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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A year ago, at the 2014 Annual Meeting, I found myself back on the EOM Board after a hiatus of over 5 years. Not only that, I was president again, ten years after my first term ended; and with that bit of history in mind, I would like to welcome you to the 2015 Annual Meeting, and to an upcoming year of progress for the Estey Organ Museum.

In 2003, as your first president, our challenge was to build a new organization from scratch with an enthusiastic group of people with various different interests all involved in some way with the Estey Organ Company or its buildings, history, and products. Now, twelve years later, we have come a long way and are operating professionally under the knowledgeable care of our administrative director, Phil Stimmel. Over the years, we have bought, improved, refinanced and maintained our own building; built up our collections to overflowing, regularly opened every weekend for several summers in a row, and presented interesting programs and newsletters on many things "Estey". With a managing director available to answer the volumes of inquiries from all over the world, and to guide the Board of directors in their efforts at good governance, we have spent the last year learning about just where we are headed, and taking action on such items as realistic budgeting, de-accessioning policies to control storage costs, and redesign of our website under the efforts of director, Karen Rosen. Also, thanks to Valarie Abrahamsen, we have scheduled docents for museum openings and found volunteers for fundraisers.

We were sorry to lose both Kim Benzel and Jody Oakman this summer, who, for various reasons, could not continue their membership on the EOM board. As a result, we are looking for new Board members, a treasurer, and a bookkeeper. We hope that any of you reading this report, who might be interested in any of these positions, will contact us through Phil or me. Many thanks.

Cindy Wilcox
President

MANAGING DIRECTOR

At the close of my second year as Managing Director, it's good to take a few moments to review where we are, and perhaps what additional directions in which we may need to go. As the "front-man" for the museum, I continue to receive and respond to all email and telephone communications. This can be a daunting task. There have been as many as 2-3 phone calls in a day, and a fairly steady stream of emails asking for information about particular organs, where the owner might sell the organ, would the museum like to receive the organ as a gift, and "what is my organ worth?" Fortunately, with knowledge of the organ's serial number and a photo or two, I am generally able to identify the particular model, and return to the owner a file illustrating their organ in one of the Estey catalogs. This all is a time-consuming process.

This year, again, the museum has been open on Saturdays and Sundays during the summer months, thanks to our crew of generous docents, and Valerie Abrahamsen's organizational ability. Further, when calls come in to visit on other days and times, I have been able to oblige with private tours. One of my desires has been to find a way to schedule visits by tourist buses during the summer and fall foliage seasons; however, this seems to be dependent on taking expensive ads in magazines catering to tour bus companies.

At my urging, the board of trustees has conducted a fairly in-depth analysis of our financial condition, identifying strengths and weaknesses of our financial health. The museum has actually been operating at a deficit for many years, which clearly cannot continue.

As a way to deal with our over-filled storage space of organs and parts, I am delighted that, under Karen Rosen's leadership, we are planning the first "organ re-homing" event for October 24-25. This will be a way that we can pass on some of our surplus to others who may be interested in these "treasures."

The Estey Organ Museum continues to function, but on a much lower activity level than in past years. Those of us closely involved all agree that there is a real need for more active board members, more volunteers and more financial resources. Those who founded the museum certainly had laudable and lofty goals. It is up to those of us who are currently entrusted with its care to make every effort to keep taking steps toward achieving those goals.

Philip Stimmel

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is currently comprised of Cindy Wilcox, President; Valerie Abrahamsen, outgoing Secretary; and members Les Nicholas, Karen Rosen and Jesse Hamilton. David Ryan has continued to assist the Managing Director and the Board in facilities matters. We are grateful for the service of Chase DeForest, who resigned from the Board in September 2014; and to Kim Benzel, Vice President, and Jody Oakman, Bookkeeper, who stepped down in June 2015. The Board, along with Phil Stimmel, met 10 times in 2014-15, either in the Community Room at Brattleboro Savings and Loan, in the offices of the Brattleboro Historical Society, or at the museum. We are grateful to BS&L and BHS for their accommodations.

Actions taken by the Board included approval and implementation of an Annual Appeal in July 2014 and June 2015; transferring financial responsibilities from Barbara George to Jody Oakman, Cindy Wilcox and Phil Stimmel; electing Cindy Wilcox as President and Treasurer in September 2014; closing and securing the museum during the winter months, thus saving money on heat; electing Karen Rosen to the Board in November 2014; approving a 2014-15 budget with a \$6,138 deficit; extending the original loan of our mortgage and agreeing to meet the new terms offered by the bank; electing Kim Benzel as Vice President in December 2014; agreeing to relieve Cindy Wilcox of Treasurer duties in December 2014 and electing Jody as Treasurer in May 2015; gratefully accepting a donation from the estate of Alan Dann, which was added to the memorial funds; gratefully acknowledging receipt from Jody Oakman of donated QuickBooks software to print checks, thus eliminating the need to write checks by hand; creatively discussing ideas for deaccessioning organs in order to reduce rental space and costs; and working productively with Chris Grotke of MuseArts (and Estey Past President) on improving our website and approving several proposals around that project.

To reiterate Cindy's request, please consider offering your services as a Board member or officer – Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

Valerie Abrahamsen
Secretary

EVENTS

A number of events were planned and executed during the year. Sherry Stimmel and Valerie Abrahamsen co-coordinated the second annual Coffee Break at the Guilford Welcome Center on Saturday, July 11, 2015, which netted approximately \$900. Sherry and Valerie were ably assisted by Phil Stimmel, Ed and Karen Rosen, and a number of Board members and friends of the museum that day and in advance. Valerie, Phil and Ed Boadway planned and managed a Hymn Sing on Saturday, August 29, 2015, at which Ed played hymns on several organs, with the hymns selected by the small but enthusiastic crowd (Phil also took a few turns at hymn-playing). Thanks to David Ryan and Ned Phoenix, the museum was represented by the Estey float in the Strolling of the Heifers and the July 4th parade; we were proud to receive the Guernsey Award from Strolling of the Heifers for Funniest Float. A holiday bake sale is planned at the Exit 1 Outlet Shops for Saturday, December 12, 2015, and other events are under discussion.

More members are needed to help plan and execute events, especially fundraising events, for the museum. Speak to Valerie or Phil if interested; the work is fun!

Valerie Abrahamsen

DOCENTS

The museum was open almost every Saturday and Sunday afternoon from 2:00 to 4:00 pm between Saturday, May 16, 2015, and the present (and docents are on board for the remaining weekend days through Sunday, October 11). Most docents served three to five times (approximately once a month), and several served over and above the call of duty. Responsibilities of docents included opening and closing the museum, tidying the museum space, welcoming visitors, taking donations, selling merchandise, and encouraging visitors to play the organs and/or playing themselves.

While there were some open days when there were no visitors, at other times, docents hosted upwards of 11 guests. Most guests were non-members, so a \$5 donation was usually received, and guests (including teens) always express great enthusiasm for our collections and gratitude that the museum is open.

Many thanks go to the following who served as docents: Augusta Bartlett, Ed Boadway, John Carnahan, Barbara George, Les Nicholas, Karen Rosen, David Ryan, Phil Stimmel, Cindy Wilcox and Valerie Abrahamsen. Serving as a docent is fun and educational and is essential to the success of the museum; more docents (and a docent coordinator) would be most welcome.

Valerie Abrahamsen