



AMICA International

Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association

Honor Roll

William Haeseler

Biography of AMICA Honorary WILLIAM HAESELER
From The AMICA, Nov/Dec 1989

Mr. Haeseler's inspiration was upon Uncle Bernhard Haeseler's visit to America from Germany. He captivated the neighbors by putting a sheet over the keys and playing the piano. This so intrigued him that his folks bought him a piano. After he learned to play quite well, he gave music lessons to the neighbor children and his reputation grew.

As he bought sheet music at the Curtis Andrees Music Store and got acquainted with Mr. Andrees, he asked him to play in his orchestra. Later when he went to college, giving music lessons and having his own orchestra paid for his tuition.

He also supplied the musical background for silent movies in the local theaters. You had to improve to keep up with the action on the screen, demonstrating how different tempos evoked different moods.

When Mr. Benjamin Rand bought the North Tonawanda Musical Instruments Works, he hired Mr. Haeseler as an arranger for the Music Department. He used popular tunes of the day.

Mr. Haeseler always wanted to be a Banker. Henry P. Smith, president of Marine Bank suggested he go to law school and finish his education. He enrolled in the University of Buffalo Law School and graduated in 1928. While at law school, he worked for attorneys collecting accounts.

After graduation he organized a Credit Bureau for the Tonawandas. In 1988 after 50 years in the business, he sold it.

William was asked to reorganize the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas in 1933. In 1936 he organized the Certified Finance Company, Inc., which got him into banking. The company is still active today with branches in western New York.

In 1970 Certified Travel Tours was organized and is still very active. Mr. and Mrs. Haeseler have traveled around the world and visited every continent including the North and South Pole, and they still enjoy it.



William and Mabel Haeseler.

Local Man Honored Friday, September 1, 1989, Tonawanda NEWS

Friday, September 1, 1989



MUSIC ENTHUSIAST: Bill Haeseler of North Tonawanda, photographed in the late 1960s, plays his Grand Piano which he later donated to St. Mark's Lutheran Church on Oliver Street.

A North Tonawanda man has been recognized by an international organization for his work in the 1920s when he was employed by the North Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works, later sold to the Rand Company.

Bill Haeseler of 164 East Felton Street was awarded an honorary membership in the Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors Association. The international organization collects, preserves and exhibits band organs used on carousels.

Mr. Haeseler was honored in Boston where he and his wife Mabel attended an Association meeting.

Delegates at the meeting were taken to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to see a computer system that perfectly re-creates the band organ sound long associated with merry-go-rounds. There was also a concert at Boston University on an ancient waterlogged band organ that had been restored.

Mr. Haeseler, 88, said that one of his greatest thrills is to visit an amusement park and hear one of the band organ tunes that he arranged.

Mr. Haeseler said he told the Association about the Carousel Society in North Tonawanda and invited the group to come to North Tonawanda for a future convention and visit the home of the original Allan Herschell Company, Wurlitzer and Von Kleist's Musical Instrument Works, which are all recognized worldwide.

WILLIAM HAESELER, JR.

By Dorothy Bromage, Honorary Member Chairman,
The AMICA July/Aug 1995

On December 22, 1994, Honorary Member Bill Haeseler passed away at age 93. This is the sad news in a letter from his wife, Mabel. Bill had been in a nursing home, as he had a tube in his stomach (it was hard for him to swallow), and he needed a lot of care. Cause of death was pneumonia and Parkinson's Disease. Since becoming an Honorary Member, Bill and his wife never missed sending me a Christmas card. Bill was a life-long resident of the Tonawandas and founder and chairman of Certified Finance Co., Inc. He was a long time member of the Rotary Club, St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church of North Tonawanda and past president of its Lutheran Layman's League, the Tonawandas Historical Society and Carousel Society. A graduate of UB law school, he had a special life-long love of music. His hymn "Be Strong and of a Good Courage" received international recognition. A past president of the Musicians Association of the Tonawandas, he is survived by his wife of 66 years, Mabel, two children, six grandchildren and a great-grandchild. AMICAns who came to AMICA Boston 1989 will remember Bill and Mabel Haeseler. Afterwards, they wrote about how much they enjoyed the event, thanked Sylvia Steeves for taking them to the airport, and enclosed a copy of an article in the Tonawanda *NEWS* of September 1, 1989, which read, in part:

"A North Tonawanda man has been recognized by an international organization for his work in the 1920s when he was employed by the North Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works, later sold to the Rand Company. Bill Haeseler . . . was awarded an Honorary Membership in AMICA. The international organization collects, preserves and exhibits band organs used on carousels. Mr. Haeseler was honored in Boston where he and his wife Mabel attended an Association meeting. Mr. Haeseler . . . said that one of his greatest thrills is to visit an amusement park and hear one of the band organ tunes that he arranged. Mr. Haeseler said he told the Association about the Carousel Society in North Tonawanda and invited the group to come to North Tonawanda for a future convention and visit the home of the original Allan Herschell Company, Wurlitzer and Von Kleist's Musical Instrument Works, which are all recognized worldwide."

Rolls that Bill recalls arranging include "Why Did I Kiss That Girl?" and "I've Got a Bimbo Down in Bamboo Land." Anyone wishing to write to Mabel Haeseler may do so by sending a card or letter to her at 164 East Felton St., North Tonawanda, New York 14120-2608.

R.I.P.