

Elden E. Benge Co.

Chicago - Burbank - LA - Anaheim

- 1904 Elden Eugene Benge born in Winterset, Iowa
- 1913 Benge begins learning the cornet
- 1920 Benge still in Winterset, no occupation (census)
- 1920s Benge playing for theater orchestra in Pasadena, CA
- 1928 Benge starts as principle trumpet for Detroit Symphony
- 1930 Benge is listed with parents, #807 E. Colorado, Glendale, CA, orchestra musician (census)
- 1933 Benge starts with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, twin sons Donald & Ronald are born in November
- 1935 Benge starts making his own trumpets based on the French Besson that he played; earliest trumpet #500 is made at his home at #2634 W. Berwyn Ave, Chicago
- 1937 Benge moves to #2511 N. Major Ave., Chicago
- 1939 Benge resigns from the CSO and starts full time production of his trumpets; E.E. Benge Co.; start of Resno-Tempered bell name
- 1940 home at #2511 Major Ave., musician (census)
- 1942 Benge moves to #1945 W. Morse where most of the Chicago trumpets are made
- 1945 Benge is first trumpet for the Chicago Philharmonic while overseeing production of his trumpets
- 1953 Benge moves to Burbank, CA and starts production in his garage there; about 5 trumpets per week
- 1960 Benge dies due to a car accident and his sons take over the business
- 1963 Donald buys out his brother; production up to 22 / week
- Late 1960s start of the Claude Gordon model trumpet based on the pre-WWII French Besson with 0.468" bore
- 1969 short-lived Jubilee models introduced but later dropped since the cheaper model could not be built to quality standards desired
- 1970 Donald sells Benge to Leisure Time Industries and production is moved to Los Angeles to a shop upstairs above Lockie Music Exchange, #950 S. Broadway



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- 1972 Benge is sold to King and moved to a new facility in Anaheim (photo 1); the line is expanded to Kanstul French horns & piccolo trumpets
- 1979 King / Benge is sold in bankruptcy to creditors
- 1983 Benge is sold to Conn and production is moved to Eastlake; the Claude Gordon model ends
- 1985 Conn is merged into UMI
- 2000 UMI is purchased by Steinway
- 2005 all Benge production is ended
- 2007 Donald Benge dies in a car accident



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Trumpets at right: #637 (Chicago, Robb Stewart photo), #2364, #1754, #14700 (Eastlake)(Horn-u-copia photos)