

# Midwest Organ Open House

## Experience a Theatre Pipe Organ!

A Do-It-Yourself Musical Experience

The organ is a late model (1928)  
Robert Morton opus 2401 Model 23N.

The original ranks are flute, clarinet, vox,  
violins I, II, III, french horn in the main.

Tuba, diapason, tibia, saxophone,  
kinura in the solo.

Six ranks of tuned percussion.

### ADDITIONAL RANKS

David Billmire added several ranks to  
the original 11:

Posthorn, french trumpet, orch oboe,  
musette and flute celeste.

The organ is now a 3/17.

### MAIN CHAMBER

Flute 32'-2'  
Violin I 16'-2'  
Celeste Violin II 8'-4'  
Celeste Violin III 8'-4'  
Clarinet 16'-4'  
French Horn 8'-4'  
Vox Humana 8'-4'  
Flute Celeste 4'  
addition R-M  
Musette 8'  
addition Wurli Schopp's copy

### SOLO CHAMBER

Tibia 16'-2'  
Diapason 16'-4'  
Tuba 16'-4'  
Saxophone 8'-4'  
Kinura 8'-4'  
Orch Oboe 8' addition R-M  
French Trumpet 8'  
addition Dennison-Schopps  
English Posthorn 8'  
addition Wicks (modern)

*The bottom extensions for the Flute,  
Tibia, Tuba, Diaphone, Violin and  
Clarinet are Walker.*

You're invited to  
Experience the organ  
that received the 1999  
ATOS Restoration Award

The 3 manual, 17-rank Robert Morton  
theatre pipe organ is ready to sing for you!

Most Theatre Pipe Organs are gone  
today ... mere reminders of the thrilling  
sounds of a past generation that filled the  
theatres and auditoriums to accompany  
flickering films and provide concerts.

Quite frankly, there are not many left.

Occasional organs exist today, but few  
are actually accessible. They require a  
large space and maintenance expense.

### Serving the King of Instruments

David and Elaine Billmire had opportunity  
to adopt and restore one of their own.

However, as they read of the plight  
of others who haven't had a chance to  
enjoy such an experience, performing on  
a real live theatre organ, they became  
inspired to provide an event featuring their  
instrument to provide that opportunity.

They decided to invite the world to their  
instrument. Although major conventions  
with structured programming are staged  
in major cities, excessive costs to attend a  
week-long event, plus convention hotel  
rates, prevent many who are interested  
but may lack resources or time to attend.

Major conventions are performance-  
oriented to big name performers, so any  
hope for average organists to actually  
play one of these instruments is bleak.

Their solution? ... to open the doors to  
welcome others to share their song.

David Billmire, doing his part, says,  
"I am trying to stir up some interest.  
We have not had a lot of organ activity in  
my area for some time. We are installing  
the Emery Wurli in the local Music Hall  
ballroom, but that is being done totally by  
professionals."

Paul E. Kealy <StentorVox> Editor - Publisher

NOON TIL MIDNITE

July 19, 2008

Come one ~ Come all  
Sign up for your "Open Console"  
opportunity to enjoy and perform  
on a genuine theatre pipe organ.

For out-of-towners, restaurants  
and overnight accommodations  
are available within a few miles.

Feel free to bring your video or  
recording equipment to document  
yourself performing on a real, live  
Theatre Pipe Organ!

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*What began as an opportunity to provide  
people the thrill of performing on a live  
theatre pipe organ has become the Midwest  
Organ Open House at the Billmire House in  
Cincinnati, Ohio.*

### ABOUT THE INSTRUMENT:

*Originally installed as a 3 manual, 11 rank  
organ in the Empress Theatre in Columbus,  
Ohio, this organ has an exciting history.*

*The interesting Empress theatre, featuring a  
seating capacity of 500 to 600 seats, primarily  
served the African American community.*

*When in the 'fifties the building was razed,  
as was the fate of so many similar theatres,  
the organ was removed from the structure  
and moved to the theatre owner's house.*

*Following this, it was sold to a farmer in  
southeastern Ohio who didn't complete its  
restoration, but eventually sold it to a person  
in the 'seventies who installed it in his house.*

*Before its completion, however, the new  
owner was killed in an auto accident, and the  
organ was adopted by a friend of his, David  
Billmire, the present owner, who completely  
rebuilt it over the next 6 years.*

*All the pipe work, professionally restored  
and finished by Wilson and Duddy, has been  
returned to its original voicing.*