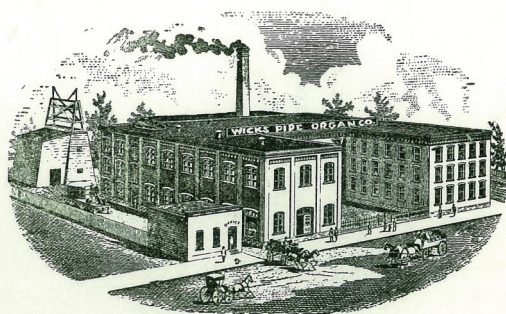




OUR MOTTO

! SUCCESS !

WATCH US GROW.

List of churches who have purchased WICKS PIPE ORGANS
since March 1st, 1908, now being built.

St. Mary's Catholic Church	Edwardsville, Ill.
German Evangelical Church	Marine, Ill.
First Methodist Church	Emporia, Kansas.
Jasper College	Jasper, Indiana.
German Evangelical Church	Okawville, Ill.
German Evangelical Church	Marissa, Ill.

Wicks Pipe Organ Co.,
HIGHLAND, ILL. U. S. A.

A 1908 advertisement for Wicks Pipe Organ Company (Wicks)

WICKS PIPE ORGAN COMPANY

THE EARLY YEARS

by Cindy Reinhardt

On Sunday mornings, at church services all over the world, worshipers hear the soaring, majestic sounds of pipe organs. For more than a century, many of those instruments were made by the Wicks Organ Company in Highland, Illinois.

The Wicks Pipe Organ Company was founded by the Wicks brothers in 1908 and continues to build and service pipe organs that bring beautiful music to the world. It is still a family business, with current owner, Scott Wick, the third generation to do business with music lovers around the globe.

The Wick family reaches back four generations in Highland with the first, Aloysius (1830-1893), arriving in America from Baden (Germany) in the late 1840s. A few years later, his younger brother, Julius (1833-1909), followed him to America. After brief stops elsewhere in America, both established successful careers in Highland. Aloysius, called Aloys, was a veterinary surgeon who helped organize a hospital for wounded and disabled Civil War veterans. The facility later became Highland's St. Joseph's Hospital.

Julius, who trained as a cabinetmaker in Baden, apprenticed to a watchmaker after coming to America. By the mid-1870s, he had his own store on Highland's square at the corner of Main and Washington Streets. The store specialized in selling, making, and repairing watches, clocks, and jewelry. In 1868, he married Mary Rueckher (1847-1896), who was also an immigrant from Baden. The couple had four children who survived to adulthood, all boys who entered the family business. Three of them, Louis, Eugene and John, trained as watchmakers and jewelers and the fourth, Adolph, took on Julius's former trade as a cabinetmaker and carpenter. After his marriage, Eugene established stores in other communities, including Troy, Illinois, but eventually moved to

Cont. on page 4

MCHS RECENT NEWS

MCHS COMES TO YOU

In addition to MCHS events, the Society has been guests at several locations this month. On September 9 they participated in the Edwardsville Book Festival and hosted a booth at the Latzer Homestead Harvest Days in Highland.

On October 15, the Society will be at LeClaire Parkfest in Edwardsville. To learn more about the LeClaire National Historic District, either attend the festival or check the MCHS website. There is a video under "Speaker Series" or, an issue of the MCHS News, Vol. 10 #5, on LeClaire.

EDWARDSVILLE MASONIC LODGE HOLDS FUNDRAISER FOR MCHS

MCHS is grateful to the Edwardsville Masonic Lodge who held a breakfast fundraiser for the Society last month. For the second year in a row, the Lodge hosted a biscuits and gravy (with scrambled eggs) breakfast where they did the cooking AND donated 100% of the proceeds to the Society.

This year's donation was \$411.00. The Society is grateful for their continued support.

Hours

Wed - Fri, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Sunday 1- 4 p.m.

Madison County History Museum
and Library
801 N. Main Street
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Contact us:

Library: 618-656-7569
Society: 618-656-1294
Email: info@madcohistory.org

RECENT NEWS

AED DEVICE AT ARCHIVAL LIBRARY

On July 13, representatives of the Greg Holthaus Memorial Fund presented MCHS with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). The device came with electronic step-by-step verbal instructions, battery, pads, damage-proof case and an alarm. The availability of this device at the Madison County Archival Library will provide another layer of safety for staff, volunteers, and visitors to the library in case of emergency.



Pictured (left to right) Mark Holthaus, Luca Sackett, Eileen Sackett, and MCHS President Fred Faust.

TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER

As of this writing, proceeds are still being tallied, but what is known is that the Trivia Night on August 26 was a wonderful success. The event brought in much needed funds for the Museum, Archival Library, and staff salaries. Of special note is the wonderful variety of offerings at the pastry and silent auctions.

It was the first year that the event was held at St. Gregory's Community Center and thanks to their wonderful facility and staff, it won't be the last. Thank you to all the donors, sponsors, players, and, especially, to Eddie and Norma Asadorian who organized this event.

BOARD MEETINGS NOW IN-PERSON

After several years of Zoom meetings, the MCHS Board is now meeting in-person and taking advantage of the open rooms of the museum building for a meeting place.

WEIR HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

Progress continues on work at the Weir House, the Society's museum building. On the first floor of the 1836 building, walls have been repaired, painting with lead-barrier paint completed, and the floors refinished.

The floors in the 1928 addition have been prepped and tile will be laid in the coming weeks.

Our painter (AKA board member Steve Mudge) is already at work on the second floor rooms where carpenters have repaired wood trim. Also on the second floor, ceilings have been repaired where they were damaged by the leaking roof which is (thankfully) now a distant memory.

NEW MCHS INTERN

MCHS is pleased to have a new SIUE intern for fall semester. Michael Voltz, a Geography student is helping with Educational Outreach events this summer and fall (see the MCHS booth below). He's a natural at setting up and working the booths because he grew up in a family that did festivals!

The Society hopes to use his map-making skills when creating new exhibits for the museum later this fall.



VOLUNTEERS!

Many thanks to all of our outstanding volunteers who each do their part to make it possible for MCHS to do so much valuable work!

Donna Bardon
Craig Becker
LaVerne Bloemker
Betty Byrd
Lynn Engelman
Mike Featherstun
Susan Featherstun
Gary Forshaw
Laura Fowler
Laurie Frey
Nick Hoffstetter
Bill Iseminger
Charles Jorgenson
Damon Kirk
Cherie Kuhn
Marty Lane
Shirley Malench
Steve Rensberry
Mike Reinhardt
Connie Royston
Ellen Thorson
Gregory Thorson
Sue Wolf

Volunteers assist with the Probate Project, take care of the MCHS grounds, host festival booths, and much more!

MCHS BOARD

Fred Faust, Pres.
Robert Clouse, V-Pres.
Arnold Meyer, Treas.
Candace Ladd, Sec.
Norma Asadorian
Leslie Bednar
Tallin Curran
Bob Daiber
Wilbert Glasper
Stephen Hansen
William Krause
Carol Manning
Stephen Mudge
Jeff Pauk
Cindy Reinhardt
Jeff Skoblow

STAFF

Robert Clouse
Operations Director
Mary Z. Rose
Archives Librarian
Jenn VanBibber
Museum Curator

Sunday Staff

Robert Clouse
Cindy Reinhardt
Stephen Mudge
Carol Manning

PUBLICATIONS

MCHS NEWS

6 issues annually
Cindy Reinhardt, Editor
cindy.reinhardt@madcohistory.org

VOLUNTEERS

There are abundant and varied opportunities for volunteers at either the Museum or the Library. If interested, please call 618-656-7569.

MEMBERSHIPS

Several membership levels are available to those interested in supporting the work of preserving Madison County history through a MCHS membership. Memberships run on the calendar year, Jan 1-Dec 31. Applications are available on our website, or at the Library.

THE Madison County Historical Society is a 501(c)3 charitable organization.

RECENT NEWS

NEW MCHS BOARD MEMBER

Wilbert Glasper was welcomed as a new member of the MCHS Board in August.

Glasper is a life-long resident of Madison County and currently lives in Venice. He attended school in Madison, Lovejoy, and Venice. He retired in 2009 from Anheuser Busch where he worked as a licensed electrician.

He has served on the Venice Board of Education and on the Belleville Area College Advisory Board for Building Trades. He remains active in his community working with youth in career counseling. Glasper is also a talented musician and plays in a number of area bands and orchestras. He is interested in helping preserve our rich past.

SUMMER HISTORY CAMP

Summer History Camp was a great success this year with 17 "campers" enjoying four days of field trips. The Society is grateful for the partnership with the Madison County Regional Office of Education, the cooperation of Jim Nickerson at the Troy Center and to all who provided insight and information for the children on the various topics covered this year.



OUR FRIEND LAVERNE BLOEMKER

All of us at MCHS were saddened to hear of the unexpected death of Laverne Bloemker on September 1. Over the last two decades, Laverne served as a member of the MCHS Board, then as a Library employee, and most recently as one of our regular Thursday volunteers. She was a Madison County historian of great knowledge and skill which she was happy to share with anyone needing assistance with their research. More importantly, she was a wonderful person, friendly, outgoing, and generous with both her time and talent. Our condolences to all her family and friends for their loss.



Laverne Bloemker

GRANTS MAKE IT WORK

We have recently received grants from the City of Edwardsville and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to fund the Living History Days Festival on October 6-8, and from the SIUE Emeritus Faculty Association to fund the Living History Walk on September 23.

Earlier this summer we received a grant from the Edwardsville Community Foundation to assist with funding the Summer History Camp. We are very grateful for this community support!

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER SPONSORED BY

WICKS ORGAN LLC

Thank You!



Martin and Barbara Wick

In support of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) New Organist Fund, the Martin and Barbara Wick Scholarship was established nearly twenty years ago.

This fund supports Pipe Organ Encounters (POE), a 4-5 day event that introduces participants to the world of the pipe organ with group instruction in the basics of pipe organ techniques and service playing.

The introduction is needed in this time when churches often find it difficult to find an organist.

Organists are not just important to the Wick family because they manufacture organs. It is also what brought Martin and Barbara Wick together. Martin met her when he attended her Senior Recital at Fontbonne College. Six months later, the organ maker and the organist were married.

Please join us for a memorable afternoon

Martin and Barbara Wick Scholarship Benefit

Sunday October 22, 2023

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: The Olde Wicks Factory
1100 5th Street | Highland, IL 62249

Reservations Required

Cost \$ 25.00 per person

Reserve seats online at: www.eventbrite.com
Search for Martin and Barbara Wick Scholarship Event
or enter the following URL:
www.eventbrite.com/e/martin-and-barbara-wick-scholarship-event-registration-685084675707

Includes:

Catered dinner by Cygan-Delany
Dessert
Non-alcoholic beverages
Pipe organ entertainment
Cash bar available for cocktails

WICK FAMILY IN MADISON COUNTY

Ohio to be closer to his wife's family. He died in 1917 of pancreatic cancer at the age of 41. The three remaining Wick brothers would become the founders of the Wicks Pipe Organ Company.



Louis Julius Wick

The oldest brother, Louis (1869-1936), took over his father's business in the 1890s, changing the name to "Louis J. Wick, Watchmaker and Jeweler." During those years, prior to the turn of the century, Louis and his father often won awards for their work at the local fairs, Julius for cabinetry and Louis for jewelry, and later for watches and clocks. In 1898, Louis bought the business building at 923 Main Street from his father.

Louis was nearly a decade ahead of his younger brothers in both business and family life. An advertisement in December 1890, lists him as the manager of his father's

An 1893 advertisement for the Wick watchmaker and jewelry business at 923 Main Street in Highland. The first Wicks organ was built on the second floor of this building.. (Latzer Library)

business, "Jul. Wick, Watchmaker and Jeweler." He was the only one of the brothers to be married before their mother's death in 1896. On October 2, 1894, he married Louisa Barbara Schwartz at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Highland. The couple would eventually have four children, with the fourth being a girl, Anna, adopted from the St. Ann Home in St. Louis in 1910.

An 1897 news article referenced Louis playing organ for a church service in Pierron, but in most articles it's his brother, John F. Wick, who was known as an excellent musician. Louis was fascinated with electricity and the mechanics of watchmaking, skills which transferred well to manufacturing organs.

In 1896, Louis built an electric clock for the town of Highland, making all the parts himself. Two years later, with Highland still working to provide adequate electricity for the town, Louis installed his own electric light plant to illuminate his home and storefront. The Wicks were first introduced to Direct Electric Action in 1913, but it wasn't successful until

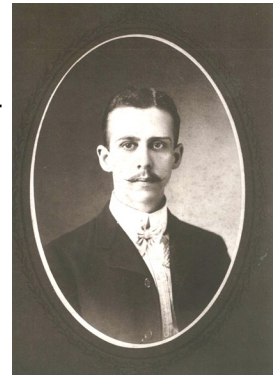
Louis made it applicable. He gained a patent in 1922 which put the company ahead of all the rest in this regard. Direct Electric Action reduced the working parts to a minimum, eliminating thin leather pouches, and other parts by substituting magnets that were much more durable. To state it simply, Louis was a genius with electronics, especially in the early years of development.

The second brother, Adolph Alois Wick (1873-1945), was a carpenter who built houses and churches in the area. In 1896, Adolph married Ida Seifried and together they raised three children, two boys and a girl. In October 1905, while building a house near Highland, Adolph fell from the roof, injuring his foot so badly that he was not able to return to his regular work. Instead, he went to work for his brothers as a cabinet/console maker. Later, his son, Edgar, would also become a cabinet-maker and worked for the Wicks company for more than 70 years.

The youngest brother, John F. (1881-1948), was nearly always referred to as "John F." or "J. F." because he was not the only John Wick. He would later have a son and grandson named John. As in earlier publications, he will be referred to as "John F." throughout this article. He was eight years younger than Louis, but after apprenticing with a watchmaker, his official entry into the jewelry business was announced in a statement dated January 4, 1904, and published in the *Highland Journal*:

"L. J. Wick & Bro., Watchmakers and Jewelers. To my customers and the public in general: It is with pleasure that I announce that my brother, John F. Wick, has this day entered my business as partner. This will enable us to serve our customers better than ever. Trusting that you will honor the new firm with the same loyal patronage, I remain, Respectfully Yours, Louis J. Wick."

Oral history, in stories often repeated in Highland publications, state that several years before going into business with his brother, John F. was approached by the local priest who asked if he would take organ lessons. The church was in need of an organist and choir master. John F. took the train to St. Louis for several years studying under the organist at the St. Peter and Paul's Catholic Church and at a university. According to newspaper reports, by 1902, at only 21 years of age, he



John Francis Wick



Opus #001 was used at the Catholic Church in Lively Grove, Illinois, for many years, then restored and put on display at SIU Carbondale in 1973. Wicks reacquired the organ which is now being painstakingly restored for exhibit in its facility. (Wicks)

A NEW COMPANY

was serving as organist and choir director at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Highland. It's possible that he began this work for the church even earlier.

John F. married Marie Ida "Mary" Schwarz on October 8, 1903, at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Highland. John and Mary had four children who survived to adulthood, three boys who would all work for their father when they became old enough, and a daughter, Helen, who became a nun, Sister Mary Kenneth.

The three Wick brothers, in the workshop above the watch and jewelry store at 923 Main Street, built their first pipe organ in 1906. Earlier publications have said building an organ was at the request of the priest at St. Paul's but that is not supported by the evidence. An article in 1894 indicates that Louis and Adolph Wick made repairs to an organ at the Catholic church in St. Rose, so working on an organ was not unprecedented. Also, the first Wick organ built was not for St. Paul's. A 1937 history of the company, probably written by John F., says that after reading numerous books on organ construction, he approached his brothers with the suggestion that they try to build an organ.

Opus 001, as the first organ is known, was sold to the Catholic church in Lively Grove, Illinois. The third and largest of the early organs was built for St. Paul's Catholic Church in Highland. It was installed in time for Easter Services in March 1907 with John F. at the keyboard.

In April 1907, the *Highland Leader* published the following, "Encouraged by the splendid success achieved with the construction of a new pipe organ for our St. Paul's church, Wick Bros. (the business) and Louis Spengel have decided to establish an organ factory at Highland and leased for said purpose a wing of the old milk factory... They will manufacture all kinds of pipe organs from \$300 up to \$10,000."

In 1908, the company was incorporated with 200 shares of capital stock at \$100 each. The largest stockholders were Louis J. Wick (53 shares), John F. Wick (34), and Louis Spengel (33). Louis Spengel was a cousin of the Wick brothers, so the majority of stock owners were all family. There were many small shareholders including Adolph Wick who had just three shares.

The first few years for the company were ones of industry and experimentation as they worked towards an improved product. By 1910, they were ready to expand and purchased the land on Fifth Street that would be the company's home for more than a century. The original building, was completed by 1911, with more added about 1920, and still more in the 1950s. When the Wicks company sold the property in 2017, it included 87,000 square feet of manufacturing, retail and storage space.

It's interesting to note that in 1914, the company briefly considered leaving Highland due to difficult rail-switching facilities and because Highland didn't have enough housing for the workers they needed to bring in. The rail situation was improved, and gradually the housing issue resolved itself.

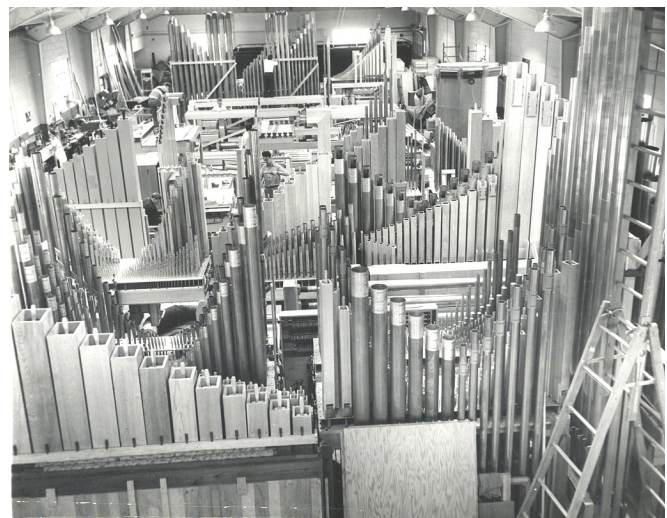
In 1917, Wicks received an order for 15 theatre organs from the American Photo Player Company of San Francisco. By 1920, John F. had convinced them to build a factory in Highland on the Wicks' property. American Photo Player produced devices called Fotoplayer which were a type of player piano, or, in this case, they were used in combination with a Wicks organ. Theater owners liked them because it provided a soundtrack for the silent movies of the time without having to hire someone with musical talent. With the demise of silent films, American Photo Player went out of business in 1926 and their building at the Wicks complex became the pipe shop.



Above: In 1908 Wicks operations were in the old Helvetia Milk plant that was located at Broadway and Washington. Below: An aerial view of the Wicks complex on Fifth Street circa 1940s. The original 1911 building is at the bottom of the photo, facing the railroad tracks. Behind it, on the right, is the building built for the American Photo Player Company that later became the Pipe Shop. West of the Pipe Shop is a shipping room and power plant, and west of that, on the far left is the Mill Room. The smaller buildings at the back were used for storing lumber. Later the Erecting Building was erected where the sheds are located. (Wicks)



Below: This is a view of the Erecting Room in the 1930s. Every part is tested and every assembly checked before an organ leaves the factory. After it has been completely assembled, is taken apart for shipment, then reassembled at its final destination. (Wicks)



SURVIVING AND THRIVING

The company survived and thrived because of their ability to change and move with the times. Louis and John were also cautious. They did not sell their jewelry business until 1921. They constantly worked on producing a better organ, with the best sound and reliability on the market, and the Wicks name became synonymous with quality. The Direct-Electric Action device, which was patented and trademarked, was one innovation that they continued to make improvements to. The company's best year in that era was 1929 when it made 120 organs.

Surprisingly, although business slowed during the Great Depression, the drop was not significant. Typically, the company pivoted and began making a smaller organ they called "the miniature." Sales were primarily made to churches. One might assume there was a greater need for prayer in those dark times.

Louis Wick died of cancer in 1936 after witnessing the tremendous growth of the company. In his obituary he was said to have a gentle and kind nature. "He was a man of sterling character, very unassuming, but a man with a keen mind. The great work which he has performed (as an inventor) for the organ industry will be long remembered."

At the time of his death, Louis Wick was Secretary of the Wicks Pipe Organ Company which to that date had built 1500 organs that were sold to locations all over the globe. None of Louis' children established careers at their father's company.

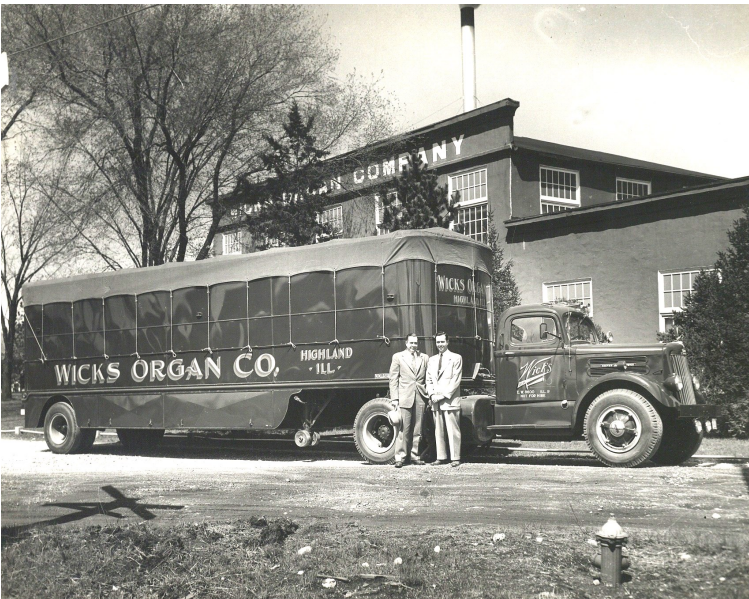
Throughout the years, John F. was the face of Wicks Pipe Organ Company, later the Wicks Organ Company. He was president of the company and ran the business end, yet due to his background, like Louis, a watchmaker, he was thoroughly versed in all the mechanics of the organs built at the factory. He was also a superb musician and often called on to perform at dedications of organs all over the country. After all, who knew a Wicks organ better than a Wick? A typical accolade following a 1922 concert at St. Paul's in Highland said, "Under the skillful manipulation of John F. Wick the possibilities of the new Cathedral Organ were shown at the best and

the audience was lost in wonder and admiration."

John F.'s three sons all went into the family business, but the oldest, August was killed when a train struck his car. The 19-year-old was returning from a business trip. The second son, John H., was secretary of the company when he was killed in an automobile accident in 1941. He was only 29. John F.'s third son, Martin was attending St. Louis University Law School when his brother John was killed. Six months later, following graduation, he did not take the bar exam, but went immediately to work with his father.



Wicks theater organ made for the Garrick Theatre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada 1927 (Wicks)



Wicks organs were delivered by truck if they weren't too large, otherwise by train. Martin Wick is standing at right. (Wicks)

In 1942, under contract with the government, Wicks experimented with different kinds of air raid sirens. The following year, the company received government contracts to manufacture airplane parts. One of the larger items was wood airplane wings that were used for training planes. Initially, they continued to make organs also, but after a few months, in September 1943, the government stopped the manufacture of organs, citing material shortages. In September 1944, the company received the good news that after a year of halted production, it could resume organ manufacturing. By then, the contracts for government production had been fulfilled.

Just as the company was beginning a financial recovery, Adolph Wick, one of the original founding brothers, passed away, followed by Mary Wick, John F.'s wife, in 1946, and by John F. in 1948. By the time the last two founders passed away, the company had built 2500 organs.

With the founders gone, 28-year-old Martin Marcellus Wick, was the new president of the Wicks Organ Company, a position he would hold until his death in 2002.

During his tenure the company grew with the 1950s and 1960s being some of the best years for organ sales in the history of the company. Wicks made all kinds of organs, many of them custom, and for customers all over the globe. They were primarily for churches, but also for mortuaries and private homes. After World War II, there were many new churches, with most of them also wanting new organs.

The company also took on new products, making custom wood furnishings for churches or homes in the cabinet

CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

shop, grandfather clocks that recaptured the Wick brothers roots, roll-top desks, cabinetry for electronic pianos, and more.

Martin Wick took flight lessons to get his pilot's license in the late 1940s. This interest in flight and the company's experience with government contracts during the war eventually led to a second company run out of the same offices, Wicks Aircraft Supply Company, next door to the pipe organ company at 410 Pine Street. The company began by manufacturing and selling all the parts needed for a home-built airplane.

The Wicks Organ LC continues to manufacture organs today, but only custom orders. Their primary organ business is in service and repairs. They have about 300 clients within 150 miles of Highland and have representatives in several major U.S. cities that continue to service and upgrade Wick organs. To date, the company has built 6,478 organs. Some recent instruments have been shipped to Korea, the Philippines and to a Buddhist Temple in Hawaii.

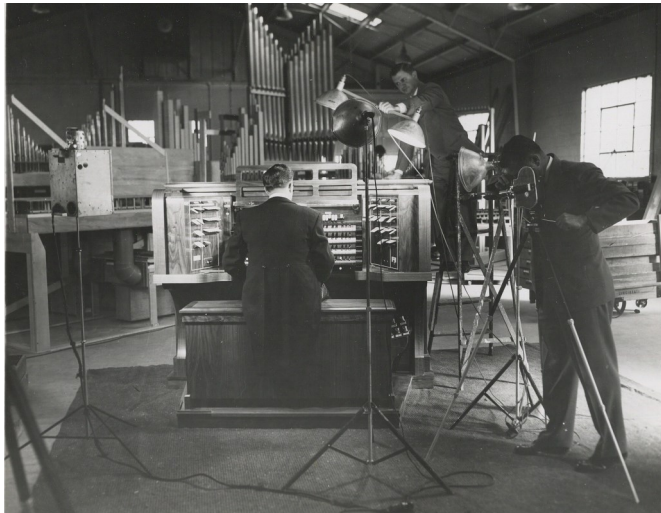
In 1960, Martin married Barbara Krausel, a St. Louis organist, as it turned out. Martin played the organ, but mostly by ear, that is, without reading music. The Wicks had six children and most worked in the business at one time or another, but only one, Scott, made it his permanent career. When Martin died in 2002, Barbara took over as president for eight years before retiring and turning the reins over to Scott, who now owns the company.

In 2017, with organ production a smaller part of the business, the organ manufacturing and repairs moved across the street to the Wicks Aircraft Supply buildings on Pine Street. The historic Wicks complex was sold to Frank and Jennifer Ostrander who originally purchased it as a home for Core Elite Tumble and Cheer, a gym that hosted cheerleading competitions. The Ostranders



Above: A Wicks truck loaded with PT-19 (primary trainer) aircraft wings made at the plant in 1943. Both men and women worked at the plant during the war. (Wicks)

Below: This is a scene from a promotional film made by the Wicks Organ Company in 1958 called "Capturing the Wind." This film and another, "The Pipes of Highland" (late 1960s) have been restored and can be viewed on YouTube. (Wicks)



Below: In a photograph taken for advertising purposes, is a scene from the Wicks Music Supply Store in Highland where small organs were sold and band instruments sold and rented to students. (Wicks)



The Trades

Organ building is by necessity a business that involves custom crafting. Planning, construction and finishing stages of each instrument require special skills not easy to find. Often over the years the Wicks company advertised for young men who could be trained in the intricacies of the trades. Wicks has hired many specialists that previously worked for other companies. It's a niche market where these skills are especially appreciated, so employees who have worked for Wicks for 50 years or more are not unusual.

Designers and engineers plan all the components and specifications for each project.

Mechanics and electricians create the components necessary to assemble the blower and the trademarked Direct Electric® of the organ, as well as other delicate parts.

In the foundry, molten metal, an alloy of tin and lead, is rolled out to precise thicknesses to be made into various sizes for the organ pipes. The pipes range from very small to 32 feet long. After the metal has aged for six months, pipe-makers commence turning it into pipes.

In the Mill room, specialists work with every kind of wood to match the design and color of the environment where the organ will be installed. Finishers need to exactly match the stain and varnish of the church where the organ will be installed.

The organ consoles, and later church and home furnishings are works of art created by the cabinet-makers who have worked for Wicks, many of them for decades.

Once completed, the pipes are sent to voicers, experts on tone. In some ways, it is the most important skill, because if the organ doesn't sound perfect, then it will not be a good product, no matter how beautiful it looks. Wicks organs are known for their tone.

The last stop before being shipped out is the Erecting Room where every part is tested. The organ is completely assembled and tested, then disassembled to be shipped to the customer. A Wicks employee supervises installation of the organ at its final destination.

WICKS (CONT. FROM PAGE 7)

have since done an outstanding job of renovating 87,000 square feet of organ factories into a unique event space for occasions of any kind. The Olde Wicks Factory under the direction of the Ostranders provides a valued service for the community while honoring the unique history of the buildings where the Wick brothers created musical instruments that have stood the test of time.

FREE WICKS ORGAN CONCERT



Pictured above are the pipes of the Wicks organ at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church at 406 Hillsboro Avenue in Edwardsville. The St. Andrew's organist, Henry Evans, will give a free concert on Sunday, September 24 at 2 p.m. to celebrate 20 years as organist and choirmaster at the church. St. Andrew's purchased a Wicks organ in the early 1920s and this second organ in 1962. The church itself is more than a century old. The program by Evans will include the works of Bach, Dandrieu, Langlais, Vaughan Williams, Vierne, and others.

Evans holds numerous music degrees including a Master of Music in Organ Performance from the University of North Texas. He has played the organ and conducted church choirs for 41 years.

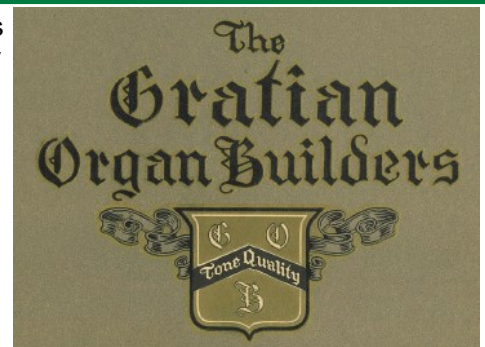
He has taught as adjunct faculty at both Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and at Southwestern Illinois College.



Wicks label on the organ at St. Andrew's church. (Reinhardt)

GRATIAN ORGANS

Wicks organs were not the only organs manufactured in Madison County. An Englishman, Joseph Gratian, came to Alton in 1858 and opened a pipe organ factory whose customers were often, but not exclusively, Episcopal churches.



The company officially closed for good in about 1930, but there were several gaps in Gratian's three-generational history. Gratian was closed from roughly 1902-1915, and in the latter years, Wicks was making many of the organs for them and putting a Gratian label on them. Despite advertisements lauding the quality and tone of Gratian organs, they were no match for a Wicks.

FALL CALENDAR

Most events can be found in detail in the calendar insert with this newsletter, but here is a quick check-list.

Saturday, September 23

Family History Walk

Friday-Sunday, October 6-8

Living History Days

Sunday, October 15

Leclaire Parkfest

Saturday, October 21

Paranormal Event at Mineral Springs Hotel

Sunday, November 5

Dining in History at the
Old Wicks Pipe Organ Factory