



2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention

August 18-23, 2026 Princeton, New Jersey

Registration for the convention is now available. See insert in this issue to sign up! The event will take place at the historic Nassau Inn in the center of downtown Princeton, NJ, across the street from the esteemed Ivy League university. Hotel reservations can also be made now. See information below. If you have any also specific questions, you can contact co-chair Joel Cluskey at ampico2018@gmail.com or Glenn Thomas at wurlitzer165@gmail.com.

Early Arrival - Monday, August 17, 2026

Attendees planning to attend the pre-convention tour to Arnold Chase settle into Nassau Inn. MBSI will hold their board meeting on this day.

Pre-Convention Tour & Convention Arrivals - Tuesday, August 18, 2026

Arnold Chase Home Tour: A continental breakfast will be served at the hotel* and then buses will provide transportation to one of the most remarkable personal collections of automatic musical instruments, held in a stunning hilltop estate in West Hartford, CT. Upon arrival, lunch will be served buffet style on a new enclosed rooftop deck with breathtaking views in all directions. Guests will then have ample time to view the mechanical music collection in two large rooms. Other spaces open for visiting include the Arcade Room with vintage pieces ranging from 1920 to 1970, a Working Model Scene Room with coin-op and movie reel machines, and a separate collection of Muniscopes, contraptions designed to explore the insides of pipes. A box dinner will be provided for the bus ride home. Bus travel is 4 hours each way. Attendees must use bus transportation for security reasons.

Attendees planning to attend the convention but not the Chase Collection should arrive this day.

Day One - Wednesday, August 19, 2026

Welcome Breakfast, Edison Labs, Morris Museum & Silent Movie & Ragtime Piano Recital

After a welcome breakfast at the Nassau Inn, buses will take us to various destinations north of Princeton. These include:



Thomas Edison National Historical Park, which houses the world's first industrial research laboratory, where revolutionary inventions like the motion picture camera and improved phonographs were developed.



Morris Museum in Morristown is New Jersey's second-largest museum and its only Smithsonian Affiliate, housed within a historic Georgian-style mansion designed by Stanford White. Its centerpiece is the world-renowned Murtoth D. Guinness Collection, which features over 750 historic mechanical musical instruments and automata that are brought to life through daily live demonstrations.



Silent Movie at the Morris Museum Bickford Theater accompanied by award-winning theater organist **Ian Fraser**.



In the evening, enjoy a concert by ragtime pianist **Peter Mintun!**

2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention cont.

Day Two - Thursday, August 20, 2026 **American Treasure Tour & Glenn Thomas Home Collection with Evening Player Piano Pumper Contest**

After breakfast on your own, buses take us again to destinations no more than a 1 hour drive from Princeton, they include:



American Treasure Tour in Oaks, Pennsylvania. This is a sprawling 100,000-square-foot Americana museum that showcases one of the world's largest private collections of mechanical music machines, classic cars, and pop culture oddities. Visitors explore the massive warehouse via a narrated tram ride that meanders through floor-to-ceiling displays of vintage toys, animatronics, and quirky memorabilia. See many instruments held here that are owned by MBSI. Lunch is included at the 1950's themed Arnolds Restaurant on the property.

Glenn Thomas Private Collection: A meticulously refined assembly of rare automatic musical instruments, including nickelodeons, orchestrions, and reproducing grand pianos. The highlight of the collection is a massive Wurlitzer Style 165 Band Organ, which Thomas has documented and preserved.

The evening concludes with the infamous Player Piano Pumper contest.



Day Three - Friday, August 21, 2026 **2026 Workshops & Mart**

Workshops: The morning will be packed with mechanical music-related workshops, topics to be announced in later promotions.

Mechanical Music Mart will be held in the afternoon. The mart is a dedicated marketplace where members can buy and sell a wide array of automatic musical instruments, parts, and literature.

Following dinner on your own, the traditional ice cream social will be held at the Nassau Inn, including a new-member meet & greet and entertainment by Matt Tolentino.

Day Four - Saturday, August 22, 2026

Meetings, Band Organ Rally & Banquet Dinner This day introduces a change to the traditional convention meeting/schedule. AMICA board meeting & MBSI annual meeting will be held while those not part of these activities will enjoy the day in Princeton attending the COAA Band Organ Rally.

Band Organ Rally will be a vibrant public gathering on the streets of Princeton where collectors showcase a wide variety of mechanical musical instruments, ranging from small hand-cranked monkey organs to massive, trailer-mounted fairground organs.

Self Guided Princeton University Tours for those interested in learning about this beautiful town and campus.



Princeton University Art Museum just reopened in a brand new facility and is world class. Three blocks from the hotel, it is free to the public.

The evening begins with a cocktail hour, then annual dinner banquet dinner, followed by light entertainment.

Day Five - Sunday, August 23, 2026

Breakfast Meetings & Band Organ Rally Breakfast buffet will be followed by AMICA annual meeting. An optional Sunday non-denominational service with mechanical music will be available.

Band Organ Rally will continue on the streets of Princeton throughout the day. Don't forget the art museum!

No house tours are scheduled at this time, but suggestions for afternoon destinations will be provided.



2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention cont.

Nassau Inn Reservation Information

The convention committee has negotiated a per night room rate of \$169.00 + tax. This is a very fair price considering location in the center of the town of Princeton and the historic nature of the hotel. You can only make reservations for this group rate up until **Friday, July 17, 2026**. After that day you may be required to pay the non-discounted room rate. The following options are available to make reservations:

Option 1:

Call the Nassau Inn directly at (609) 921-7500. Tell them you are part of the **AMICA/MBSI/COAA group** and reference booking number **30355**.

Option 2:

On-line at either of the two links below. If a pop-up appears at any time while you are reserving and asks if you would like to, "Unlock Exclusive Rates by Nassau Inn," click on "DON'T ALLOW."

Link A:

Nassau Website <https://nassauinn.com/>

1. At upper righthand corner click on "Book Now" (or find it in the hamburger pull down on your mobile device).
2. Select number of adults and click on "Add Code" pull down. Leave default at "Group Attendee" and add group code 30355. Click on "Add."
3. The next screen will identify the room block. Click "Select & Go To The Next Step."
4. At the Guests & Rooms page select days on calendar pop-up & click on "Confirm Dates of Stay." Follow remaining screen instructions for room selection and payment.

Link B:

For direct access to the group reservation use:

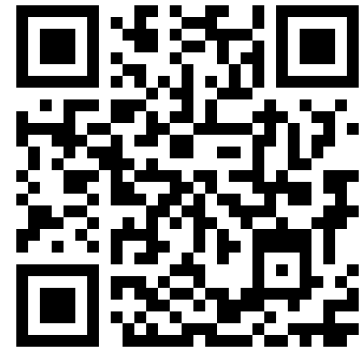
<https://reservations.travelclick.com/13522?groupID=4891622>

1. A popup will identify the room block AMICA/MBSI/COAA. Click, "Select & Go To The Next Step."
2. At the Guests & Rooms page, select # of adults and click on "Add Code" pull down box. Leave default at "Group Attendee" and add group code 30355. Click on "Add."
3. Click on "Update Guests & Rooms," Select days on calendar pop-up & click on "Confirm Dates of Stay." Follow remaining screen instructions for room selection and payment.



**Nassau Inn
10 Palmer Square
Princeton, NJ 08542**

**Scan the codes below using
your phone's camera.**



Link A



Link B

2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention cont.

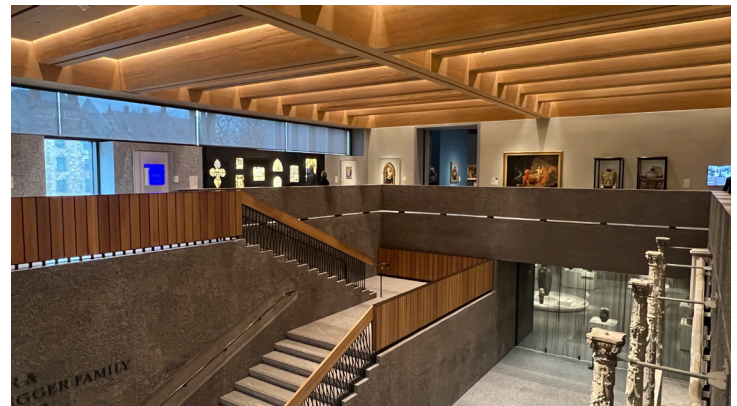
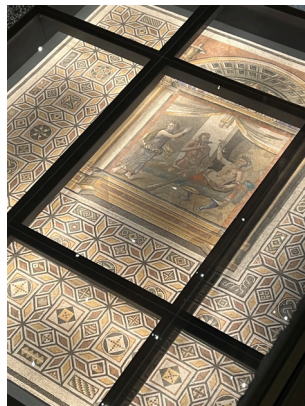
Other Important Information:

- There is a limited number of guest rooms available, so make your reservation as soon as possible.
- The group rate is for overnight stays from check-in Monday, August 17 through check-out Sunday, August 23, 2026. There are a very limited number of rooms available for check-in Sunday, August 16 & August 23.
- Room modifications are allowed only before cutoff date of Friday, July 17, 2026.
- Cancellation Policy: Cancellation is up to 3 PM, 48 hours prior to arrival to avoid one night's room and tax charge. There will be no exceptions to this policy.
- Group Rates not eligible for Rewards Program.
- Check-In Time: 3:00pm, Check-Out Time: 11:00am
- Vehicle parking is available across the street from the hotel in a municipal garage which has an arrangement with the Nassau Inn. For \$20.00 per night you will receive a pass with 24-hour unlimited access (you can come and go as you please). Non-hotel guest rate for 24-hour parking at the garage is currently \$36.00. Vehicle height limit is 6'-4".
- Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) is the most convenient airport to access Princeton, NJ. Travel time by auto/rideshare is approximately 1 hour. The hotel does not provide transportation/limousine service, but private services are available. Public transportation from the airport is possible via a combination of the AirTrain from airport to NJ Transit main line which will take you to Princeton Junction Station. Then transfer for a 5-minute shuttle train (locally referred to as the "Dinky") to Princeton Station. The hotel is just over ½ mile walk from the station or take an Uber. Overall travel time for these connections is about 2 hours and total cost for AirTrain & NJ Transit is roughly \$28-\$42.
- Additional information about the Nassau Inn can be found at their website

<https://nassauinn.com/> See QR code on page 10 for Link A.



Nassau Inn (outside and inside)



Princeton University Art Museum

2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention cont.

Foot-Pumper Contest Invitation

This year at the 2026 AMICA/MBSI/COAA Convention in Princeton, NJ, the Foot-Pumper Contest will take place on Thursday evening. This is a truly AMICA tradition that, in my opinion, is one of the highlights of the convention. It has all the suspense, excitement, amazement that comes from creating a REALISTIC performance from a paper music roll! To accomplish that, the performer needs an instrument that can respond to the nuances of snappy pedaling, tempo changes, and through the judicious use the levers in the key slip, expression. The featured instrument this year is a beautiful Cunningham upright with Standard action that was recently restored by notable craftsman Paul Manganaro.

This is a good-humored event that has a panel of judges who will score each contestant based on a loosely-followed set of rules that can be found on the AMICA website or at the end of this article. Bring your favorite 88 note performance roll along with others to play at your leisure during the convention. Please don't be shy about entering. With the allotted time we should have up to 12 entries that will be taken on a first-come basis.

The piano will be accessible throughout the convention for members to play. If you're the winner, you will have the exclusive right to keep the "Golden Footsie Award" for a whole year! It comes with its own carrying case for easy transportation and, like the famous hockey Stanley Cup, the names of all past winners are engraved on the trophy. Please send me an e-mail if you'd like to participate.

Sincerely,
Joel Cluskey, Convention Co-Chair and Past President
Email: ampico2018@gmail.com



2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention cont.

AMICA Annual "Pumper" Contest Judging Guidelines

1. The competition is open to convention attendees and their immediate family.
2. The previous year winner may participate but is not eligible to win the trophy. They are eligible to win every-other-year.
3. The Contestant will make up to a 1-minute introductory talk before playing their roll. 10 points will be deducted from the score for every 1-minute the introduction exceeds this limit.
4. The roll used may be of any brand or type that fit the piano. All reproducing, theming, or other such auto-enhancing mechanisms of the rolls and/or piano being used are to be turned off. Control holes in the tracking mechanism shall be covered with removable tape.
5. The top and bottom tracker holes pertaining to reproducing roll control notes may be masked on the 88-note player, but it is the responsibility of the contestant to furnish their own removable tape ahead of time, and to cover the holes in a timely manner. Taking more than 30-seconds for this task and/or mis-covering the wrong holes results in a 10- point reduction in overall score.
6. Rolls may not exceed a play-duration of 5 minutes. 10 points will be deducted from the score for every 1-minute the roll-play exceeds this limit.
7. Any performance that is additional to piano playing, for example; singing; theatrics; or secondary instrument playing will be tolerated, but the judges will score performance based primarily on piano playing. Contestants are cautioned that such additions may serve to lower their score if judges find these actions a nuisance rather than an enhancement.
8. Scoring is based on a 0-100 point system, with 100-points being the highest score possible. Judges score separately in the following weighted criteria:
 - a. Roll introduction to include why selection was chosen (10 points).
 - b. Music Selection (20 points)
 - c. Proper Expression & use of mechanism (30 points)
 - d. Artistic Performance (40 points)



AMICA-MBSI CONVENTION & COAA ORGAN RALLY

AUGUST 18-23, 2026

NASSAU INN • PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

NOTE: Use this form only for mail-in registration and payment by personal check.
For online registration and payment by credit card/paypal, use the QR code (right) or go to:
<https://mbsi.org/amica-mbsi-coaa-2026-annual-meeting-registration/>



REGISTRATION DEADLINE: FRIDAY, JULY 17, 2026

Name (Attendee 1) First Convention? YES

Name (Attendee 2) First Convention? YES

Address

City, State/Province, Zip, Country

Phone Email

Est. Date/Time of Arrival? Will you be staying at the Nassau Inn? YES NO

Name(s) to appear on badge:

1. _____ 2. _____

I'm a member of (Required): AMICA MBSI MBSGB COAA

Will you participate in the Player Piano Contest? YES NO

Please advise any special dietary requirements.

Meal Preferences: ___ Meat ___ Chicken ___ Vegetarian

Convention Registration includes 5 days of activities, tours and transportation to Glenn Thomas Collection, Morris Museum, American Treasure Tour, Thomas Edison National Historical Park • **ALSO INCLUDED** is the Band Organ Rally throughout the streets of downtown Princeton, Pumper Contest, Convention Workshops, The Mart, Ice Cream Social, Annual Dinner Banquet with cocktail hour & light entertainment, Silent Movie at the Morris Museum Bickford Theater accompanied by award-winning theater organist Ian Fraser, and more!

Arnold L. Chase Tour is not a part of the basic convention registration cost. Additional registration required.

Fees	# of Persons	Price Per Person	Total \$
Early Convention Registration (up to June 22, 2026)		\$564	
Late Convention Registration (after June 22, 2026)		\$590	
Student Rate Ages 14 to 21 • APPROVAL NEEDED (See note below)		\$282	
Optional Pre-convention Tour of the Arnold L. Chase Collection (See note above)		\$100	
Optional Mart Table (Include completed Mart Sign Up Form with this registration)		\$25	
Total due for registration plus optional event/mart			

Student Rate: Students from ages 14 to 21 are half price, provided they submit to **Eileen Jacobs** at emcgj@aol.com a one page description of their interest in mechanical music and why they want to attend the convention. Students 18 and under must be accompanied by a full paying adult.

SEE NEXT PAGE.

2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention cont.

CHECK PAYMENT & MAILING DETAILS

**REGISTRATION
DEADLINE:
FRIDAY,
JULY 17, 2026
(Postmark)**

Make Checks Payable To: AMICA

Memo: **2026 Annual Convention**

Currency: Pay in US Funds

Mail Completed Registration Form By July 17 To:

William Sharkey, Registrar

AMICA/MBSI/COAA 2026 Convention

77 Sunrise Way

Bethpage, NY 11714



PRINCETON
NASSAU INN
PALMER SQUARE

HOTEL RESERVATIONS:

Nassau Inn

10 Palmer Square, Princeton, NJ 08542

nassauinn.com

Find reservation information in this month's issue.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS

General: Joel Cluskey (412) 779-0740 ampico2018@gmail.com

Registration: William Sharkey (516) 984-9568 ftdwilly@aol.com

Mart: Jere Ryder (908) 377-9146 jryder@morrismuseum.org

CANCELLATION POLICY (No Exceptions)

100% refundable before June 15, 2026.

A 25% fee deducted June 15 to July 1, 2026.

A 50% fee deducted July 2 to July 10, 2026.

No refund after July 10, 2026.

Cancellation dates are when notice received by registrar, not postmark.

All refundable fees will deduct non-reversible expenses.

2026 AMICA MBSI/COAA Convention

AMICA-MBSI CONVENTION & COAA ORGAN RALLY

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

THE 2026 MART

Mart Policies

WHO: The Mart will be open to participants who are registered for this Annual Convention. Exhibitors must be MBSI, AMICA or COAA members. Badges must be worn to enter and conduct business.

TABLES/ SPACES: Full Tables will be available at a cost of \$25 each. Table cover, skirting, and two chairs will be provided. You need to bring your own electrical extension cord!

SET UP: Only the registered Mart exhibitor and one registered helper will be permitted entry into the Mart room during setup. Exhibitors are expected to leave the Mart area as soon as they are set up. Reentry will be permitted just prior to the opening.

Please, no trades, sales, or “previews” will be permitted during setup. This policy is one of simple fairness to the general membership.

BREAKDOWN: When the mart closes, please pack and secure your items before the start of the footpumper contest which follows shortly thereafter.

Please save a copy before sending in your Mart application.

Mart Registration

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Assistant (must be registered) _____

Assistant Phone _____

PLEASE RESERVE: _____ **FULL TABLE (S)** _____ **EQUIVALENT FLOOR SPACES**

YES, Electrical outlet needed.

My items are loud. My items are relatively quiet. My items are large.

Other _____

Mart Disclaimer

Musical Box Society International (MBSI), Carousel Organ Association of America (COAA), The Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors’ Association (AMICA) and its Founding Chapter, being non-profit organizations, cannot and do not assume responsibility for any loss or damage of any nature whatsoever to any item or object offered for sale or displayed during this convention. The organizations/associations carry no insurance for this purpose and suggests that Mart participants provide their own coverage. All persons participating in the Mart do so solely at their own risk and agree to hold harmless the above organizations, the chapters, their members, and the Nassau Inn in the event of the loss or damage of any kind whatsoever.

All Mart participants are responsible for compliance with local, state, and federal tax laws. Each Mart participant shall, where required, collect all sales or similar taxes on any taxable transaction and shall complete and sign an acknowledgment form agreeing to comply with association guidelines concerning Mart policies and tax matters. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in exclusion from the Mart.

I have read and understand the Mart Policies and the foregoing Disclaimer and I accept the terms as a condition of my participation in the Mart.

Member’s Signature/Date _____