

THE WGN PIPE ORGAN



WGN Radio 720 · WGN Television 9

WGN Continental Broadcasting Company · 2501 Bradley Place, Chicago, Illinois 60618

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A HISTORY OF THE WGN PIPE ORGAN

The WGN Pipe Organ is one of the few left to be used in a broadcast studio. Its history parallels that of WGN Continental Broadcasting Company.

The original organ was Wurlitzer built, as were most of the theatre organs of that day. When WGN Radio first began as a broadcasting entity in 1924, it was housed in studios atop Chicago's famed Drake Hotel. The pipe organ was built in a penthouse studio atop the Drake and the basic pipe work then consisted of the following stops: Tibia, Tuba, Clarinet, Viole d'Orchestre, Viole Celeste, Concert Flute and Vox Humana.

After eleven years at the Drake, WGN moved into new studios adjacent to the Tribune Tower in 1935. The organ was installed in Studio 3, on the main floor of the new building, under the direction of Len Salvo, staff organist at that time.

The contract for re-building the organ was given to Kimball Company, who built the console still in use, and the following pipes were added at that time: Open Diapason, Trumpet and English Horn.

A studio remodeling program found the organ being re-installed in Studio 3 but when additional space was required by the Tribune Company for a photo studio, the pipe organ was dismantled and put in storage.

There it stayed for approximately two years, during which time the present WGN Radio and Television facilities were erected on Bradley Place.

Upon completion of the present broadcasting complex in 1961, the pipe organ was re-installed in Studio 3 and the installation was accomplished under the direction of Frank Wichlac, an organ builder. One of those helping with the installation was Al Swets, who is the present organ maintenance man.

Since then, one more set of pipes has been added: a Night Horn, a gift from a friend of Harold Turner, who also donated traps for the organ which have not been completed. The organ has always had a Harp and Celeste, Glockenspiel and Xylophone, all of which are in perfect working order.

The console is equipped with 10 General Pistons, 10 on each manual (Solo, Great and Accompaniment) and 6 on the pedal. It is on high wind pressure, giving it a big sound.

SPECIFICATIONS OF THE WGN PIPE ORGAN

GREAT

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Trumpet 16 | Piccolo (Tibia) 2 |
| Tuba 16 | Piccolo (Flute) 2 |
| Open Diapason 16 | Tierce 1 3/5 |
| Tibia 16 | |
| Clarinet 16 | Harp 8 |
| Contre Viole 16 | Celeste 4 |
| Contre Celeste 16 | Vibra Harp 8 |
| English Horn 16 | Xylophone |
| Bourdon 16 | Glockenspiel |
| Vox Hymana 16 | Chimes |
| | |
| Trumpet 8 | Couplers |
| Tuba 8 | Gt. super 4 |
| Open Diapason 8 | Acc. sub 16 |
| Tibia 8 | Acc. unison 8 |
| Clarinet 8 | Acc. super 4 |
| Viole d'Orchestre 8 | Solo sub 16 |
| Viole Celeste 8 | Solo unison 8 |
| English Horn 8 | Solo super 4 |
| Concert Flute 8 | |
| Vox Hymana 8 | |
| | |
| English Horn 4 | |
| Octave 4 | |
| Viole 4 | |
| Octave Celeste 4 | |
| Piccolo 4 | |
| Flute 4 | |
| | |
| Twelfth (Tibia) 2 2/3 | |
| Twelfth (Flute) 2. 2/3 | |

ACCOMPANIMENT

Bourdon 16
Vox Humana 16
Trumpet 8
Tuba 8
Open 8
Tibia 8
Clarinet 8
Viola 8
Viola Celeste 8
English Horn 8
Flute 8
Vox 8

Octave 4
Piccolo 4
Flute 4

Twelfth 2 2/3
Piccolo 2

Harp 8
Celeste 4
Vibra Harp 8
Xylophone

Couplers
Acc. 16
Unison 8
Acc. 4

2ND TOUCH

Trumpet 8
Tuba 8
Open 8
Tibia 8
Chimes
2 Couplers

3 Tremulants
General
Tibia
Vox Humana

SOLO

Trumpet 8
Tuba 8
Open 8
Tibia 8
Clarinet 8
Viola 8
Viola Celeste 8
Eng. Horn 8
Flute 8
Vox 8

Eng. Horn 4
Octave 4
Piccolo (Tibia) 2
Piccolo (Flute) 2

Harp
Celeste
Vibra Harp
Xylophone
Glockenspiel
Chimes

Coupler
Acc. Unison 8

PEDAL

Tuba 16
Open 16
Bourdon 16
Tuba 8
Open 8
Tibia 8
Cello 8
Flute 8
Flute 4

Couplers

Solo to Ped. 8
Gt. to Ped. 8
Acc. to Ped. 8

PISTONS

10 General
10 on each manual
6 on pedal

2 shade pedals
1 Crescendo pedal
1 Sforzando pedal & button

