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Catch Last Glimpse of D.B. Johnson Organ for Awhile

Winthrop University

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Catch Last Glimpse of D.B. Johnson Organ for Awhile

Quick Facts

- The Department of Music will bid farewell to the D.B. Johnson Memorial organ May 21.
- The organ will undergo restoration at the Letourneau Organ company in Quebec, Canada.

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop University's **Department of Music** will hold a farewell party May 21 for the temporary removal of its beloved **Æolian-Skinner organ** in **Byrnes Auditorium**.

The May 21 event begins at 7 p.m. in the auditorium and will last as long as participants want to linger. Any organist may play one piece on the organ during the informal program. The audience is welcome to come and go.

David Lowry, professor emeritus of music, is the curator for the restoration and continues as Winthrop's organ professor. He calls the May 21 event "not the usual university bash but a totally 'dis-organ-ized' occasion with no set program." Light refreshments will be served.

The **D.B. Johnson Memorial organ**, now 52 years old, will be removed beginning May 24 and sent to the **Letourneau Organ company** in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada, for a complete restoration. **Lowry** said the organ should return by fall 2008 in pristine operating condition with no changes in the tonal design.

After a fundraising campaign led by Shirley Fishburne and David White, the university awarded a contract to the Letourneau firm for restoration. The campaign has raised \$255,000 to date, and volunteers continue to solicit donations.

Named for Winthrop's founding president, the organ is widely regarded as one of the most valuable and historic instruments in the Southeast. The **Æolian-Skinner Organ Company**, the Boston company that built Winthrop's treasured piece, constructed many of the finest mid-20th-century organ in the United States.

For more information, contact the **Department of Music** at 803/323-2255.

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