boston Music Hall, and brought with it its three manual and pedal organ built in 1832 by Thomas Appleton. Originally installed in Boylston Hall, the society and its organ moved in 1839 to Melodeon Hall. As relocated a second time to the Boston Music Hall, the organ stood in the niche behind the

screen of the stage. The Boston Music-Hall Association rented this organ for \$240 a year, and eventually purchased it.

Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham published a 43-page treatise entitled "Acoustic Architecture, or the Construction of Buildings with Reference to Sound and the Best Musical Effect". The discussion topics were drawn from his series of articles then recently published in "Dwight's Journal of Music". The treatise expanded on the discussions given in the articles, reported the results of his further investigation into architectural acoustics, and included several references to allied design and construction considerations of the Boston Music Hall.

A committee of members of the Boston Music-Hall Association with Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham traveled to Great Britain, France, Switzerland and Germany to examine organs and visit organbuilders during the summer and autumn.

Jonas Chickering died on Thursday, December 8, at age 55, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1856 A festival concert was held in the Boston Music Hall on Saturday, March 1 to celebrate the unveiling of Thomas G. Crawford's seven-foot high bronze statue of Beethoven. The statue itself was placed on a six-foot high pedestal located at the center of the stage. Charles Callahan Perkins was credited with bearing some of the expense of casting and transporting the statue, although Mr. Crawford declined any further payment.

The Boston Music-Hall Association voted on Wednesday, June 11 to commence raising \$25,000; the estimated required amount to purchase an organ. The Association itself appropriated \$10,000, on the condition that an additional \$10,000 be raised by private subscription, and that the remaining \$5,000, or such portion of it as would be required, be guaranteed without expense to the Association.

The Boston Music-Hall Association voted on Monday, October 6 to authorize Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham to go to Europe to obtain a contract with an organbuilder.

1857 A contract, consisting of more than forty pages, was signed on Friday, February 20 with E. F. Walcker and Company of Ludwigsburg, Germany to build the organ for the Boston Music Hall.

Thomas G. Crawford died on Saturday, October 10, at age 44, in London, England.

1860 Reverend Theodore Parker died on Thursday, May 10, at age 49, in Florence, Italy.

A contract was signed in April with Gustave and Christian Herter (the "Herter Brothers") of New York for the organ case of American black walnut to be based on a preliminary design by the Boston artist and architect Hammett Billings.

1862 The Saturday, June 21 issue of "Dwight's Journal of Music" reported that the "Great Organ" for the Boston Music Hall was completed at the factory of the E. F. Walcker and Company in Ludwigsburg, Germany. Also, that the case for the organ was finished at the workshop of Herter Brothers in New York, New York.

A committee, representing the Boston-Music Hall Association, assembled at the factory of the E. F. Walcker and Company in Ludwigsburg, Germany, to examine the "Great Organ". The committee consisted of Edward John Hopkins, Johann Georg Herzog, Julius Schiedmayer and Jacob Adam Seitz. Their report, dated Saturday, August 16, concluded that their examination of the instrument found that all the terms of the contract had been satisfied, and that they found the organ to have been constructed in a "most excellent and durable manner".

1863 The Dutch brig "Presto", with the "Great Organ" on board, sailed from Rotterdam, The Netherlands, for Boston on Thursday, January 1.

Ebenezer Dale managed the task of transporting the organ case from the workshops of the Herter Brothers in New York to the Music Hall during the winter.

The Dutch brig "Presto", with the "Great Organ" on board, arrived in Boston on Sunday, March 22.

The 1832 Thomas Appleton organ in the Boston Music Hall was dismantled, removed and sold to the First Presbyterian Church of San Francisco, California.

Decorative painter William James McPherson oversaw the renovation of the walls and ceiling of the Boston Music Hall. The color scheme was changed, with the walls being painted somewhat darker and the ceiling lighter.

The seating arrangement in the Boston Music Hall was changed; the seats were reupholstered and covered with dark red enamel cloth. New porcelain plates were installed to number the seats, which totaled 2,654.

The "Great Organ" was first shown and heard at a private exhibition for the subscribers and stockholders of the Boston Music-Hall Association, members of city government and other invited guests, on Saturday evening, October 31. A huge green curtain, veiling the organ, was dramatically lowered, Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham delivered a lengthy report of the organ project, and various organists performed.

The "Great Organ" in the Boston Music Hall was formally inaugurated to the public on Monday evening, November 2. Tickets to the event were priced at three dollars, and the proceeds were to be used to reduce the debt in acquiring the organ, and to establish a fund to underwrite the maintenance of the instrument. Charlotte Saunders Cushman recited a lengthy ode, written by Mrs. James T. Fields. Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham, President of the Boston Music-Hall Association and Chairman of the Organ Committee, introduced Friedrich Walcker, son of the organbuilder, to the audience. As at the prior private exhibition, a green curtain, veiling the organ, was dramatically lowered. John Knowles Paine,

Whitney Eugene Thayer, George Washbourne Morgan, Benjamin Johnson Lang, Dr. Samuel Parkman Tuckerman, and John Henry Willcox performed works by Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frideric Handel, Felix Mendelssohn, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Henry Purcell and Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wély.

A complimentary dinner was presented in honor of Johann Friedrich ("Fritz") Walcker, son of the builder of the "Great Organ" Eberhard Friedrich Walcker, by the directors of the Boston Music-Hall Association on Tuesday evening, November 3 at the Revere House. Approximately thirty-five invited local dignitaries and people associated with the organ project attended. Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham, President of the Boston Music-Hall Association and Chairman of the Organ Committee presided and introduced the many speakers who each offered remarks appropriate to the celebration.

1866 The Boston Music-Hall Association reported that receipts at the Music Hall for the month of June were \$576.

1871 The pitch of the "Great Organ" was raised.

The New York Times of Wednesday, June 14 reported that the once a year dusting of the "Great Organ" costs \$133.

Ebenezer Dale died on Sunday, December 3, at age 59, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1872 Thomas Appleton died on Thursday, July 11, at age 86, in Reading, Massachusetts.

Eberhard Friedrich Walcker died on Friday, October 4, at age 78, in Ludwigsburg, Germany.

1874 George Derby died on Saturday, June 20, at age 55, in Boston, Massachusetts.

Hammatt Billings died on Saturday, November 14, at age 56, in New York, New York.

1875 John Henry Willcox died on Tuesday, June 29, at age 47, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1876 Charlotte Saunders Cushman died on Friday, February 18, at age 59, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1878 Julius Schiedmeyer died in January in Stuttgart, Germany.

Mark Hopkins died on Friday, March 29, at age 64, in Yuma, Arizona.

Jacob Adam Seitz died, at age 77.

1879 George Stillman Hillard died on Tuesday, January 21, at age 70, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1881 English-born architect Henry Vaughan arrived in New York aboard the steamship "Abyssinia" from Liverpool in February.

Henry Lee Higginson, the founder of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and his associates purchased a controlling interest in the Boston Music Hall during the summer, when preparations were being made for the debut of the orchestra.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra gave its inaugural concert in the Boston Music Hall on Saturday evening, October 22 under the direction of conductor Georg Henschel. Works by Ludwig van Beethoven, Christoph Willibald Gluck, Franz Joseph Haydn, Franz Schubert, Max Bruch and Carl Maria von Weber were performed.

1882 Robert E. Apthorp died on Friday, February 10, in Boston, Massachusetts.

An exquisite, highly-detailed facsimile model of the "Great Organ", 22 feet wide and 15 feet high, fabricated of wood and dry goods, displayed in the show window of the Jordan and Marsh establishment, was unveiled on Saturday, May 13.

The Boston Daily Globe reported on Thursday, September 7 that the "Great Organ", considered to be out of public favor, unreliable

and occupying both needed stage and audience space, was contemplated to be purchased in the interest of the New England Conservatory of Music, removed from the Boston Music Hall and placed in a new, as yet to be built, concert hall at the rear of the conservatory property.

1883 The "Great Organ" was purchased by the sewing machine developer and trustee of the New England Conservatory of Music, William O. Grover, for \$5,000 in March.

The legal suit to obtain a court injunction to prevent the removal of the "Great Organ" from the Boston Music Hall was denied, and the organ's removal was scheduled to begin in May 1884.

Christian Herter died on Friday, November 2, at age 43, in New York, New York.

1884 Frederic Archer gave the last performance on the "Great Organ" in the Boston Music Hall on Wednesday evening, May 14. The recital consisted of works by Gustav Merkel, Edouard Batiste, Jacques Nicolas Lemmens, Giacomo Meyerbeer, Frederic Archer, Joseph Callaerts, Felix Mendelssohn, Johann Ludwig Krebs, Berthold Tours and Richard Wagner.

Completion of the dismantling of the "Great Organ" and its removal from the Boston Music Hall was accomplished prior to the required date of Tuesday, July 1. The components of the organ were placed in storage in a rough frame building in the yard at the rear of the New England Conservatory of Music.

1885 With the "Great Organ" having been removed from the Boston Music Hall, a large sounding board was constructed over the stage platform to increase the acoustical projection of the sound of the Boston Symphony Orchestra into the hall.

1886 Charles Callahan Perkins died on Wednesday, August 25, at age 63, in Windsor, Vermont.

- 1887** Edward F. Searles and Mary Frances (Sherwood) Hopkins were married at a ceremony in Trinity Chapel, New York, New York on Monday, November 7.
- 1889** Whitney Eugene Thayer committed suicide on Thursday, June 27, at age 50, in Burlington, Vermont.
- Edward F. Searles purchased the Methuen Woolen Company building, built in 1864 and in which woolen shawl cloth was produced, from Amory Leland. Power to run the machinery was provided by a nearly 10-foot drop on the Spicket River at "Harvey's Falls".
- 1890** Samuel Parkman Tuckerman died on Monday, June 30, at age 71, in Newport, Rhode Island.
- 1891** Mrs. Edward F. Searles [Mrs. Mary Frances (Sherwood) (Hopkins) Searles] died on Saturday, July 25, at age 73, in Methuen, Massachusetts.
- 1892** Ownership of the former Methuen Woolen Company building was transferred from Edward F. Searles to James Elbert Treat on Thursday, January 7.
- George Washbourne Morgan died on Sunday, July 10, at age 70, in Tacoma, Washington.
- Edward F. Searles established the Methuen Organ Company with James Elbert Treat in the former Methuen Woolen Company building. Two other enterprises, the United States Tubular Bell Company, manufacturers of harmonic bells; and the D. M. Bruce Company (David M. Bruce), suppliers of metal pipes for organs, were also located in the old mill building.
- 1893** George Snell died on Thursday, February 23, at age 73, in Boston, Massachusetts.
- John Sullivan Dwight died on Tuesday, September 5, at age 80, in Boston, Massachusetts.

- 1895** William O. Grover died on Thursday, September 5, at age 72, in Beverly, Massachusetts.
- Organbuilder Johann Friedrich "Fritz" Walcker died on Friday, December 6, at age 66, in Ludwigsburg, Germany.
- 1896** Ownership of the former Methuen Woolen Company building was transferred from James Elbert Treat to Edward F. Searles on Monday, April 27.
- Mrs. Jesse Gould Searles [Mrs. Sarah (Littlefield) Searles], mother of Edward F. Searles, died on Thursday, November 12, at age 87, in Methuen, Massachusetts.
- 1897** The dismantled "Great Organ" was purchased at an auction to settle the estate of William O. Grover, held within the rough frame building in the yard at the rear of the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston in which the organ had been stored for the past 12 years, by John M. Ingraham, representing the Methuen Organ Company and Edward F. Searles, for the single bid of \$1,500 on Wednesday, May 12.
- 1898** Gustave Herter died on Tuesday, November 29, at age 68, in New York, New York.
- 1900** The nineteenth season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra was the last held in the Boston Music Hall. The final concert in the venue took place on Saturday evening, April 28 under the direction of conductor Wilhelm Gericke. The program consisted of Ludwig van Beethoven's "Leonore Overture No. 2", Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Quintette, "Di scrivermi ogni giorno", from "Cosi fan tutte", and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.
- The interior of the Boston Music Hall was gutted and remodeled into a vaudeville theater. The facility reopened on Tuesday, September 4 as the "Boston Music-Musee Hall".

The Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of conductor Wilhelm Gericke held its inaugural concert in the new "Symphony Hall", located at Huntington and Massachusetts Avenues, on Monday evening, October 15. The concert consisted of the "Missa Solennis" by Ludwig van Beethoven.

1901 Edward John Hopkins died on Monday, February 4, at age 82, in London, England.

Organist Frederic Archer died on Tuesday, October 22, at age 63, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

1902 Dr. Jabez Baxter Upham died on Saturday, March 15, at age 82, in New York, New York.

1905 The Boston Music Hall was substantially remodeled yet again. A third entrance was added from 415 Washington Street. On Sunday, February 12, the Music Hall was renamed the "Empire Theatre".

The Methuen Organ Company began rebuilding the "Great Organ".

1906 John Knowles Paine died on Wednesday, April 25, at age 67, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The "Empire Theatre" became the "Orpheum Theatre" on Monday, September 3

1909 The construction of the "Serlo Organ Hall" was completed.

Johann Georg Herzog died on Wednesday, February 3, at age 86, in Munich, Germany.

Benjamin Johnson Lang died on Sunday, April 4, at age 71, in Boston, Massachusetts.

An informal recital was performed by Everett E. Truette of Boston on the "Great Organ" in the Serlo Organ Hall on Thursday, June 10. The recital was arranged by Edward F. Searles, and was attended by a few invited guests.

On Monday, September 13, the "Boston Globe" reported that the "Orpheum Theatre" would be known as the "American Music Hall".

Edward F. Searles held a rededication of the "Great Organ", originally in the Boston Music Hall, in Serlo Organ Hall on Thursday afternoon, December 9. Some two hundred and fifty invited guests attended. Everett E. Truette of Boston performed works by Alfred Hollins, Charles King Hall, Johann Sebastian Bach, Théodore Dubois, Alexandre Guilmant, Eugène de Bricqueville, William Wolstenholme, Adolphe Marty and Louis Thiele.

1910 After a summer of stock plays, the "American Music Hall" became the "Orpheum Theatre" once more.

1911 The first public recital on the "Great Organ" in the Serlo Organ Hall was performed by Everett E. Truette of Boston on Thursday evening, June 8. Works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Charles-Marie Widor, Alexandre Guilmant, Richard Wagner, Alfred Hollins, William Wolstenholme and Fernand de la Tombelle were heard.

1912 Edward F. Searles donated to the town of Methuen a Henry Vaughan designed stone arch façade bridge over the Spicket River, with turrets and piers at the southern property line of Serlo Organ Hall.

1913 A recital celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the inauguration of the "Great Organ" in the Boston Music Hall was performed by (John) Wallace Goodrich on Sunday, November 2. Works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Alexandre Guilmant, Marco Enrico Bossi, Felix Mendelssohn, Charles-Marie Widor, Louis James Alfred Lefébure-Wely and César Franck were performed.

1915 Mrs. James T. Fields [Mrs. Annie (Adams) Fields] died on Tuesday, January 5, at age 80, in Boston, Massachusetts.

James Elbert Treat died on Wednesday, May 26, at age 81, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1916 The Boston Music Hall was again gutted and remodeled. On Thursday, January 20, the facility reopened as the "Loew's Orpheum Theatre", to become Boston's first authentic movie palace.

1917 Henry Vaughan died on Saturday, June 30, at age 72, in Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

1919 Henry Lee Higginson died on Friday, November 14, at age 84, in Boston, Massachusetts.

1920 Edward Francis Searles died on Friday, August 6, at age 79, in Methuen, Massachusetts.

Under the terms of the will of Edward F. Searles, allowed in Salem, Massachusetts Probate Court on Friday, November 26, Arthur T. Walker, as residuary legatee, became owner of the Serlo Organ Hall, the "Great Organ", and the organ factory building.

1925 Wilhelm Gericke died on Tuesday, October 27, at age 80, in Vienna, Austria.

1927 Arthur Thomas Walker died on Monday, August 8, at age 50, in Windham, New Hampshire.

Under the terms of the will of Arthur T. Walker, filed in court in Brooklyn, New York on Wednesday, August 17, Ina Cecil McEachran of Detroit, Michigan and others became owners of the Serlo Organ Hall, the "Great Organ", and the organ factory building. Mr. Walker's secretary, Elgin E. Rudd, was named executor of the estate.

1929 Elgin E. Rudd died on Tuesday, November 19, at age 58, in New York, New York.

A recital on the "Great Organ" in Serlo Organ Hall was performed by Marcel Dupré on Thursday, November 21. The program

consisted of works by César Franck, Johann Sebastian Bach, Marcel Dupré and Johannes Brahms.

1930 Ownership of the Serlo Organ Hall, the "Great Organ", and the organ factory building was transferred from Ina Cecil McEachran et alii to Lillian (Wightman) Andrew of Methuen, Massachusetts on Tuesday, June 17.

A mortgage on the Serlo Organ Hall, the "Great Organ", and the organ factory building was obtained by Mrs. Francis Martin Andrew [Mrs. Lillian (Wightman) Andrew] from the Essex Savings Bank on Thursday, August 21.

1931 Serlo Organ Hall, the "Great Organ", and the organ factory building were purchased by organbuilder Ernest M. Skinner of West Newton, Massachusetts from Mrs. Francis Martin Andrew [Mrs. Lillian (Wightman) Andrew] on Wednesday, February 4.

Alexander McCurdy performed a recital on the "Great Organ" of the "Serlo Hall" on the evening of Thursday, November 5.

1932 Alexander McCurdy performed a recital on the "Great Organ" of the "Serlo Hall" on Wednesday, June 22, as part of the American Guild of Organists Eleventh General Convention which was being held in Boston.

A program of Christmas music was broadcast live from the "Serlo Organ Hall" by Boston radio station WBZ and the National Broadcasting Company network from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M. on Sunday, December 25. Archibald T. Davison; Harvard University Organist and Choirmaster, and Director of the Harvard Glee Club; gave a brief resume of the history of the organ. William E. Zeuch, organist of the First Church in Boston, played the "Great Organ" and directed a choir of 24 voices. Fox Movietone News was there to record a news reel of the event.

- 1933** A mortgage on the Serlo Organ Hall and the organ factory building was given by Richmond H. Skinner to the Essex Savings Bank of Lawrence on Friday, January 13.
- Everett E. Truette died on Saturday, December 16, at age 72, in Brookline, Massachusetts.
- 1934** Georg Henschel died on Monday, September 10, at age 84, in Aviemore, Scotland.
- 1935** E. Power Biggs performed recitals on the "Great Organ" of the "Methuen Organ Hall" on the Sunday afternoons of September 22 and 29 at 4:00 P.M.
- 1936** Ernest M. Skinner and his son, Richmond H. Skinner, established "The Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company" organbuilding company in the organ factory building adjoining the Serlo Organ Hall.
- E. Power Biggs performed recitals on the "Great Organ" of the "Methuen Organ Hall" on the Sunday afternoons of July 19 and 26 at 4:00 P.M.
- 1937** The Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company was awarded the contract to build the organ for the National Cathedral in Washington, D. C.
- E. Power Biggs performed recitals on the "Great Organ" of the "Methuen Organ Hall" on the Sunday afternoons of July 11, 18, 25 and August 1 at 4:00 P.M.
- 1938** The Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company organ in the National Cathedral, Washington, D. C. was dedicated on Thursday, November 10.
- 1941** A two-manual organ for Saint Peter's Church, Beverly, Massachusetts, was the last built by the Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company in Methuen.

1942 On Monday, June 1, the War Production Board issued an order that mandated the conversion of the entire musical instrument manufacturing industry to defense work effective Wednesday, July 1. All organbuilders were ordered to convert to producing blowers for link trainers used in the ground training of pilots.

In August, the Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company transferred all of its assets to Arthur T. Wasserman and Matthew Brown as trustees to protect itself from creditors.

The Ernest M. Skinner and Son Company ceased operations in the Methuen organ factory building, declared bankruptcy and closed on Thursday, October 1.

1943 A land court decree was issued in May, empowering the Essex Savings Bank of Lawrence to sell the Serlo Organ Hall and organ factory building as properties covered by two mortgages: one given by Mr. Francis Martin Andrew and Mrs. Francis Martin Andrew [Mrs. Lillian (Wightman) Andrew], and the other given by Richmond H. Skinner.

The organ factory building was destroyed by a general alarm fire on Thursday, June 17.

On Friday, July 2, the Essex Savings Bank acquired title to the Serlo Organ Hall and the surrounding land at the mortgage foreclosure public auction for \$55,000.

1946 The Articles of Organization of the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. were filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on Monday, May 6. The officers of the corporation were Reverend Theophilus Ringsmuth, President; B. Allen Rowland, Vice President; Philip F. Danforth, Treasurer; and Mary G. Watts, Secretary.

A Certificate of Incorporation of the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. was issued by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on Wednesday, June 12.

The Serlo Organ Hall and the surrounding land were purchased by Alfred Calvin Gaunt from the Essex Savings Bank on Friday, June 14.

The Serlo Organ Hall and the immediate surrounding property were given by Alfred Calvin Gaunt to the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. on Friday, June 14.

The Serlo Organ Hall was renamed the Methuen Memorial Music Hall.

A contract was signed on Monday, July 8 with the Aeolian-Skinner Organ Company, Inc. of Boston to rebuild the "Great Organ" to specifications prepared by Arthur Howes, Carl Weinrich and Ernest White for \$24,500.

A steam heating system was installed with an oil-fired cast-iron boiler and cast-iron radiators.

Ownership of two tracts of land was transferred from Alfred Calvin Gaunt to the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. on Friday, December 13. The first tract was land on the east side of the Spicket River south and west of the hall. The second tract was land on the west side of the Spicket River fronting on Union and River Streets.

1947 A rededication concert of the rebuilt "Great Organ" in the Methuen Memorial Music Hall was performed by Arthur Howes, Carl Weinrich and Ernest White on Tuesday evening, June 24 and Wednesday evening, June 25. Works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Dietrich Buxtehude, Hubert W. Lamb, Johannes Brahms, César Franck, Giambattista Martini, Johann Kirnberger, Thomas Arne, Max Reger and Sigfrid Karg-Elert were performed, as well as an improvisation by Ernest White.

The Music Hall Board of Trustees rented the building and organ for a portion of the summer to Arthur Howes for the purpose of conducting an "Organ Institute". This annual rental arrangement continued through at least 1959.

- 1949** The tax-exempt status of the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. was established by a letter from the Commissioner of Internal Revenue dated Thursday, November 17.
- 1951** The Music Hall Board of Trustees leased the lower floor of the building to the Town of Methuen for use as a Civil Defense shelter. This annual arrangement continued through at least 1955.
- The "Organ Institute" began publication of the "Organ Institute Bulletin/Quarterly"; Arthur Howes, editor. This publication continued through at least the summer of 1964.
- 1952** (John) Wallace Goodrich died on Friday, June 6, at age 81, in Boston, Massachusetts.
- 1953** Columbia Records conducted recording sessions of E. Power Biggs performing works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Marcel Dupré, Lynnwood Farnum, Franz Liszt, Julius Reubke and Leo Sowerby on the "Great Organ" on Monday, May 25 and Wednesday, May 27.
- 1954** On Monday, January 18, Columbia Masterworks released a 33 1/3 rpm, monophonic, 12" long-playing record of E. Power Biggs at Methuen playing works by Julius Reubke and Franz Liszt.
- 1955** Ownership of the land between the hall and the storage warehouse was transferred from Alfred Calvin Gaunt to the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. on Wednesday, June 15.
- 1956** Organbuilder G. Donald Harrison died on Thursday, June 14, at age 67, in New York, New York.
- 1958** During the summer, E. Power Biggs' weekly organ recital broadcasts over the CBS Radio Network featured performances recorded in the Methuen Memorial Music Hall.
- A 10' x 16' addition was constructed at the northeast corner of the Music Hall.

1959 Alfred Calvin Gaunt died on Wednesday, January 21, at age 76, in Methuen, Massachusetts.

1960 Organbuilder Ernest M. Skinner died on Sunday, November 27, at age 94, in Duxbury, Massachusetts.

1961 Archibald T. Davison died on Monday, February 6, at age 77.

Ownership of three parcels of land was transferred from Mrs. Alfred Calvin Gaunt [Mrs. Bertha Theresa (Fisher) Gaunt], E. Abbot Gaunt, Mrs. E. Abbot Gaunt [Mrs. Kathleen S. (Stott) Gaunt], Mrs. James Brown Woodman, Jr. [Mrs. Persis Lovejoy (Gaunt) Woodman, Jr.] and Mrs. Wilbur B. Bradford [Mrs. Nancy Lyle (Gaunt) Bradford] to the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc. on Monday, August 7. The first parcel was the land upon which the residence at 238 Broadway and the storage warehouse were located. The second parcel was of the land surrounding the southern end of the dam. The third parcel was of the land surrounding the northern end of the dam.

Mrs. Francis Martin Andrew [Mrs. Lillian (Wightman) Andrew] died on Tuesday, October 24, at age 80, in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

1963 William E. Zeuch died on Sunday, June 2, at age 96, in Boston, Massachusetts.

A centennial anniversary concert of the inauguration of the "Great Organ" in the Boston Music Hall was performed by E. Power Biggs, John Ferris and George Faxon on Sunday afternoon, November 3. Works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Georg Phillip Telemann, Felix Mendelssohn, César Franck, Johannes Brahms, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and George Friderich Handel were performed.

Mrs. Alfred Calvin Gaunt [Mrs. Bertha Theresa (Fisher) Gaunt] died in November, at age 80, in Massachusetts.

1966 A contract was signed on Wednesday, January 12 with the Andover Organ Company, Inc. to replace the blower of the "Great

Organ" with a new 3 stage, 2 pressure, 7 1/2 horsepower blower for an estimated total cost of \$2,355.

- 1967** Francis Martin Andrew died on Monday, November 27, at age 87, in Methuen, Massachusetts.
- 1970** The design of the Great division of the "Great Organ" was restored more along the lines of the Walcker original by the addition of a set of chorus reeds. Utilizing windchest space and stopknobs already available, the Andover Organ Company, Inc. installed a 16' Trumpet, an 8' Trumpet and a 4' Clarion. The pipes were made by Roland Killinger of the Süd-Deutsche Orgelpfeifenfabrik of Freiberg-Beihingen, Germany.
- 1971** Marcel Dupré died on Sunday, May 30, at age 85, in Meudon, France.
- 1972** On Tuesday, January 18, the Orpheum was abandoned by Loew's Theatres, and the facility reopened for the performing arts as the "Aquarius".
- 1973** The first "Maifest" Pops Concert was held in the hall on Friday, May 18 featuring organist George Faxon.
- 1974** In May, Sarah Caldwell and the trustees of the Opera House Company of Boston began using the "Aquarius" under its old name of the "Orpheum Theatre".
- The Music Hall Board of Trustees awarded the first of its annual scholarships to graduating high school seniors who select music as their major at college.
- 1975** The organ case and the wood paneling of the Music Hall were refinished by the firm of McGrath Associates of Boston.
- 1977** E. Power Biggs died on Thursday, March 10, at age 70, in Boston, Massachusetts.

- 1978** The Opera House Company of Boston use of the "Orpheum Theatre" ceased when it purchased Benjamin Sack's "Savoy Theatre". The "Orpheum" serves now as a rock concert venue, accessed only via the Hamilton Place entrance and seating 2,763.
- The Music Hall and the "Great Organ" were listed in the National Register of Historic Places effective Thursday, December 14.
- 1980** Ernest White died on Sunday, September 21, at age 80, in Fairfield, Connecticut.
- 1982** E. Abbot Gaunt died in September, at age 73, in Methuen, Massachusetts.
- 1983** The interior walls of the Music Hall were cleaned and painted by the Edward K. Perry Company of Boston.
- Alexander McCurdy died on Wednesday, June 1, at age 77, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 1984** A "Plan of Land in Methuen, Massachusetts owned by Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc" dated November 17, 1983 was recorded at the Essex North Registry of Deeds on Monday, January 23.
- 1985** A Declaration of Endowment for Building and Organ Preservation was signed on Tuesday, 9 April.
- 1986** Richmond Hastings Skinner died in March, at age 88, in Dallas, Texas.
- Mrs. James Brown Woodman, Jr. [Mrs. Persis Lovejoy (Gaunt) Woodman, Jr.] died in April, at age 75, in Concord, New Hampshire.
- 1989** Arthur Howes died on Saturday, April 29, at age 81, in Lawrence, Massachusetts.
- 1990** Parts of the tower bearing-wall brickwork were removed and replaced.

- 1991** Carl Weinrich died on Monday, May 13, at age 86, in Princeton, New Jersey.
- Benjamin Allen Rowland died on Friday, June 21, at age 81, in New Castle, New Hampshire.
- 1992** George H. Faxon died on Thursday, June 25, at age 79, in Brookline, Massachusetts.
- 1993** Philip F. Danforth died on Wednesday, February 17, at age 96, in Andover, Massachusetts.
- Damaged roofing slates were replaced; and a new copper roof over the tower connector, flashing, valleys, gutters, headers and downspouts were installed.
- A 32-level combination action system, designed and fabricated by Solid State Logic Ltd. of England, was installed by the Andover Organ Company, Inc.
- 1996** The archway structure was renovated, including a second exit from the balcony on the south wall of the hall.
- An addition was constructed at the rear of the hall providing a handicap ramp, new building access and new handicap accessible rest room.
- 1997** The deteriorated doors at the main entrance of the hall were replaced by new, custom-made, quartersawn oak doors.
- The restrooms in the lower level of the hall were completely redesigned and reconstructed under the guidance of Angelo Petrozzelli of Design Partnership Architects, Inc. of Haverhill, Massachusetts.
- 1998** Reverend Theophilus Ringsmuth died on Sunday, August 2, at age 86, in Palm Beach, Florida.

Deteriorated bricks in several areas of the building exterior side walls and on the lower section of the tower were replaced and repointed.

1999 On Thursday, May 20, a "1999 Historic Preservation Award" was presented to the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc by the Methuen Historical Society; Martha M. Welch, President; "in recognition of efforts in preserving and promoting Methuen's historical heritage through the restoration of property at 192 Broadway".

2000 The Andover Organ Company, Inc. removed and replaced the leather of all 86 stop action motors of the organ.

2001 Roland Killinger died on Sunday, July 15, at age 73, in Freiberg, Germany.

The granite turrets and piers along the Spicket River at the southern property line were restored by the Victory Construction Corporation of North Attleboro, Massachusetts. The Andover Organ Company, Inc. of Lawrence, Massachusetts, under a sub-contract from Victory Construction Corporation, fabricated a new pyramidal roof for the turret closest to Broadway. It was constructed off-site. The design of the new roof utilized a mahogany frame and cedar shingles.

2002 On Thursday, May 16, a "2002 Historic Preservation Award" was presented to the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc by the Methuen Historical Society; Mary M. Seavey, President; "in recognition of efforts in preserving and promoting Methuen's historical heritage through the restoration of the historic structures known as the 'Searles Bridge Turrets' at 192 Broadway".

2003 Matthew Brown died on Friday, September 5, at age 98, in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Andover Organ Company, Inc. renovated the organ console, rebuilt the manual keyboards with new ivory naturals, refinished

the sharps, installed new key bushings and electrical contacts, replaced the old pneumatic coupling action with solid-state switching, and replaced the 1947 cotton-covered wiring with modern cabling.

2004 Berj Zamkochian died on Monday, February 23, at age 74, in Boston, Massachusetts.

The Mailloux Brothers Construction Company, Inc. of Methuen replaced one hundred and fifty roofing slates, installed snow rails above the handicap entrance addition at the rear of the structure, replaced gable flashing, and installed a new copper floor pan and the flashing at the base of the open region at the top of the tower of the hall.

2005 The Andover Organ Company, Inc. further renovated the organ console, replaced the pneumatic drawknob units with modern units, replaced the pneumatic tilting tablet assembly with an electromechanical assembly, rebuilt the right stop jamb to match the left jamb, installed new oblique drawknobs and labels, and revised the stop layout.

Arthur Theise Wasserman died on Sunday, June 26, at age 93, in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

2006 Mrs. E. Abbot Gaunt [Mrs. Kathleen S. (Stott) Gaunt] died on Wednesday, February 22, at age 91, in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

The Andover Organ Company, Inc. transferred the 8' Krummhorn 61 note Aeolian-Skinner spotted metal reed stop from the enclosed Choir division of the organ to the unenclosed Positiv division utilizing a previously unused slider and toeboard of the Positiv windchest, and installed an 8' Clarinet 61 note spotted metal reed stop of Aeolian-Skinner origin in the enclosed Choir division where the 8' Krummhorn was previously located.

The "Mothers' Day Flood" caused extensive damage in the lower level of the hall.

The oil-fired steam heating system boiler was replaced with a new unit manufactured by Utica Boilers of Utica, New York, purchased from Bell Pumps of Methuen, Massachusetts, and installed by the Freeman Fuel Company of Methuen, Massachusetts at a total cost of \$14,500.

Music Hall Trustee Sally Slade Warner donated her 1945 Steinway Model B 6' 10" semi-concert grand piano to the Music Hall corporation. McCallum Classic Piano of Haverhill, Massachusetts restored the instrument.

2007 The Andover Organ Company, Inc installed an 8' Gamba stop on the Great division utilizing pipes made in 1904 by the Hutchings-Votey Organ Company of Boston, Massachusetts. This stop replaced the seldom used 1 1/7' Septieme on the Great division.

On April 6, Angelo Petrozzelli of Design Partnership Architects, Inc. of Haverhill, Massachusetts advised the Music Hall Board of Trustees with regard to the reconstruction of the damaged lower level.

Following the demolition of the water-ruined interior walls of the lower level, numerous layers of paint were removed from the inside surface of the perimeter walls to allow inspection, remediation and restoration to their original appearance.

2008 The lower level of the hall was reconstructed by Andover Construction Company, Inc. utilizing new materials and a new reconfigured floor plan developed by the Music Hall Board of Trustees Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Mrs. Wilbur B. Bradford [Mrs. Nancy Lyle (Gaunt) Bradford] died on Sunday, May 18, at age 94, in Denver, Colorado.

John Ferris died on Friday, August 1, at age 82, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

Through the generosity of the Gomidas Organ Fund, Inc., a new artists' room was built in memory of the late organist Berj Zamkochian, a frequent performer at the Music Hall.

Approximately 60 spalled brick were removed, replaced and repointed, and limestone joints were repointed in upper areas of the external walls of the east transept of the hall by Folan Waterproofing and Construction Company, Inc. of South Easton, Massachusetts at a cost of \$36,363.

A new and appropriately-sized exterior sign was fabricated and erected on the front lawn of the hall by Harvey Signs of Methuen, funded by an anonymous benefactor.

2009 A Certificate of Registration for the dam across the Spicket River at "Harvey's Falls" at the southern boundary of the property was issued on March 24 by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Office of Dam Safety.

On the recommendation of Structures North Consulting Engineers, Inc. of Salem, Massachusetts, the roof trusses were reinforced with the addition of wooden braces, metal rods, and plates by Heritage Steeplejack and Construction of Rehoboth, Massachusetts at a cost of \$40,875.

On Saturday evening, May 9, The Harvard Musical Association presented a re-enactment of the November 2, 1863 "Inauguration of the Great Organ" in the Boston Music Hall. Elizabeth Gawthrop Riely recited the ode originally read by Charlotte Saunders Cushman, Christoph Wald assumed the persona of Friedrich Walcker, and organists Brian Jones, Sandra Soderlund, Peter Sykes and Mark Dwyer performed the original recital pieces. An added attraction was the world premiere performance by Sandra Soderlund of "Odyssey", an organ solo composition by her husband Herb Bielawa, especially commissioned for the occasion by The Harvard Musical Association. The re-enactment included a gala catered dinner and a dessert reception under a tent on the back lawn of the Methuen Memorial Music Hall property.

The source of water leaks in the east transept wall and parapet was further investigated by AT&S Masonry of Methuen.

The "ZipTrip" segment of Fox 25 Morning News was broadcast live by the Boston television station from the grounds of the Music Hall on Friday, July 31. A previously-recorded portion of the segment featured the interior of the Music Hall and the organ.

An ad hoc committee of the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc, Board of Trustees planned a "Centennial Celebration Weekend" in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the 1909 dedication of the "Great Organ" in Methuen. The weekend events were an organ recital by Felix Hell on Friday evening, September 25; an organ demonstration for young people by Trustee Reverend David F. Gallagher on Saturday morning, September 26; an organ demonstration for adults by Trustee Douglas Major on Saturday afternoon, September 26; a gala five-course catered dinner with guest speaker Michael Barone of "Pipedreams", organist Peter Krasinski and Trustee Barbara Owen, historian, on Saturday evening, September 26; and an organ concert with organists Barbara Bruns, Ray Cornils, Brian Jones with a vocal quartet, and Trustee Douglas Major with Richard Watson, trumpet and Will Pirone, harmonica on Sunday afternoon, September 27.

Music Hall Trustee Sally Slade Warner died on Friday, December 4, at age 77, in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

2010 Former Music Hall Trustee Emily Eastham Heald died on Thursday, March 18, at age 93, in Falmouth, Massachusetts. During her years of service she held the positions of secretary, vice-president and president.

Per the "transfer upon death" estate planning provision of the late Music Hall Trustee Sally Slade Warner, a variable annuity death benefit and shares of a mutual fund, totaling over \$225,000, were conveyed to the Music Hall corporation. As such, it was the largest financial gift in the history of the organization.

The Gomidas Organ Fund, Inc. donated \$30,000 to underwrite a series of six annual "Berj Zamkochian Memorial Organ Recitals".

The Methuen Festival of Trees awarded an \$18,750 matching Historic Preservation Grant towards the cost of repairs to the east exterior transept wall of the Music Hall.

The Pro Organo label released a two-disc package (DVD plus CD), "Methuen Century", in recognition of the centennial of the Music Hall. Organist Frederick Hohman was seen and heard in performances of works by Bach, Brahms, de Grigny, Dupré, Franck, Handel, Mozart, Schumann and Sowerby. Organ technician Matthew Bellocchio provided a 22-minute guided tour of the insides of the organ on the DVD.

Based on the 2009 investigation, a repair and restoration project was undertaken to the east exterior transept wall of the Music Hall. The restoration efforts by AT&S Masonry included repair of the flashing on both sides of the east transept gable at the junctions with the slate roof, repointing the failed mortar joints of the brick on the back side of the gable wall and the sandstone trim elements, repair of the sandstone corners on the backside of the parapet wall, and cleaning all sandstone bands, caps and window trim on the front gable wall.

Paul Jacobs was the featured performer in the first "Berj Zamkochian Memorial Organ Recital" on Friday, October 22.

2011 The Organ Historical Society Press released a 397 page hardcover book, "The Great Organ at Methuen: from its celebrated arrival in nineteenth-century Boston to the present", by Music Hall Trustee Barbara Owen.

A "Sally Slade Warner Memorial Concert" to honor the late Music Hall Trustee was held on Friday, September 16. Organists Leo Abbott, Barbara Bruns, Mark Dwyer, John and Carolyn Skelton; tenor Allen Combs; and pianist Christopher Walter performed.

An ad-hoc committee, designated the "Carriage House Development Special Committee", was created by the Music Hall Board of Trustees to analyze a proposal received from Brooks Properties concerning the storage warehouse on the Music Hall

property. Over the course of several months, the committee executed due diligence in their analysis of the proposal, focusing on "can we" and "should we", with the goal of providing an objective and unbiased report to the Trustees. After receipt of the committee's report, and a period of review and discussion by the Trustees, the Board voted not to proceed with the proposal.

The Music Hall and organ were featured as "Methuen's Hidden Gem", a segment of the "Chronicle" program, broadcast on Friday, September 30 over WCVB-TV, Channel 5, ABC Network, Boston, Massachusetts.

Janette Fishell was the featured performer in the second "Berj Zamkochian Memorial Organ Recital" on Friday, October 21.

2012 Six Music Hall Trustees were named to the Corporation's Honorary Council in recognition of their many years of dedicated service: David Coffman, Betty Couilliard, John Freeman, Angie Privitera, Hilda Wagner and William Zurwell.

The limestone around the front entrance was repaired and repointed; the cracked granite on the front stairs was repaired; the granite treads were reset and repointed; the old railings were removed, painted and reset; and the old hot top front walk was removed and replaced with a new colored, stamped (herringbone pattern) walkway.

John Scott was the featured performer in the third "Berj Zamkochian Memorial Organ Recital" on Friday, October 26.

2013 The Andover Organ Company, Inc. installed a sequencer to the combination action of the organ to facilitate registrational changes during performances.

Music Hall Board of Trustees President Ed Sampson hosted two cable television programs about the "Great Organ" and the Music Hall produced by Methuen Community Television and Salem (New Hampshire) Community Television.

The German audiophile label MDG released a Super Audio Compact Disc (SACD), "Variations on 'America'", of Rudolf Innig performing works by Rossini, Buck, Parker, Ives, Wagner and Gershwin on the "Great Organ".

A comprehensive Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) engineering study effort was initiated concerning the feasibility and options for air conditioning the Music Hall.

The Music Hall Board of Trustees in conjunction with the Nevins Memorial Library held the first bilingual event by sponsoring a Saturday morning, free admission event for children on September 21 with a performance of an organ transcription of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf". Narration was given in both English and Spanish.

Hector Olivera was the featured performer in the fourth "Berj Zamkochian Memorial Organ Recital" on Friday, October 18.

To recognize the 150th anniversary of the "Great Organ" (1863-2013), a celebratory concert was held on Saturday, November 9, at which six organists performed. A capacity audience heard Abbey Hallberg Siegfried, David Carrier, Diane Meredith Belcher, Peter Sykes, Rosalind Mohnsen and Douglas Major perform works by Paulus, Brahms, Edmundson, Bach, Dupré, Reger and Vierne. A wine and cheese reception was held following the concert.

2014 Isabelle Demers was the featured performer in the fifth "Berj Zamkochian Memorial Organ Recital" on Friday, October 24.

Through arrangements with the abutter, the property on the north side of the storage warehouse on the premises of the Music Hall was cleared and landscaped.

The Music Hall Board of Trustees contributed two items to the December online auction of the "Festival of Trees" community fundraising program for support of historic preservation: a gift basket, "Methuen's Famed Music Hall", of books and DVDs; and an experience, "Pipe Dream Come True", a guided tour of the hall, including the interior of the "Great Organ".

2015 The intrusion alarm system of the Music Hall was reconfigured to improve system operation.

Additional Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) engineering studies, concerning the feasibility and options for air conditioning the Music Hall, were obtained.

All three levels of the storage warehouse in the rear of the property were cleaned, shelving was fabricated, and a massive honey bee hive was removed from the soffit.

A "Pipes and Pipes" car show was introduced, together with an open house of the Music Hall.

Repairs were made to the west transept masonry and windows of the Music Hall.

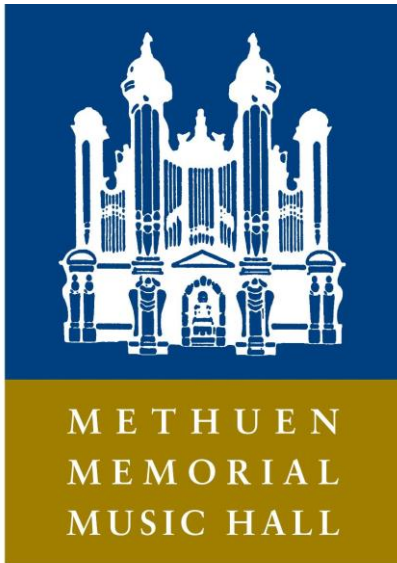
2016 Repairs of the west transept masonry and window casings of the Music Hall were completed.

Results of engineering studies concerning the feasibility and options for air conditioning the Music Hall were evaluated.

Music Hall Board of Trustees President Ed Sampson hosted two episodes of a new cable television series, "Pipe Up", on Methuen Community Television (MCTV).

A "Young Artists Organ Recital" was introduced as the first recital of the fifteen-week Wednesday Evening Organ Recital Series to give local promising organ students an opportunity to perform in a formal concert setting.

A new format of the website was launched with increased mobile device compatibility and social media linkage.



**Researched, developed and maintained by
Ed Sampson, President
Board of Trustees
Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Inc.
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