

Charitably



Speaking

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President's Message

As we move ahead into 2024, the remaining focus of my term in office will be on membership. We have all heard about our ongoing need for new members, especially since 25% of our membership is over 80 and another 25% in their 70s. We have not done a very good job of bringing in newer, younger members to keep MCMA the vibrant organization it once was. I believe that needs to be corrected.

As we get to a more retired state of life, there is a greater tendency to become out of touch with those actively involved in our trade. Membership requirements of today may not adequately reflect changes over time. Not long ago, people in the skilled trades far outnumbered those who used no skilled trade in their work; today, skilled businesses are begging people to work and hence becoming even more corporate themselves.

I have asked five members to head up a Membership Qualification Taskforce: Tom Crowdis III, Dick Stewart, Harry Dodakian, Greg Davidian, and Kurt Hanson. They will be gathering information by survey and at a special general session where you can provide their input. That can begin right here, right now. Send me your comments and thoughts today. We want quality members who are both concerned about and who have respect for, the men and women that are a part of the skilled trades and craft industries in America today.

Great members are where you find them. And perhaps they don't even work in that industry but were educated or trained in it. I trust our members to refer people they believe will be quality members; that premise may need to have greater importance since it is that personal knowledge that is what makes us the organization we are, not necessarily having a skill or owning a business.

You will hear more in the coming months. Please participate and please feel free to send me your thoughts on this as well. Our declining membership needs your thoughts and comments. As we focus on our purpose, we must continue to "Be Just, and Fear Not." – **Chuck**

Helping Others

We last featured **Northeast Arc** back in 2017 when they opened, with support from MCMA, the Breaking Grounds Cafe in Peabody Square. That venture has been a quiet success, as the cafe has created opportunities for paid trainees to work in a community setting, develop job skills, become comfortable with customer interactions, and move on to jobs in local restaurants. More than 30 individuals with disabilities have been successfully placed in jobs with private employers after transitioning through this training program. Another individualized training program, a boutique called *Parcels*, enables participants to learn every aspect of working in a retail store.

Founded in 1954 by parents of children with developmental disabilities, Northeast Arc's straightforward mission is to help people with disabilities become full participants in the community. Its programs have since expanded to support both children and adults with a broader range of disabilities, including autism and physical disabilities. And today Northeast Arc serves approximately 10,000 people annually across 190 North Shore communities. The services offered are extensive, but MCMA's support has long been directed toward its Community Employment



Program, through which it provides employment training, education and supported employment opportunities, both with private employers and with Northeast Arc's own micro-businesses.

In the first category, Northeast Arc partners with over two dozen area eateries and retailers. When a business has a job to be filled, Northeast Arc's job coaches identify a candidate suited to the role and responsibilities of the position, help them in getting to work, and assist in training. The job coach provides as little or as much support as necessary, depending on the needs of the individual and the complexities of the job. For Northeast Arc, it is important that individuals learn in the way that works best for them, that they master their work skills and gain confidence, and that they maintain their position for the long-term.

Northeast Arc's own micro-businesses include, in addition to Breaking Grounds Cafe and *Parcels*, a jewelry making enterprise, a chair-caning operation, and a document destruction business. Shine Jewelry produces one-of-a-kind jewelry handcrafted by artists with disabilities and sells it through a number of retailers on the North Shore. For more than 50 years The Caning Company of Northeast Arc has provided chair-weaving services to the general public, antique dealers and commercial businesses all over New England, and its staff and workers are expert in all types of weaving, including hand cane, pressed cane, fiber rush, and porch weave. And Heritage Shredding provides a solution for the safe destruction of personal or company confidential documents.

Because of its equipment needs, the shredding business has received the bulk of our support. Services include delivery and pick-up of locked bins, shredding of documents and CDs/DVDs, Proof-of-Tracking, and Certificate of Destruction for FACTA and HIPAA compliance. Shredding is done by trained employees in a secure area, and shredded paper is processed into pulp for recycling. This is a well-run operation, shredding over 400,000 pounds last year for more than 2,300 customers. More importantly, it enables the employment of 25 individuals, 20 of whom have disabilities, and we are very pleased to be able to support it.

- For more information about NeArc's shredding services in Essex County and eastern Middlesex County please contact Knicki at KFoss@ne-arc.org.
- For employment candidates in the same area, please contact Lauren at LTobey@ne-arc.org.



Pranaav, now a Panera employee, shows off a pumpkin latte he made while training at Breaking Grounds Café.



Danny, a longtime employee of The Caning Company, smiles as he canes the back of a chair.

Ben, a document destruction employee for five years, and **Susan**, a senior shredder, load shredded paper into the baler so it can be compressed and recycled.



MCMA History

A very specialized profession in the 1800s and into the early 1900s was the manufacture of pipe organs, then in demand for churches and concert halls throughout the country. Though the Great Depression was a catalyst, the industry declined as newer technologies gradually produced smaller and less expensive electronic organs and today's digital instruments. But many of the pipe organs of that time, though restored, are still in use today, and valued not for their age but for the excellence of their workmanship and sound. Our records indicate only a handful of these organ builders were members of MCMA, but three of those members were very accomplished and are well-worth remembering, so let's do that.

Thomas Appleton (1785-1872), who joined MCMA in 1837, was the son of a carpenter who apprenticed him to a cabinet maker, following which Thomas went to work for a prominent organ builder. He went on to also form an important partnership with piano maker Alpheus Babcock before opening his own workshop in 1820. He was awarded a Gold Medal at MCMA's 2nd Exhibition in 1839, the judges pronouncing his entry (a 9' wide x 17' high x 7' deep church organ) "a most excellent instrument", noting that "quality of tone is uncommonly good ... stops are superior ... touch is excellent ... speaks with extraordinary promptness," and "evenness ... is entitled to great praise." His reputation continued to grow until he retired in 1869, by which time his instruments served churches as far away as South Carolina and California.

The oldest extant product of this renowned craftsman now resides in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and it is still played several times each year. The museum's Appleton organ, dated 1830, is believed to have been built for South Church in Hartford, Connecticut, before being moved in 1883 to Sacred Heart Church in Plains, Pennsylvania. Nearly a century later the organ was restored and officially installed in its current location at the Met. The day after the first organ recital given for the public following that installation, the *New York Times* declared "the sound of it was extraordinary," and "So refined and musical was its tone, in fact, that the instrument serves as a kind of reproof to those who have assumed that musical sophistication was in almost hopelessly short supply in the United States in the early 19th century. This pipe organ ... is absolutely elegant – both in looks and expressivity. And it would be absurd to think that this was the only example of the kind."

At right is the pipe organ made by Thomas Appleton in 1830, initially built for South Church in Hartford, Conn. The organ has been in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York since 1982.



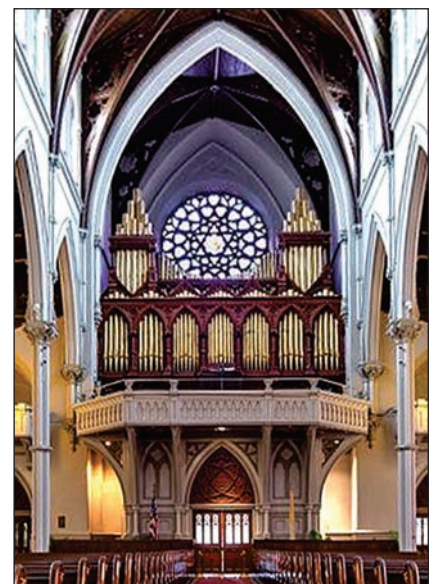
George S. Hutchings (1835-1913) was born in Salem. He began his career by entering the organ factory of E. & G. G. Hook, Boston, where he was superintendent for 10 years. In 1869 he organized the firm of J. H. Wilcox & Co., which later became the Hutchings, Plaisted Company and in 1901 the Hutchings-Votey Organ Company with a factory in Cambridge. The Hutchings Organ Company succeeded the business five years later and a new plant was established in Waltham. He installed organs in a great many colleges, including Vassar, Dartmouth, Brown, Wellesley, Williams, and Wesleyan. In 1903 Yale College conferred the honorary degree of Master of Arts on Mr. Hutchings as the result of the organ he manufactured especially for the college. Locally, he installed organs for Symphony Hall, the New England Conservatory of Music, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Trinity Church, The Mission Church, "New" Old South and other churches in Boston, and for the chapel in Harvard's Divinity Hall. Mr. Hutchings joined this Association in 1890 and was a life member. He also served two years in the Civil War, enlisting from Roxbury in Company E, 13th Massachusetts Infantry, and was discharged for disability.



The Hutchings organ (1897)
Mission Church, Boston, Mass.

Francis Henry Hastings (1836-1916) was raised in Weston and received his only formal education at the nearby District School. He left school at age 14 to work as an apprentice in a machine shop, and five years later took a job, like Hutchings, at E. & G. G. Hook in Boston, which at that time was the largest organ factory in the country. His mechanical ability and business acumen proved valuable and in 1866 the Hook brothers took him into the firm as a co-partner, later changing the name to "E. and G.G. Hook and Hastings." In 1880 and 1881 the Hook brothers died, and Hastings purchased their share of the business, but he kept the prestigious "Hook" name, even when the firm was reorganized as a corporation in 1893. Hastings relocated the company to Weston in 1889, to a new factory constructed on the Hastings family farmland. The complex included a lumber storage shed and railroad spur line used to bring materials directly onto the property and load finished organs onto railroad cars for shipment throughout the country. Inside the factory were rooms for the manufacture of wood and metal pipes, mill rooms where fine cabinets were constructed to house the organs, and a "Voicing Room" where employees perfected the individual sounds of each stop and the proper blending of the whole. The finished organs could be assembled in the monumental central "finishing" or "erecting" room, where hundreds of employees and neighborhood residents would assemble for a concert before an important organ was dismantled and crated for shipment.

In its 108 years of operation in Boston and Weston, E. & G.G. Hook and Hook and Hastings produced an estimated 2614 organs, 650 of them for churches and halls in Massachusetts. Their works were known for superior standards of craftsmanship and are considered among the finest examples of 19th and early 20th century organ building. Organs such as the one built for the Cincinnati Music Hall in 1877 – with its four manuals (keyboards), 96 speaking registers, and 6237 pipes – were the largest in the country when built, and they attracted widespread public attention. The largest extant Hook and Hastings organ, built in 1875, is located in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston's South End. A smaller, rebuilt example can be found in the Goddard Chapel at Tufts University. Hastings joined our association in 1879.



The Hook & Hastings Co. organ (1875)
Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston, Mass.

References:

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- *MCMA Annals*, 1913
- www.metmuseum.org
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