



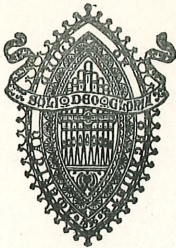
Gazette Photo by Fred Kardon

## 120 Years New

This view of the interior of Mechanics Hall on Main Street looks like a million bucks . . . and so it should. The 120-year-old landmark is in process of being restored to new condition, and the \$1.2-million first phase of the work has been completed. Mechanics Hall was built in 1857 for \$110,130, but passing years took their toll on the building. Deterioration reached the stage several years ago

where Mechanics Hall was deemed a fire hazard. Then momentum began to build for the restoration. The first phase included air conditioning, brick work, wiring, plumbing, heating, painting, restoration of 22 paintings, balcony work, and installation of carpeting, seats and chandeliers. The result, above, is worth more than a second glance.





AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS  
WORCESTER CHAPTER

December 21, 1974

Julie Chase Fuller, President  
The Board of Trustees  
Worcester Mechanics Association  
Mechanics Hall  
321 Main Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

Dear Mrs. Fuller and Trustees of the Mechanics Association:

The Worcester Chapter, American Guild of Organists is anxious to be of help and encouragement in your efforts to restore and re-open to the public your grand, old home on Main Street.

Of particular interest to us, and hence this letter, is the large, historic organ built in 1864 by Messrs. E. & G. G. Hook of Boston. It is the oldest extant 4-manual organ built in the United States, and, save for the alterations to the playing action made earlier in this century, it remains today a monument to 19th century organ building. Mechanics Hall, a national cultural landmark with miraculous acoustics, is the original home of this fine instrument, intensifying our hopes for a careful restoration of the building and the organ.

Rhetoric is cheap! How can the A. G. O. be of help? By our abilities in calling attention to the organ.... by contributing our time and talents in any phase of the whole project.... by hosting benefit concerts in the Worcester area churches. Our motto is the furthering of music in America. We stand ready to help. May we?

Very sincerely yours,

Robert C. Dickinson  
Dean

256 Main Street  
Spencer, Mass. 01562



# MINUTES

of

A Joint Meeting of the Worcester Chapter,

American Guild of Organists  
and

The Worcester Mechanics Association

Monday, January 20, 1975, 3:00 PM  
Mechanics Hall, Worcester

Those present: Messers J. Verner Otterson, W. Danforth Hayes of the Worcester Mechanics Association  
Messers Robert C. Dickinson, Barclay Wood, Charles L. Davis, Stephen Long of the Worcester A. G. O.  
Mr. Thomas Murray, Organist, St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston.

This meeting, requested by the Worcester Chapter, American Guild of Organists in a letter to the Mechanics Association dated December 21, 1974, was opened by Robert C. Dickinson, Dean of the Worcester A. G. O. There was no agenda. The meeting was immediately turned over to open discussion of the state of the organ in Mechanics Hall, a large 4-manual instrument built in Boston in 1864 by the E & G G Hook Organ Company. The purpose of the discussion was to discover ways in which this organ might be preserved and restored, along with the building in which it is housed.

The concensus of this meeting was that an official, joint committee be appointed consisting of three members from the Mechanics Association (to be appointed by Julie Chase Fuller, President); three persons representing the Worcester Chapter, A. G. O. (to be appointed by Robert C. Dickinson, Dean); Mr. Thomas Murray of St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston; Mr. Raymond Morin, Music Critic for the Worcester Telegram; and representatives from the Worcester Heritage Society and the Worcester Historical Society.

Many ideas were presented in support of the monumental task of restoring the organ. Among them, a benefit film series sponsored by the Mechanics Association, benefit concerts and recitals in Worcester-area churches sponsored by the A. G. O., and Thomas Murray offered his services as a recitalist without fee for fund-raising concerts. Mr. Murray further stated he would be willing to turn over to the Mechanics Association the publication rights for a recording (yet to be made) of the Mechanics Hall organ.

It was further decided that Mr. Robert Newton of the Andover Organ Company of Methuen, Massachusetts be asked to inspect the organ at an early date and to estimate the expenses involved in:

1. immediate repairs to the instrument, so that a recording could be made, and
2. a full restoration of the instrument to its original state.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*Stephen Long*