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JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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September/October 2004

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# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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EDITOR: Dale Baker

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## President's Message



What a wonderful time! Our fine Dairyland Chapter certainly had their ducks (with or without Kinuras!) in order. The 49th Annual ATOS Convention was an intimate and fun-filled family reunion with a most outstanding and thoroughly enjoyable series of theatre organ events. Indeed, those who were there regularly used superlative adjectives to describe it. My sincerest “Thanks!” to all who made it possible and to all who participated.

As is customary, our ATOS Board of Directors gathered for their Annual Meeting just before the Convention officially began. One new Director, Jelani Eddington, was seated; one Director, Dr. Ed Mullins, continues in that position for a second three-year term; and one “recycled” Director, Nelson Page, was seated . . . all in accordance with your wishes as expressed in the annual election. At that time, Jim Stemke, who had completed his term, received a plaque as our expression of gratitude for his years of service as a Director. Don Bickel, our other retiring Director, was presented with a similar plaque, in recognition of his many contributions, at the Awards Presentation during the Convention.

I am most pleased to be able to report that the new initiatives I wrote to you about a year ago are progressing well. The first ATOS Electronic Theatre Organ Competition was a success. For the first time, the Volunteer Technician Award was presented. Our Web Site is essentially under new management and is being kept up to date with the latest and greatest news and information. Additionally, emphasis is being placed on developing our Public Relations Program, the Student Organist Scholarship Program has been revamped, and several of our programs for young enthusiasts, including a possible Theatre Organ Workshop/Summer Camp Program, have been placed under a newly created Youth Initiatives Committee chaired by Jelani Eddington. And what all of us have been waiting to hear, the Wurlitzer Book Project continues on schedule and should be completed before the end of this calendar year.

Incumbent officers, except for the Treasurer, were reappointed. Our outstanding previous Treasurer, Bob Maney, decided to retire from that office because of his increased professional responsibilities. At the Awards Ceremony, Bob received a plaque for his fine work for ATOS. Personally, I cannot thank Bob enough for all he has done for us, as Vice President, Publisher, Publications Manager, Web Site innovator and motivator, guardian of our Bylaws, and Treasurer. His work has always been of the highest professional caliber and was consistently accurate, efficient, effective, and expeditiously accomplished. And personally . . . well, we'll never know a finer person! He does continue with us as Trustee of the Endowment Fund. Bob, we already miss you and look forward to your return in a fuller capacity when that's possible for you. I said several times that we would not . . . indeed; we could not . . . get a replacement for Bob. We would, however, attempt to find a worthy successor. Thankfully, two very fine and well-qualified candidates for this office presented themselves to the Board. Jim Merry of Fullerton, California, was appointed Treasurer and has already begun to show that he is a worthy successor.

At least by October 1, a mass mailing regarding all the various annual ATOS programs – including descriptions, pertinent guidelines, necessary forms, schedules, contact persons, and other information – is to be in the hands of all local Chapter Presidents and Secretaries. This information will, thus, be readily available to members at the local level. Additionally, when these materials are included in a mass mailing, they are not so likely to get lost in the shuffle, or be inadvertently discarded as they possibly would if sent piecemeal at various times . . . which had been our previous practice. We trust this procedure will assist all members in keeping abreast of all programs of particular interest to them, and significantly encourage increased participation. Of course, periodic announcements concerning these programs will continue to appear regularly in our journal, THEATRE ORGAN.

In addition to implementing those regular programs and activities, we are now turning our attention more specifically to the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of ATOS. This celebration will, of course, be climaxed at the 2005 Annual Convention, to be hosted by our Los Angeles Chapter in Pasadena, July 1–5. A very special commemorative booklet, which you will be proud to have, is in process for publication by the time of that event. Please do begin now to make your plans to be a part of this great milestone Convention; participate in celebrating our past, and work with us in setting the stage for a very bright future.

Gus

# FABULOUS FOX ORGAN WEEKEND

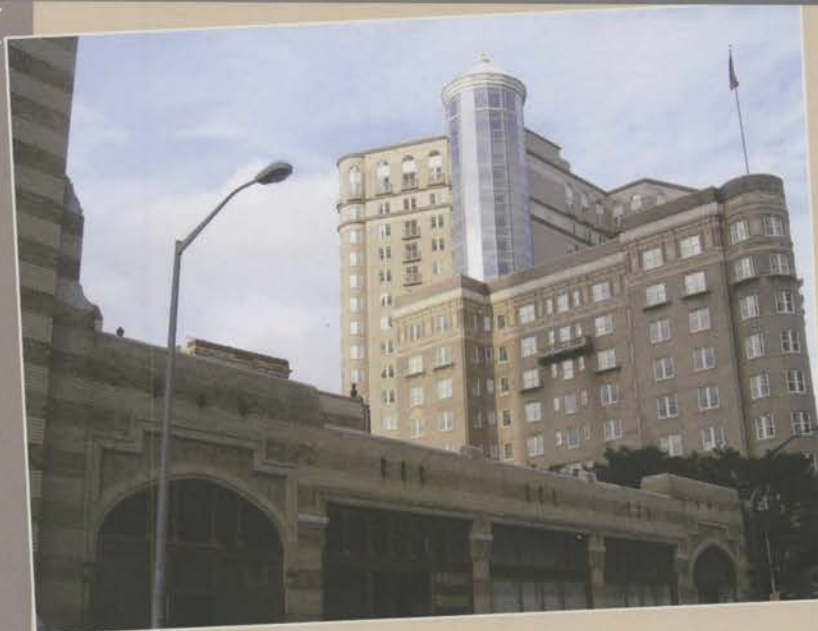
## Post Script

Allan France & Jody Baker

*In revisiting the Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend, it must be noted that it was 'magical'... a combination of environment history, artists, enthusiastic happy people, southern hospitality, and great music.*

*The setting for the entire weekend was two blocks of Atlanta, Georgia, a modern city that's rich in southern history and tradition.*

*During this weekend we had a rare opportunity to 'step back into the past' while residing at the historic Georgian Terrace Hotel, and walking across Peachtree Street for wonderful musical events in the extraordinary Fox Theatre.*



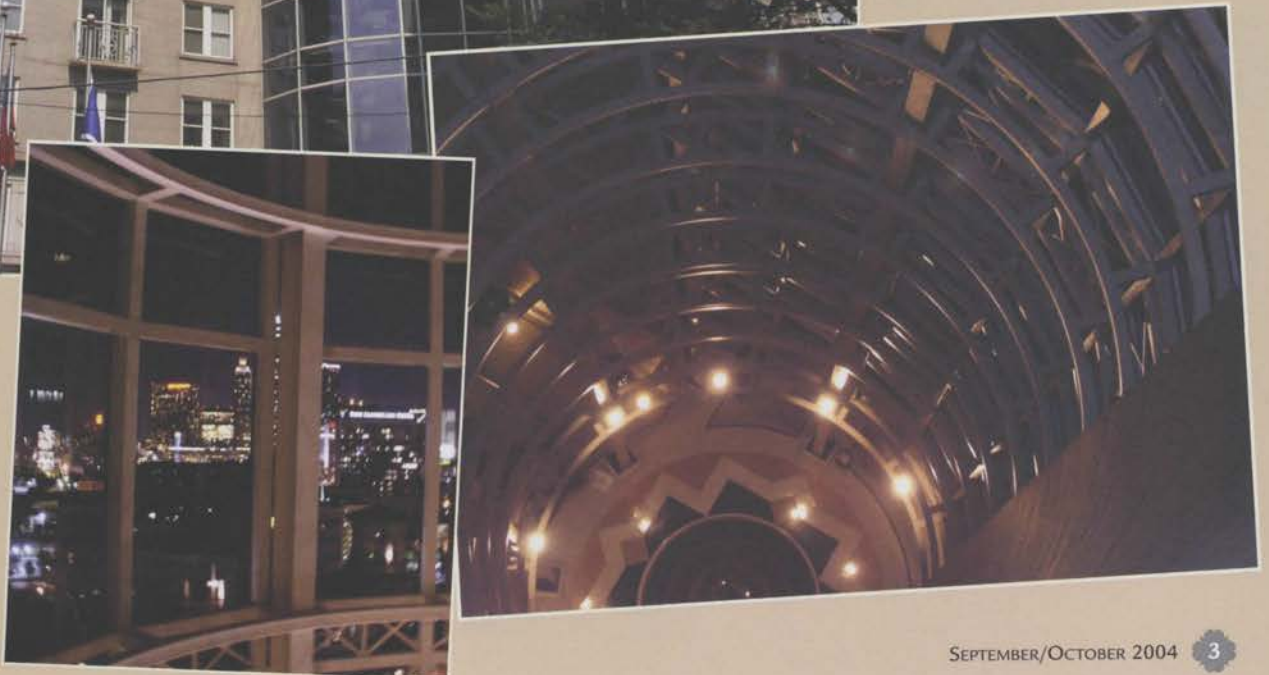
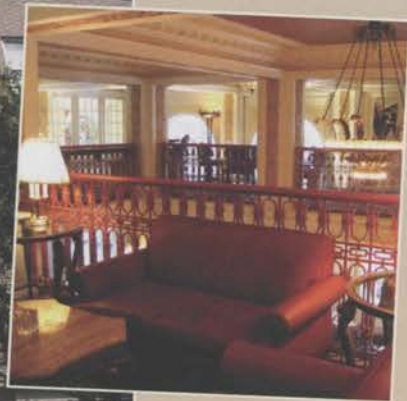
Throughout our lives, we occasionally receive a very extraordinary special gift. During this past Memorial Day weekend, the people of Atlanta gave us one of these valuable gifts. They provided us with the unique opportunity to hear one of the greatest theatre organs in one of the most magnificent theatres... truly a magical weekend of wonderful theatre organ music.

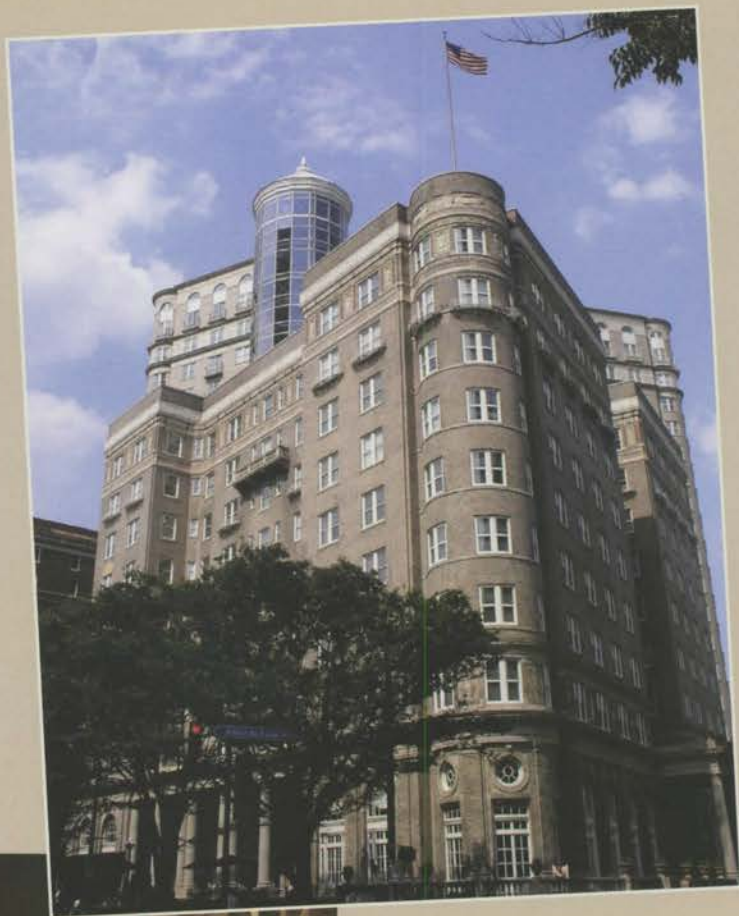


**Photos by**  
Allan France  
Jody & Dale Baker  
Earl McDonald  
Elbert Fields  
Jack Moelmann  
Thurman Robertson



*Georgian Terrace  
Hotel*





# Friday, May 28

The Atlanta weather was quite pleasant for the first Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend, and the mood of excitement and anticipation was prevalent throughout the over 600 attendees.

Our host hotel, The Georgian Terrace, located on the corner of Peachtree Street and Ponce de Leon Avenue, is directly across from the Fox Theatre. It is the epitome of a graceful southern hotel and is rich in history. An all-suites hotel, it is the ultimate in grand elegance and was a treat to call home for the weekend. The Georgian Terrace hosted the 1939 gala reception for the world premier showing of *Gone With the Wind*. Its proximity to the Fox Theatre eliminated the need for transportation and early morning wakeup calls. Therefore our late-night chat sessions grew even later!



It was quickly apparent that the Atlanta Chapter had worked hard to plan, organize, and present the weekend. Registration was a breeze; the record shop was top-shelf...convenient and well laid out. The Allen, Lowery, and Walker Rooms were very accessible and busy throughout the weekend.



## Registration



*Enjoying the first evening.*

# Egyptian Ballroom



Our first event was in the Egyptian Ballroom, and if this was a preview of the theatre, we were in for a special treat, as the ballroom was certainly 'over the top'! The Southern-Egyptian Cocktail Buffet was certainly a most unique way to start off the weekend festivities. Tables with white cloths and beautiful floral centerpieces added to the elegance of this wonderfully ornate ballroom. Larry Douglas Embury provided delightful dinner music.



Larry Embury



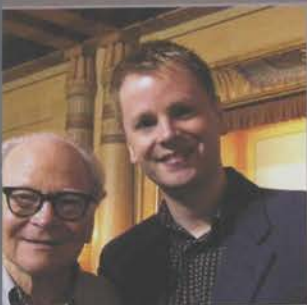
Philco Radio Players

## Banquet, Philco Radio Players & Lyn Larsen Concert

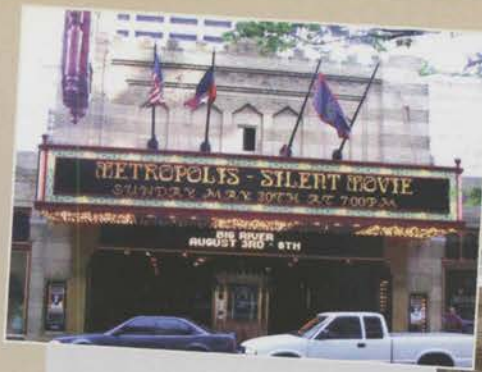
Neil Pollock



The Philco Radio Players, a group who replicate 'old time radio dramas', presented two live shows that provided the audience with a sense of how these dramas were originally produced in radio studios. Neil Pollock provided the musical background as we were entertained by *The Shadow* and *Flash Gordon* programs.



Fred Boska & Norman Easterbrook



# Fox Theatre Main Entrance



Rosa Rio



Neil Pollock

## Recognition

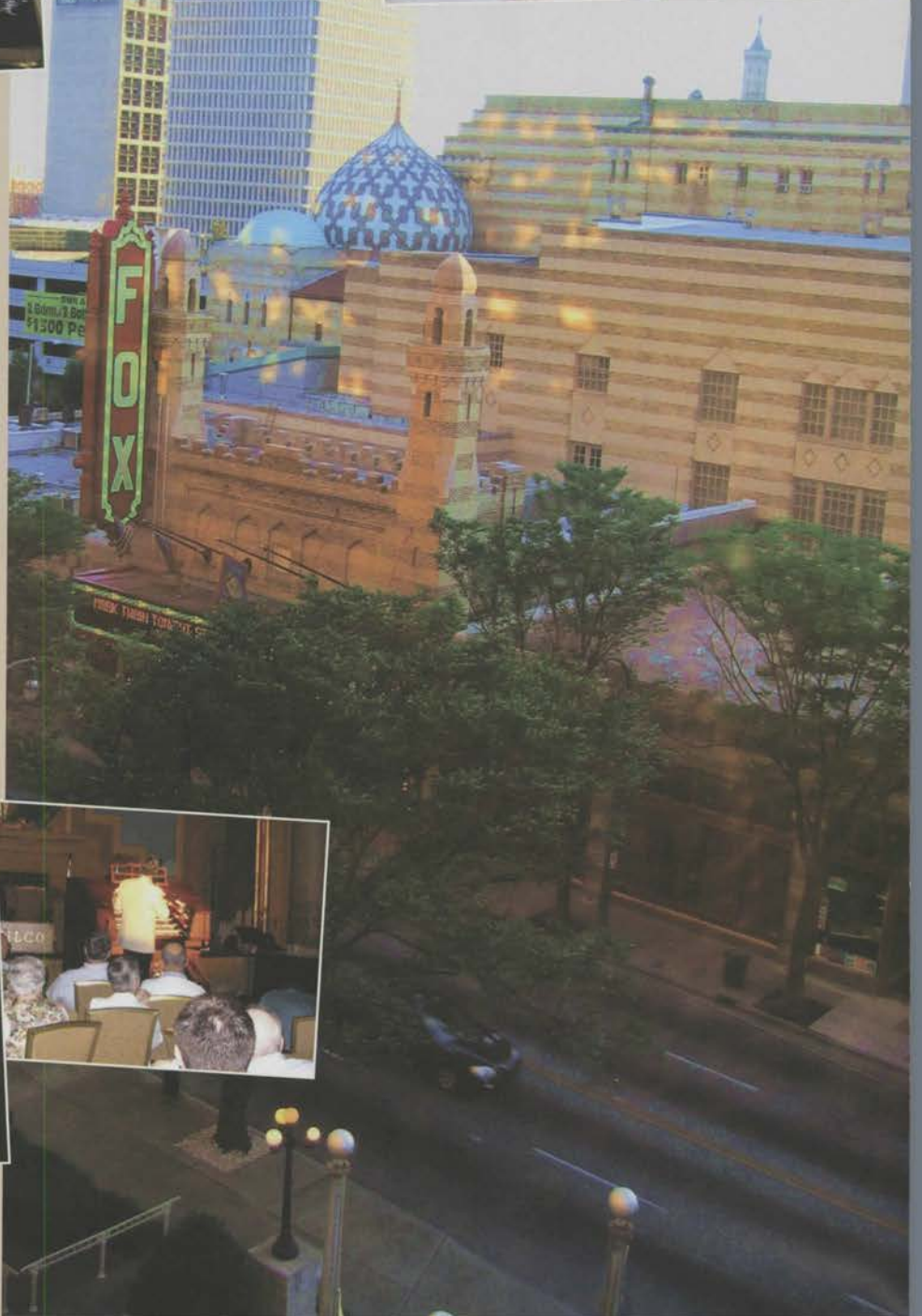
With his southern charm, John Clark McCall, Jr., Co-Chairman of FFOW and President of the Atlanta Chapter, welcomed us to the weekend festivities. The Atlanta Chapter honored Rosa Rio, for her contributions to theatre organ. Norman Easterbrook was also recognized for his contributions to the Rylander Theatre in Americus, Georgia.

## Lyn Larsen Concert

'Maestro' Lyn Larsen presented a delightful concert, featuring the premiere of the George Wright-Allen Digital Theatre Organ owned by Dr. and Mrs. Bob Polgalse. Lyn was at the top of his form for the evening. As always his musical selections were superb, and brought tears to many eyes. His humor brought much laughter, as only Lyn can. What a terrific start to a grand weekend.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 24





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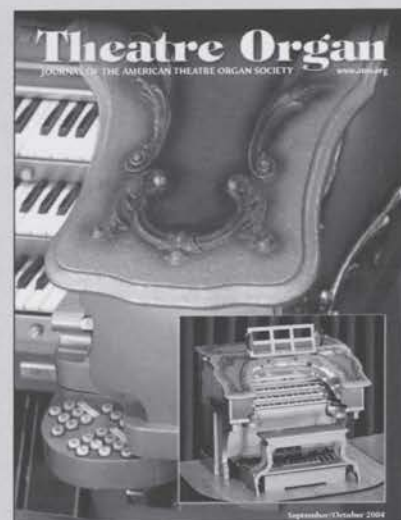
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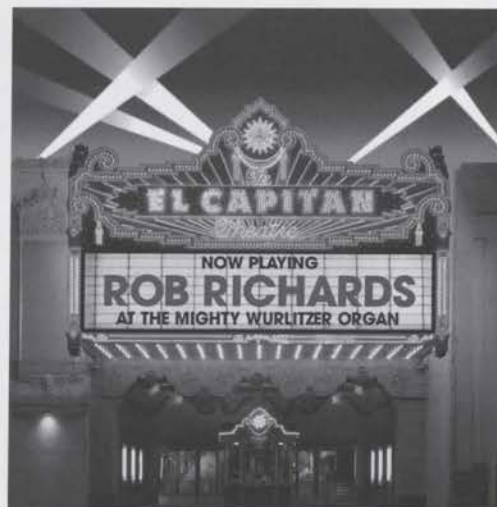


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# Members' Forum\*

Dear Editor:

As a long time member of ATOS, I would like to bring attention to an often-overlooked aspect of our activities. Those chapters, but more especially those individual members, who have been fortunate enough to actually obtain a theatre pipe organ should be made aware of a situation often unnoticed until it is too late.

After having located, rescued, and eventually restored one of these instrument, you and your fellow theatre organ members can hopefully look forward to many years of superb music and the satisfaction of knowing that you have saved a historical and musical treasure.

But what happens to your treasured organ in the unfortunate event of your passing? Very often our heirs, even if they have our enthusiasm, do not always have the resources to properly maintain and continue to keep your instrument. Unfortunately all too often, the instrument you struggled to save, restore, and spent endless dollars and hours maintaining, must be sold to some unknown or even worse unscrupulous individual(s). Often they will re-sell or worse yet, break up for parts, your labor of love just to make a few thousand dollars. Whether it's a 2/5 or a 4/36, many a fine and historically significant instrument has been lost in just such a manner, never again to play as an entity. Every year more instruments are lost because their owners did not plan ahead. These are instruments that can never be replaced.

None of us are getting any younger. Before it's too late,

make a plan to preserve and maintain your instrument. Whether it means amending your will, putting a little money aside regularly to keep maintaining the instrument, finding a suitable new owner, or even donating it to a chapter or institution, have a plan in place before it becomes a necessity and your options become limited. Whatever plan you decide on, **put it in writing** and advise everyone who is involved with the instrument what the plan is and how it will be carried out.

I urge every owner of a theatre pipe organ, no matter what its size, to make a plan for the proper disposition and preservation of your instrument and to have your plan in place and understood by all parties. Otherwise, your wishes may not be followed, your instrument could end up sold off or even scrapped, and the fate of your treasured theatre organ could be left to an uninterested heir or worse still an attorney.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read my letter. I hope other members will take note and plan for the continued preservation of their instrument so future generations can marvel at these wonderful theatre organs and their music.

W. J. Sangeleer  
Arlington, Massachusetts



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Dear Editor:

I wish to comment or add a footnote to Christian Orlov's letter in the May/June 2004 issue. I am sure most readers respect everyone's right to his or her own opinions. However, I do feel it is equally important to present accurate facts, so that a reader may then draw a better conclusion, based on exactness.

Mr. Orlov was most correct when he referred to the quite extraordinary organ in Alice Tully Hall. However, his statement that the instrument "has not been used for concerts for many years" is not accurate. November 17, 2002, Germany's sensational organ wonder-kid, Felix Hell, performed in Alice Tully Hall. Most recently, Thursday, June 3, 2004, The Interscholar Orchestra of New York, (ISO) performed their 32nd Anniversary Gala Concert in Alice Tully Hall, with guest artist Rossina Vrionides De Gomez performing on the Kuhn Organ.

June 4, 2004, Charles Ives Psalm 90 For Chorus, Organ and Bells, and John Corigliano Psalm 8 for Chorus and Organ Accompaniment both were performed in Alice Tully Hall.

I hope these facts present a less dismal picture of the pipe organ in New York City.

Donald P. Robinson  
Rockford, Illinois



ED: In the Nov/Dec 2003 issue, Ralph Beaudry reviewed the "Sonic Bloom" recording. He referenced an erroneous statement in the liner notes, indicating that Möller had installed only 12 theatre organs. ATOS Historian Tom Delay caught the error, and discussed this subject on p.11 of the Mar/April 2004 issue. Subsequently Mr. Beaudry commented on this in his "Corrections..." in the July/Aug 2004 issue.

Dear Editor,

Each edition of THE THEATRE ORGAN magazine I read with much interest and always await the next edition with anticipation.

Page 44 of the July-August, 2004 edition caught my attention under the headline "Corrections and Apologies". I could not determine who wrote the comments, however the statement that Möller Organ Company installed only 12 theatre organs is completely wrong and totally inaccurate!

I have in my possession the M.P. Möller publication of December 1930. This booklet lists all of the Möller installations from 1880 to 1930, a period of 50 years, which also covers the era of the theatre organ. Of the total of 5,925 organs built during this time, by Möller's own count, 570 of their organs were theatre organs. Most of these were small, listed as two-manual of around 25 stops. (I believe that their count was of stop keys and not ranks of pipes.) They produced quite a number of three manual organs and many of them are listed as having around 57 stops. A four manual of 92 stops is listed for the Poli Theatre, Hartford, Connecticut, probably built around 1919. The Hippodrome Theatre of Lancaster, Pennsylvania is listed as 4/109.

I hope that these figures will give you some idea that Möller built more theatre organs than just the 12. I believe that they built about 1/4 as many theatre organs as Wurlitzer.

Perhaps that above will be helpful in keeping the record straight.

Larry Burt  
Broomfield, Colorado

\*Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN. Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.



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This French-style console was built for Jack Darr of Irvine, California.

# Closing Chord

## LAUREL HAGGART

1924-2004

Laurel Haggart passed away June 14, after a brief illness. She was 79 years old and was working full time until just three months ago when she was diagnosed with lung cancer. Laurel experienced life to the fullest, and always made the most of her life. She was a true friend, and she will be dearly missed. A brief summation of her life follows, as written by her daughter.

*John Ledwon*

## LAUREL DOREEN HAGGART

On December 9, 1924, God gave the world a unique gift when Laurel D. Haggart was born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Her parents were Leslie A. and Golda D. Pifer. Mom went to be with Jesus on June 14, 2004. As a small child, Moms' family moved to Portland, Oregon. One of her greatest achievements while growing up was that of being a Mariner Scout! On August 9, 1945 Laurel married Gerald E. Ruby. They produced three children. Being very civic minded, Mom volunteered and served every community she lived in.

Throughout her adult life, her two driving passions were her dogs and cats and the "Mighty Wurlitzer" Theater Pipe Organ; three of which she personally restored and installed. Through her love of pipe organs, Mom met and married Lee Haggart June 2, 1967.

Who else but Mom could pilot a Goodyear blimp, single-handedly transform a weedy hillside into a magnificent rock terraced flower garden, meet an astronaut, have a star named

after her, and serve on the Board of Directors of the American Theater Organ Society. She was also the first Editor of *The Gluepot*.

In 1994 Mom moved to Laurel, Montana to begin a new life. She immediately began working at Hardee's. Mom was so proud to be "independent" and have her own home. She loved meeting people and serving "her" customers. She was still working at Hardee's until her illness in March. Again her civic-mindedness landed her seats on both the Laurel Water Board and the Laurel City/County Planning Board, positions she took very seriously. Mom was a member of the Laurel Federated Woman's Club, again holding office. Mom loved her friends, yard, trains, music, good books, and latch-hooking her own designs.

While I will miss you dearly, Mom, I will see you again, pain free and safe in the arms of Jesus.

Laurel is survived by one daughter, Linda (Dan) Murphy . . . two sons, Gerald (Pam) Ruby and Bruce (Diane) Haggart, D.C. . . . eight grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren.

A celebration of Laurel's life was held on June 17, 2004 at Faith Chapel in Billings, Montana. If desired, memorials may be made to the Northern Rockies Oncology Center, 1041 N. 29th St., Billings, Montana 59101 or the Horizon Hospice House, 1019 Neptune, Billings, Montana 59105.



*Laurel Doreen Haggart.*



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# Pop Organ Workshop

By Bill Irwin



## THEATRE ORGAN

### STYLES AND TECHNIQUES

In this session...

- *Intermediate Solo: "Sunshine Of Paradise Alley"*
- *Analysis of inner chord movement creating progressions and fills, with intervals and steps of the scale. Heel and Toe Pedaling, Chord Substitution, Harmonic Fills.*
- *Advanced Solo: "Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight"*
- *Analysis of Three Part Open Harmony With Finger Glissandos (Construction and Performance), Simple Registration Change, Sustained Counter Melodies and After-Beats*
- *Favorite Registration from Walt Strony*
- *Q & A—Registration Changes*

## Theatre Organ Style . . . What Is It?

### How would YOU define "Theatre Organ Style"?

There are several typical theatre organ style techniques. One of them is the famous "Jesse Crawford Style" which features three Part Open Harmony and Finger Glissandos. But if you had to describe "Theatre Organ Style" how would you do it?

There are many factors, which, I believe, tend to take individual organists down different paths, such as physical differences, including the size of their hands. Common techniques such as Bridging (holding down a melody note with one finger, while the balance of the fingers on the same hand, play both melodic and rhythmic fills on an adjoining manual) and moving to the Solo Manual for crisp Brass Fills in open spaces. There is also choice of registration and other factors.

The size and features of a theatre pipe organ will have a lot to do with how it is played. If the organ has Second Touch (press or strike the keys harder and the same Manual will speak with a different Voice, usually a stronger registration), or, if the organ offers the feature called *Sostenuto*, the ability to sustain voices on one Manual while the organist moves to a different Manual to play fills . . . those two features alone, will contribute to the theatre organ styling of the organist.

I hope you will accept both of my arrangements as being within the realm of theatre organ styling, as I have tried to keep the required playing technique, hopefully, within the realm of the average reader.

### There's More to Reading . . . than Just Reading

The organist, who is able to read both the Treble and Bass Clefs, can play the most difficult arrangements without having the knowledge of harmony needed to prepare the arrangements. My analysis, playing hints and education offered in

these Workshop Sessions, are given to not only help the readers perform the arrangements, but to encourage those who want to create their own arrangements, embellish otherwise dull arrangements, and perhaps learn to improvise.

### "Sunshine Of Paradise Alley"

There is no introduction in the arrangement. If you want to be creative, set up a Vibraphone, with sustain, and play a long arpeggio (broken chord) of D7th (D, F#, A, C) all the way up the Manual. The result will be a pretty Pyramid Chord, and the D7th will prepare the ear of the listener for the G major chord that starts the arrangement. Change your registration before beginning the arrangement.

If you examine the 1st measure, top line (or system), you will see only one chord symbol, but if you look at the notes played on every beat, even if you can't spell and identify the different chords that are being played, your ear will tell you that there are three chords in the measure instead of just the one chord shown in symbol form. That's why playing from "Fake" books (single note melodies with chord symbols) rarely satisfies the ear of the educated musician. You need to add to the basics found in "Lead Lines" . . . and that's why I like to explain what you see in my arrangements.

### Let's Examine What The Music Is Telling You To Do

The chord progression from the G major in Measure 1 to the E7th in measure 2 is called the I major to the VI7th. I moved down chromatically (in half tones/steps) in 6th intervals. (You can try that with C to A7, F to D7, Bb to G7 and Eb to C7). In measure two, I used what would be a 10th Progression in E7, if I had moved the Root Eb up through F#, G and G#. (See my book 10th Progression Magic). In measure 3, by

# Sunshine of Paradise Alley

JOHN BARATTON  
Arr. Bill Irwin

Slowly and Smoothly

Both Hands Lower Man.

*mf*

G E7 A7 D7

5

G C C#dim G

9

C D9 Eb9 Gmaj7 G B7 Emi A7

R.H. Upper Man.

L.H. Lower Man.

©Arrangement Copyright 2004, Bill Irwin, U.S.A.



14 *Emi7* *Eb9* *G* *E7*

5

3 1 2 1 1 1 1 1

Both Hands Lower Manual

19 *A7* *D7* *G* *C* *C#dim* *G*

24 *C* *G#9* *A9* *G9* *E9* *D9*

R.H. Upper Man.

L.H. Lower Man.

Slower

28 *C9* *D9* *E9* *Eb9* *D9* *G* *Eb* *Ab* *G*

Slower

using a Tri-Tone Acc. for the A7 chord, i.e., two notes in the L.H., the bVII and III, (reading from the bottom up), with the Root in the Bass, I was able to use both the sharpened 5th, "F" and the flatted 5th "D#" (enharmonic to "Eb" to avoid two accidentals in the measure, for the sake of simplicity.) The same accompaniment technique in measure 4, allows the "F" natural (the sharpened 9th step and enharmonic for "E#"), to be played without clashing with the full D7 chord symbol. Technically speaking, the first two chord symbols in the measure should be D7 (#9) and D7.

These are the harmonic techniques that you take for granted when you are reading an arrangement, but using them requires study, unless you're blessed with Perfect Pitch or darn good Relative Pitch.

Measures 5 and 6, indicate heel and toe pedaling for a legato effect in the melodic Bass Pedal movement. You can learn to choose bass notes from steps of the chords in progression, that will create a melodic bass, instead of jumping around, playing all Roots.

Measures 7 and 8 feature a melodic Fill in the L.H. using the descending notes of the G major scale.

In measure 11, note the Bass Pedal marking, indicating that you are to play the bass note "G" with the left toe and hold the pedal key down while you substitute the left heel . . . in order to move smoothly to the bass note F# in measure 12.

In measures 14, 15 and 16, to help the non-bass clef reader achieve the same effect as the written arrangement, there should be three different chord symbols shown for each measure. Can you name them? The 8 measures from measure 17 through measure 24, are a simple repeat. In measure 25, notice that the L.H. is suddenly playing in the Treble Clef. Have you seen that before? Stay alert as the Treble Clef changes back to a Bass Clef in measure 27 just before the 2nd beat.

From measure 25 through measure 28, I've used "Moving 9th Chord Substitution" to enhance what might have been one G major chord in the accompaniment for all those measures. Notice how the melody is built on the steps of the G major scale.

Can you determine what all the accompanying chords are in measures 29 and 30? (I'll tell you near the end of this session.)

The Ending is a very common chord progression that you can use with all Ballads. After you play the final Root Major chord, move to the major chord of the Flatted 6th step of the major scale (The Mozart 6th), then to the following Root on the Circle of Chords (which puts you a half tone above the final Root) and then move down the 1/2 tone to the original major chord.

Quite a trip . . . for a fairly easy-to-play arrangement.

### "Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight"

The toughest part of this arrangement, is mastering the Three Part Open Harmony with Finger Glissandos. Take away all those grace notes, (which have no value of their own) and you would have a very simple arrangement. Let's talk about Three Part Open Harmony, before we discuss the Finger Glissandos, (which, to my knowledge, are not really Glissandos, but are glorified slurs, since all notes are articulated and actually fingered).

### Playing The Melody In Three Part Open Harmony

(R.H. plays 3-note chords, melody on top.  
L.H. plays the middle notes an octave lower.)

Obviously, when the tempo (speed) of a tune is slow, and the melody notes are of long duration, Ex., "I'll See You In My Dreams," "Stardust," and our study tune, "**Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight**," there is ample time and space to play the melody in two parts, three parts and four parts.

When playing the melody in three part harmony, i.e., adding the balance of the notes of the Triads (3 note chords) under the melody notes, adding the notes of the Major, Minor and Augmented chords, is relatively simple.

However, when you add the balance of 4 note chords under the single melody notes, you must be aware of what note you will delete from the 4 note chord to make it a three part chord.

The two, basic 4 note chords are the Seventh (I, III, V, bVII steps of the scale) and the Diminished. *It is necessary to omit one of the four steps in order to use Three Part Harmony.*

In popular music, a Diminished Chord is actually a Diminished 7th chord, containing 4 notes. Play C7th . . . C,E,G,Bb, and lower every step a half tone/step, except the Root, and you have C, Eb, Gb, A . . . called C Diminished 7th. Note: A Diminished chord in *Classical Harmony*, is a 3 note chord. I, bIII, bV. Start with the C Major chord (Triad), notes C, E, G. Then, flat the 3rd and 5th steps to construct the Classical Cdim = C, Eb, Gb.

### In the Four Note Chords, Which Step Should Be Omitted?

In the two basic four part chords of Seventh and Diminished 7th, one step in each chord must be removed to create Three Part Harmony. Basically, the melody note will usually decide which note, of the four, will be removed.

To make the Seventh and Diminished 7th chords sound authentic, the "color tones", the notes that define the type of chord being used, must be present when the four part chord is reduced to three parts.

In the Seventh Chord, the Flatted 7th step is the "color tone". The least necessary step of the chord, when it is reduced, is the Root, which is generally present in the Bass Pedals. Therefore, you should consider using the III, V, & bVII steps of the scale. (In Modern Keyboard Harmony Progression, Roman numerals are generally used to represent the steps of the scale, Arabic numerals and abbreviations, are used to indicate the type of chord to be played on the step of the scale. Example: In the Key of C, the progression C, D7, G7, C (Note: when no Arabic number or abbreviation is shown, it is assumed that the chord symbol is a Major chord.) is identified as I, II7, V7, I, enabling the educated musician to transpose, modulate, create and improvise, theoretically, in any key.

### Playing Finger Glissandos

Wesley Williams, the wonderful staff organist at the world famous Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona (a short drive from my home) was kind, generous and trusting, when he loaned me a set of Jesse Crawford's Organ Courses for Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced players.

In the Advanced Course, Mr. Crawford has a five-page

From the  
Arranger's  
Notebook.

# Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight

F. H. KLICKMANN  
Arr. Bill Irwin

Slowly C

mf UPPER A TEMPO

G7 C

AL CODA

F Fm 5b

C

G7 LOWER

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a single bass clef staff below. The music is in common time (C). The grand staff contains a melody with various accidentals and a bass line with chords and fingerings. Above the grand staff, handwritten notes include: C, G7(F#5), Cmaj7, Gm7(bb), A7(b9), D7, D9, G7, F7, E7. Below the grand staff, the tempo markings "Poco Rit.", "A TEMPO", and "Rit." are written. The single bass clef staff contains a simple bass line with some accidentals.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of three staves: a grand staff and a single bass clef staff below. The music is in common time. The grand staff contains a melody with accidentals and a bass line with chords and fingerings. Above the grand staff, handwritten notes include: Eb9(b5), D7, A, and "DC AL CODA". Below the grand staff, the tempo marking "Poco Rit." is written. The single bass clef staff contains a simple bass line with some accidentals.

Handwritten musical score for the third system. It consists of three staves: a grand staff and a single bass clef staff below. The music is in common time. The grand staff contains a melody with accidentals and a bass line with chords and fingerings. Above the grand staff, handwritten notes include: CODA, F, E, E7, A7, Bb7(b5), A7, and "LOWER". Below the grand staff, the tempo marking "Poco Rit." is written. The single bass clef staff contains a simple bass line with some accidentals.

Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight – Page 3

chapter on “The Glissando”. A summary of his playing points are: (a) Use full tremulant (b) For small intervals, use chromatics for small glissandos (I know that action of the R.H. connecting grace notes, as a Slur that connects two single notes) and a combination of chromatics and harmonic intervals for larger interval jumps. (c) Play downward glissandos with decreasing volume and upward glissandos with increasing volume. (d) ‘Glissing’ down in intervals, start down from the bottom note and use chromatics to get to the following interval. To ‘gliss’ up to another interval, start with the top note of the interval and ‘gliss’ up chromatically. (e) When the melody is played in chords, it is best to place the melody note on top. (f) Tibia Clausa or Flute stops are most effective for the multiple finger glissandos, when both hands are playing the chromatic movement.

(g) You will add interest to the finger glissando when it is used to connect close harmony chords with open harmony chords. (h) Hold the melody notes as long as possible and don’t start the finger glissandos until the last possible moment. (i) Too frequent use of this “device” will make it tiresome and boring.

Please remember that the following arrangement of “Sweet Hawaiian Moonlight” is a **study** arrangement. I’ll accept “tiresome and boring,” when you can play the multiple finger glissandos cleanly and smoothly.

### A Simple Approach to Performing Finger Glissandos

It is rare to find an equal number of notes in each hand when performing the finger glissando with both hands. For example, in measure 1, the R.H. has 4 grace notes in the chromatic run and the L.H. has 3 grace notes.

Start the finger glissando with the hand containing the most number of notes. In measure 1, the R.H. has one more note than the L.H. While you’re holding the R.H. interval of “G” and “E”, move the “G” to the “G#”, then have the L.H. leave the “C” and play the “C#” together with the R.H. “A” and from that point, both hands will play together up to the next melody note. Try to have the R.H. hold the first note “E” as long as possible before raising your 5th finger to play the following “G” over “C”.

Stay with that practice until you can smoothly arrive at the next chord with both hands together. Keep doing that until

you are able to move off the first chord, start the finger glissando with both notes together and, generally, by playing the R.H. slightly faster than the L.H., arrive at the following chord with both hands together.

Use the same approach to all the other finger glissandos in the arrangement.

To practice performing them smoothly, I suggest that you practice the glissandos up and down in each measure. The fingering remains the same and you will soon be able to start the two hand glissandos together, play them smoothly and end with both hands together.

In the Bridge, starting at measure 9, both hands move down to the lower manual for a simple registration change. Concentrate on holding the sustained counter melody notes in the L.H. while you play the 2nd and 3rd afterbeat intervals crisply, so that it sounds like two hands are playing the notes.

Notice my 'different' fingering of the chromatics. It works better for me than the classical 1,3,1.3.1.2.3 etc. Finally, practice the last two measures where finger glissandos connect each inversion of the final major chord. Hold the final chord as long as you wish (see the Fermatas over the notes?) and slowly fade to end.

## A Walt Strony Registration

From his book *The Secrets Of Theatre Organ Registration*, Walter (Walt) Strony has given me permission to give you his variation on the gorgeous "mist" sound that you have heard from many theatre pipe organists. Play a chorded melody in upper middle of the keyboard. Registration: 16' Vox Humana(s), 16' Saxophone, 8v Vox Humana(s), 8' Quintadena (optional), 4' Tibia Clausa(s) (or perhaps only the softer one), and 1' Fife (either Tibia Clausa or Concert Flute). Thanks Walt.

## Chord Names In "Sunshine Of Paradise Alley"

The names of the three chords in measure 29 of "SUNSHINE..." are Eb9, Eb7 (b9), Eb7. In measure 30, the three chords are D9, D7 (b9) and D7. Did you know that? Can you use that knowledge elsewhere?

Did you notice a pattern in the progression? With knowledge of Modern Keyboard Harmony, you'll discover free lessons every time you read an arrangement!



### Q Workshop Questions—the students ask:

*"How should I handle Registration Changes?"*

### A Bill:

One of the most important features, if not the most important feature of the theatre pipe organ, is the variety of tonal colors it is able to produce. The same comment applies to the modern electronic organs with their samplings of theatre pipe organs and their ability to reproduce the almost limitless varieties of tonal textures and qualities that thrills listeners. In this session, I am going to deal mostly with registration *changes* instead of the actual registrations.

As in all art forms, "beauty is in the eye (in this case, it's in the ear) of the beholder" (the listener). To paraphrase... "One man's Flute is another man's Tibia Clausa." In a given "musical situation", the sounds of various registrations that may appeal to the student, the teacher, the advanced amateur or the professional artist, may be so different, that it becomes almost impossible to please every ear with one set of registrations. That's why registrations shown in published arrangements are called "Suggested Registration."

### How, What, Where, When and Why?

I'm taking the liberty of paraphrasing the journalist's litany of questions to obtain information about a subject. I've just changed "Who" to "How" to fit the physical effort involved with changing registrations.

How does one go about physically changing registrations on the organ? Well, there are several ways, some depending on

your dexterity and some depending on the features built into the instrument.

Since we can not always perform on the same instrument, and it takes time to learn the intricacies of each different pipe or electronic organ, I encourage students to first try to use factory pre-sets or make physical changes whenever possible. Otherwise, on the larger pipe organs with three or more manuals, it is fairly simple to set up the various manuals in advance and move quickly from one manual to another for fast registration changes. Avoid extra long pauses of a sustained melody or accompanying chords, while making changes during the performance or at the end of the piece. Learn to judge how long you can pause, without losing your rapport with the audience. A good 'ritarded' ending is like slowly closing a book after reading a good story. After closing the book, put it down and either get up or reach for a new book.

### Ten Easy Registration Changes, Without Touching Tablets... Or Drawbars... Or Anything

Don't dismiss this simplistic approach for chord system players, as being "too simple". It could save you the embarrassment of using one sound throughout an entire song if you do not have the time, knowledge or opportunity to set up a complete set of registrations. Use a General full 16' setting on the Swell or Upper Manual and an 8', 4' combination of Flutes, Strings and Reeds on the Great or Lower Manual. The Bass Pedal can be a combination of 16' and 8', or optional. Try the following routine... for R.H. melody:

1. Single note melody, middle register, Upper Manual.

2. Single note melody, middle register, Lower Manual.
3. Melody in chords, upper register, Upper Manual.
4. Melody in chords, upper register, Lower Manual.
5. Single note melody staccato, Upper Man.
6. Single melody note staccato, Lower Man.
7. Melody in staccato chords, Upper Man.
8. Melody in staccato chords, Lower Man.
9. Play both hands together, high register of the Upper Man.
10. Play both hands together, middle register of Lower Man. Mix up the order by moving back and forth on the Manuals as desired.

If you want further simple changes, consider turning the tremulant off and on. Add a Glock or Bell tone to the Upper Manual. Remember, these simple changes apply to using "lead sheets" single note melody with chord symbol accompaniment. There is no excuse for a "one sound arrangement".

#### What Registrations To Choose

Again, it's a matter of personal taste, but let me give you some guidelines. For example, don't be too subtle in your changes or the casual listener may not hear any change at all. Make all changes distinct, using contrast in sharpness, roundness, soft edges (flutes, tibias), hard edges (brass, reeds) . . . soft volume, loud volume; . . . Note: Medium or Moderate Volume and Tempo can get boring. Don't frighten people with sudden, unexpected volume, or let them think you've stopped playing when the volume becomes too low to hear.

Choose instruments as the Conductor of your "orchestra." If it's a Violin solo, not only should you choose the Violin setting, but it also should be played as a violin, (both in touch and in volume, as well as in the range of the instrument, in order to simulate the real instrument). If it is a jazz saxophone solo, or any wind instrument, remember the player has to breathe now and then. Remember the breath attack also, (non-legato) and avoid excessive use of the Legato touch when "breathing" on the organ.

Simple basics. If the setting for the melody is soft, put the harder edges of strings and reeds behind the melody, for contrast. The same applies to a harder edge used for the melody, like a Reed or a Brass stop. That will be showcased nicely with a round accompaniment of Flutes and Tibias with perhaps a touch of Strings for definition. Remember that the greatest teaching aid is **listening . . .** to organ and orchestra live performances and recordings, but not as background to conversation. Really listen and try to analyze how the music was arranged, the tempo, the dynamics, the orchestration/arrangement, the instrumentation (what instruments soloed and how was the instrument played) the use of Volume for effectively communicating the emotion of the song, etc.

#### Where and When

Where should you change Registration? How about as the Right Hand starts to play a Pick-up (an incomplete measure) Tacet, Solo, Soli or the familiar N,C, (no acc. chord) use your L.H. to make the change. In a conventional 32-measure tune, it's nice to change the sound of the melody at the end of the first 8 measures. Surely you want to change registration for the Bridge of the song . . . (the secondary theme) and if you're going to play a special Ending, I'd change there also.

However, remember that too many registration changes is as bad, or worse, than too few changes. If you are constantly moving your hands and body to make the changes, it's very noticeable to an audience watching, as well as listening to you. And if you are constantly changing the sounds, an audience starts to listen to the changes instead of the music. Let your ear, your experience and your taste decide where, when and how often to make registration changes. Did I forget to advise you to watch for "echo" passages in the music and simply play the "echo" of the melody on the Lower or a different Manual?

#### Why? Do We Need To Ask?

Ever fall asleep during a lecture, or a too "talky" movie? In bed, do you like to fall asleep with smooth, soft, soothing music? It happens during concerts too! To keep the audience's attention, change registration, change volume, change tempo . . . wherever you feel that while "speaking" at the organ you want to raise your "voice," do it with the volume. Do you want to create a mental picture for the listeners, do it with tonal color in registration. An artist, in any art form, uses all the facets available in the medium chosen for self-expression. In this case, it's the organ.

If I wanted to be a bit poetic, I could describe Registration as, "the royal garment for the King of Instruments."

Aren't you glad you play the organ?

#### And In Conclusion . . .

That's all for this time. A big "Thank you!" to Pat Stacy, Dorset, England, for her work in engraving "Sunshine Of Paradise Alley". She's my friend, my personal music engraver, and now my teacher, as I try to learn music engraving with the computer.

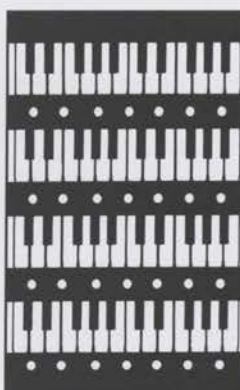
My contribution to the Nov/Dec issue will be a Christmas article, with unusual arrangements of traditional Christmas tunes. See you for the "Sleighbell Session."

'Bye now,  
Bill



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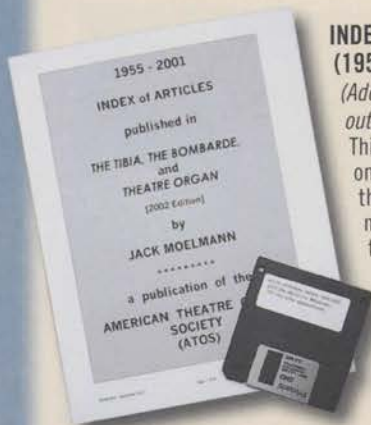
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The back issues of *THEATRE ORGAN* contain invaluable information about the history of the theatre pipe organ. The articles that have appeared in the Journal provide the necessary information to fully understand and appreciate the rich heritage of the theatre pipe organ and the people who have been responsible for the manufacture, maintenance and presentation of these magnificent instruments. The text and photographs give an overall perspective of the tremendous contributions that the ATOS and its members have made in preserving and promoting the theatre pipe organ as a musical art form since 1955.

### INDEX OF ATOS PUBLICATIONS (1955-2002)—\$8.00

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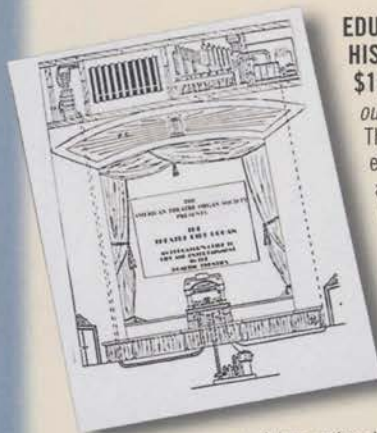
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This publication was developed to help educators teach the history of the theatre pipe organ. It is designed to be used with students in the upper elementary school grades through junior high school age. It approaches the subject of the history of the theatre pipe organ by focusing on the history of the 1920s. Students study the important social issues and events, style and fashion, prominent personalities, dance, music, silent films,

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The Wurlitzer Factory Video is a rare black and white silent film documentary from the early 1920s showing the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company in Tonawanda, New York. A musical score is provided by Ray Brubacher on the 2/10 Wurlitzer, formerly in the Loew's Colonial Theatre in Reading, Pennsylvania. This video contains a special added attraction guaranteed to please every theatre organ enthusiast. This video is available in VHS format for the U.S. market and in PAL format for the overseas market.

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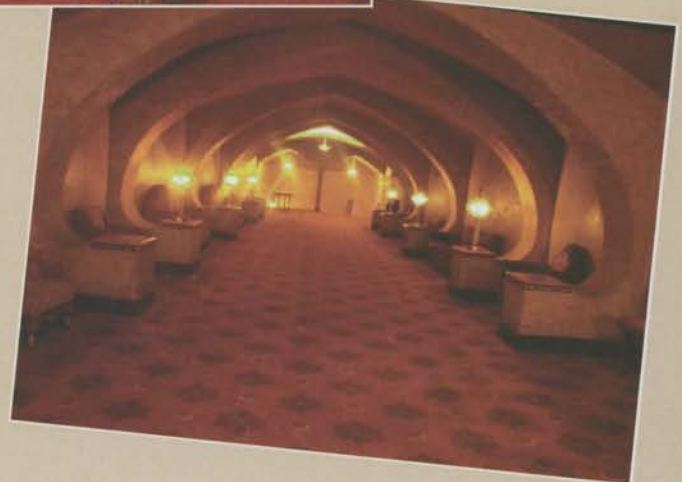
If you have any questions, please contact John Ledwon, ATOS Marketplace Manager at [ledwon@atos.org](mailto:ledwon@atos.org), or 818/889-8894.

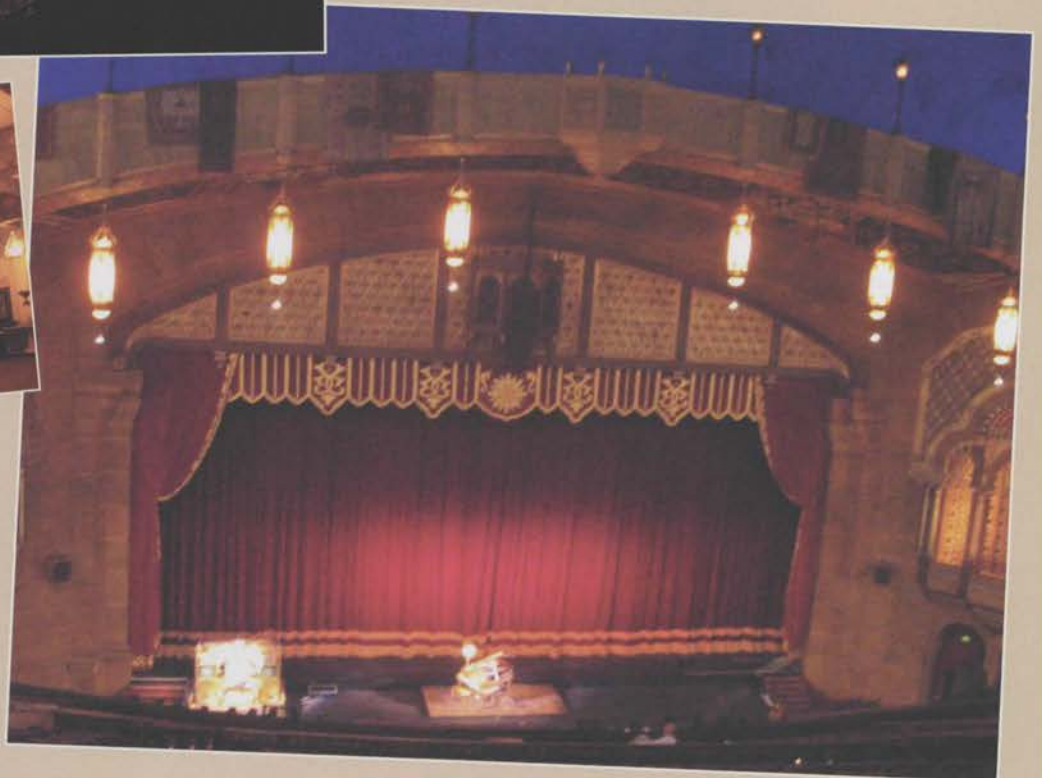
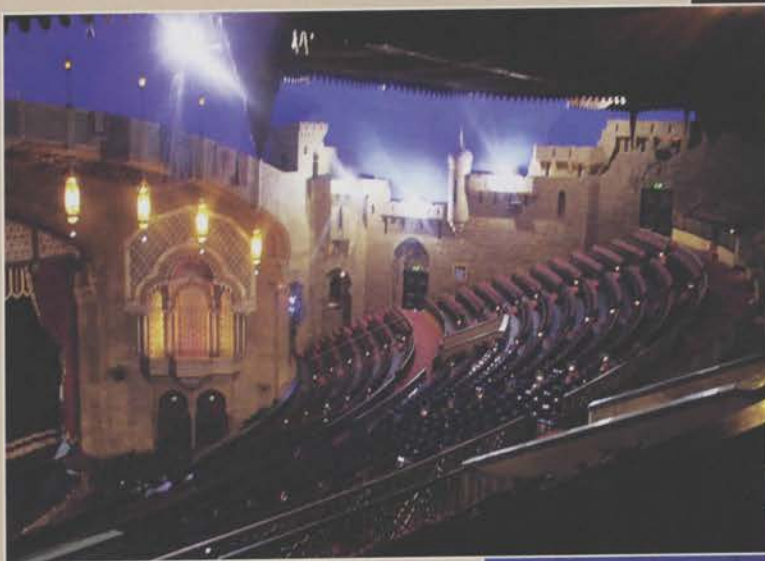
# Saturday, May 29

Saturday morning was a beautiful warm spring day, and started with tours of the Fox Theatre. Guests were provided with an in-depth view of the entire theatre and its elaborate ornate furnishings. Among these were the \$40,000 chairs in the lavish Ladies Egyptian Lounge. When walking into the Fox, we passed under the marquee, and through the 140-foot entry to access to the theatre lobby. It is hard to absorb all the architectural features and ornamental interior décor at the first view. The first item that caught your eye upon entering the over 65,000 square foot main auditorium was the magnificent jeweled stage curtain. Next, the vividly intense ultramarine blue atmospheric ceiling with moving clouds, and twinkling stars was overwhelming. There are also two balconies, complete with 'canvas tents'. This is one of the finest theatres in the world!



*Fox Tour*







The lecture by Joe Patten on the Fox Möller was extremely interesting and informative. Since Joe is known as the "Phantom of the Fox," he gave us a fascinating insight into the organ and theatre.



## Joe Patten Lecture



## Lowery Room



## Simon Gledhill Concert



Ken Double was our entertaining emcee for the weekend. It was the 75th birthday of the 4/42 Möller known affectingly as *Mighty Mo*, and it was ready to come alive in all of its golden glory. The first artist to be engulfed by its massive console (said to have its own zip code) was Simon Gledhill. Simon and *Mighty Mo* were quite a pair! Simon's program contained not only familiar melodies, but also some lesser-known pieces, and all gave freshness to his performance. His tributes to John Seng and Bob Goldstein were quite fitting. His spectacular rendition of "Girl from Ipanema" left all wondering, how he does it! The hoots and hollers that followed Simon's medley of music by the great Duke Ellington were well deserved.

Intermission gave everyone time to catch his or her breath. In exploration of the theatre, Joe Patten's comments had given us new insight. The oriental rugs draped over the arched, lantern-lined



bridge above the stage, the ornate gold finished chamber grilles... all added to the wonderful atmospheric palace!

Simon entered the second half wearing a red Shriners' Fez. Simon explained his headgear, stating that (since the Fox started out as a Shrine temple) it would be fitting on the organ's 75th birthday, to honor John Philip Sousa, who was a Shriner, Simon played "Nobles of the Mystic Shrine," and the Fez was prominently placed upon *Mighty Mo*.

An assortment of popular music from 1929 was followed by "Deep River." A medley of tunes made popular by the great Judy Garland came next. Simon demonstrated his unique stylings with selections from the Broadway hit *The King and I*. Simon's last number was the wonderful composition by Holzt, "The Planets". After a well-deserved standing ovation, Simon's encore was the so appropriate "Atlanta, GA."



## Record Shop



## Walker Room





*Fr. Gus & Bucky Reddish*

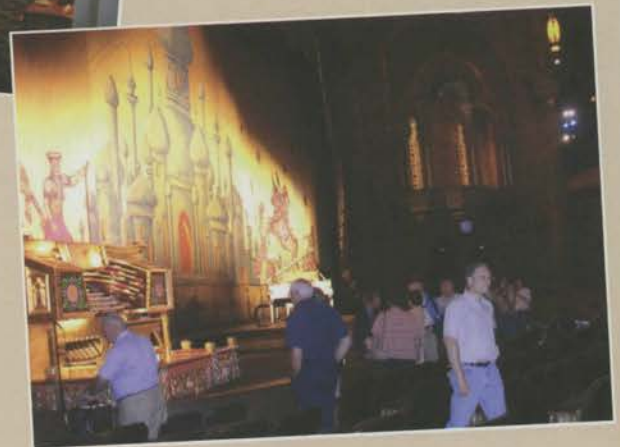
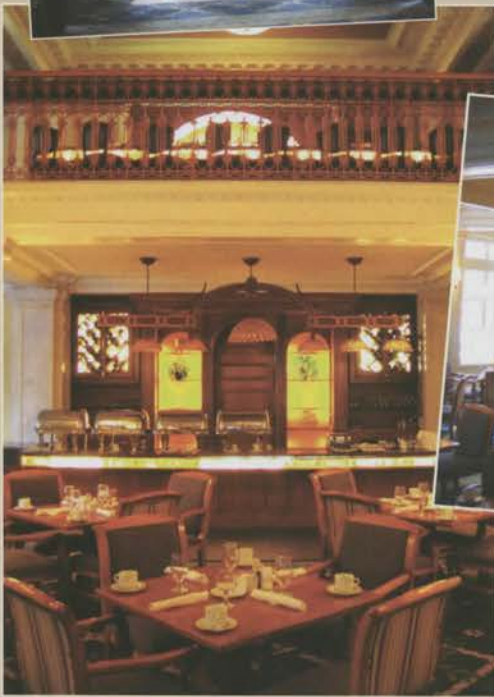


*Rosa Rio*



*Ken Double & Clark Wilson*

## *Hotel Interior*



## *Recognition*



*From left:  
Robert Foreman Jr.,  
Joe Patten &  
Simon Gledhill*

The Atlanta Chapter has much and many to be proud of. Two of the major players, who helped save the Fox Theatre and the Möller, were honored before the second event . . . Robert Foreman, Jr., President of the Atlanta Landmarks, Inc. and a member of the Atlanta Chapter . . . and the "Phantom of the Fox" Joe G. Patten. Simon Gledhill made the presentation of plaques to these deserving recipients, and all in attendance gave a rousing, heartfelt thank you!

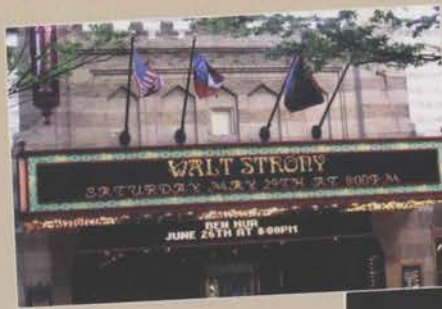
Mighty Mo sprang to life, with the incomparable Walt Strony at the console, playing the rebel rousing "Dixie". As always Walt entertained with exuberance, energy, enthusiasm, and artistry. Walt presented several selections that showed off the soft voices of the Fox Möller, and then changed by giving us the full-organ treatment.

The FFOW was a unique weekend experience. However, unique moved into the realm of bizarre when Walt reappeared. Remembering Scarlet's dress made from curtains in *Gone With The Wind*, followed by Carol Burnett's satirical take-off on this scene in her television show, Walt gave us his unusual interpretation of what a well-dressed Fox organist should wear... "Fashions By Mr. Darr."

Walt returned for the second half of his concert, attired in real-life drapery, rods included! *Mighty Mo* and Walt color coordinated so very well... it was totally, "Darr'ling!" Walt honored his 'one of a kind' designer garments with a medley of tunes from the 1939 Academy Award winning movie *Gone With The Wind*.

Walt's rendition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" sent chills up the spine, and was so patriotically perfect for a Memorial Day weekend! It is always a treat for the organist to let the audience in on the idiosyncrasies of the organ, and Walt touched upon some of the unusual stops of the Fox Möller. All in all it was wonderful, exciting, stimulating, and downright enjoyable!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52



## Walt Strony Concert



*"I cannot prepare you for what you are about to see!"*



# Welcome!

## New ATOS Members...

Gordon Bachlund, Monrovia, CA  
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 Julie Johnson, West Chicago, IL

Duane King, Johnstown, OH  
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 Shawn Pahl, Bristol, CT  
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 Paul Renard, Chicago, IL  
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### A FAMILY ORIENTED MUSICAL SHOW

*"Bob Ralston worked his tail off for us, was fun to work with, rolled with the organ's deficiencies and presented a delightful, family oriented musical show [at the Seattle Paramount on 3/16/03]. Bob kept us spellbound for over two hours. It was a wunnerful, wunnerful show... a real crowd pleaser."*

—Clint Meadway, Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society

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*"At the Paramount Theatre, downtown Denver, on March 30, 2003, we featured one of the most talented showmen on the artistic scene, Mr. Bob Ralston. Bob treated a nearly full house [more than 1,000] to a delightful and thrilling program; he left them humming and singing as they left their seats after the patriotic finale."*

—Priscilla Arthur, Rocky Mountain Chapter, ATOS

### THE CONSUMMATE MUSICIAN

*"Bob Ralston enthralled our audience [playing our big Möller at the Capitol Theatre, Chambersburg, PA, on 7/18/03]. He is the consummate musician and entertainer—professional, charming and a complete perfectionist! We can't wait to have him back!"*

—Theresa Bachman-Myers, Executive Director, Council for the Arts



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PHOENIX, ARIZONA NOVEMBER 26TH - 28TH 2004

JOIN US THANKSGIVING WEEKEND 2004

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Afternoon: **Walt Strony** - Orpheum Theatre

Evening: **Lyn Larsen** - Orpheum Theatre

### Saturday

Morning: **Rob Richards** - Orpheum Theatre

Afternoon: **Lew Williams** - Historic First Presbyterian Church

Evening: **Ron Rhode** - Orpheum Theatre

### Sunday

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# An Acre of Seats in a Palace of Splendor

By Steve Levin, Associate Editor

## PANTAGES

San Diego, California

Opened: May 10, 1924 • Architect: B. Marcus Priteca • Capacity: 1400

Organ: Robert-Morton 2/16

Few relationships in the annals of theatre architecture were as strong or as enduring as that between vaudeville magnate Alexander Pantages and architect B. Marcus Priteca. A Scot, Priteca arrived in Seattle in 1909 and found work as a draftsman with architect E. W. Houghton. After a chance encounter with Pantages, he was given the commission for a new theatre in San Francisco. When the house opened at the end of 1911, the architect was but 21. From then on, every new Pantages was designed by Priteca, right up to the last one (Hollywood, 1930).

The early houses were executed in a restrained classical style the architect dubbed "Pantages Greek" (see below). This style evolved over the years, becoming increasingly more elaborate. The restored Tacoma Pantages (1919) is a very fine example of the later type.

For San Diego, he came up with something completely new: the theatre drew its inspiration from Spain, giving Priteca full scope to indulge his love for detailed ornament. By this time, celebrated decorator Anthony Heinsbergen had

joined the Pantages team, and his rich color palette was a perfect compliment to Priteca's intricate detail. In its basic composition, San Diego was the inspiration for two later Pantages houses: San Francisco (1926) and Fresno (1928). Both survive, but the San Francisco theatre has been repainted far too many times.

Alexander Pantages sold his circuit in 1929, with most of the theatres going to either R-K-O or Warner Brothers. The San Diego Pantages was one of the former group; it was renamed Orpheum. In later years it was operated by Fox West Coast. The theatre was demolished in 1962.

Pantages was among the earliest vaudeville operators to appreciate the growing importance of motion pictures, and he was one of the first to install organs in his theatres. This organ, moved from the Broadway, Los Angeles (a theatre Pantages was moving out of), was typical of most Pantages organs: only partially unified and installed beneath the stage. The only Pantages to have side chambers, in addition to two in the pit, was San Francisco.



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*Opposite: The Oakland Pantages is an excellent example of the early "Pantages Greek" style. Note the torch above the proscenium. Every Pantages had a torch somewhere.*  
**Photo: Steve Levin Collection**

*Above: Priteca flanked the theatre with an ornate office building reflecting the Spanish heritage of San Diego. The corner entrance and marquee are particularly fine.*

*Right: The ceiling of the entrance was very elaborate, a typical Priteca touch.*  
**All San Diego photographs: Terry Helgesen Collection, THS.**





*Above: The sidewall scheme of simulated stone with a densely textured frieze was repeated in San Francisco and Fresno. Note the series of torches in the frieze.*



*Left: While not terribly large, the lobby was uncommonly appealing. Priteca's architecture and Heinsbergen's decorations were always a fine combination.*



*Above: The ornate proscenium could easily be mistaken for the work of John Ebersson. As was typical in vaudeville houses, we find annunciator boards to identify the acts.*

*Right: The dome in the balcony soffit had a spooky medieval charm all its own. The rear was open to the mezzanine.*



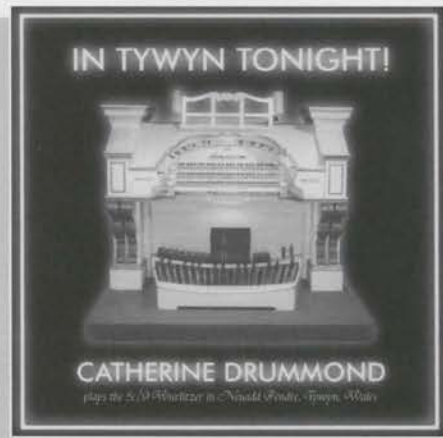
# For the Records

**Ralph Beaudry, Associate Editor**

Compact discs, cassettes, videos, and books to be reviewed should be sent to Ralph Beaudry, 5155 N. Fresno Street, Apt. 170, Fresno, CA 93710-6838. Please be aware items must be received three months prior to the issue date in which the review will appear. Information telephone 559/222-0239.

## IN TYWYN TONIGHT!

Catherine Drummond



Debut recordings are always exciting to receive and listen to. And, it's an exceptional joy to review one when it features a young organist who is well on his or her way to theatre organ stardom! Catherine Drummond's first CD is a the-

atre organ delight in every way. Born in 1982, she won the British Young Organist Competition at age 12 and went on to be the Junior Division winner of the ATOS Young Organists in 1996, the Intermediate winner in 2000, and was named both Senior and Overall winner in 2001. That, of course, gave her a major concert spot at the ATOS 2002 Convention in Southern California, where she was featured at the Plummer Auditorium 4/35 Wurlitzer. Convention reviewer Ron Musselman, in the January, 2003 Journal, wrote "...this young lady set the audience on its collective ear. It was an exciting performance and we heard well-implemented subtle solo voices... (and when) she asked for a wide dynamic range the exceptional Plummer organ delivered the goods in spades."

Catherine's first CD was recorded on the only Wurlitzer organ in Wales! It's

Opus 2203, a 3/9, originally installed in the Granada Cinema, Woolwich, London, in 1936 — yes, Wurlitzers were still being built right up to the start of WWII. The noted British organ buff John Smallwood obtained the organ in 1991 and installed it in Tywyn's 250 seat Neuadd Pendre Community Center. David Lowe played the opening concert in 1996 and also made the first recording of this sweet little Wurlitzer. About his CD (titled *Take The A Train* reviewed in the January, 1999 Journal) we commented that "...the bright spacious acoustics give the Wurlitzer a larger sound than might be expected... it's bright without sacrificing lushness." In fact, this Wurlitzer's voices and ensembles sound very similar to the Style 216 organ heard on George Wright's recordings made at South Pasadena's Rialto Theatre (reviewed in the January, 1998 Journal.)

"Knightsbridge March" is Catherine's

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opening number on this 59-minute CD. It's a robust rouser in every way and it fully confirms those comments about the organ's richness and the room's warm, enhancing acoustics. This stirring march was, as her excellent liner notes tell us, for 27 years the theme music for the BBC's program *In Town Tonight*. David Raskin's hauntingly beautiful "Laura" is considered one of the finest melodies ever written for a film. (In case you didn't know, Laura's last name was Hunt, and Johnny Mercer's lyrics were not written until sometime after the film was released!) Catherine spices up this song with a tasteful cool jazzy second chorus — delightful! Sidney Torch's "On A Spring Note" is a chirpy, chipper, captivating musical joy, and then you'll want to get out the castanets for the Latin waltz "Eleanora."

One of today's finest young film composers is James Horner (born in 1953) who, since his 1979 start in Hollywood has composed scores for well over 50 films—six of them nominated for Oscars. One critic has said, "His talent for creating arresting, memorable music continues to generate critical praise." In 1986 he wrote the score for the popular animated film *An American Tale*, which told the story of a young Russian mouse named Fievel who comes to New York City to escape from the Cossack cats in his homeland. Catherine next plays that

film's biggest hit — "Somewhere Out There" — which was sung in the film by pop star Linda Ronstadt. After a mystical opening, listen to the haunting solo voices and warm accompaniment.

Staying with great film music Catherine next plays an attractive 13-minute medley of most of the well-remembered tunes the Sherman Brothers wrote for Disney's 1964 Academy Award winning *Mary Poppins*. Opening with "Feed the Birds," it's on to a cheerful dose of "A Spoonful of Sugar," the zippy "Chim Chim Char-ee," the rarely played but certainly rousing "Sister Suffragette," the merry, mellow "The Life I Lead," the cartoon fox hunt "Jolly Holiday," and, of course, "Supercalifragi—" (you surely know the rest of that title) and closes with the sprightly "Let's Go Fly A Kite." Time for a burst of martial energy so this time it's "Blaze Away" which is followed by one of the smoothest melodies to ever come out of Hollywood. It's "Pure Imagination" from the movie that billed itself as a Scrum-dilyumptious Show — *Willie Wonka And The Chocolate Factory*. The all-time most challenging finger buster is next, and Catherine is all up and down the keyboards with "Dizzy Fingers." WOW!

Hoagy Carmichael's "The Nearness of You" is his #2 most-recorded song, and Catherine's version is lush and romantic. Although it may not have been written

for 1938's *Romance In The Dark*, it was sung in that film by Gladys Swarthout and John Boles. Surprisingly, it was also in Elvis Presley's 1962 movie *Girls! Girls! Girls!* No, it wasn't sung by the King of Rock and Roll, but by a sultry voiced Stella Stevens who was born in — I'm not making this up — Hot Coffee, Mississippi. Another finger busting novelty is next; it's the slightly bizarre march "Portrait Of A Tin Soldier." This program's Grand Finale is Offenbach's ever-popular "Overture" to *Orpheus In The Underworld*. This very French comic operetta, (written as a political satire like the later British Gilbert and Sullivan operettas) was composed by a German who based it on an ancient Greek legend. George Bernard Shaw wrote that, "Offenbach's music is wicked. It is abandoned stuff; every accent is a snap of the fingers in the face of moral responsibility." Other critics have commented that, "...no one wrote finer tunes or catchier dances and no one entertained audiences better." It's all here in Catherine's excellent orchestral transcription, which includes, of course, the frenzied Bacchanalian 'Gallop Infernal' (better known as the 'Can-Can') for a supreme adrenaline rush climax. Bravo!

Congratulations to Catherine for a great debut recording which is Highly Recommended. The program and recording are first-class, there is a

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wonderful variety of registrations from just nine ranks, the room beautifully compliments the organ, and the 12 pages of liner notes include all the information about the artist and her music as well as the organ's complete history (including photos of its original Granada Cinema home) and specifications. Catherine tells us, "The CD is available through my website at the price of GBP 11.50, and payment may be made through PayPal at the current U.S. \$ "rate of exchange." The website is <http://www.catherine-drummond.com> and her e-mail address is [cd@catherinedrummond.com](mailto:cd@catherinedrummond.com).

## ROCHESTER SHOWTIME

Don Thompson



Although British-born Don Thompson relocated to America in 1968, his organ playing career began 14 years earlier so he's now in his 50th year of international concertizing. (In the January, 2004 Journal we reviewed his "Hands Across the Sea" CD recorded in Australia.) Over his years in the US, Don's liner notes tell us, "He has played in Rochester at least ten times..." This new 73-minute release was recorded live during some of those concerts on the Rochester Theatre Organ Society's 4/23 Wurlitzer (Opus 1951) in the Auditorium Theatre. Don has carefully edited the tapes to eliminate most of the applause and the usual coughs and wheezes; but the audience enthusiasm for some of his tunes is fully evident on this disc.

Having spent most of his U.S. years in the Bay Area, Don's console raiser just has to be "San Francisco" which Bronislaw Kaper and Gus Kahn wrote as the title song for Hollywood's first disaster film back in 1936. Jeanette MacDonald sang it twice in the film; first in Blackie's Paradise Café and later (after she became a legitimate star) at the Tivoli Opera House. The audience gets into the act on Don's "Blaze Away" march, which is certainly chipper and furiously

fast. Something lush is the seven-minute "Overture" to Rudolph Friml's 1924 operetta *Rose Marie*. Bing Crosby introduced the seductive tango "Temptation" way back in 1933's *Going Hollywood*. The scene is a Tijuana saloon, where Marion Davies has just walked out on Bing — who recovers quickly enough to sing this song to Fifi D'Orsay!

A genuine audience participation number is the samba "Tequila" and then it's on to Satie's impressionistic "Gymnopédie" and a corny but cute version of "Bill Bailey, (Won't You Please Come Home?)" Alfred Hitchcock's famous theme music "Funeral March For A Marionette" is, as you would expect, spooky good fun. Don has never claimed to be a composer, but his next number is a really hilarious finger-twister, which he's titled "Krazy Kat." (Actually, of course, it's a take-off on Zez Confrey's "Kitten On The Keys") For a nice contrast Bach's "Air On A G String" is next. Don salutes Duke Ellington with a five-minute medley of "Caravan" (with the fastest camels we've ever heard), "Solitude" (which features the Wurlitzer's rich Tibias), and a jazzy "It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)."

"Now From The Altar," the liner notes say, is one of Don's favorite hymns,

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### SARASOTA SPECTACULAR!

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### CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND

Featuring the dynamic duo of Jelani Eddington and pianist David Harris performing some of the most beloved holiday music of all time at the Wheaton-Fox Studio at the Paul & Linda VanDerMolen residence. Highlights include: *Sleigh Ride*, *White Christmas*, *Suite From The Nutcracker*, *European Christmas Carol Fantasy*, *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*.

### LET'S FACE THE MUSIC!

Recorded at the breathtaking 4/35 Wurlitzer at the Berkeley Community Theatre in Berkeley, California. This album premieres the newly-refurbished Art Deco console from the Center Theatre in Rockefeller Center. Highlights include: *Let's Face The Music And Dance*, *The Music of Johnny Mercer*, *Medley From Showboat*, *Overture From Candide*, *Kitten On The Keys*, *Bacchanale*.

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and he gives it a lush, rich, theatrical setting. Following that is a Celtic medley of a brisk, bouncy “The March Hare,” and a rather tempest tossed “Skye Boat Song.” Time for a brief Blackpool quick-step medley of “Margie,” “Avalon,” and “When You’re Smiling.” Don then plays a theatre organ chestnut we haven’t heard in a while — Augustine Lara’s “Granada.” Lara (1900–1970) was considered to be Mexico’s Irving Berlin, for he wrote over 600 songs during his distinguished career. With a slight Blackpool beat, Don’s Gershwin Medley features “S’Wonderful,” “Lady Be Good,” “The Man I Love,” and a brief hint of “Rhapsody In Blue” which leads into the concluding song “I’ll Build A Stairway To Paradise.”

A bit of Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” embellishes Cole Porter’s “Night and Day.” It’s said that Porter claimed the melody was suggested by a Mohammedan chant he heard in Morocco, but it’s verse was based on his hearing Mrs. Vincent Astor’s complaint to a hotel desk clerk in New York City about her leaky faucet and its constant “...drip, drip, drip...” Don’s next selection combines Rachmaninov and Scott Joplin in a rousing, robust “Russian Rag” which is followed by one of Irving Berlin’s snappiest songs, “Puttin’ On The Ritz.” Although that song was written as the title tune to a 1928 ‘talkie,’ you may be shocked to discover it was sung AND danced in the 1939 film *Idiot’s Delight* by none other than Clark Gable. (This is the only time Gable — who appeared in over 75 films between 1924 and 1961 — ever sang or danced in a film.)

According to many critics, the 1952 film *Singing In The Rain*, “...remains an undoubted masterpiece and the finest, most durable musical ever to have come out of Hollywood.” Starring with Gene Kelly was a young Debbie Reynolds, who is still appearing in stage shows and occasionally on television in *Will and Grace*. All the numbers in that show are great, and Don plays a nine-minute medley which includes (in the order played) the title tune, “All I Do Is Dream Of You,” “Should I (Reveal Exactly How I Feel?),” “You Are My Lucky Star,” “Good Morning,” “Would You?,” “You Were Meant For Me,” and “Broadway Rhythm.” That was his big finale, but he

gives us a quickstep encore medley of “Rosalie” and “I Double Dare You.”

It’s a nicely balanced, entertaining concert, and there are only a few minor audience ‘intrusions’. However, those who demand note-perfect performances will surely wince at the occasional aberrant melody notes and errant harmonies. Compact disc is \$20.00 (postpaid) from Pipe Organ Presentations, 68-022 Grandview Ave., Cathedral City, CA 92234. You can also order by FAX to 775/522-1091 and by e-mail to don@donthompson.org.

## THE CINEMA ORGAN COLLECTION

14 British Organists



In the last issue we reviewed a 2-CD set titled *Theatre Organ Pioneers*, which featured recordings of Jesse Crawford and 11 other organists from the 1920s to the 1940s. While that set included a few numbers by three British organists, this new 2-CD set has 129 minutes of music played by Sidney Torch and 13 other U.K. organists from that same *Golden Age of Theatre (Cinema) Organs*. There are 20 tracks on each CD but, since there are several medleys in this new set, the tune total is 56. In the July, 2003 *Journal* we reviewed another recent British archival album, *The Golden Age of Cinema Organs*, which featured many of the same organists and organs heard on this new set. However, only 11 tracks from that disc are repeated here and we’ve marked those with two asterisks before the title. This *Collection*, like that earlier disc, is devoid of liner notes except for the song titles, composers and

publishers, the organist and the venue.

And, unlike the last issue’s *Pioneers* set, which grouped the selections by artist, this set scatters each artist’s numbers throughout the 2-CDs. This review, however, will take each artist (in the order in which they first appear on the set) and group his/her numbers together. Sidney Torch (who was inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1971) opens the program at the 4/15 Christie in the Regal, Edmonton with a rousing “Twelfth Street Rag” which features the piano and xylophone plus his own unique touches. His other numbers at this organ are a medley of “Chinatown, My Chinatown,” “Japanese Sandman,” and “Limehouse Blues.” One of his most famous Hot Jazz numbers is next — it’s the “Bugle Call Rag.” Then Torch switches to the bright and brassy 4/16 Wurlitzer in the State Kilburn for a upbeat medley starting with “Over The Rainbow.” Next is Johnny Burke’s “Scatterbrain.” That was written in the mid-1930s but didn’t become a hit until it was used as the title song for a 1940 film starring Judy Canova. You do remember her, don’t you? She had her own radio show and appeared in more than a dozen films which displayed her cornball hill-billy humor and ear-bursting yodeling. Closing this medley is Irving Berlin’s charming “It’s A Lovely Day Tomorrow.” Berlin wrote this number for his 1940 hit

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musical *Louisiana Purchase* and ten years later altered both the melody and lyrics a little bit for Ethel Merman to sing as "It's A Lovely Day Today" in *Call Me Madam!*

Continuing at the State, Kilburn, Torch presents a medley of that genuine moldy oldy "The Hut Sut Song," the 1941 Oscar nominated ballad, "Dolores" (which Frank Sinatra sang with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra in *Las Vegas Nights*—his screen debut!) and Harry Warren's "I, Yi, Yi, Yi, Yi (I Like You Very Much)" which Carmen Miranda sang in two films: 1941's *That Night In Rio* and 1944's *Four Jills In A Jeep*. One more medley at the State includes "Tonight My Heart Will Sing," "Yes, My Darling Daughter," (which Jack Lawrence wrote for one of the last of Broadway's musical reviews, 1941's *Crazy With The Heat*.) and "Amapola." According to the liner notes Torch's slam-bang arrangement of "Hot Dog" was recorded at the Regal Cinema, London and it comes complete with mustard, onions, ketchup, and dill pickle relish...plus a Posthorn to set your hair on fire! His final two selections are \*\*\*"You Are My Heart's Delight" made on the 3/10 Wurlitzer in the Dominion, Walthamstow and his impeccable ver-

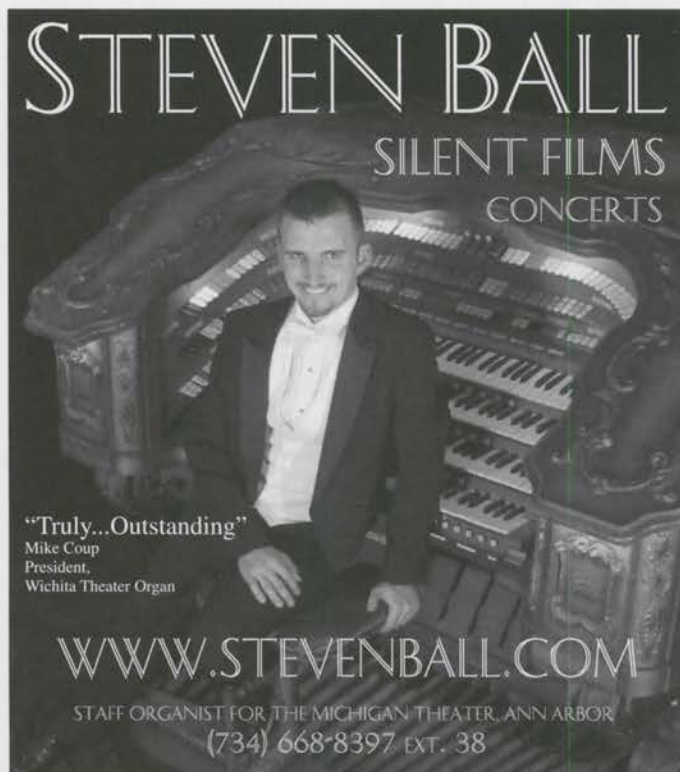
sion of the "Dance Of The Blue Marionettes" on the 4/26 Christie in the Regal, Marble Arch. Quentin McLean, our next artist, was inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1971. At the 4/24 Wurlitzer in the Trocadero, Elephant and Castle he plays Billy Mayerl's charming "Marigold" (which was such a success that he named his home Marigold Lodge) and later presents Ethelbert Nevin's equally delightful "Narcissus." At the console of the 4/36 Christie in the Regal Marble Arch he plays the cheery \*\*\*"Lily of Laguna" and the upbeat \*\*\*"Little Dolly Daydreams."

Although he came to the U.S. in the 1950s and made a number of best selling theatre organ recordings for the Cook label, Reginald Foort was certainly one of the UK's best known organists in the 1930s and 40s. (Foort was named to the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1970.) At the Regal Marble Arch he recorded the lush ballad "I Believe In You" and the romantic, though Western-flavored \*\*\*"When It's Night Time In Nevada." On the 2/8 Wurlitzer in London's New Gallery Cinema he plays the sentimental "Love's Garden Of Roses," Ketelbey's tone poem "Bells Across The Meadow," and Friml's "In Love." Moving to what we believe is the 4/10 Compton with Melotone in

London's Paramount Cinema, Foort plays two upbeat medleys of Broadway show tunes. His first has "She Didn't Say Yes," "Night and Day," and "You're The Cream In My Coffee." His second is a trio of the always popular numbers "Anything Goes," "Blue Room," and "Tea For Two."

Organist Terence Casey plays two novelties on the 2/9 Wurlitzer in The Regal Cinema Brighton. These are a boisterous \*\*\*"Policeman's Holiday" and the somewhat amusing \*\*\*"Whistler and His Dog." In 1973 our next organist, Sandy MacPherson, entered the ATOS Hall of Fame. His four selections are played on the 4/20 Wurlitzer in London's Empire Cinema. First is the ballad \*\*\*"Starlight" which is followed by \*\*\*"My Hero" from *The Chocolate Soldier* by Oscar Strauss. (No, the hero wasn't made of chocolate, he just preferred eating chocolate to fighting!) "Molly" is followed by "Alone In The Rain" and Sandy's final melody is a lush, full organ arrangement of Leah's "Merry Widow Waltz." Pattman (he used only his last name!) at the Astoria Cinema in London plays two long time favorites of all theatre organists: "The Doll Dance" and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 41



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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Desert Winds** Thanksgiving weekend, 2004, Valley of the Sun Chapter will present seven organists and three organs. Complete information is available in THEATRE ORGAN or at <<http://www.desertwinds.info>>

**2005 TOSA Semi Annual Convention**, Melbourne, VIC, Australia Friday March 25 - Monday, March 28 plus afterglow. Coburg, Dendy, Malvern, Moorabbin. John Atwell, David Bailey, Gail Dibben, Leith Ewart, Tony Fenelon, John Ferguson, John Giacchi, Margaret Hall/Nelson, Elizabeth Hanton, Scott Harrison, Thomas Heywood, Chris McPhee, Rob Richards, Robert Weatherall, Carole Wyatt.

Stay tuned for more information.

**2005 Morton Madness**, Northern California, April 9, 2005, Tom Hazleton.

**2005 Annual ATOS Convention**, 50th Anniversary of ATOE / ATOS, Los Angeles, CA, Friday, July 1 - Tuesday, July 5 plus PreGlow and Afterglow. Monday evening, July 4 at Hollywood Bowl for music and fireworks.

**2005 Regional ATOS Convention**. Anyone care to host this one???

**2006 Annual ATOS Convention**. Wed May 24 through Tue May 30, Tampa / Sarasota, Florida.

**2006 Regional Convention**, Eastern Massachusetts, Friday, November 3 - Monday, November 5

Schedules subject to change. Please watch THEATRE ORGAN for details.

## HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

ATOS Annual and Regional Conventions require planning and advance consideration. It is not too early to consider bidding for the conventions in 2007, 2008, and beyond. The income from your efforts can certainly help fund your Chapter's projects.

## ATOS PERKS

Around the middle of September, Jack Moelmann, the ATOS Secretary, will be sending each Chapter President and each Chapter Secretary, of record, a packet of information about all the ATOS Perks. If you wish to know about Competitions, Scholarships, Grants, and other benefits of membership, contact your Chapter President or Secretary after the middle of September. The participation in the Competitions was rather sparse last year so let's work toward more entries this year.

## ELECTRONIC INSTRUMENTS

For those liking electronic musical instruments (including varieties of 'organ'), check out <[http://www.obsolete.com/120\\_years/](http://www.obsolete.com/120_years/)>

## APPOINTMENT

Dennis James tells us that he has been appointed house organist at the Historic Everett Theatre in Everett, Washington.

# International ATOS NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AMERICAN THEATRE  
ORGAN SOCIETY

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 5

<http://www.ATOS.org>

September, 2004

## EVENT LISTINGS

There are many groups who sponsor organ events throughout the year. It is very helpful if you will submit your event listings early. The best time

to submit is on the day you sign the artist or venue; that way it is fresh in your mind. Also, please keep your web site up to date.

## ATOS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Codes used in listing: A=Austin, B=Barton, C=Compton, CHR=Christie, E=Estey, GB=Griffith Beach, H=Hybrid, K=Kimball, M=Möller, MC=Marr & Colton, P=Page,

RM=Robert-Morton, W=Wurlitzer.

Example: (4/19W) = 4 manual, 19 rank Wurlitzer.

*Schedules subject to change.*

### ■ ALASKA

**State Office Building**, 333 Willoughby Ave, Juneau, AK, (907)465-2910, (2/8K); Organ concerts Fri at 12:00noon; E-mail: <[mackinnon@gci.net](mailto:mackinnon@gci.net)>

### ■ ALABAMA

**Alabama Theatre**, 1817 3rd Ave. North, Birmingham, AL. (205)252-2262, (4/28W); <<http://www.AlabamaTheatre.com>>

### ■ ARIZONA

**Organ Stop Pizza**, 1149 E Southern Ave, Mesa, AZ (480)813-5700, (4/74+W); Winter organ hours, Sun-Thu, 4:30pm - 9:00pm, Fri-Sat, 4:30pm - 10:00pm; Summer organ hours, Sun-Thu, 5:30pm - 9:00pm, Fri-Sat, 5:30pm - 10:00pm; Charlie Balogh, Lew Williams; Sun, Nov 28, 9:00am, Charlie Balogh; Sun, Nov 28, 1:00pm, Jelani Eddington; <<http://www.organstoppizza.com>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 203 W Adams, Phoenix, AZ, (602)252-9678, (3/30W); Fri, Nov 26, 7:30pm, Lyn Larsen; Sat, Nov 27, 9:30am, Rob Richards; Sat Nov 27, 7:30pm, Ron Rhode; <<http://www.silent.sundays.com>>

### ■ CALIFORNIA (NORTH)

**Angelino's Restaurant**, 3132 Williams Rd, San Jose, CA, (408)243-6095, (3/13W); Live music Thu thru Sat 6:30pm 9:30pm, Dean Cook; Silent movies Sun, 4:00pm, Dean Cook; Oct 10, Jekyll & Hyde; Dec 19, Two Tars & Big Business

**Bella Roma Pizza**, 4040 Alhambra Ave, Martinez, CA, (925)228-4935, (3/16W); Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun, 6:00pm - 9:00pm; Fri - Sat, 6:00pm - 10:00pm; Tue, Wed, Sat, Dave Moreno; Thu, Bob Reichert; Fri, Sun, Kevin King

**Berkeley Community Theatre**, 1930 Alston Way, Berkeley, CA, (510)632-9177, (4/33W); All concerts at Sun, 2:30pm; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/norcal>>

**Castro Theatre**, 429 Castro, San Francisco, CA, (415)621-6120, (4/21W); Intermissions played nightly by David Hegarty, Warren Lubich, or Keith Thompson

**Grand Lake Theatre**, 3200 Grand Ave, Oakland, CA, (510)452-3556, (3/18W); Intermissions: Fri, Warren Lubich; Sat, Kevin King

**Fox Theatre**, 308 W Main St, Visalia, CA,

(559)-625-1369, (4/22W); Sun, Sep 26, 2:00pm, Charlie Balogh

**Grant Union High School**, 1500 Grand Ave, Sacramento, CA, (4/21W), (510)644-2707; Sun, Nov 14, 2:00pm, Ron Rhode

**Harmony Wynelands**, 9291 East Harney Ln, Lodi, CA, (209)369-4184, (3/15 RM); Tasting Room open Fri, Sat, Sun 11:00am - 5:00pm or by appointment; Bob Hartzell live and recorded performances; <[www.harmonywynelands.com](http://www.harmonywynelands.com)>

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**Paramount Theatre**, 2025 Broadway, Oakland, CA, (510)465-6400, (4/27W); Public tours on 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 10:00am; Movie Overtures, Thursdays at 6:30pm; <<http://www.paramounttheatre.com>>

**Stanford Theatre**, 221 University Ave, Palo Alto, CA, (650)324-3700, (3/21W); Organ played before and after the 7:30 movie; David Hegarty, Jerry Nagano, or Bill Taylor; Call to verify the theatre is open for the evening

**Towe Auto Museum**, 2200 Front St, Sacramento, CA, (916)442-6802, (3/16W); Sun concerts, 2:00pm free with museum admission; Fri, Sep 17, 8:00pm, Dave Hooper, Silent Movie; Fri, Oct 26, 8:00pm, Paul Quarino, Silent Movie; <[ds3@att.net](mailto:ds3@att.net)>

**YE Olde Pizza Joynt**, 19510 Hesperian Blvd, San Leandro, CA, (510)785-1866, (3/14W); Venue temporarily closed due to a fire.

### ■ CALIFORNIA (SOUTH)

**Arlington Theatre**, 1317 State St, Santa Barbara, CA, (805)963-4408, (4/27RM); All concerts on Saturdays, 11:00AM; Sep 11, Jelani Eddington; <<http://members.cox.net/sbtos/>>

**Avalon Casino Theatre**, One Casino Way, Catalina Island, CA, (310)510-2414, (4/16P); Fri & Sat, 6:15pm, Pre-Show concert, John Tusak; <<http://www.visitcatalina.org/>>

**Balboa Park**, Spreckels Organ Pavilion, San Diego, CA, (619)702-8138, (4/72A); All Concerts, Sunday afternoons at 2:00pm unless otherwise noted;

Carol Williams and guests; <<http://www.serve.com/sosorgan/>>

**El Capitan Theatre**, 6838 Hollywood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, (800)DISNEY6, (4/37W); Organ played for weekend intermissions & special showings; House Organist, Rob Richards, Staff Organists, John Ledwon & Ed Vodicka; <<http://www.elcapitantickets.com/>>

**Nethercutt Collection**, 15200 Bledsoe St, Sylmar, CA 91342, (818)367-2251, (4/74W); Guided tours twice a day, Tue-Sat at 10:00am and 1:30pm. Free admission by reservation; Organ is played at the end of each tour; Organ Concerts: Reservations required in advance; Fri, Oct 22, 8:00pm, Chris Gorsuch; Sat, Oct 23, 2:00 & 8:00pm, Chris Gorsuch; Fri, Dec 3, 8:00 pm, Ron Rhode; Sat, Dec 4, 2:00 & 8:00 pm, Ron Rhode; Fri, Dec 10, 8:00 pm, Lyn Larsen; Fri, Dec 17, 8:00pm, Tom Hazleton; Sat, Dec 18, 2:00 & 8:00pm, Tom Hazleton; Fri, Feb 4, 2005, 8:00pm, Tony Fenelon; Sat, Feb 5, 2005, 2:00 & 8:00 pm, Tony Fenelon

**Old Town Music Hall**, 140 Richmond St, El Segundo, CA, (310)322-2592, (4/26W); Bill Field at the Wurlitzer; Fri & Sat 8:15pm, Sat & Sun 2:30 pm; Fri, Oct 3, 8:15pm, Sat, Dec 4, 2:30pm & 8:15pm, Sun Dec 5, 2:30pm, Bill Fields, *Scrooge*; Fri, Oct 29, 8:15pm, Sat, Oct 30, 2:30pm & 8:15pm, Sun, Oct 31, 2:30pm, Bill Fields, *Phantom of the Opera*; Sun, Nov 7, 7:00pm, Jerry Nagano; Fri, Nov 26, 8:15pm, Sat, Nov 27, 2:30pm, & 8:15pm, Sun, Nov 28, 2:30pm, Bill Fields, *College*; Fri, Dec 3, 8:15pm, Bill Fields, *Scrooge*; Sat, Dec 4, 2:30pm & 8:15pm, Bill Fields, *Scrooge*; Sun, Dec 5, 2:30pm, Bill Fields, *Scrooge*; Fri, Feb 11, 2005, 8:15pm, Sat, Feb 12, 2:30 & 8:15pm, Sun, Feb 13, 2:30pm, Bill Fields, *The Thief Of Bagdad*; Fri, Feb 25, 2005, 8:15pm, Sat, Feb 26, 2005, 2:30pm & 8:15pm, and Sun, Feb 27, 2005, 2:30pm, Bill fields, *Seven Chances*; <<http://www.otmh.org>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 842 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA, (310)329-1455, (3/14W); Sat, 11:30am, organ is featured as part of the guided tour of theatre; Sat, Jan 15, 2005, 8:00pm, Bob Salisbury, *Thief Of Bagdad*; <<http://www.laorpheum.com>>

**Plummer Auditorium**, 201 E Chapman, Fullerton, CA, (714)671-1300, (4/36W); Sun, Sept 12, 2:30pm, Stan Kann & Charlie Lester; Sun, Nov 14, 2:30pm, Scott Foppiano; <<http://www.octos.org>>

**San Gabriel Auditorium**, 320 S Mission Dr, San Gabriel, CA, (888)LATOS22, (3/17W); Sun, Sep 19, 1:30pm & 4:00pm, Chris Elliott; <<http://www.latos.org>>

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, 3092 Kenwood, Spring Valley (San Diego), CA, (619)286-9979, (4/24W); Sat, Sep 11, 7:00pm, Chris Gorsuch; Sat, Oct 9, 7:00pm, Russ Peck, Laurel & Hardy movie nite; Sun, Nov 14, 3:00pm, Rob Richards; Sun, Dec 5, 3:00pm, Bob Salisbury; <<http://theatreorgans.com/ca/tosssd/>>

**Walt Disney Concert Hall**, 111 S Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA, (323)850-2000, (Not a theatre organ); Sun, Oct 31, 7:00pm, Clark Wilson, *Phantom of the Opera*

## ■ COLORADO

**Colorado Springs City Auditorium**, 221 E. Kiowa St., Colorado Springs, CO. (719) 385-5969, (3/8 W); Thursdays, 12:00N - 1:00pm, May 6 thru Sept. 2, Sacklunch Serenade with organ and silent short presented by local and guest artists. Food available on premises.; <<http://RMCATOS.home.comcast.net>>

**Holiday Hills Village**, 2000 W. 92nd Ave, Federal Heights, CO, (303)466-3330, (elect); Sun, Oct 17th, 2:00pm, Ron Reseigh

## ■ CONNECTICUT

**Thomaston Opera House**, 158 Main St, Thomaston, CT, (203)426-2443, (3/15MC); Sun, Dec 5, 2:00pm, Dave Wickerham; <[ThomastonOperaHouse.org](http://ThomastonOperaHouse.org)>

## ■ DELAWARE

**Dickinson High School**, 1801 Milltown Rd, Wilmington, DE, (302)995-2603, (3/66K); All concerts Sat, 8:00pm; Sat, Sep 25, Dave Wickerham; Sat, Nov 6, Ron Rhode; Sat, Jan 29, 2005, Dan Bellomy; Sat, Mar 12, 2005, Cameron Carpenter; Sat, Apr 30, 2005, Richard Hills; Sat, Jun 11, 2005, Clark Wilson; <<http://www.geocities.com/dtoskimbball>>

## ■ FLORIDA

**Grace Baptist Church**, 8000 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL, (941) 922-2044, (4/32W); Concerts Sunday afternoons at 3:00pm; <[www.mtos.us](http://www.mtos.us)>

**The Kirk Of Dunedin**, 2686 Bayshore Blvd, Dunedin, FL 34698, (813)733-5475, (4/100H); <<http://www.kirkorgan.com>>

**Polk Theatre**, 127 S Florida Ave, Lakeland, FL, (863)682-7553, (3/11RM); Movie overtures 7:45pm, Fri & Sat, 1:45pm, Sun, Johnnie June Carter, Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbs & Heidi Lenker

**Roaring 20's Pizza and Pipes**, 6750 US Highway 301, Ellenton, FL, (941)723-1733, (4/41W); Sun-Thu eve, Open: 4:30pm-9:00pm, Organ performance: 5:00pm-9:00pm; Fri-Sat eve, Open: 4:30pm-10:00pm, Organ performance: 5:00pm-10:00pm; Sat & Sun aft, Open 12:00 - 2:30pm, Organ Performance: 12:30-2:30pm; Wed, Fri, Sat aft, Sun eve, Alternating Mon, Dwight Thomas; Tue, Thu, Sat eve, Sun aft, Alternating Mon, Bill Vlasak

**Tampa Theatre**, 711 Franklin St, Tampa, FL, (813)274-8286, (3/14W); Movie Overtures, Bob Baker, Stephen Brittain, Bill Brusick, June Carter, Bob Courtney, and Sandy Hobbs; Sun, Sep 26, 3:00pm, Rosa Rio, *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*; <<http://www.tampatheatre.org>>

## ■ ILLINOIS

**Arcada Theatre**, 105 E Main St, St. Charles, IL, (630)845-8900, (3/16GMC); Organ interludes Friday and Saturday nights.

**Gateway Theatre**, 5216 W. Lawrence Ave, Chicago, IL, (773)205-SFSC(7372), (3/17WH); Silent film showings on Fridays at 8:00pm; <[www.silentfilmchicago.com](http://www.silentfilmchicago.com)>

**Lincoln Theatre**, 103 E Main St, Belleville IL, (618)233-0018, (3/15H); Organ plays movie overtures Fri, David Stephens, Sat, Volunteers; Sun, Oct 24, 2:00pm, Vaudeville Revival; Sun, Dec. 5, 2:00pm, An Old Fashioned Christmas Show; Thu, Dec 9, 1:30pm, Dennis Ammann; Fri, Dec 31, 7:00pm, Pipe In the New Year; <<http://www.lincoltheatre-belleville.com>>

**Tivoli Theatre**, 5201 Highland Ave, Downers Grove, IL, (630)968-0219, (3/10W); Theatre organ interludes on Friday, Dennis Scott; Saturday, Freddy Arnish; <<http://www.classiccinemas.com>>

**Virginia Theatre**, 203 W. Park St, Champaign, IL (217)356-9063, (2/8W); Organ played prior to monthly film series, Champaign-Urbana Theatre Company performances, and many other live shows throughout the year. Warren York, organist; <<http://www.thevirginia.org>>

**York Theatre**, 150 N. York Rd, Elmhurst, IL, (630)834-0675, (2/7B); Theatre organ overtures on Friday nights, Freddy Arnish; Saturday nights, Roland Frase; <<http://www.classiccinemas.com>>

## ■ INDIANA

**Embassy Theatre**, 125 W Jefferson, Fort Wayne, IN, (260)424-6287, (4/16P); Oct 23, 8:00pm, Dennis

James, *Phantom Of The Opera* <<http://www.EmbassyCentre.org>>

**Hedback Theatre**, 1847 N Alabama St, Indianapolis, IN, (317)356-3561, (2/11PW); Sun, Oct 24, 2:30pm, Brett Valiant

**Long Center For The Performing Arts**, 111 N 6th, Lafayette, IN, (765)589-8474, (3/21W); Sat, Sep 25, 2:30pm, Bill Tandy, *Teddy at the Throttle* & Laurel and Hardy short; Sat, Dec 18, 2:30pm, Martin Ellis & Burnett Creek Elementary School Chorus; Sat, Mar 12, 2005, 2:30pm, Dave Wickerham; <[www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org)>

**Manual High School**, 2405 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN, (317)356-3561, (3/26W); Sun, Oct 10, 2:30pm, Brett Valliant; <[www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org)>

**Paramount Theatre**, 1124 Meridian, Anderson, IN, (800)523-4658, (3/12P); <<http://www.parathea.org/>>

**Warren Center**, 9500 E Sixteenth St, Indianapolis, IN, (317)295-8121, (3/18B); Sun, Sep 12, 2:30pm, Ken Double; Sun, Sep 11, 2005, 2:30pm, Ken Double; <[www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org)>

## ■ IOWA

**Paramount Theatre**, 123 3rd Ave, Cedar Rapids, IA, (319)364-6300, (3/12W); Sun, Oct 17, 2:00pm, Donna Parker

## ■ KANSAS

**Century II Civic Center**, 225 W. Douglas, Wichita KS, (316)838-3127, (4/38W); Sat, Oct 23, 7:00pm, Jelani Eddington; <<http://www.nyparamountwurlitzer.org>>

**Little River Studio**, 6141 Fairfield Rd, Wichita, KS, (316)838-3127, (4/19 W); Sun, Oct 24, 1:00pm, Steve Schlessing; <<http://www.nyparamountwurlitzer.org>>

## ■ MAINE

**Merrill Auditorium**, 389 Congress St, Portland, ME, (207)883-9525, (5/107A); All concerts Tue, 7:30pm unless otherwise noted; Thu, Oct 28, 7:30pm, Dennis James, *SHERLOCK JR, DO DETECTIVES THINK?, SURE LOCKED HOLMES* Fri, Feb 11, 2005, 7:30pm, Dennis James <<http://www.foko.org/>>

## ■ MARYLAND

**Rice Auditorium**, Stoddard St, Catonsville, MD, (410)592-9322. (2/8M); Sun, Sep 19, 3:00pm, Don Kinnier & Judy Townsend; Sun, Oct 17, 3:00pm, Bob Gullidge; Sun, Dec. 5, 3:00pm, Charlie Koskoski; Sun, Apr 10, 2005, 3:00pm. Michael Xavier Lundy; <[www.theatreorgans.com/md/freestate/](http://www.theatreorgans.com/md/freestate/)>

## ■ MASSACHUSETTS

**Knight Auditorium Babson College**, Wellesley Ave, Wellesley, MA, (978)670-1269, (4/18W); Sat, Sep 25, 7:30pm, Juan Cardona, The Kid; <[www.emcatos.com](http://www.emcatos.com)>

**Shanklin Conference Center**, 130 Sandy Pond Rd, Groton, MA, (978)670-1269, (4/34W); <[www.emcatos.com](http://www.emcatos.com)>

## ■ MICHIGAN

**Crystal Theatre**, 304 Superior Ave, Crystal Falls, MI. (906)875-6052, (3/21M); E-mail: <[klamp@up.net](mailto:klamp@up.net)>

**Fox Theatre**, 2211 Woodward Ave, Detroit MI, (313)471-3200, (4/36W) & (3/12M); Lobby organ played for 45 minutes prior to selected shows.; Call Theatre for dates and times

**Grand Ledge Opera House**, 121 S. Bridge St, Grand Ledge, MI, (888)333-POPS, (3/20B); <[www.lto-pops.org](http://www.lto-pops.org)>

**Michigan Theatre**, 603 E Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI (616)668-8397, (3/13B); Wed thru Sun intermissions (times vary); Henry Aldridge, Director; Steven

Ball, Staff Organist, & Newton Bates, Wade Bray, John Lauter, Stephen Warner

**The Mole Hole**, 150 W. Michigan Ave, Marshall, MI, (616)781-5923, (2/6 B/K); Organ daily, Scott Smith, recorded artist

**Public Museum of Grand Rapids Meijer Theater**, 272 Pearl St NW Grand Rapids, MI, (616)459-4253, (3/30W); Tours by appt, and ATOS guests welcome to hear organ on Thurs noon weekly; story time slides program during school year; Organ played Sundays 1:00pm - 3:00pm

**Redford Theatre**, 17360 Lahser Rd, Detroit, MI, (313)531-4407, (3/10B); Movie Overtures, Fridays at 7:30pm and Saturdays at 1:30pm & 7:30pm; Guest Organists: Steven Ball, Gus Borman, David Calendine, Jennifer Canda, Gil Francis, John Lauter, Tony O'Brien, Sharron Patterson; <<http://redfordtheatre.com>>

**Senate Theatre**, 6424 Michigan Ave, Detroit, MI, (313)894-4100, (4/36W); All Concerts start at 3pm; Sun, Sep 19, Brent Valliant; Sun, Oct. 17, Jelani Eddington; Sun, Nov. 21, Dave Calendine; Sun. Dec. 5, Ron Rhode

## ■ MISSOURI

**Fox Theatre**, 527 Grand Blvd N, St Louis, MO, (314)534-1678, (4/36W); 10:30am theatre tours with Stan Kann playing the organ; <<http://www.fabulousfox.com/>>

## ■ MINNESOTA

**A CENTER FOR THE ARTS**, (Fergus Theatre), 124 W Lincoln Ave E, Fergus Falls, MN, (218) 736-5453, (3/12W); Friday Summer noon series, Lance Johnson; Fri, Oct 24, 7:00pm, Donna Parker

**Heights Theatre**, 3951 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN, (763)789-4992, (4/11W); Movie overtures every Fri & Sat

**Minnesota State U Moorhead**, 1104 7th Ave, South Moorhead, MN, (701)237-0477, (3/7H); Lloyd Collins, Steve Eneboe, Lance Johnson, Dave Knutson, Gene Struble; <[organ@johnsonorgan.com](mailto:organ@johnsonorgan.com)>

## ■ NEW JERSEY

**Broadway Theatre**, 43 South Broadway St, Pitman, NJ, (856)589-7519, (3/8K); Movie Music Overtures; Tue, 6:30pm - 7:00pm; Fri & Sat. 6:30pm - 7:00pm; Sun, 2:30pm - 3:00pm; House Organists: John Bresline, Michael Xavier Lundy, Bob Nichols, Janet Norcross, & Harold Ware; Sun, Sep 26, 3:00pm, Michael Xavier Lundy, Double Comedy Feature; Sat, Oct 30, 7:00pm. & 9:30pm, Jeff Barker & Michael Xavier Lundy, Double Horror Feature *The Phantom of the Opera*, 7:00pm & *Nosferatu A Symphony of Horror* 9:30pm; Sun, Mar 20, 2005, 3:00pm, Michael Xavier Lundy, *The King of Kings*; Sat, Apr 30, 2005, 3:00pm, Michael Xavier Lundy, *Peter Pan*; Sun, Jun 12, 2005, 3:00pm, Michael Xavier Lundy, *The Tramp*; <[www.pitmansbroadway.com](http://www.pitmansbroadway.com)>

**Galaxy Theatre**, 7000 Boulevard E, Guttenberg, NJ (201)854-6540, (3/12K); Fri, Sat evenings before and after evening shows, Jeff Barker; (Lobby, 2/6M) Sun afternoon before matinee, Jeff Barker; <<http://www.galaxy-movie-theatre.com/>>

**The Music Hall at Northlandz**, Rt 202 South, Flemington, NJ, (908)982-4022, (5/39W); Organ played several times daily, Call for exact times; Bruce Conway, Harry Ley, Bruce Williams

**Newton Theatre**, 234 Spring St, Newton, NJ, (973)579-9993, (2/3E); Saturday evening intermissions, John Baratta

**Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Auditorium**, 27 Pilgrim Pathway, Ocean Grove, NJ, (732)775-0035, (4/154 Hope-Jones + Hybrid); Concerts by Dr. Gordon Turk; <<http://www.oceangrove.org>>

**Symphony Hall**, 1040 Broad St, Newark, NJ, (973)256-5480, (3/15GB); Used for special events; <<http://www.gstos.org>>

**Trenton War Memorial**, W. Lafayette St @ Wilson, Trenton, NJ (732)741-4045, (3/16M); <<http://www.gstos.org>>

**Union County Arts Center**, 1601 Irving St, Rahway, NJ, (732)499-8229, (2/7W); <[www.ucac.org](http://www.ucac.org)>

## ■ NEW YORK

**Auditorium Center**, 875 E Main, Rochester, NY, (585)377-5552, (4/23W); Sat Sep. 11, 8:00pm, Tom Hazleton; Sat Oct. 16, 8:00pm, Don Kinnier; Sun Nov. 14, 2:30pm, Paul Roberts; Sat Dec. 11, 8:00pm, Tim Schramm; <<http://theatreorgans.com/rochester/>>

**Bardavon 1869 Opera House**, 35 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, NY, (914)473-2072, (2/8W); Organ played before selected movies. Call or check the website for details.; <<http://www.bardavon.org/>>

**Capitol Theatre**, 220 W Dominick St, Rome, NY, (315)337-2576, (3/7M); Silent movie programs in 35mm (all shows start at 7:00pm); <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/ny/rome/>>

**Empire Theatre**, 581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse, NY, (315)451-4943, (3/11W); All concerts start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise; Aug 26, - Sep 6, 2004 NY State Fair, Wurlitzer is played several times daily by area artists. Times to be posted on our website when available.; Sep 12, Byron Jones; Oct 24, John Ledwon; Dec 19, Lance Luce; <[www.jrjunction.com/estmim](http://www.jrjunction.com/estmim)>

**Lafayette Theatre**, Lafayette Ave, Suffern, NY, (845)369-8234, (2/10W); Sat, 7:30, Movie overtures, Dave Kopp, Keith Gramlich, Earle Seeley, Bernie Anderson

**New York Military Academy**, Academy Avenue, Cornwall-On-Hudson, NY, (4/33M; Sun, Oct 3, 3:00pm, Cameron Carpenter

**Proctor's Theatre**, 432 State St, Schenectady, NY (518)346-8204, (3/18W); Noon Concert series, Tuesday unless stated otherwise; <[www.proctors.org](http://www.proctors.org)>

**Shea's Buffalo Theatre**, 646 Main St, Buffalo, NY, (716)684-8414, (4/28W); <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/ny/buffaloarea/sheas/concert.htm>>

## ■ NORTH CAROLINA

**Carolina Theatre**, 310 South Green St, Greensboro, NC, (336)333-2600, (3/6M); Organ played before & after the Carolina Classic Film Series; <<http://www.carolinatheatre.com/index.htm>>

## ■ NORTH DAKOTA

**Fargo Theatre**, 314 N. Broadway, Fargo, ND, (701)239-8385, (4/21W); Organ plays Fri, Sat, Sun evenings before and between performances; Short organ concerts, Lance Johnson, David Knudson, & Steve Eneboe; <<http://www.fargotheatre.org/>>

## ■ OHIO

**Akron Civic Theatre**, 182 S Main St, Akron OH, (330)253-2488, (3/19W); Sat, Oct 30, 7:30pm, Jim Riggs, *Phantom of the Opera*; <[www.akroncivic.com](http://www.akroncivic.com)>

**Church of God**, 3649 E Garfield Rd, New Springfield, OH, (330)549-3728, (4/44H); Sat, Oct 30, 7:00pm, Rob Richards

**Gray's Armory**, 1234 Bolivar Rd, Cleveland, OH, (216)532-4214, (3/13W); Sat, Oct 9, 7:30pm, Lew Williams

**The Historic Ohio Theatre**, 3114 Lagrange St, Toledo, OH, (419)241-6785, (4/11MC); Organ pre-show for movies (6:30-7:00pm)

**Music Hall**, 1241 Elm St, Cincinnati, OH, (513) 744-3223 (elect); Fri, Sat, Sun, May 13, 14, 15, 2005, 8:00pm, Dennis James, Cincinnati

Symphony Orchestra, Erich Kunzel, conductor

**Music Palace**, 11473 Chester Rd, Sharonville, OH, (513)771-1675, (4/33W); Tue Thru Sat, 11:00am - 2:00pm; Call for evening performance times; Closed Sundays, Mondays, & Holidays; Trent Sims

**Ohio Theatre**, 55 E State St, Columbus, OH, (614)469-1045, (4/34RM); Organ overtures and intermissions; <<http://www.capa.com/>>

## ■ OREGON

**Bijou Theatre**, 1624 NE Highway 101, Lincoln City, OR, (541)994-8255, (Elect); Silent Film Series on Wednesdays at 1:00pm; <<http://www.cinemasavers.com/>>

**Elsinore Theatre**, 170 High St SE, Salem, OR, (503)233-7274, (3/24W); Silent Movie Programs start Wednesdays during May at 7:00pm, Rick Parks, organist; <<http://www.elsinoretheatre.com/>>

## ■ PENNSYLVANIA

**Grand Court of Lord & Taylor**, 13th & Market, Philadelphia, PA (6/469 H); Forty five minute organ concerts daily except Sunday, 12:00 noon, Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri & Sat, 5:00pm, Wed, 7:00pm; <<http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/>>

**Keswick Theatre**, Easton Road & Keswick Ave, Glenside, PA, (610)346 - 8494, (3/19M); Musical Overtures Before Live Shows; House Organists: Barbara Fesmire, Michael Xavier Lundy, Wayne Zimmerman; <[www.keswicktheatre.com](http://www.keswicktheatre.com)>

**Keystone Oaks High School**, 1000 Kelton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA; (412)921-8558, (3/19W); All concerts on Saturday at 7:30pm; <<http://www.aol.com/wurl2/index.html>>

**Longwood Gardens**, Kennett Square, PA (610)388-1000, (4/146 Aeolian); Sun, 2:30pm, Pipe Organ Concert Series

**Roxy Theatre**, 2004 Main St, Northampton, PA, (610)262-7699, (2/6W); Organ is played 6:30pm - 7:00pm and intermissions, Henry Thomas; <[www.Roxytheaternorthampton.com](http://www.Roxytheaternorthampton.com)>

**Strand-Capitol PAC**, 50 N George St, York, PA, (717)846-1111, (3/17W); Theatre undergoing renovation. Organ is in storage.; <<http://www.strandcapitol.org/>>

**Sunnybrook Ballroom**, East High Street, Pottstown, PA, (610)326-6400, (3/14US); Organ plays for Sunday Brunch

## ■ TENNESSEE

**The Paramount Center for the Arts**, 518 State St, Bristol, TN, (423)968-7456, (3/11+W); <[www.theparamountcenter.com](http://www.theparamountcenter.com)>

**Tennessee Theatre**, 604 S Gay St, Knoxville, TN, (770)428-4809, (3/16W); Concerts 12:00 noon on the first Monday of each month; <<http://www.tennesseetheatre.com>>

## ■ TEXAS

**Jefferson Theatre**, 345 Fannin, Beaumont, TX, (409)835-5483, (3/8 RM); Organ played occasionally before shows and for concerts; <<http://www.jeffersontheatre.org>>

**Sunland Park Mall**, I-10 & Sunland Park Dr, El Paso, TX, (3/15W); Mon, Wed, Fri, 1:00pm - 1:30pm; Tue, Thu, Sat, 6:30pm - 7:00pm; Sun, 5:00pm - 6:00pm

## ■ UTAH

**The Organ Loft**, 3331 S. Edison St, Salt Lake City, UT, (801)485-9265, (5/36W); <<http://www.organloftslc.com>>

## ■ VIRGINIA

**Byrd Theatre**, 2908 W Carey, Richmond, VA, (804)353-9911, (4/17W); Overtures Sat, 7:15pm & 9:30pm, Bob Gullede

## ATOS NEWS

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HARRY HETH, EDITOR

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Michael Fellenzer  
ATOS Membership Office,  
P.O. Box 551081  
Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581  
E-mail: fellenzer@ATOS.org

## WASHINGTON

**Everett Theatre**, 2911 Colby, Everett, WA, (425)258-6766, (3/16K); Tue, Dec 14, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Mar 8, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Apr 12, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, May 10, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Jun 14, 2005, 7:00pm; Dennis James; Tue, Jul 12, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Sep 13, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Jan 11, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Oct 12, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; <<http://www.everetttheatre.org>>

**Hokum Hall**, 7904 35th Ave SW, Seattle, WA, (206)937-3613, (2/10W); Saturday and Sunday, 2:00pm, silent move. Call to verify schedule.

**Mt Baker Theatre**, 106 N Commercial, Bellingham, WA (2/12W); Second Sun monthly, 2:00pm, Open console

**Paramount Theatre**, 911 Pine St, Seattle, WA, (206)467-5510, (4/20W); Mon, Feb 7, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Janet Gaynor in *SUNRISE*; Mon, Feb 28, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Anna Mae Wong in *PICCADILLY*; Mon, Aug 1, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in *THE NAVIGATOR*; Mon, Aug 8, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in *OUR HOSPITALITY*; Mon, Aug 15, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in *SHERLOCK JR.*; Mon, Aug 22, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in *COLLEGE*; Mon, Aug 29, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in *STEAMBOAT BILL, JR.*; Mon, Feb 21, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Gloria Swanson in *MALE & FEMALE*; Mon, Feb 14, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Greta Garbo & John Gilbert in *LOVE*; <<http://www.theparamount.com/>>

**Washington Center for the Performing Arts**, 512 Washington St SE, Olympia, WA, (360)753-8586, (3/25W); <<http://www.washingtoncenter.org/>>

## WISCONSIN

**Organ Piper Music Palace**, 4353 S. 108th St., Greenfield (Milwaukee), WI, (414)529-1177, (3/27 W/K); Organ hours, 5:30pm - 9:00pm, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sun.; 5:00pm - 10:15pm, Fri. & Sat; Tue & Wed, Dave Wickerham; Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun, Ron Reseigh

**Oriental Theatre**, 2230 N Farwell Ave, Milwaukee, WI, (414) 276-8711, (3/39K); <http://theatreorgans.com/wi/milwaukee/orientaltheatre/>

**Phipps Center for the Arts**, 109 Locust St, Hudson, WI, (715)386-8409, (3/16W); Sat, Dec. 18, 2:00pm, Clark Wilson, *The Mark of Zorro*; Sat, Jan. 22, 2005, 2:00pm, David Wickerham; Tue, Apr. 19, 2005, 7:00pm, Simon Gledhill; Sat, Jun 4, 2005, 8:00pm, Barry Baker <[www.ThePhipps.org](http://www.ThePhipps.org)>

## AUSTRALIA

**Capri Theatre**, 141 Goodwood Rd, Goodwood, SA, (08) 8272 1177, (4/29W+H); Sun, Sep 12, 1:45pm, Tony Fenelon & Chris McPhee; Fri, Sat, Sun, Nov 12, 13, 14, 8:00pm, Dennis James

Sun, Dec 5, 1:45pm, Tony Fenelon & Limited Edition; Organ used Tuesday, Friday, & Saturday evenings

**Coburg City Centre**, 90 Bell St, Coburg, VIC, (03) 9781 5349 (2/9 Blackett & Howden); Sun, Oct 17, 2:00pm, Leith Ewart & Carole Wyatt

**Dendy Cinema**, 26 Church St, Brighton, VIC, (03) 9781 5349, (3/15W); Organ before films, Saturday evening; Sun, Sep 19, 1:30pm, Paul Fitzgerald & Heath Wooster

**John Lecke Music Center**, Melvista Ave, Nedlands, WA, (08)9276 6668, (3/10C); Sun, Sep 19, 2:00pm, Gail Dibben

**Karrinyup Center**, Perth, WA, 61-9-447-9837, (3/13W); Sun, Nov 7, 7:00pm, Dennis James

**Malvern Town Hall**, Glenferrie Rd & High St, Malvern VIC, (03) 9781 5349, (3/16C); Sun, Nov 28, 2:00pm, John Atwell

**Marrickville Town Hall**, Marrickville & Petersham Roads, Marrickville, NSW, (02) 9629 2257, (2/11W); <<http://www.tosa.net.au>>

**Orion Centre**, 155 Beamish St, Campsie, NSW, (02)9629 2257, (3/17W); <<http://www.tosa.net.au>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 380 Military Rd, Cremorne, NSW, 9908-4344, (3/15W); Sat nite, Sun afternoon, Intermissions, Neil Jensen

## CANADA

**CASA LOMA**, 1 Austin Terrace, Toronto, ON, (416)421-0918, (4/19W); All concerts, Monday @ 8:00pm; <[www.theatreorgans.com/toronto/](http://www.theatreorgans.com/toronto/)>

**Church of the Redeemer**, 89 Kirkpatrick St, Kingston, ON, (613)386-7295, (3/28K); All concerts 8:00pm unless otherwise stated; Sat, Sep 11, 2:00pm, Matinee for Seniors, Regional Artists; Wed, Oct 6, John Lauter; Thu, Nov 4, David Wickerham; Sat, Dec 11, Regional Artists' Christmas Concert; Sat, Feb 12, 2005, 6:00pm, Valentine Gourmet Dinner with Open Console; Wed, Apr 6, 2005, Clark Wilson; Fri, May 27, 2005, Ken Double

**Uptown Theatre**, 612-8th Ave. SW, Calgary, AB, (403)543-5115 (elect); Mon, Mar 14, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Mon, Mar 21, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Mon, Mar 28, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Mon, Mar 7, 2005, 7:00pm, Dennis James:

## HOLLAND

**CBS Building**, Princes Beatrixlaan 428, Voorburg, Holland, 0344-624623, (2/11Standaard); Fri, Sep 17, 8:00pm, Don Thompson; <<http://www.xs4all.nl/~janhuls/Pagina-EN/NOF-intro-E.htm>>

**Fortis Theatre an der Schie**, Stadserf 1, Schiedam, Holland.; 010 246 25, (3/11Standaard); Sun, Sep 19, 12:00noon; <<http://www.xs4all.nl/~janhuls/Pagina-EN/NOF-intro-E.htm>>

**Theatre de Meenthe**, Stationsplein 1, Steenwijk, Holland 0521-514004 (4/29 Strumk); Sun, Sep 19, 8:00pm, Don Thompson; <[http://home.wanadoo.nl/tomk/website\\_peter/web/index.html](http://home.wanadoo.nl/tomk/website_peter/web/index.html)>

## UNITED KINGDOM

**The Assembly Hall**, Stoke Abbot Road, Worthing, Sussex, (0)1903-206 206, (3/23W); All concerts Sunday at 3:00pm unless noted otherwise; Sun, Sep 26, 3:00pm, Walt; Strony; Sun, Oct 17, 3:00pm, Phil; Kelsall; Sun, Nov 21, 3:00pm, Jim; Riggs; Sun, Dec 19, 3:00pm, Simon; Gledhill; Dances Saturday, 7:15pm

**The Barry Memorial Hall**, 7, Gladstone Rd, Barry, South Glamorgan, (4/15CHR); <[www.atos-london.co.uk](http://www.atos-london.co.uk)>

**Civic Hall**, North Street, Wolverhampton, W Midlands, (0)1902 552121, (4/44C); Friday noontime concerts 12:00-12:30pm before the Tea Dance, Steve Tovey or Cameron Lloyd; All concerts Sat, 2:00pm; <[http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic\\_hall.html](http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic_hall.html)>

**Fentham Hall**, Marsh Lane, Hampton-in-Arden, Solihull, +44 1564 794778, (3/11C); All Concerts Sunday at 3:00pm; Oct 3, John Barnett; <<http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk/cosdistr/midlands.html>>

**Kilburn State Theatre**, 197 - 199 Kilburn, High Rd, Kilburn, London, (4/16W); <[www.atos-london.co.uk](http://www.atos-london.co.uk)>

**New Victoria Centre**, High Street, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, Co. Durham. (0)1388 762 467. (3/12W); Concerts are on Sat at 7:00pm and Sun at 2:30pm.; Those events which have only one date are Saturday evening concerts; Oct 9/10, Keith Beckingham; Nov 13/14, Nigel Ogden; Dec 18/19, Richard Openshaw & Annfield Plain Gleemen;

<<http://www.theatreorgans.com/uk/netoa>>

**Ossett Town Hall**, Market Place, Ossett, Wakefield, W Yorkshire, 44 (0) 113 2705885; (3/13C); All concerts Sunday at 2:30pm; Oct 3, Kevin Morgan; Nov 7, Willie Stephenson; Dec 5, David Shepherd

**Peterborough Regional College**, Eastfield Rd, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, UK, (44(0)1733 262800,(2/11W);<[www.ptops.ptops-wurlitzer.co.uk](http://www.ptops.ptops-wurlitzer.co.uk)>

**The Ritz Ballroom**, 73 Bradford Road, Brighouse, W Yorkshire, 44 (0)1274 589939, (3/10W); All concerts, Sun, 2:30pm.; Oct 10, Donald Mackenzie; Nov 14, Simon Gledhill; Dec 12, Robert Wolfe; Feb 13, 2005, David Lobban; May 8, 2005, Youth at the Console; Jun 12, 2005, Nigel Ogden; Aug 21, 2005, Richard Hills; Sep 11, 2005, Trent Sims; Nov 13, 2005, Nicholas Martin; Dec 11, 2005, Robert Wolfe; <[www.cosnorth.co.uk](http://www.cosnorth.co.uk)>

**St. Albans Organ Museum**, 320 Camp Rd, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, 01144(0)1727 851 557 (3/12W); Sat, Oct 2, 7:45pm, Jean Martyn; Sat, Oct 23, 7:45pm, Nicholas Martin; Sat, Nov 6, 7:45pm, Phil Kelsall; Sat, Dec 4, 2:30pm & 7:45pm, Robert Wolfe; Fri, Dec 31, 8:30pm - 12:30am, Donald Mackenzie & Guests;

<<http://www.stalbanorganmuseum.org.uk/>>

**St John Vianney RC Church**, Clayhall, 1 Stoneleigh Rd, Ilford Essex, 44 (0)1525 872356, (3/7C); <[www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)>

**Singing Hills Golf Course**, Albourne near Brighton, (0)1903 261972, (3/19W); All concerts at 3:00pm

**South Bank University**, 103 Borough Road, London, Hall has been remodeled and organ has been removed; <[www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)>

**Stockport Town Hall**, On A6, Main Road Thru Stockport, UK, 44 (0) 161 764 3979, (4/20W); Mon, Oct 4, 12:00noon, Paul Roberts; Mon, Nov 1, 12:00noon, Kevin Grunill; Sun, Nov 28, 2:30pm, Nigel Ogden; Mon, Dec 6, 12:00noon, Joyce Alldred

**Thomas Peacock Community College**, The Grove, Rye, East Sussex, 01424 444058, (2/6W)

**Woking Leisure Centre**, Woking Park; Kingfield Rd, Woking, Surrey, (3/17W); <[www.atos-london.co.uk](http://www.atos-london.co.uk)>

**Wolverhampton Civic Hall**, North Street, Wolverhampton, W Mids, (0)1543 425 214, (4/44C); Sat, Oct 23, 2:00pm, Peter Jebson, Tribute concert to Reginald Dixon

**Town Hall**, Victoria Rd, Portslade, Sussex, 011-44-1293-844788, (3/20C); Sun, Sep 12, 3:00pm, Don Thompson; <<http://www.organfax.co.uk/clubs/south-coast-tos.html>>



## FOR THE RECORDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

"Charmaine" and then we have Philip Park at the Victory Cinema in London playing \*\*\*"When Your Hair Has Turned To Silver" and the \*\*\*"Missouri Waltz." The only female organist on this set is Florence DeJong and her one melody is "An Old Italian Love Song."

Like Foort, Al Bollington (who entered the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1988) was a popular British organist who began his career in the 1920s but later moved to the U.S. where he made a few recordings before his death in 1991. He

is featured here in two medleys of "Serenades" played on his favorite organ, the Compton with Melotone in London's Paramount Theatre. His first medley has the "Serenades" by Toselli, Heykens, and Romberg while his second medley has Lehar's "Frasquita Serenade," and a second "Serenade" by Heykens, and Schubert's "Serenade." An interesting sidelight on these 'serenades' is that Sigmund Romberg wrote the operetta *Blossom Time*, (a fictionalized biography of Schubert, which opened on Broadway in 1921) using Schubert's own music, but 'adjusting' it to fit the newly written English lyrics; rather like the much later Broadway musicals composed by George Forrest and Robert Wright—*Song of Norway* (Grieg) and *Kismet* (Borodin). Sidney Gustard at the organ in the Trocadero Cinema in Liverpool plays Richard Whiting's bouncy "(I'm In Love With You) Honey" and the novelty "Cuckoo Waltz." Then we have Leslie James at the 2/8 Wurlitzer in London's New Gallery Cinema, playing the rather

upbeat ballad "Just Imagine" from 1927's *Good News*, and Robinson Cleaver at the 3/17 Wurlitzer in the Granada, Welling playing the 1940 Academy Award nominated ballad "Our Love Affair," which was written for the Judy Garland/Mickey Rooney film *Strike Up The Band*. (Which had nothing to do with the earlier Gershwin stage musical of that title!)

Two additional selections in this set deserve special mention, for each one closes out its disc. The first disc closes with a rare, quite amazing 6-minute organ duet of Suppe's sparkling \*\*\*"Light Cavalry Overture." It's played by Gilbert Handy at the Orpheum in Golders Green and Alfred Ugly at the Ritz Cinema in Middlesex. They were apparently connected by a telephone line with the Abbey Road Studio which recorded their performance. The second disc's finale is Quentin MacLeans's magnificent 6 1/2-minute arrangement of the complete orchestral score to Ketelbey's "In A Monastery Garden." It's complete

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including the male chorus singing the "Kyrie Eleison" in the background! Despite the age of these recordings the sound quality is quite good due to substantial noise suppression, which tends to make the organs sound somewhat similar. But there is minimal hiss and virtually no 'ticks' or 'pops.'

Since Torch's recordings are scattered throughout these two discs, they seem to pop-up here and there like a breath of fresh air. In the February, 1973 Journal Stu Green, in reviewing Torch's two LP Doric set, wrote "...his bright arrangements tend to enhance even the more mundane tunes... Some may sound very dated to today's ears but they were 'right on' in their time... One of his special skills is in his use of the Posthorn for jazz emphasis effects... He was doing it when organists elsewhere were concerned with stressing the 'soulful' side of their instruments." While many will find the Torch cuts the most fascinating listening, this 2-CD archival set includes some of the finest recordings by the legendary British organists Reginald Foort, Quentin MacLean, and Sandy MacPherson. For ordering details readers should contact Sanctuary Records Group LTD, Sanctuary House, 45-53 Sinclair Road, London W14 0NS, U.K. or check their website at [www.sanctuaryrecordsgroup.co.uk](http://www.sanctuaryrecordsgroup.co.uk). 

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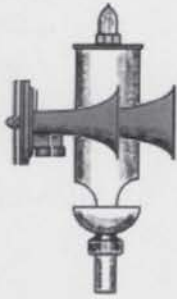
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Lee Orville Erwin Jr.  
1915 (age 7).

*Lee Orville Erwin and Mary Estella Shaver were married September 18, 1907 in Huntsville at the residence of the bride's parents.*  
- from Family Bible

# LEE ORVILLE ERWIN JR.

by Michael Hix

## Lee Orville Erwin Jr. in Huntsville

Lee Orville Erwin Jr. was the first child of Mary Estella Shaver Erwin and Lee Orville Erwin Sr. According to family records he was born July 15, 1908 at East Holmes Street in Huntsville, Alabama. During the next 15 years, Lee would be joined by five siblings: Thelma May Erwin Castator (born, April 20, 1911 – died, March 11, 1988), Sara (Sally) Elizabeth Erwin Hix (born, November 25, 1914), Chas Alfred Erwin (born, June 13, 1917 – died, March 16, 1918), Mary Leone Erwin Edwards (born, November 26, 1920), and Joseph (Joe) Arthur Erwin (born, January 13, 1923).

Life in the Erwin household was a comfortable one. Lee Erwin Sr., the founder of the Erwin Manufacturing Company and the Textile Hardwood Manufacturing Company Incorporated, was a successful businessman in northern Alabama. The family lived in a large house in West Huntsville until 1918 when they moved to Calhoun Street inside present day downtown Huntsville. According to Joe, the youngest Erwin sibling, his parents were “fun-loving” and very attentive: “Mother would read stories to us, or get Thelma or Sally to do it. Dad would make up stories, many of which were outlandish and we knew it, but we loved listening anyway. They would take us on hikes, for a ride in the car on Sundays — often including a stop at the Drug Store for an ice-cream cone.”

The Erwin parents exposed their children to the arts and discovered the individual talents of each child: Thelma enthusiastically studied ballet; Sara was interested in the visual arts; Mary loved to write. Although each child was encouraged to pursue their interests, the common discipline among the Erwin family was music. In a 1970 article by Lloyd E. Klos, Lee Erwin recounts:

*One of my first remembrances was listening to music. My mother was the organist of a very small church; she was probably the only member of the congregation who could play. When I was three or four, I was given a toy piano for Christmas. It must have been a better than average toy, because it was exactly in tune, and it had a keyboard of almost four octaves. Although I couldn't possibly have known at that time that I was gifted with absolute pitch, I realize now that I was demonstrating it regularly by reproducing accurately any group of notes, which I heard. So, I found that I could automatically play anything I heard my mother play on her big piano.*

When Lee started school he began his formal lessons with a lifelong friend of the Erwin family, Bessie Pettus (Spragins). Joe Erwin recalls:

*The Simonton Literary Prize was created to recognize and award original scholarship and research in all areas pertaining to the-atre pipe organ history. In the following article, we revisit the work of one of the most important and imaginative practitioners of silent film accompaniment, and the renaissance of silent film presentation in the latter half of the 20th century.*

*Throughout the following pages, we take an intimate look into the life of a fine gentleman, musician, and one of the world's greatest theatre organists.*

*The ATOS Board of Directors is pleased to present the Simonton Literary Prize to Michael Hix, for his research and writing on the life and work of Lee Erwin.*

Jeff Weiler

Lee Erwin, Paris, France to Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, January 19, 1931. "Ask Miss Bessie if she has stopped writing letters to her friends. I wrote her way before Christmas and have not heard from her in a very long time." Another letter to his mother dated August 30, 1930 mentions receiving a letter from Miss Pettus.

*"All the children studied piano with Ms. Pettus, but only Lee and I developed sensitivity to musical expressiveness. Miss Bessie, as everyone called her, loved young people and music. She was not a great performer, technically, but played very expressively. Her love of each of us, her students, translated that sense of expressiveness with great flourish and enthusiasm. She had a genuine pride in the accomplishments each of us would achieve."*

Various letters and documents in the Lee Erwin Collection reflect the warm relationship between Lee Erwin and Bessie Pettus. While studying in France in 1930 he corresponded with her frequently.

The family's genial relationship with Pettus remained intact through several decades. Sara Erwin Hix's children, William P. Hix, Jr. and Elizabeth (Betty) Hix also studied piano with Pettus when younger.

Moving from West Huntsville to the Calhoun Street residence, the family began attending the First United Methodist Church of Huntsville. It is quite possible that it was here Lee began to play the organ, substituting for the regular organist. Although his religious upbringing and early musical experiences are important to note, Lee Erwin's fascination and life long love of the organ commenced in the movie theatres.

During the 1920s Huntsville had two movie theatres: the Grand Theatre located on Jefferson Street, and the Lyric Theatre, located on Washington Street. Young Lee Erwin was a fixture at both of these theatres. The Lyric Theatre was equipped with a Style L Wurlitzer Pipe Organ-Orchestra, which was played by organist George Hatch. According to Erwin, Hatch could not read music, but did a terrific job of improvising music for films. The Grand Theatre did not originally have an organ; instead, a pianist accompanied the films. In numerous interviews Erwin reminisced about his time spent in the Huntsville movie theatres:

*After a time I was given permission to play the supper show in both theatres any time I wanted to, but without pay, of course. It did give me the opportunity to attend both theatres without admission — a real prize for a 12 year-old boy who was already hooked on the theatre organ.*

In 1924 Lee Erwin made the transition from the adolescent who haunted the movie theatres substituting for regular organists to a serious young man intent on a career in music. At 16 he graduated from high school, (Mills Taylor School, a private high school in Huntsville) and was awarded a scholarship to study at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

## Lee Erwin's Education

Cincinnati provided a tremendous cultural contrast to the small, sleepy Huntsville of the 1920s. Erwin enrolled at the conservatory in 1926 and studied organ with Professor Parvin Titus. A native of New Jersey, Parvin Titus (1897–1973) had studied with organists Marcel Dupré and Gaston Dethier. When he was appointed to the position of Professor of Organ in 1924, Titus moved to Cincinnati, where he taught at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music until 1965. Titus was exceedingly supportive of the young Erwin's talent and later arranged for him to study in France.

In order to earn extra money during his school years, Erwin played the organ seven nights a week in two local movie theatres; the Albee Theatre, located on the south side of Fifth Street, and the Palace Theatre. Because they were an important part of the movie palace experience, theatre organists of the silent film era were handsomely paid musicians. In his autobiography *The Million Dollar Life of Gaylord Carter*, organist Gaylord Carter recalls that during the 1920s "as a theatre organist you would make in a week what a church organist would make in a month." According to Erwin, he earned \$20 a week - a substantial sum, considering his rent was only \$5 a week. A steady income allowed the young Erwin to amass substantial savings as well as to purchase his first car, a Model T Ford.

In 1929, after three years at the conservatory, Erwin left school to accept his first full time theatre positions. He served as assistant organist at Loew's Temple Theatre and organist for the Alabama Theatre, both located in Birmingham, Alabama. Loew's Temple Theatre, with its 4/60 Möller organ, featured first-run films and popular vaudeville acts.

*Lee won a statewide piano competition held in Birmingham, and was awarded a scholarship to study at the Cincinnati Conservatory.*

LEE ERWIN COLLECTION



*Lee Erwin, age 21, at the console of the Loew's Temple Theatre Möller.*

Joseph Stovee, principal organist for Loew's Temple Theatre, was a powerful influence on Erwin's ideas regarding the theatre organ.

*"The chief organist, Joseph Stovee, was a genuine artist, not a retreaded piano player. He really knew classical and popular music, and his improvisations were marvelous. Even his first 'cold' performance of a silent film (a new one each week) was nearly always a masterpiece. From his examples, I learned, in an unforgettable way, that an organist should never use current popular music, or even well known classical selections as accompaniment for a serious film. Any familiar piece of music already has preconceived connotations for any audience, and therefore, draws too much attention to the organ, at the expense of the film. For him, each film had to have a new, completely original score that he improvised on the spot. It was a lesson which very few organists learned, probably because many of them weren't capable. Of course, there were books of cue music to fit any given situation, except usually it didn't really fit."*

In addition to accepting a position at Loew's, 1929 marks the beginning of Erwin's long time involvement at the Alabama Theatre.

The following telegram details Erwin's job with the theatre.

*Have opening Alabama Theatre for feature organist play spot solos and accompany orchestral overtures. Two hours a day approximate time actual playing. Salary sixty seven fifty. Wire me at once if interested.*

*Bert Hollowell Alabama Theatre*

An ambitious young man, it was also during this time that Erwin became involved in radio. He served as pianist and organist for two Birmingham radio stations, WAPI and WRBC.

In winter of 1930 Professor Parvin Titus invited Erwin to embark upon a yearlong period of study in France. Initially Erwin's parents were not supportive of this venture to Europe. They felt that the 21-year-old Erwin was too young for an extended period of study overseas. After assurances from Titus that he would escort Erwin and help him get established in

*Lee Orville Erwin Jr., Paris, France, to Mrs. Mary Shaver Erwin, Huntsville, Alabama, June 19, 1930, Lee Erwin Collection. The Lee Erwin Collection contains forty-five letters Erwin wrote to his mother during his study in France.*

France, the parents acceded. Erwin and Titus departed on the Vollandam from New York, June 6, 1930.

Remaining in France until May 1931, Erwin studied music with several of the master musicians of Paris. He was the first American student of organist André Marchal (1894-1980). Blind from birth, Marchal studied at the National Institute for the Blind, where Vierendeux and Barié had studied. When he was 15, he began studying organ with Adolphe Marty, and harmony with Albert Mahaut, both of whom had won the Premier Prix d'Orgue at the Paris Conservatoire in the class of César Franck. Marchal was famous more for his abilities as a colourist and interpreter rather than for technical prowess.

There is no doubt that Marchal pushed his new American student. The letters Erwin wrote his mother attest to this. Erwin revered Marchal, and worked very hard to succeed in his lessons. From his time in France, until the end of his performing career, Erwin cited Marchal as an important influence. Erwin, indebted to and very fond of Marchal, maintained contact with him and his family through the years.

The weekly organ lesson was not the sole medium through which Erwin learned his craft. The artistic atmosphere of Paris, with its host of musicians, inspired and nurtured Erwin's ideas about music. Erwin's connection to Marchal allowed him to spend time with numerous influential French musicians of the 20th century. It was through Marchal that Erwin met one of the greatest French organists of the century, Olivier Messiaen.

*Yesterday Marchal had us to his house in the morning to play a whole bunch of new music for us:*

*some things that have just been written in the past year. Some of the things I liked, and some of them I didn't, but a piece composed by one of Marchal's pupils (Olivier Messiaen) was extremely good. It is very different from anything I have ever heard and it is also very difficult.*

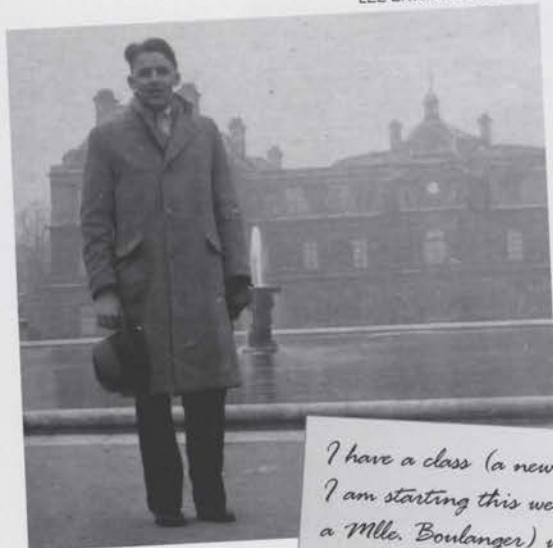
*When the theatre was resurrected and restored in the 1980s by Cecil Whitmire, Erwin graced the console of the Wurlitzer (nicknamed Big Bertha) in concerts and film productions nearly every year. I first saw Lee Erwin perform at the Alabama Theatre in April of 1992, where he was featured in a Holy Week presentation of the Cecil B. DeMille classic King of Kings.*



LEE ERWIN COLLECTION

*Lee Erwin at age 22.*

Books of "cue music" or "cue sheets" include a breakdown of the film's plot, with musical suggestions for each scene. Books of "cue music" include *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists* published in 1924 by Erno Rapee, and Lang and West's *Musical Accompaniment of Moving Pictures* published in 1920. "Cue sheets" were published and circulated with the films.



Lee Erwin in France,  
1930.

*I have a class (a new one that I am starting this week with a Mlle. Boulanger) where we all sing the cantatas and church music of Bach in German.*

Erwin fondly recalled his Sunday mornings in Paris. After hearing Marchal improvise his Sunday morning service, Erwin and his colleagues rushed to the Paris Métro to reach Trinité in time to hear Messiaen's improvisation.

In addition to organ, Erwin studied harmony while in France. He worked with a former colleague of Titus' named Jean Verd. At one time Verd had been a faculty member of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, however health problems caused him to leave America and return to his home in France. Erwin studied harmony, solfege, and piano with Verd, who encouraged and challenged the young musician.

*Mr. Verd sees to it that I don't have a single idle moment. The other day he said, "Well now, Sunday is a holiday for you. Of course you will study all morning and most of the afternoon and have a French lesson at night, but the rest of the day is your own to do as you like with it!" The "rest of the day" I will take a walk similar to the one last Sunday, but one not quite so long.*

*To save time, that Mr. Verd says I need to put towards harmony and solfege, he has suggested that I cut down on my letters to everybody but you all. He does not say to write less, but to make all the letters very short and to the point, and whenever possible, just write a postal card.*

In a letter dated August 30, 1930 Erwin speaks of Verd's guidance and his plans to continue his musical education in France.

*Mr. Verd is being simply too good to me for words and I am learning much under his guidance. He believes in a person having plenty of work to do, and anyone that stays around him has to work or else-*

*He has helped me plan my course of study and if I can ever finish it I can then begin to get some insight into what music really is. My musical education has been sadly neglected, but no more than any other American I suppose — Over there a person merely gets a "smattering" of what it's all about whereas over here they plunge into it head first and even though it takes twice the time to do it that it does in America when a person finishes he is really a musician with a sound understanding of things.*

In addition to studies with Marchal and Verd, Erwin studied composition with Nadia Boulanger. One of the most famous composition teachers of the 20th century, Boulanger instructed hundreds of musicians including Aaron Copland, Walter Piston, Virgil Thompson, and Philip Glass. In his letters, Erwin mentions Boulanger in one brief sentence:

Throughout his life Erwin cited Boulanger as one of his teachers, yet his letters reflect a stronger influence of Marchal and Verd. Perhaps the relationship with Boulanger was embellished because of her fame in musical circles. While Marchal and Verd were obviously important in Erwin's musical development, the name Boulanger ("arguably the greatest teacher since Socrates, certainly the greatest music teacher") carried with it associations that lend credibility to a theatre organist, whose musicianship would have been questioned by classical organists.

During this period, Erwin's friends and family in America were struggling with the economic hardship of the Great Depression. Many of his letters reflect his concern for his father's business and those of several of his relatives. Because his parents were unable to provide financial support during his year of study in France, Erwin utilized the savings he amassed playing as a theatre organist in Cincinnati and maintained a very strict budget. In a letter dated October 12, 1930 Erwin calculated his monthly living expenses at \$110, and stated that he had \$500 in the bank. Briefly working as a substitute organist at the American Cathedral in Paris, Erwin was also able to secure an additional 35 francs each week, (Erwin estimated this equaled around \$1.50 a week.) as well as an organ on which to practice. In order to remain in France for a longer period of study Erwin contacted his Aunts Julia and Sarah. Both wired him additional funds to help pay for this unique educational experience. As his trip came to a conclusion Erwin even arranged to sell his car, which was in Huntsville with his parents. When his parents sold the Model T Ford in April of 1931, he used the money to repay his generous relatives rather than remain in France.

With his savings depleted, Erwin returned to Alabama in May of 1931. Though he never returned to France as a student, this experience shaped his life. According to his student, Jeff Weiler, Erwin spoke fondly of this exciting educational venture. He reminisced not only of the music and musicians he heard, but of the life lessons learned.



Erwin (center) on his return trip from France, 1931.

## Erwin's Work on Radio and Television (1931-1967)

On returning to the United States, Erwin went back to work at the Alabama Theatre, though his responsibilities as a musician in the theatre were quite different. Due to the popularity of sound films ("talkies") and the economic woes of the Great Depression, the roles of theatre musicians during the early 1930s were greatly diminished. Although several large theatres kept orchestras to play overtures and vaudeville acts, between 1928 and 1930, 10,000 musicians lost their jobs. As a result, Erwin found himself playing the organ occasionally for sing-alongs but primarily working as a sync-operator.

*The sing-along was an audience favorite during the early days of film. Dick Huemer and Max Fleischer introduced the first "bouncing ball" sing-along cartoon film at the Circle Theatre, Columbus Circle, New York City, in 1924. The organist led the audience in singing a popular song, while a film projected the words onto the screen.*

As a sync-operator he synchronized the sound recordings with the films and newsreels as they were presented. Unhappy with this situation, Erwin moved back to Ohio in 1932 and completed his studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and graduated in 1936.

In 1932 at the conservatory, Erwin met John Ranck, the man who would become his first long-time companion. A 17 year-old piano student, Ranck was just beginning his studies at Cincinnati Conservatory. They moved in together in 1933 to an apartment located on 2814 Highland Avenue and remained partners for the next 20 years. They later relocated to 291 Southern Avenue in Cincinnati.

According to Ranck, Erwin kept a busy schedule playing the organ in a few small theatres, leading a dance band, and holding various other musical jobs. Erwin's dance band, Lee Erwin's Musical Troupe, was a popular group in Cincinnati that played for numerous concerts and radio appearances. This band provided Erwin with his first experience arranging music, a skill that he would eventually master.

At the same time that sound film gained prominence in the American theatre, the fledgling radio industry also



Lee Erwin, during his early twenties.

gained popularity. By 1930 there were twenty 15-minute serials on daytime network radio, totaling 75 hours a week. Sponsored by soap manufacturers, these serials were popularly known as "soap operas." Ironically, the only musical score of these "operas" was, "the organ music swelling and subsiding in the background." As a result of the popularity of the soap operas many theatre organists successfully made the transition to work in radio. As Mary Cassata and Thomas Skill observe in *Life in Daytime Television*, the soap opera organist was a direct descendant of the pianist or organist who provided the music for silent films. Both Lee Erwin and Gaylord Cater are examples of musicians who thrived in this new medium.

Erwin began playing for serials on radio station WLW of Cincinnati in 1933. Proudly called the "Nation's Station," WLW was one of the most powerful radio stations in the history of radio. From 1934 until 1939, the FCC granted special permission to station owner Powel Crosley Jr. to operate at 500,000 watts. This wattage, ten times the power other stations were allowed, was strong enough to broadcast a signal to England and South America, not to mention over the entire United States.

Arguably one of the most popular shows on WLW was "Moon River." In *Not Just a Sound: The Story of WLW*, Dick Perry describes "Moon River" as a "program of dreamy organ music, dreamy poetry, and dreamy moods which WLW used to transmit late each night to put old people to sleep and get lovers on with the business at hand." First airing in 1930, "Moon River" featured a 3/17 Wurlitzer organ, which was dedicated to the memory of Powel Crosley's mother. Each evening the program would begin and end in the same manner, with a reading of the poem, "Moon River."

*The "Moon River" organ eventually was moved, becoming the nucleus of the 4/32 organ in the Shady Nook Restaurant in Millville, Ohio.*

This poem reflects the syrupy mood of "Moon River," a radio show that typified WLW in the 1930s.

(opening)  
 Moon River . . .  
 A lazy stream of dreams,  
 Where vain desires forget themselves  
 In the loveliness of sleep  
 Moon River . . .  
 Exchanged white ribbon  
 Twined in the hair of night  
 Where nothing is but sleep.  
 Dream on . . . sleep on . . .  
 Care will not seek for thee.  
 Float on . . . drift on . . .  
 Moon River, to the sea.

(Closing)  
 Down the valley of a thousand yesterdays  
 Flow the bright waters of Moon River.  
 On and down forever flowing . . . forever waiting  
 To carry you down to the land of forgetfulness,  
 To the kingdom of sleep . . . to the realms of . . .  
 Moon River . . .

A lazy stream of dreams,  
 Where vain desires forget themselves  
 In the loveliness of sleep.  
 Moon River  
 Enchanted white ribbon  
 Twined in the hair of night,  
 Where nothing is but sleep.  
 Dream on . . . sleep on . . .  
 Care will not seek for thee.  
 Float on . . . drift on . . .  
 Moon River, to the sea.




Lee Erwin seated at the "Moon River" organ with the DeVore Sisters.

For unknown reasons Waller was fired from WLW by Crosley. One legend cites his excessive drinking, while another states that Crosley felt the jazz music Waller played was disrespectful to the organ that was dedicated to the memory of his mother.

I see you still have New York in the back of your mind, but I would be pretty sure of something more definite, before I turned WLW loose, even though it isn't just what you would like. A weekly salary coming in means a lot, when you read and see so many musicians as well as people in other lines of business, walking the streets looking for a job.

The announcers during the show's 25 year run included Peter Grant, Harry Holcomb, Palmer Ward, Charles Woods, Don Dowd, Jay Jostyn, Jimmy Leonard, and Ken Linn. It featured such singers as The DeVore Sisters, Rosemary and Betty Clooney, Doris Day, Janette Davis, Lucille Norman, Anita Ellis, Ruby Wright, and Phil Brito. Among the organists were Pat Gillick, Fats Waller, and Lee Erwin. Erwin, who replaced Waller in 1933, played on "Moon River" until 1944. According to John Ranck, Erwin was "Moon River" and was responsible for not only playing the organ, but also arranging any musical numbers needed for each broadcast.

Although Erwin was well paid and achieved a certain degree of local fame, his dream was to leave Cincinnati for New York. A 1938 letter from Erwin's mother comments upon his desire to move to New York City.

Before he acted on his dream to leave Cincinnati for New York City, however, Erwin pursued another dream. He began flying in 1940. This expensive hobby is evidence of the success Erwin was having financially as a musician in Cincinnati. According to a student logbook in the Lee Erwin Collection, Erwin flew 42 hours of solo flight time and passed the test for his pilot's license in October of 1940. During 1941 and 1942 Erwin flew dozens of flights, mostly in his personal Taylorcraft plane, between Cincinnati and Huntsville in order to visit his family. 

*The Lee Erwin story will continue in the next issue.*

**THE AMERICAN ORGANIST MAGAZINE**  
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# Chapter News

**ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS:** The deadline for receiving Chapter News items for the January/February issue is November 5. Send All Chapter News Items and Photographs to: DALE BAKER, EDITOR, P.O. BOX 51450, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46251-0450... or ... If possible, send all text via E-mail attachment, to: baker@atos.org

Photos may also be sent electronically, if they are no less than 300 dpi resolution. If you do not have access to equipment that can send high-resolution photos, please send all photos to the editor via the postal service. Please include the captions and credits for your photographs.

Be sure to include the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of your chapter president, the name of the principal city of operation for your chapter, and the name of your chapter correspondent.

You are reminded that the ATOS Board of Directors' Policy states that your article is not to include the titles of the music played at programs, or the menu items served at chapter functions. Thank you for your cooperation.

## ALABAMA

Sabrina Summers, President  
205/688-2357  
Sabrina\_atos@earthlink.net

**Birmingham, Alabama.** Finally! Wanda Carey and the Alabama Theatre's *Big Bertha* met for a concert! Wanda was originally scheduled to play her 'Gospel Music Plus' program, on our mighty Wurlitzer, on January 18, but the theatre cancelled our meeting in order to finish the orchestra level seat-recovering project. Everyone is now enjoying the beautiful new seats, but missing Wanda's concert was a disappointment; and her Sunday, June 13 program was much anticipated. Larry Davis, fellow Atlanta Chapter member, traveled with Wanda to help her navigate the Wurlitzer's many resources, resulting in varied

registrations. Wanda, *Big Bertha*, and 'Gospel Music Plus' were a delight to Alabama Chapter members and guests. She played old-time gospel hymns; many of her favorites songs, followed by a good variety of 'oldies', pop songs, and show tunes. We hope to see Wanda and *Big Bertha* together again soon.

Sabrina Summers

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

Cliff Shaffer, President, 407/207-1792

**Tampa, Florida.** The new marquee at the Tampa Theatre was programmed to welcome CFTOS at our May meeting, and the applause showed the members' appreciation. After the business portion of the meeting, our chapter organists entertained members and guests. Those

who played the 3/14 Wurlitzer were Bob Courtney, Tom Hoehn, George Losinger, Bob Logan, and Bill Van Twistern. It was a great afternoon of organ music.

Also in May, Tampa Theatre volunteer organists and technicians, with their spouses, were treated to an appreciation dinner. Tampa Theatre President, John Bell thanked the volunteers for their outstanding service and commitment to the Tampa Theatre. Everyone enjoyed the dinner and the special desert, which featured a rendition of the Tampa Theatre blade sign.

In May and June our monthly concerts at the Pinellas Park Auditorium featured Cliff Shaffer, George Losinger, Bill and Linda Van Twistern in May, and Johnnie June Carter, Sandy Hobbis, Bill, and Linda Van Twistern in June.

THURMAN ROBERTSON



Wanda Carter at console for "Gospel Music Plus" concert.

TARA SCHROEDER



Tampa Theatre Volunteer organists and technicians at the appreciation dinner. Back row from left: Cliff Shaffer, Bill Shrive, Dennis Werkmeister, George Losinger, Bob Logan, Bob Courtney, and Richard Frank. Front row from left: Sandy Hobbis, Bob Baker, and Johnnie June Carter. Missing from photo: Richard Gleason, Bill Brusick, and Steve Brittain.



Our June meeting at the Pinellas Park Auditorium was an enjoyable afternoon, with many of our members participating in 'Open-Console' on our 2/9 Wurlitzer. Everyone enjoyed a delicious potluck dinner.

The ongoing organ restoration and maintenance continues weekly at the Polk Theatre in Lakeland. The 3/11 Robert-Morton continues to be played before the movies on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and before the performing arts series, whose season begins in October.

*Sandy Hobbis*

## CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Beth Boda, President, 203/375-1038  
beboda@optonline.net

**Thomaston, Connecticut.** CVTOS held a most enjoyable Sunday program in April, at the home of member Robert Fazzino in North Haven, Connecticut. After 'Open-Console' and munching on the delicious food provided by our host, a business meeting followed, led by CVTOS President Beth Boda. After the meeting, members Gary Schwartz and Allen Miller performed a concert on the custom Allen organ. Gary played some very nice arrangements of contemporary pieces that work well on the organ. Allen has a very lush orchestral style that is always a pleasure to hear. The 25 or so members and friends had a wonderful time listening to these two performers. The organ had its debut in 1975 at Hartford's Bushnell Performing Arts Center, with George Wright at the console. (Note: Your correspondent thanks Louise Maccormack for covering this event).

ZERA MUSICLAND REPRESENTATIVE



*Gary Schwartz in concert at Robert Fazzino residence.*

Jelani Eddington and David Harris appeared in concert on Sunday May 16, at the Thomaston Opera House. It was one of the finest concerts ever presented there. The grand piano was placed on stage left, slightly above the organ console, enabling the audience to clearly see the artists' every move. Jelani and David have polished their performance to a high degree, each knowing who should play the main theme or the counter-melody, and precisely when. The program featured them individually, as well as together. It was a visual and auditory delight. The line at the gift shop was long, as theatregoers sought to take home a CD or two to enjoy again and again. The afternoon was over much too soon!

Connecticut Valley was well represented at the Fabulous Fox Weekend in Atlanta over Memorial Day Weekend. The Atlanta Chapter is to be commended for its hard work. The theatre is truly magnificent, and the organ performances were excellent!

*Mary Jane Bates*

## DAIRYLAND

Gary Hanson, President, 414/429-1177  
organpipr@aol.com

**Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin.** Our annual Ice Cream Social was again held at the Elkhart Lake home of Gary and Nancy Beick on Memorial Day Weekend. The organ is a 3/13 Wurlitzer and is the focal point in the music room, which has seating for 100 people. Organist for the day was Dairyland's own, Jelani Eddington. Wisconsin has been having weeks of rainy days this spring, and this day was no exception, but Jelani's music

MARY JANE BATES



*David Harris and Jelani Eddington at Thomaston Opera House.*

made us feel like the sun was finally shining! In addition to his 'sunny' music, he also played a medley of patriotic music in honor of Memorial Day.

We had another fantastic social in June, when we were invited to the home of DTOS member Dave Wickerham and his wife Rhonda in Menomonee Falls. Two dates were chosen, either June 12 or 13, because last year when such a huge crowd attended, the house almost burst at the seams! A total of 75 people attended during the two days. The organ is a 3/14 Wicks, with glass shutters that show off the inside of the organ chambers. The large music room also contains electronic organs and keyboards. When Dave was in the market for a new house, this one happened to be available, complete with the pipe organ already installed, and so he couldn't pass it up! As usual, Dave played a wonderful program with a special patriotic medley in honor of Flag Day... the following Monday. After his planned program Dave took requests. A professional singer, Erna Colum, who does radio and TV commercials in the Chicago area, was also in attendance. She sang a few numbers, with Dave's accompaniment. After an hour and a half of music, Dave and the group took a break for a potluck meal. Then, Dave was eager to play for us again and took requests for another hour before 'Open-Console' began. Dave's latest CD, "Sounds of Music," recorded on the 5/80 Wurlitzer at the Sanfilippo residence was also available. We thank Dave and Rhonda for their warm hospitality, with Dave greeting everyone as they parked their cars, and Rhonda's greetings to everyone when they walked in the door. It truly was another memorable day for Dairyland!

*Sandy Knuth*

## DELAWARE VALLEY

Harry Linn, President, 610/566-1764

**Media, Pennsylvania.** On May 8, Vincent Kling celebrated his 88th birthday with a bash at his estate in Chester Springs, Pennsylvania. Vince is the past President of our society. Food and drink were in great abundance for the many in attendance.

The musical highlight of the evening was organ genius Paul Richardson, organist for the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team (National League). He played two instruments at the same time, a Roland AT-70 organ with a Technics KN-7000 keyboard on top. He played many great tunes, some old, some new,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 59

## FABULOUS FOX WEEKEND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

# Sunday, May 30

Everyone had the opportunity to have a leisurely southern breakfast, and enjoy their surroundings in the company of old and new friends.



## Walt Strongy Workshop



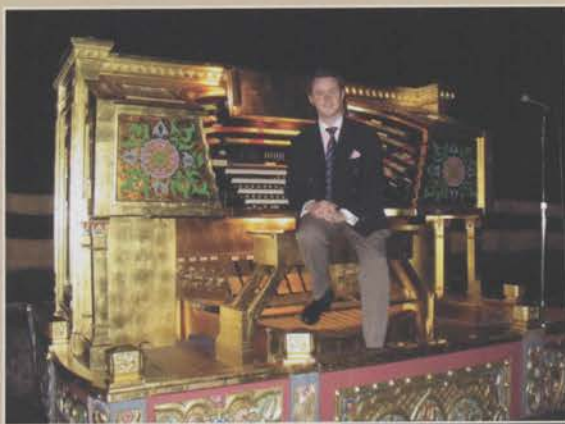
## Richard Hills Concert

Richard Hills was our next artist to preside over *Mighty Mo*, and his opening number was "Singin' in the Bathtub". Richard has a style all his own. He played a great variety of music, and he and the organ seemed as one. His amazing fingering on the Sidney Torch arrangement of "Sitting Pretty" left everyone spellbound. A medley of Rodgers & Hart music had everyone toe tapping, and the wonderful "Mexican Fire Dance" almost had them dancing in the aisles! For his closing number of the first half, Richard explained the story behind Eric Coats suite of the three Elizabeth's, entitled "Youth of



Britain”, and subtitled “Princess Elizabeth.” Richard then played it . . . Wow!

After intermission, Richard gathered steam to take all of us on another ride for the second half, opening with “Brazil.” He did a great medley of British folk songs and it was a pleasure to experience. His rendition of the Sidney Torch, “On A Spring Note” was superb. Richard provided us with a wonderful concert, ended by a well-deserved standing ovation. Magnificent job, Richard!

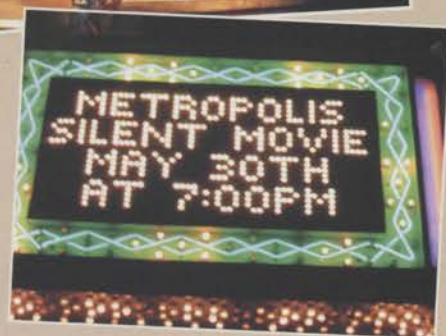


*Lyn Larsen in Allen Room*



## *Clark Wilson Silent Film - Metropolis*

Too soon our weekend of music came to a close. For our last event, Clark Wilson accompanied the fully restored black and white silent movie *Metropolis*. Also attended by the public, (including many youth) in addition to the FFOW group, it was an equally enjoyed treat for all. Clark's accompaniment techniques provide a seamless musical and visual experience, and tremendous excitement. Throughout the entire film, everyone sat in awe . . . hypnotized by the movie and the music that turbulently converged into an exciting finale. How electrifying! First class all the way! It was an historic event, a magical night, and a spellbinding experience. Thank you, Clark, for your tremendous music and a grand finale to a Fabulous Weekend!



# Open-Console

Jack Moelmann



Dolton McAlpin



Kevin Scott



Tom Hoehn



Avery Tunningley

Following the movie, the 'Open-Console' "Auction" winners had the rare opportunity to play Mighty Mo. All the bid proceeds went to the Atlanta Chapters Page Organ Project. Thanks for all those who bid, and congratulations to the winners!



Ft. Gus Franklin

## People who made the FFOW happen

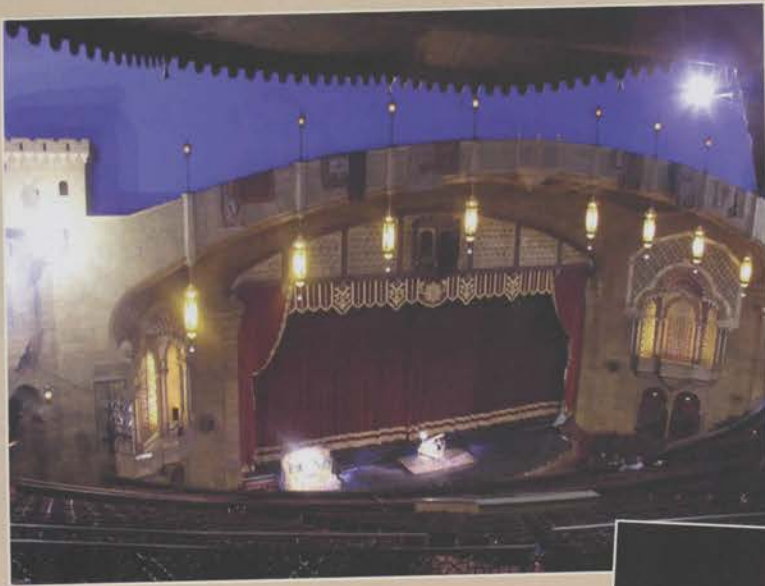


Left to Right Front Row:  
Michael Kinerk, John McCall, David Tuck, James Thrower, Ron Carter

Left to Right Back Row:  
Dennis Wilhelm, Danny Brooke, Liz Fields, Elbert Fields, Wanda Carey, Lee Lanier, Svetlana Satterlee, Ken Double, Donna Carter

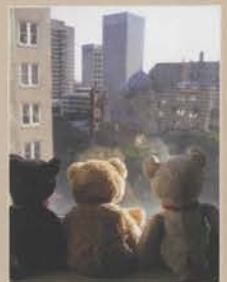
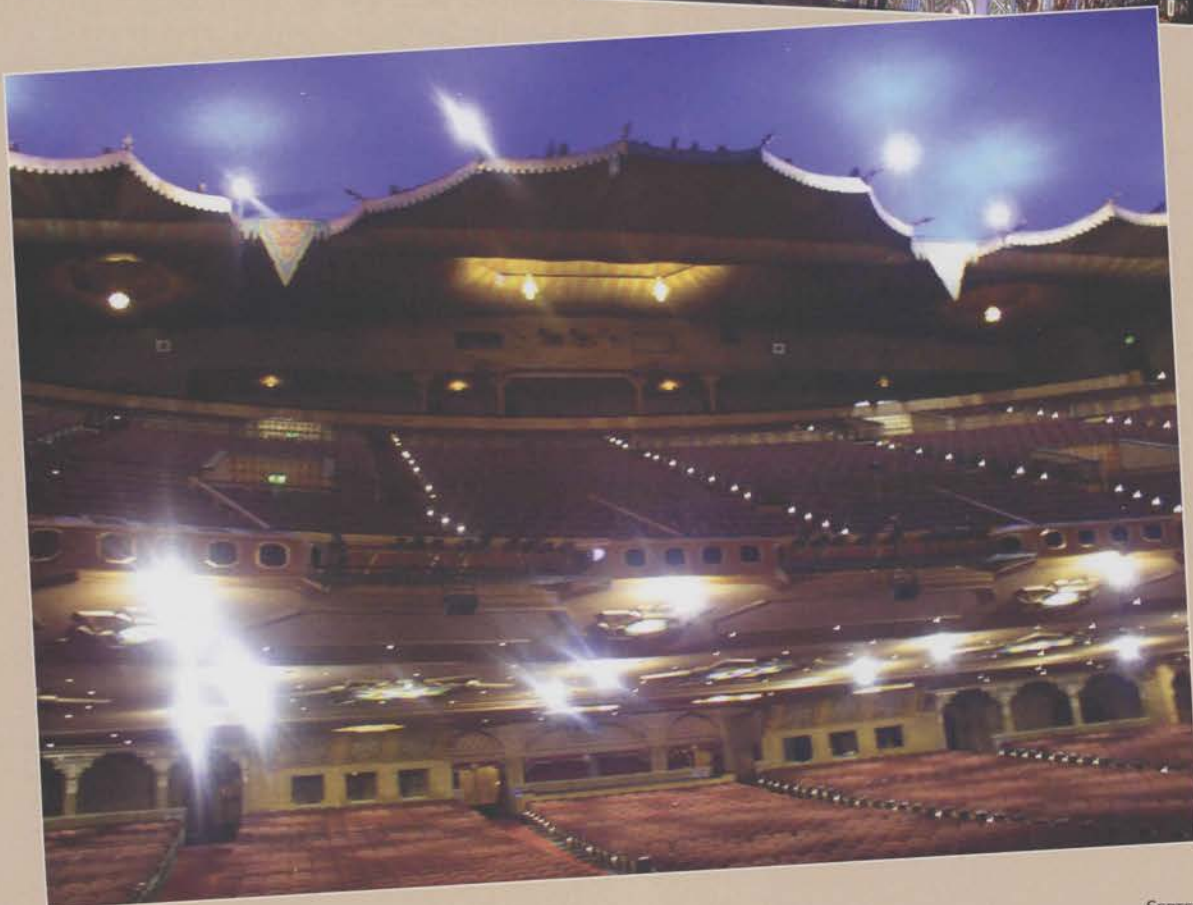
Inset:  
Bucky Reddish





The FFOW group worked very hard, and quite successfully provided over 600 attendees with a rare opportunity to step back and experience history, a wonderful hotel, theatre, and theatre organ. In sharing all this, with true southern hospitality, the Atlanta Chapter is a class act!

*Thank you for your  
very special gift.*



# A Grand Idea

The Long and Winding Road from the Michigan Theatre to the Grand Ledge

By Scott Smith\*

LTO ARCHIVES



3/21 Barton console surrounded by just a few of the LTO volunteer crewmembers. Counterclockwise: Bill Worthy, Pat Rider, Floyd Young, Scott Smith (seated), Roger Stone, Bob Preston, and George Gephart.

LTO ARCHIVES



Organist Stan Kann at the Michigan Theatre Barton, October 21, 1971.

The following story is really not so much a testament to an organ and a concert series, as it is about a determined little group that refused to give up in their quest for the perfect home.

My personal association with the core instrument goes back to our first meeting in October 1971. I had played a pipe organ for the first time only weeks before at the Senate Theatre in Detroit (the former Fisher Theatre 4/34 Wurlitzer). At the ripe old age of 16, I was suddenly smitten with the notion of playing and understanding what a theatre organ was as soon as I touched it. I had asked my organ teacher of six years, Mary Harrison about the Barton Organ in the Michigan Theatre in downtown Lansing on numerous occasions during our lessons. She had purposely started me out on the big Wurlitzer. Its refined sound and flawless working condition gave me a point of reference for a standard of excellence. Mary had cautioned me about the condition of the Barton, but stopped short of outright criticism. As fate would have it at that precise moment, I managed to overhear a portion of a conversation between my then-employer at a local music store and Lawrie Mallett, whom I knew to be in charge of the organ project at the theatre. The part I heard suggested that if anyone were interested in playing the organ at any time, they were to contact Lawrie. I was barely home before calling him with all of the youthful zeal you can imagine. Knowing he had a live one, Lawrie practically commanded me to be at the theatre that coming Sunday morning. There was to be a gathering of organists, and it would be a good time for all of us to get acquainted.

My memories of that cool, damp, overcast Sunday morning are still clear. My dad dropped me off shortly after 10 am. As I strolled up the steep walkway that led to the theatre arcade at the far end, I could hear the sound of the organ emanating from one of the open exit doors, just past the stage entrance. I quickly ducked in. My eyes cleared as I stood inside the door, and I could see the brilliant, refrigerator-white console stand out from the darkness of the drab theatre. Local nightclub organist Fred Northrup, who happened to own a small, modified Barton church organ in his home in nearby Mason was playing "You Oughta' Be In Pictures." I mused about what an oddly coincidental tune this was for a movie house organ. I can still remember vividly that the reiterating xylophone dominated his registration. For the uninitiated, Barton xylophones, with their hard rubber mallets are the musical equivalents of jackhammers in the reit mode. Soon, I discovered that this was a meeting of organ buffs and organists, some from as far away as Detroit; sort of a shakedown of the organ prior to a public showing of the 1925 silent film *Phantom of the Opera*, with organist

Stan Kann. The organ had been undergoing restoration since 1968, and, despite the fact that it really wasn't quite ready for prime time, the intrepid crew agreed to make it as ready as possible for the film. Kann had been contracted by Butterfield Theatres to perform this same film in all of its theatres throughout the state that retained their original organs, and there were many.

In spite of its demure size, I was a bit intimidated by the 3/11 Barton and the prospect of playing it cold before even a small crowd of experienced organists. Throughout the morning, Lawrie persisted in enticing me to play, but I kept putting him off. "I go on after the dog act," I said, nervously trying to kid my way out of it. I'm sure he was puzzled by my intense desire to be there, but not wanting to go on. Several people of varying abilities played as I listened intently throughout the morning hours. Suddenly, before I knew it, Lawrie had ended the proceedings by playing his signature tune. In a flash, reason overcame fear, and I boarded the console. I looked at the tabs quizzically and began playing. My first impression was the slowness of the sound in getting to my ears in comparison to the electronic organs I was used to. No wonder... the chambers were four levels above my head! Like most players, I eventually got used to it. I fumbled around for registrations that made sense, but nothing did. It seems that I played "Don't Blame Me," something safe with lots of whole notes and rests, so that I could think and play without too much pressure. I was dissatisfied with my performance, but everyone there made me feel comfortable. For years following my comment to Lawrie about when I went on, he referred to himself as "Dog Act." He apparently felt I had some promise. After several Saturday morning practice sessions, he asked if I would be willing to play a solo concert for the public. It was a real stretch, but, ready or not, the organ and I both had our big premiere on Sunday morning, August 27, 1972. Over five hundred people attended. Despite the widespread public exposure of the Kann performance almost a year prior, many of them came in disbelief that the organ was actually still there, much less in playing condition. It was the official beginning of my eight-year association with the organ in that location, nearly to the day.

Ed Corey and I joined the volunteer restoration crew in early 1973, doubling the efforts of the existing crew of George Gephart and Lawrie Mallett. There was always an ongoing, but polite disagreement between us regarding additions, but save for a 16' Tuba extension, the organ remained intact and unchanged, despite its obvious deficiencies. During the next eight years, we tried to do it all,

including intermissions, concerts and silent films. We ran *Phantom of the Opera* twice more with organist Dennis James... both times in midnight performances. The organ stayed in remarkably stable condition, in spite of a few roof leaks that found their way into the Solo chamber from time to time. One by one, over the period of the mid-70s, my fellow crewmembers all experienced personal and professional obligations that took them away from the theatre, and I reluctantly took charge. Under my hand, pipes were professionally regulated by Rick Swanson, who was fresh from his apprenticeship as a flue voicer at the Schantz Organ Company. The ever-talented Rick proved himself to be of immense help during this period, as he would again in the organ's new life in the Grand Ledge Opera House many years later. Cymbals were updated to 1970s standards and tremulants were lightened and sped up to perform more demanding music, not to mention the need to overcome the inadequacies of the puny main trunk line, left behind by the Möller Company.

The organ became a focal point for the potential purchase of the theatre by DaCapo, Inc. during its last four years of life as a movie theatre. The goal of the non-profit DaCapo (an Italian musical term, meaning "take it back to the beginning") was to recycle the theatre as a performing arts center, and to include office and performance spaces for all of the local arts groups out in the spacious arcade portion of the building. DaCapo's plan was to restore the entire complex back to its original 1921 eclectic decor, in styles ranging from French opera house to the Italian Renaissance, as envisioned by legendary architect John Ebersson and realized in a collaborative effort with theatre mogul "Colonel" W. S. Butterfield... truly a grand idea, in concept. Unfortunately, a faltering economy, plans for a new performing arts center well underway at nearby Michigan State University and an executive director who generated equal parts of public irritation and goodwill all kept us in perpetual limbo. Finally, the bubble burst Labor Day, 1980 when the doors of downtown Lansing's beloved Michigan Theatre closed forever. For some time, it had been no secret that Butterfield Theatres wanted out of their aging downtown theatres, and, despite DaCapo's consistent, but chronically stifled efforts to raise the needed funds for purchase, out-of-town developers surreptitiously bought the building on a once walk-through. Over the period of the next two weeks, audio engineer Fred Bruflodt recorded me playing many of the things that just

\*Scott Smith is an organist and organbuilder from Lansing, Michigan.

happened to be under my fingers at the moment. It was initially just for posterity, but later, in 1985, we edited the tapes that had languished for five years and sold them in cassette form as "Memories of the Michigan" over the next several years.

It had never occurred to me that Butterfield Theatres would give me any kind of say in the final disposition of the organ, but manager Walt Rekucki called and posed the question, "What do *you* want us to do with the organ?" After lobbying my fellow board members in the DaCapo organization, the non-profit group accepted donation of the Barton. The board gambled that the organ would give them a tangible foot in the door to potentially rent the theatre on a long-term basis, but it was to no avail. The rental quoted to DaCapo was outrageous, even in today's terms. It was clear that the new owners were intent on razing the auditorium to create a parking lot. Late in the summer of 1981, another call came from one of my fellow board members with the news we had all been dreading for nearly a year. The organ had to come out of the theatre. It was coming down. Sensing that this was a fateful moment, I assembled the persons who appeared to have the best interests of the organ at heart. In August of that year, Lansing Theatre Organ, Inc. was formed as a non-profit, cultural-educational organization whose purpose was the restoration and recycling of the Barton Organ as a concert worthy instrument. DaCapo was only too happy to sell the

organ to us for the tidy sum of \$1, and donated the rest of their financial assets to LTO as they bowed out of existence. It may have been worth only a dollar! By September 1981, a year of neglect from being locked out of the theatre allowed literally hundreds of gallons of water from unchecked roof leaks to wipe out a good share of the Solo Chamber.

Removing the organ was a difficult task, to say the least. Barton 206 Organ was the second of two instruments to play in the theatre. Opus 3001 Möller had been leased to Butterfield Theatres from the time of its opening in 1921 until the Barton entered in 1928. The Möller was most likely installed through the swell openings just prior to the theatre's opening, and later removed through holes punched into the stage firewall at chamber level. Following the Barton's installation, the holes were bricked back up. We chose not to reenact this historic removal method, for obvious reasons, when removing the Barton. Instead, all large components were reduced to their smallest dimension to fit through the access hole at the top of the Jacob's ladder on either side of the theatre, some just barely squeezing through. The warped and slimy six-rank vent chest in the Solo Chamber was filled with dozens of gallons of water, so it was reluctantly knocked apart and sent down the hole in pieces. Okay . . . maybe not so reluctantly. To assuage our collective guilty conscience, we would later recycle nearly this entire chest in many creative ways.

Just as the organ had narrowly escaped numerous fires throughout its life in the theatre (and later in storage), it also managed to attract water wherever it went. From chambers to the stage it went, where we organized everything to prepare for moving by truck. By now, the rain seemed to be incessant, having started well before the first night of our move. At one point, we noticed a leak from the stagehouse ceiling starting to drip heavily onto some of the organ components directly below. Within minutes after moving the same parts from one side of the stage to another, dryer location, the leak stopped where it had been and followed us wherever we went. No kidding. Something demonic seemed to be teasing us. The constant rain continued for days, into weeks. During our final few days in the theatre, part of the high-voltage electrical service had gone out, and the Barton lift had to be cranked by hand to get the console up to orchestra level. Even with the console removed, the lift was still no picnic to extract from the pit. Separating the top portion from the bottom reduced the overall weight enough to allow us to move it in two pieces.

On the last night, the console was the final piece to be moved. With no power, the sump pumps were unable to deal with the deluge of water that was coming in, and we literally pushed the console up the auditorium to the truck dock as the water quietly, but steadily filled the basement and edged its way up the auditorium floor, only feet from the console. Luckily, by now, the Barton lift

OAK HARBOR IMAGE



*The current console design is much expanded from the original, which began life as a "Butterfield Special." It had 100 tabs in place, of which only 50 actually worked! The Accompaniment and Great manuals had five pistons, and the Solo had three. Each manual also boasted (?) a Divisional Cancel, which inconveniently also cancelled the pedal stops when depressed... standard issue for Barton. Today, there are 212 tabs, 24 generals, and 33 divisional pistons, plus "Set" and "General Cancel." Restored to its historic color scheme, this may be the only Barton "circus wagon" console ever produced that had red side panels (normally gessoed gold) and the "goose egg" emblem applied, the latter of which were stolen early on in its existence.*

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## CHAPTER NEWS

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with the wonderful digital realism that these units provide. He ended his concert with the traditional ballgame number . . . root, root rooting for our home team Phillies, of course.

Paul also provided background music for a Latin dancing couple, Dr. Armin Foghi and wife Bogharta. They are a doctor and lawyer, respectively. They thrilled us with their acrobatic routine, as Bogharta seemed to fly through the air.

When darkness fell, Vince treated us to a super fireworks display. Our many thanks go to Vince for this wonderful party, we all wished him a Happy Birthday. Thanks also go to Paul Richardson for his splendid music, and to Dr. and Mrs. Foghi.

Work is proceeding on both of our two organs, the 3/19 Möller in the Keswick Theatre, Glenside, Pennsylvania, and the 3/23 Wurlitzer to be installed in the Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. There will be more news of these projects in future issues.

On June 20, we had a fun time at the Dickinson High School Auditorium in Wilmington, Delaware, featuring their famed 3/66 Kimball theatre pipe organ. The event was a bit of everything. First, there was a short concert by Michael Xavier Lundy. Michael is a recent gradu-



Paul Richardson entertains at Vince Kling's birthday party.

ate of Dickinson, and the school's official organist. He also plays professionally at churches in the Wilmington area, while attending West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania. He also is a member of our society. Michael played a variety of tunes, including a medley of service marches saluting our troops overseas.

Next, there was 'Open-Console' with Dick Metzger, yours truly, Tom Rotunno, Harry Linn, Marshall Ladd, and others, all trying their hand at this wonderful instrument. All sounded terrific, with the exception of myself. Various musical



Michael Xavier Lundy at the Dickinson 3/66 Kimball.

pieces were represented. During this period, Bob Dilworth, President of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, conducted a tour of the instrument chambers. It was a wonderful opportunity to see the innards of this unique organ.

Everyone had a great time, and refreshments were served in the lobby. Many thanks go to Bob and Mary Ann Dilworth, Michael Xavier Lundy, and The Dickinson Theatre Organ Society and crew for their hospitality in having us, and to Tom Rotunno for the refreshments.

Dick Auchincloss

*The best ability  
is dependability*

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## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Bob Evans, President, 508/674-0276  
organloft@mediaone.net

**Wellesley, Massachusetts.** On May 1, EMCATOS enjoyed the remarkable British organist Simon Gledhill for the first time, at the Richard Knight Auditorium, Babson College. The stage appropriately had both an American and British flag thereon to show kinship. The U.S. does not have a monopoly of fine theatre organists. Simon produced a variety of tones from his combinations not often heard, and he has a distinctive style, which can readily be identified as "S.G.'s." He played a great variety of selections including medleys from Broadway hits of the past, light opera, and novelty numbers. Here is a young man, a professional in the banking field that is equally competent in a 'second' career as an organist. His coordination of hands and feet were remarkable — no easy accomplishment. Mr. Gledhill received a deserved long-standing applause, which rewarded us with two encores to end a fine concert.

Our Chapter's President, Robert Evans, covered the Gledhill concert on May 2 at the Shanklin Music Hall in Groton, and he submitted the following: "The best theatre organist on the planet!" "How many hands does this guy have?" These were some of the comments the writer overheard during intermission. Simon Gledhill came to Shanklin Music Hall and made the 4/34 Wurlitzer his own! The combination of a world-class musician and a world-class theatre pipe organ made for an afternoon long to be remembered. Simon offered something for everyone's musical palate. Most outstanding, in this listener's opinion, was his tribute to Judy Garland, 'A Garland of Judy' with tunes so identified with her. Every piece was played magnificently. The audience, the artist, and the magnificent Shanklin Music Hall Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ . . . it doesn't get much better than this!

*Stanley Gamiss*

## GARDEN STATE

Don Hansen, President, 718/356-3175  
nesnah@aol.com

**Trenton, New Jersey.** A special Memorial service to honor Robert Balfour took place in the Union County Arts Center on Sunday May 23. Bob Balfour was an outstanding member, and was the first President of Garden State Theatre Organ Society. Through the years, Bob was a mentor helping our



*Edward Baykowski at 'Biggest Little' Wurlitzer for Robert Balfour Memorial.*

chapter with letters of encouragement when needed.

Bob had two important loves, one was the famous 'Biggest Little' 2/7 Wurlitzer which is an original installation in the Rahway Theatre, now The Union County Arts Center. He would spend hours working and maintaining the Wurlitzer. The theatre was like a home away from home. When the movie theatre failed, and was destined to become a parking lot, Bob convinced the community and encouraged the town of Rahway, and saved it! Our officers, President Don Hansen, Vice President Greg Klingler, Treasurer Bill Furcht and Secretary Fran Monte had chosen the UCAS as the perfect theatre to have a memorial. Sunday May 23 was a cool day. Members, friends, and workers gathered in the theatre, at the foot of the stage, where the famous 2/7 Wurlitzer stands. All were remembering, and thinking back to all the excellent concerts and super silent films that Bob had arranged.

President Don Hansen invited those in attendance to have a minute of silence in memory of Bob. A short closing chord covered Bob's professional radio engineering career, and his talent when recording concerts professionally. Bob's second love was the Wonder Morton, being installed in Loew's Journal Square Theatre in Jersey City. He was also producing a CD of the late Lee Erwin, playing the Wonder Mortons in New York City. But his greatest wish was to hear the Wonder Morton at the Loew's Journal Square Theatre play. Unfortunately, Bob's health continued to fail, and that was not to be.

In closing the memorial service, a beautiful concert on the beloved 2/7

Wurlitzer was performed by a very talented member, and good friend of Bob's, Edward Baykowski. His program was varied with well-known music, and the ending tribute of "My Buddy" and "Softly as I Leave You" caused tears in my eyes and a lump in my throat. Ed received an emotionally gratifying round of applause for his most affectionate tribute to Bob. An open buffet, supplied by our Chapter, was provided to members and guests. Our appreciation was extended to Bernie Anderson, who made the arrangements with the theatre, President Don Hansen and Greg Klingler for the buffet, and a special thank you to Ed Baykowski for his music.

Saturday, June 12, was a special day, as an invitation was given to Garden State Chapter and New York Theatre Organ Society by Bob Dilworth, leader of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, to spend a full day of 'Open-Console', mini concerts, and chamber tours. The main attraction was the famous 3/66 Kimball, placed in the auditorium of the John Dickinson High School in Wilmington Delaware.

Saturday found eager organists and members arriving at the venue, and a quick sign up for 'Open-Console' started to fill. During the leisurely afternoon every organist had the opportunity to play this wonderful large pipe organ. Bob Dilworth and assistants gave interesting chamber tours, and we were amazed at the huge 16' Diaphone pipes on the stage. A break for lunch had everyone enjoying food, drink and conversation, and then it was back to the wonderful music until 6:30 pm. It was a tremendous day, and many, many thanks go to Bob Dilworth, the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, Greg Klingler, and Tom Stehle for arranging the day.

*Jimny Vanore*

## HUDSON-MOHAWK

Frank Hackert, Chairman  
518/355-4523

**Schenectady, New York.** May and June typically signify the end of the season for the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter, since no further meetings or concerts are held until September. As usual, the May 24 chapter general meeting was the final organized meeting, and was held at Proctors Theatre in Schenectady, the home of *Goldie* the wonderful 3/18 Wurlitzer. At that event, sparsely attended due to inclement weather, the election of officers for the 2004-05 season was conducted. The elected representatives are: Chair: Frank Hackert, Vice-Chair: Lucy



David Lester, Ned Spain, and Robert Frederick at June Picnic.



Al Moser at the noontime organ concert with 'Goldie'.

DelGrosso, Secretary: Maude Dunlap, and Treasurer: Marion Hackert. Non-elected board members include: Membership: Bill Revell, By-Laws: Carl Hackert, Newsletter Editor: Stan Jones, Technicians: Richard Calderwood and Harold Russell, ATOS Contact: Norene Grose, and contributing members David Lester and Helen Menz.

The weather in upstate New York cooperated greatly for the chapter's June picnic. This gathering serves as an informal end to the season for club members. This year the event was held on June 12 at the lovely Salem home of Ted and Betty Wood. Ted has an impressive in-home 3/20 Wurlitzer that was available for 'Open-Console'. Tom and Betty have hosted the picnic many times in the past. Great thanks go to the Wood's for being such gracious hosts.

The 2003-04 series of free noontime organ concerts at Proctors Theatre concluded with the May and June programs. On May 18, organist Al Moser organized a wonderful program featuring his artistry on *Goldie*, with vocalists Theresa Bruno, Jan Bornheim, and Janet Stasio, as well as violinist Ken DeNoble. Al's

varied programs are always fun to experience, and wonderfully appreciated by the audience. The series concluded on June 22 with organist Robert Frederick, and with special participation by wife Dorothy. Their program was much enjoyed by the audience.

As a functioning picture palace, as well as concert/show venue, Proctors Theatre screens a great number of movies during the year. On many occasions, chapter members contribute their time and skill to playing *Goldie* for 30 minutes before the film begins. This introduces many teatrogoers to the organ, and provides interest in the instrument for a new audience. Thanks to Ned Spain, Carl Hackert, Avery Tunningley, Al Moser, David Lester, and Gene Zilka for sharing their artistic gifts with the film-going audience.

In the area of member concerts, Avery Tunningley continues to cement his growing expertise and reputation as a silent film accompanist with presentations in many venues. He originated, and played organ accompaniment for, a silent film series at Union Presbyterian Church in Schenectady, New York,

which recently concluded its first season with a 1918 Mary Pickford selection. He introduced a silent short film with organ as part of the Proctors Theatre movie preludes and received rave reviews for his silent movie presentation at the Capitol Theatre in Rome, New York on June 5.

Members of the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter had a wonderful experience in Atlanta, Georgia over Memorial Day weekend. Frank Hackert, Marion Hackert, Avery Tunningley, and Norene Grose attended the Fabulous Fox Weekend; and 'fabulous' indeed it was. The Fox Theatre was exquisite, and the Mighty Möller a joy to hear. Avery had the rare opportunity to experience the instrument upon a successful bid at a fund-raising auction. Kudos to the Atlanta chapter for putting on such a wonderful program!

On a somber note, the chapter regrets the passing, in June, of long-time member Merrill Locke. He worked to save the Syracuse New York Fairgrounds Wurlitzer, before moving to the Albany area with his wife Jeannine. He was a founder of the Hudson Mohawk Chapter, and

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helped underwrite theatre organ programs and the Allen Mills Artist-in-Residence program at Proctors Theatre. Merrill was an officer and annual banquet chairman of the club. A renovated seat at the theatre was donated in his memory. His wit, musical sense, enthusiasm for theatre organ, and fine cigars will be sorely missed. As a decorated US Army Medic in WWII, he was interred in the Saratoga National Cemetery with full military honors.

Norene Grose

## JATOE

Jim Patak, President, 708/562-8538

Joliet, Illinois. The weekend of April 24 will certainly bring fond memories. The 8th Annual Rialto Extravaganza was another huge success. Theatre pipe organ enthusiasts were in musical heaven from the first strains of the Rialto Barton Grande to the final notes of the Sanfilippo Mighty Wurlitzer. The overall sound of the Barton of the newly-regulated tibia on which JATOE Member LeRoy Petry spent many man hours adjusting the wind pressure on this rank Broken wires, bad pouches, and computer problems were corrected in time prior to the performance.

Performances by Jelani Eddington, Ron Rhode, Rob Richards, and Dave Wickerham earned well-deserved standing ovations for their unique arrangements and selections. Cheers of "BRAVO!" permeated the auditorium.

Attendance figures numbered 1300 people at the theatre. Theatre organ



Regional artist Gilles Bruyere, Winifrea, Julie Bruyere, Jim Hopkins, Godfrey Fisher and singing-along meister Ken Sigsworth at the Kingston 3/28 Kimball.

enthusiasts from 13 states and as far away as Vancouver, British Columbia passed the doors.

On the following day, approximately 300 people gathered at the Victorian Palace in Barrington Hills. Our congenial hosts, Jasper & Marion Sanfilippo, dusted off the proverbial red carpet and made us feel genuinely welcome. Ron Rhode and Dave Wickerham graced the immense 5/80 Wurlitzer, adding more fuel to our passion of theatre organ. Following their outstanding performances, a short walk down the driveway to the carousel barn, it was time for refreshments. Some attendees were fortunate to have experienced a ride on the ornate merry-go-round.

Although it has been said many times over and over; it never seems to be enough: "Thank You!" Thank you to the Rialto management for a memorable event, Bob Walker for presenting the Midwest premiere of his 5-manual organ, all the artists for sharing their God-given talents with us, the Sanfilippo Family for their unending hospitality, and you for attending this history-making event.

Yes, there will be Extravaganza #9. Mark your calendars now! Saturday, April 30, 2005, 8pm.

I wonder if the U.S. Postman's Motto applies here?! "Neither storm or dark of night shall keep me from my appointed rounds!" On Sunday, May 30, approximately 55 diehard theatre organ enthusiasts braved the elements to attend JATOE's monthly social. It was a soggy afternoon filled with severe thunderstorm, tornado, flashflood watches and warnings throughout the Joliet area. Our guest artist for the day was John Lauter from the Motor City area. Certainly, John made it easy to forget our cares and woes and the "sogginess" outside. His music made it warm and cozy inside.

John's repertoire leaned toward to show tunes and some seldom heard selections; all played tastefully and well-thought out. He brought out some interesting colors from the Barton's unique stoplist. Refreshments and 'Open-Console' concluded the afternoon's festivities.

Jim Koller

## KINGSTON

Dr. W.G.G. Fisher, President  
613/634-1242

Kingston, Ontario. This has been a pivotal season for theatre organ in Kingston, with our concert attendance zooming, from a previous average 48 percent of capacity to a most encouraging 97 percent at the season's last two concerts. It seemed natural to attribute April's jump in attendance to the international reputation of the artist, Simon Gledhill, but then it happened again in May for our season finale, featuring newcomer (and a Canadian at that) Peter

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Town Crier Chris Whyman introduces Simon Gledhill to the Kingston audience.

KEITH BALDWIN



*Ken Rosen at the console, demonstrating organ stops.*

Hansen. Credit must therefore go to the increased attention paid to advertising and promotion this past season, a major effort inspired in part by articles in THEATRE ORGAN by Ken Double and Scott Smith. Ken, incidentally, has been booked as one of our visiting artists for 2004-5.

The Simon Gledhill concert was billed as a thank-you to the City of Kingston, for underwriting our season-long publicity campaign, and was attended by the Mayor and City Councilors. Simon was introduced by the Town Crier with hand-bell pealing, decked out in full colorful regalia. This event also featured the first public look at our new Videotron system, giving our audience a clear view of the keyboard and pedal action projected in real time on a large screen . . . a welcome change from seeing little but the organist's back. This innovation is also a boon to amateur organists, who can see for the first time how the professionals get some of those spectacular effects.

Another interesting event featured no less than six performers from our own region, ranging in age from student to

KEITH BALDWIN



*Members Chuck Karayan and sister Vivian Karayan and Jim McEwan.*

octogenarian, including the father-daughter team of Gilles and Julie Bruyere . . . both played the Kimball, and then Julie sang to her father's organ accompaniment.

*Frank Pratt*

## LATOS

Don Near, President, 714/539-8934  
donnear@cox.net

Los Angeles, California. Ken, Jenice and Charlie Rosen hosted a LATOS general membership picnic and 'Open-Console' at their home in Chatsworth on July 3. Ken is the proud owner of a two-manual Wurlitzer theatre organ, housed in a separate building he

KEITH BALDWIN



*Member Kevin King and sons just before boys enjoyed swim in pool.*

KEITH BALDWIN



*Members David Godson and Esther Pineda.*

KEITH BALDWIN



*Time out for food. Others were still at the Rosen Roxy, listening to Wurlitzer.*

KEITH BALDWIN



*Members Jamie Elam and Dennis Bertwell.*

designed behind his home, dubbed the 'Rosen Roxy'.

While relaxing at tree-shaded tables on their lawn and patio overlooking a sparkling pool, members and guests enjoyed a delicious potluck picnic. After eating far too much, we retired to the Roxy to enjoy 'Open-Console'.

The air-conditioned Roxy seats more than 80, and it looked to be standing room only at times during the afternoon. We enjoyed mini concerts by several local artists, along with some very fine turns on the bench by our own members and guests.

The weather was pleasant, not too warm, and we all had a fine opportunity to socialize and compare notes about some of our favorite tunes, and listen to them played on Ken's fine theatre organ. Our thanks go to the Rosens for their generous hospitality.

Progress is continuing on the installation of the Crotty Wurlitzer in South Pasadena High Auditorium. Peter Crotty, who donated the organ to LATOS, is the project director, and the Gaylord Carter Memorial Fund was established by LATOS to raise funds for professional installation of what promises to be a state of the art instrument.



*Ian House and Richard Openshaw at the console.*

In addition to the three-manual console, the organ will have an electronic relay system with record/playback features to provide a good teaching aid, and to make the organ playable before school programs. With MIDI capability, the instrument will perform not only in the traditional theatre organ style, but will also allow students to add some of the modern sounds they desire.

*Char Hopwood*

## **LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND**

Ian Ridley, President  
ridley@atos-london.freemove.co.uk

Woking Leisure Centre  
Saturday May 15, 2004  
Organists: Ian House &  
Richard Openshaw

This concert is an annual event, where we feature the previous year's winner of our Young Theatre Organist of the Year Competition, sharing a concert with one of our previously established young organists. Our winner last year was Ian House, who comes from the Downend area of Bristol. Ian's experience on a pipe organ began only three weeks before winning last year's competition, and in the last six months he has worked very hard to build a programme for this concert. Just before the concert, we learned that he had won the Junior Division of the ATOS International Competition and would be going to the convention in Milwaukee to compete for the Overall title.

Richard Openshaw comes from the North East of England, where he often plays the fine Wurlitzer installation at Howden-le-Wear in County Durham. He won our competition in 1995, and in 1997 won the Senior Division of the ATOS International Competition and

was invited to play at the Annual Convention in Indianapolis.

Richard got our concert off to a flying start, with a well-known wartime number from Eric Coates and continued with music from films, which included Disney's *Pinocchio*, a Jerome Kern number from *Swingtime*, and two tunes from the pen of Harry Warren. The music of Sidney Torch has inspired many of our young organists, and Richard is no exception, so we were treated to a haunting number written by Torch for a 1950's film called *Dave & Dusty*. He concluded his first contribution with a tribute to Reginald Dixon. He played a Symphonic Fox-Trot by Carl Robrecht, since this is his centenary year, which was popularised and recorded by Dixon at the Tower Ballroom Blackpool.

Ian House, who is now just 15 years old, then came to the console for his first contribution, and it was obvious that he had not been resting on his laurels since last year's competition, but had worked hard to improve his skills on the theatre organ even more. He started with a rousing number from the musical based on the life of P. T. Barnum, then included music from the *Commodores*, a piece written by George Blackmore, and some light classical music. Ian then went on to feature the music of Ronald Binge, who wrote much of the music for Mantovani's cascading strings. Leroy Anderson, that ever-popular composer was next featured, and to take us up to the intermission, Ian gave us a lively march from the show *The Music Man*.

After the intermission Richard returned to the console with music from Bernie Wayne, which was popularised by George Wright on his recording at the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer in the '70s. He continued with some Ivor Novello, and then went on to a typically English piece of music from the pen of Roger Quilter, which had a very Edwardian sound. A wonderful Rodgers and Hart selection closed his final contribution to the concert. The audience would not let him go without an encore.

Ian returned to the console for his final contribution, and gave us a wonderful medley from the show *Oliver*. He continued with a wide range of music, including haunting ballads, British television title themes, Latin American, Marches, and for an encore a superbly performed Polka. Again the audience was very appreciative indeed. Our MC brought both young men back for a final bow and it was some time before the audience could be quieted.

There is no doubt that we in Britain



*John Mann at the console.*

are very fortunate to have such a thriving collection of young, brilliant and active theatre organists. For those of us who give our time to preserve, maintain and present these instruments, it is extremely encouraging.

**Memorial Theatre, Barry**  
**Sunday May 23, 2004**  
**Organist: John Mann**

John has been on the organ scene many years, and his popularity just goes on growing. He has a very active and thriving fan club and I'm sure many of them had travelled to South Wales this Sunday to attend his concert. The audience was further enhanced by a large group of our members, primarily from the South East of England, who were just completing a five-day educational theatre organ trip to the West Country by coach. So, it was before a much larger audience than usual that John brought the cream and gold Christie console up to tremendous applause. He gave us a fabulous concert, which included a very wide and comprehensive selection of music. We were treated to music from the shows and films — always theatre organ favourites. We had rousing marches, nostalgic radio signature tunes, and music from Spain, as well as Latin American numbers. In the interval John chatted to his many fans over a cup of tea, and in the second half we were treated to more wonderful music. Coming from Brighton on the south coast, John brought his concert to a close with a selection of music with a seaside theme, which included his signature tune. The audience was very appreciative indeed, and of course we had to have an encore. This was truly a concert to remember at Barry, and for those of us on the coach tour, it was a talking point all the way home.



Dr. Arnold Loxam and his wife Audrey.

**Kilburn State Theatre**  
**Sunday June 6, 2004**  
**Organist: Dr. Arnold Loxam**

Since my wife and I were in America for the "Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend," (and it was fabulous) information for this report was compiled by Veronica Trott, our Treasurer.

It was appropriate that on the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings, we should have an organist who saw service in World War II. Arnold has been on the theatre organ scene for a great number of years now, and at the age of 88, is still going strong and producing wonderful performances. So a concert at the State Theatre Kilburn in the heart of London, on the very anniversary day, was right up Arnold's street.

It was a wonderfully nostalgic event. We had well chosen music to pay tribute to the men of Air Force, the Navy, and

the Army. Popular music of the day was also represented, with music from music hall, the shows and Gilbert & Sullivan comic operas. Arnold then produced an unusual selection of tunes with birds or bird's names in the title — it was surprising how many there were. Since it is the 100th anniversary of the birth of that well-known organist Reginald Dixon this year, Arnold played a wonderful tribute to him in celebration. He then rounded off the first half with his version of what he called "Storm at Sea" as a further tribute to the D Day landings. Quite appropriate, as I believe it was indeed stormy on that day in 1944!

Arnold started the second half with music from the *Poet and Peasant*, and went on to include novelty numbers, one of his famous 'Rhythm Selections' that display his wonderful pedal work, and a clever selection of songs to celebrate Father's Day, which also happens this month. To end the concert, he played a selection of ten well-known wartime favourites, and after a dynamic 'foot flying' encore Arnold finished, as would have been the case in those days, with the National Anthem. This was a great afternoon of theatre organ entertainment, which included every type of music, and it was a great pleasure for all the audience to be able to hear an organist age 88 pay tribute to his own generation on such a day.

**Woking Leisure Centre**  
**Saturday June 19, 2004**  
**Organist: Brian Sharp**

Brian has been a regular and popular organist on both pipes and electronic for many years. For most of the last 20 years he has been musical director and resident organist on the 3/15 Christie at the

Sandford Park Holiday Complex near Poole in Dorset.

Over the years, he has developed something unique in organ entertainment by skillfully combining theatre organ with extra pre-recorded electronic accompaniment. This allows him to produce a more enhanced performance, and a greater experience for the audience, than can be achieved with two hands and feet alone. I have to say that our Woking audience really took to this technique and loved it!

Brian started off with a rousing march in which the electronic input played a part, and then went into a wonderful selection from the musical *The King and I*, followed by a beautiful ballad, all this without electronics. The first half continued with military marches, Strauss waltzes, some Latin American and a well-known marching hymn tune. He provided plenty of contrast, sometimes including electronics and sometimes not.



Brian Sharp at the console.

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*Dwight Thomas at the console.*

THURMAN ROBERTSON



*Mark Hermann at the console.*

The second half brought more of the same great music . . . with marches, Latin American again, and a great contribution to the music and style of Edmundo Ross. Another hymn tune, more Strauss waltzes and haunting ballads, which included some very sensitive and lovely use of the electronics, all well appreciated by the audience. He finished with a well-known light classical number, but as you can imagine we had to have an encore. So after our MC had thanked Brian, and everyone concerned, we were treated to a fantastic closing number which started with church organ sounds played purely on the Wurlitzer and built up to include some extra wonderful elec-

tronic accompaniment for the finish. This was absolutely tremendous, and the audience gave tumultuous applause to such an extent that I thought we may have to have yet another encore! It is some time since Brian had played for us at Woking, and there is no doubt that his unique performance captured the imagination of the audience, such that we had repeated requests for him to perform there again in the near future.

## MANASOTA

Charles Pierson, President  
941/924-0674

**Sarasota, Florida.** Dr. John Landon, talented organist and author of the book, "Jesse Crawford, Poet of the Organ; Wizard of the Mighty Wurlitzer," was our guest artist on April 18. Dr. Landon now resides in Florida, and he graciously agreed to speak about Jesse and Helen Crawford. Dr. Landon has a very large collection of 78-rpm records and visual materials from the golden age of theatre organ. He not only played selections of Jesse Crawford's original recordings, but we saw a wonderful slide show with many interesting pictures of the Crawford family and Jesse's publicity photos. Dr. Landon showed rare sheet music covers and talked about several of the songs, some of them lesser known, that Crawford recorded. He then played them in the 'Crawford' style on our 4/32 Wurlitzer, giving us all a new appreciation for Jesse Crawford.

The very talented Dwight Thomas presented an All American Concert on Sunday, May 30. Dwight Thomas is one of the superb organists at "The Roaring Twenties Pizza and Pipes" in Ellenton, Florida. This was the first time that Dwight had concertized on the Forker Wurlitzer, and given the audience response, we're sure that we shall be hearing him again. This is the second year that Manasota has presented a Memorial Day concert, so to speak, although this is considered the 'off season' in Sarasota, in that most of the tourists have headed back north, Dwight's program was a great success, and it appears that this will become an annual event, eagerly looked forward to by our ever-growing audience. Dwight entertained his audience not only with spirited marches, patriotic songs, and up-tempo fox trots, but he showed off the beautiful Wurlitzer stops in his dreamy ballads. As one dear lady enthusiastically remarked, "That young man is not only easy on the ears, but easy on the eyes." Needless to say, Dwight has now

acquired many new fans, not only for himself, but also for our upcoming programs. And if audience appreciation and hand clapping are any indication, Dwight should issue a new CD as soon as possible.

Mark Herman, a young artist from Fort Wayne, Indiana, played our Father's Day program on June 20. Several of our MTOS members heard Mark play a cameo performance at the Berkeley Community Theatre, Berkeley, California, during the 2003 ATOS Annual Convention. They were so impressed that it was decided to quickly extend an invitation to Mark to fly to Sarasota to perform. Fortunately, he and his teacher agreed to accept. Mark is 16 years old and what a talent. His organ teacher is John Ferguson, noted teacher of Jelani Eddington, Barry Baker, and Dwight Thomas. Everyone who heard Mark agreed that he is going to be our next 'star.' Not only does Mark play well, but he has an engaging smile and personality. He became an instant hit with his listeners. Mark is not only a good arranger, but like Dwight, Jelani, and Barry, he has 'the gift.' He has rhythm, plays musically, and is filled with youthful enthusiasm. One can see that he thoroughly enjoys sharing his talent with his audience, and they sense this. Incidentally, Mark is also a fine pianist, and he demonstrated this by graciously playing a solo on the 9' Steinway. Keep this young man in mind for future bookings.

*Jim Weisenborne*

## NEW YORK

Bernard Anderson, Chairman  
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**New York, New York.** On Saturday May 22, the New York Chapter presented organist John Baratta in concert at New York Military Academy in Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York. John took advantage of the vast resources of the Academy's 4/33 Mighty Möller, and demonstrated his outstanding musical talent with a program that featured a wide range of popular music arranged for the theatre organ, as well as several classical pieces. Pointing out that the audience had come to listen to music rather than to hear him talk, John presented a delightful program that consisted primarily of medleys, mostly of tunes from a wide variety of Broadway shows, past, and present. Toe-tapping selections of music by Jerry Herman and Cole Porter, lush orchestral arrangements of Richard Rodgers favorites, and Broadway classics

TOM STEHLE



Organist John Baratta at the New York Military Academy 4/33 Möller.

by Gershwin, Berlin, Sondheim, Weber, and Bernstein, among others, made for a delightful tour of Broadway and a wonderful afternoon of theatre organ music. It was clear from their response that the audience thoroughly enjoyed John's program and performance. Thanks to Lowell Sanders and Tom Stehle, the Möller was in fine tune and was concert ready. Thanks also to Calvin Fenton, John Valentino, and Allan France for their production assistance.

On June 12, New York and Garden State Chapter members joined together for a visit to Dickinson High School in

TOM STEHLE



New York Chapter member Mike O'Brien tries his hand at 'Open-Console' on Dickinson HS 3/66 Kimball.

Wilmington, Delaware. NYTOS and GSTOS were invited by the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society to enjoy their magnificent 3/66 Dickinson Kimball for a full day of 'Open-Console', mini-concerts, chamber tours, and the good company of fellow theatre organ enthusiasts. Bob Dilworth and other DTOS members were gracious hosts, leading us on tours through the entire organ, answering any and all technical questions, and arranging lunch for everyone. Although attendance as not as great as we had anticipated, and we were not able to run a bus as planned, those who drove or carpooled certainly enjoyed a wonderful day of theatre organ activities, and the thrill of playing one of the world's finest theatre organs. Thanks to Bob Dilworth and the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society for their invitation and warm hospitality, and to Greg Klingler from Garden State and Mike O'Brien from New York for their efforts in arranging the day's activities.

## NORTH TEXAS

Earl McDonald, President  
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Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. North Texas Chapter held our June meeting in the Criswell College Auditorium. This was our first use of the facilities since signing the contract with Criswell College, providing for our chapter's use of the auditorium and the 5/39 Wicks organ. The organ, while not a 'theatre' organ, has tonalities and other capabilities that lend to the interpretation of typical theatre organ literature. These include rich Strings and String Celestes, tremulants on some ranks, and all ranks in chambers with individually controlled swell shades on all chambers. The stops are in arrays on both sides of the console, and use tablets rather than draw knobs. The organ is well suited to the large size of the auditorium.

We were delighted that our own Danny Ray agreed to play the organ program for us on this instrument. The multi-talented Mr. Ray has a long association with our chapter and the theatre organ, having played on many instruments in concert. He is also a composer and arranger, and is associated with the Turtle Creek Chorale where he utilizes all of his talents, including singing and accompanying.

Danny playfully labeled his program "Heroine Addiction - Rodgers and Hammerstein Ladies." Naturally, his selections were all songs associated with these

ladies of Broadway and the movies. Included were medleys from *Oklahoma* and *South Pacific*. The sounds that came out great on this Wicks organ under Danny's deft touch, were well orchestrated. With just a little arm-twisting, we were glad to see several of our members and guests give this unfamiliar instrument a work out during 'Open-Console'.

Plans are getting underway to have several public programs in this facility, including at least two with popular silent movies. Volunteers were solicited to help in these plans.

Those hard workers of the 'breakfast club' have been working to complete some of the restoration work that had to be sidelined due to the removal and storing of the Cook organ, and work on the Wicks organ in preparation for our meetings in the Criswell College auditorium.

IRVING LIGHT



Danny Ray and Lew Williams played a Crawford organ duet... four hands/one organ.

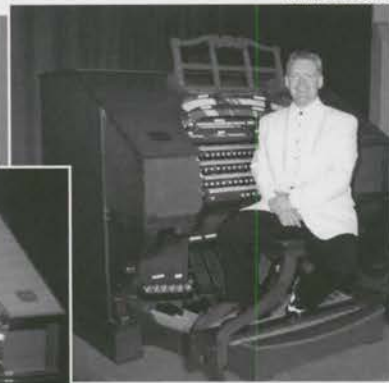
IRVING LIGHT



Lew Williams was a surprise guest at June meeting of NTC.



RANDY-PHOTO



Chris Elliott at the console.

RANDY-PHOTO



Chris Elliott on June 20.

Completion of the Solo Chamber work on the E.M. Johnson residence Wurlitzer is now nearly finished, and we hope to hear it being played for chapter meetings soon.

At one of the breakfast club sessions at the Johnson residence, Danny Ray was invited to give it a try before they started work in the chamber. They report that Danny played for well over an hour, and was finding beautiful tonalities. Everyone was enthralled at what they were hearing after the many hours of devoted work in the restoration. Way to go, guys (and gals)!!

Irving Light

## ORANGE COUNTY

Ed Bridgeford, Chairman  
714/529-5594

**Fullerton, California.** Chris Elliot was our featured artist at the June 20 concert.

We added this concert to our schedule to include a full-length silent film, compared to the short comedies we normally feature. Chris is especially skilled at silent film accompaniment, which requires a special kind of music that supports the film but does not distract from it. Our movie was *The Navigator*, featuring Buster Keaton and considered one of his best; our audience was large and very enthusiastic, both for the on screen comedy and Chris's talent at the console.

We have rescheduled Don Thomson to play at our summer 'Open-Console' on August 21. He was to have performed last December, but the organ was unavailable due to a technical problem.

Bob Trousdale is continuing the project of creating a complete set of replace-

KEITH BALDWIN



Members Jeff and Sharon Fowlson.

ment circuit boards for the organ, as well as replacing existing boards that lack gold plated edge connectors, which will improve their reliability of performance.

Members of Orange County joined a LATOS sponsored day trip to Catalina Island on June 26, for the presentation of *The Iron Mask*, one of the last silent films starring Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.

The Page Theatre Pipe Organ was in good tune, and accompanied the film with Bob Salisbury at the console. Bob has many years of history performing in the renown Casino Building in Avalon, Catalina Island. The weather was ideal, and all had a fine time.

Upcoming concerts at Plummer Auditorium include Stan Kann and Charlie Lester, (would you believe, at the Therman) on September 12, and Scott Foppiano on November 14.

Jim Merry

## PIKES PEAK

Dave Weesner, President, 719/632-9539  
dnwdwa@aol.com

**Colorado Springs, Colorado.** On May 23, the Pikes Peak Chapter, along with the Veteran's Motor Car Club of Colorado Springs, held a joint social at Mt. St. Francis Auditorium. The featured organist for the day was resident organist Bob Lillie. Bob played several



We met at the bow of the Queen Mary for our Catalina Express boat departure.

KEITH BALDWIN



Wayne Flottman and Jim Dawson.

selections before a porch picnic was served.

The summer series of Sacklunch Serenade programs is off to a great start. For the 4th of July program, over 450 people from the community were in attendance, as well as many from other parts of the country. We very much appreciate all those who make their vacation plans to include spending time at the SLS on Thursdays. We always want to know where you are from, and we encourage our visitors to stay in Colorado Springs and enjoy our club organ in Mt. St. Francis.

Plans are being made for the Wild West Wickerham Weekend, which is going to be held August 19-22; we hope that you had the opportunity to attend this fun weekend.

September is the month that PPATOS has decided on for the rededication for the new console and new relay system at Mt. St. Francis. Everyone is invited to attend this special event; Patti Simon and Dick Kroeckel will be featured artists, with the possibility of a third artist.

Owanah Wick

## PUGET SOUND

Clint Meadway, President  
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cbmeadway@wwdb.org

Seattle, Washington. Wurlitzer Manor in Gig Harbor, Washington was packed for Tony Fenelon's May 16 program when half-an-hour into the event, the lights blinked, the organ groaned, the blower ceased running, and everything abruptly stopped. It was all hands on deck—Ed and Patti Zollman who installed and now care for the instrument, Dick Wilcox who originally conceived and built the home and organ, Raymond Lavine, owner of the home, Bob Zat, Russ Evans. Meanwhile, Tony, trooper that he is, quickly re-stationed himself at the grand piano where he astounded everyone with the repertoire packed into those amazing fingers. After an outstanding half-hour of concertos, Chopin, and other noteworthy renditions, it was determined that a power surge had destroyed part of the Wurlitzer's control system. However, the playback system was unaffected. Tony had earlier prerecorded and saved to disk a number of organ tracks to be accompanied on the piano. The second half of the program consisted of these orchestral arrangements—Tony at the Wurlitzer accompanied by Tony at the grand piano! A fantastic duo!

At the end of the program, after receiving several standing ovations in appreciation of both his musicianship and his positive handling of a potential disaster, he walked to the Wurlitzer console and gently caressed a few tabs, putting one down. He touched a key, and it spoke! He put down a few more tabs, touched a few more keys, and they spoke as well! He slid onto the bench, began experimenting, and found the organ playable, but the preset combination action inoperable. He hand set reg-



Tony Fenelon (center), Barbara and Raymond Lavine with Tony's Award.

istrations for several magnificent Buddy Cole arrangements, and finished the program with a stirring American patriotic medley.

Earlier in the day, guests were startled to find a huge flag sporting the PSTOS logo hung as a backdrop in the entry foyer. Following Tony's concert, folks were invited to join Raymond and Barbara in a toast and festive official flag rising. Raymond hoisted the flag high onto the 50-foot pole, as the crowd observed and cheered.

Many thanks to Raymond and Barbara for their tremendous support! What a memorable day! Thank you, Tony!

Jo Ann Evans

## THE RIVER CITY

President, Bob Markworth  
402/573-9071

Omaha, Nebraska. Our May 16 chapter meeting was held at the home of Sandy Anderson and Hugh Stuckey in Council Bluffs, Iowa, with 38 members and guests in attendance. President Bob Markworth chaired the meeting, with Secretary-Treasurer Paul Kanka presenting his financial report. Then, Vice President Jeanne Mehuron introduced Sandy Anderson, our guest artist for the afternoon. The Anderson-Stuckey home is a very interesting, multi-tiered design, rambling down the hill to the back and ending in a small pond and a waterfall. The entrance level has the kitchen and dining area, overlooking a lower level where Sandy has his Conn Theatre Organ, a keyboard on an adjacent table, and a baby grand piano. This music room level also has French doors that look into another dining area, plus a listening area with a large TV. Back in the upper dining level there is a stairway leading upwards to a balcony, overlooking the music area. Sandy, a consummate musician, wowed us with an outstanding program. Following the program, Sandy

and Hugh treated us to a delightful cold buffet.

Our annual corporation meeting was held on June 20 at Durand's Skyranch Studio, the home of River City Chapter's Barton Theatre Organ. Bob Markworth chaired the meeting, and Paul Kanka presented his financial report. The first order of business was the election of officers for the coming year. Harold Kenney, our Administrator, conducted the election process. Our slate of officers included: Bob Markworth, President; Jeanne Mehuron, Vice President; Jerry Pawlak, Secretary; and Naomi Emmack, Treasurer. The other Directors included Harold Kenney, George Rice, and Greg Johnson (Past President). With no nominations from the floor, our slate was elected by a unanimous voice vote. It was duly noted that it took two people to replace Paul Kanka, who served us admirably as Secretary-Treasurer!

Then Jeanne Mehuron introduced member Larry Poffenberger as our guest artist for the afternoon. Larry, who is 'self taught' (and also plays the accordion), was dressed in formal attire, including 'tails'. Larry shared this thought, "If you want to think like a banker, dress like a banker!" His musical offerings ranged from pop tunes from stage and screen, a march, a polka, to a classical composition. During one segment of his program Larry donned a blindfold, plus a black hood over his head. His purpose was to demonstrate those obstacles encountered by blind musicians. With the help of his wife Sondi, who called-out the title of each tune in his play list, Larry casually flipped through black paper pages in his three-ring notebook, and played a faultless rendition of each number. (No, he didn't play "Three Blind Mice!") In another segment, this time with vision, Larry asked us, "Would you recognize "Beethoven's Fifth?" Then he pulled-out an empty schnapps bottle, with Beethoven's picture pasted on it, from a brown paper bag. Larry then announced that he would, "attempt to play Beethoven's Fifth." He got part way through and then stopped, his wife Sondi explained that their electronic organ at home had been 'zapped' by lightning, and that Larry only had a Casio Keyboard for practice. This was a fun afternoon, thanks to Larry, as we all enjoyed the surprises he offered.

Bob Markworth, Norman Emmack, and Paul Kanka contributed to this report.

Tom Jeffery



Raymond Lavine and the PSTOS Flag.



Sandy Anderson at console of his Conn Theatre Organ.



Larry Poffenberger entertained us on the Chapter's Barton pipe organ.



Don Story at the console.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Owanah Wick, President, 719/488-9469  
dowick@prodigy.net

Denver, Colorado.

### "Musical Story":

Chapter member Don Story, who lives in Tucson, Arizona (and makes frequent trips to Denver to visit his Mother), performed for us at the May 16 club social, held at the Holiday Hills Ballroom. Don, by his own admission, thrives on obscure music for the theatre organ, and he did a wonderful job of sharing songs with us that really should not be overlooked. He rekindled memories of some beloved pieces that are seldom heard, and introduced us to unusual and challenging 'new' music. Thanks Don, for an enjoyable afternoon.

### Pizza, Pipeless, & Prancing:

On June 20 the seating and tables were pushed back around the perimeter

of the Ballroom at Holiday Hills, to make room for the brave and good dancing members to kick up their heels and have a real wingding. After the feast, our 'new kids on the block,' Bev Bucci, Jim Calm, and Lee Traster, (three new members who have joined us over the last six months) cranked up *George*, and did organ and piano duets, organ only, piano only, one on organ and two on piano. If we weren't out there dancing, there was a whole lot of toe tapping going on. When the strains of a Broadway musical were heard, an impromptu chorus line magically formed. It was truly a fun, food and frolic filled afternoon.

### "Pipeless Theatre Organ, Piano, & Patter":

Featuring Stan Kann and Ralph Wolf in concert at the Holiday Hills Ballroom on July 10 and 11, these two venerable musical 'giants' presented not one but two afternoons of finely honed musical offerings. They have certainly earned their reputation of being the epitome of musicianship, and put *George* and the piano through their paces. The interaction of two old friends having fun by playing a beautifully put together program was certainly enjoyed by both members and guests.

### Coming Events:

October 16, 1:00pm and 4:00pm

Ron Reseigh

Duane Searles Residence

October 17, 2:00pm

Ron Reseigh

Holiday Hills Ballroom

Priscilla Arthur

## SIERRA

Craig Peterson, President  
916/682-9699

craigapeterson@cs.com

Sacramento, California. Jim Riggs returned to the Dale Mendenhall Memorial 3/16 Wurlitzer at the Towe Auto Museum in May to score the 1925 film, *The Freshman*, starring Harold Lloyd. Jim started his programs with several selections. He also gave us a brief, but very informative, discussion and demonstration on the capabilities of the theatre pipe organ, and also elaborated on how to score a silent film. Then Jim, Harold (Lloyd), and the Wurlitzer combined to give a tremendously enjoyable experience. He received a well-deserved loud and long ovation. We're looking forward to hearing you again in the future, Jim. Thanks to Nick Langdon for arranging permission for us to show this great film.

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FRIDAY, NOV. 12, 7 P.M. D.W. Griffith's epic of the American Revolution, *America* (1924)  
Accompanied by Dr. Philip C. Carli (\$10/\$9/\$2)

SATURDAY, NOV. 13, 2:30 P.M. Organ pops concert with internationally-renown organist Paul Roberts (Free Admission!)

FRIDAY, DEC. 3, 6:30 P.M. Capitol Theatre 76th Anniversary Program (\$10/\$9/\$2)

### CAPITOL TALKING FILM PROGRAMS

Organ plays 30 minutes prior to show

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2:30 & 7 P.M. *The Glenn Miller Story* (1954) with James Stewart & June Allyson (\$5, \$1)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 7 P.M. An Edgar Allen Poe Halloween Songs and films based on Poe, including the feature *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1964) (\$8/\$6/\$2)

220 W. Dominick St., Rome, N.Y., 13440, (315) 337-6453 theatreorgans.com/ny/rome/



(L-R) Jim Calm and Lee Traster at Holiday Hills meeting.



Don Kinnier and Judy Townsend during a visit to the home of Jim and Lorainne Stetts.



Jim and Lorainne and their wonderful 3/13 Wurlitzer home installation.

In June, Sierra Chapter returned to the McCluer's home in the Sierra Gold Country for a picnic. This year 13 of the planned 19 ranks were playing, along with most of the tuned percussions and toy counter. After lunch, a third of the participants took advantage of the 'Open-Console', and all enjoyed a good time.

Pete McCluer

## SOONER STATE

Vernon Jackson, President  
918/493-2365

Tulsa, Oklahoma. Sooner State Chapter had another fun session at our May meeting. The artist this time was our member Sam Collier, playing our



High-Kickin' chorus line at the Holiday Hills concert

3/13 Robert-Morton at Tulsa Technology Center's Broken Arrow Campus. We opened with our now-usual enthusiastic singing of the National Anthem, with Carolyn Craft playing the accompaniment, and then Sam began to play.

He began with a bright Latin number – and commented that it would wake everybody up, and blow the dust out of the pipes! He then continued with a wonderful variety of music. We heard lots of old standards, many played in a perky up-beat rhythm and accompanied with lots of feet tapping among the audience. There were also some slower, pretty ballads, and all kinds of other selections. All of them were played beautifully, and were thoroughly enjoyable! He truly is fun to listen to, and we had a wonderful time. During 'Open-Console' we heard music from Dick Deaver, Bonnie Duncan, Carolyn Craft, and Joyce Hatchett.

On May 1 members of our Chapter were privileged to have an 'All Day At The Coleman Theatre', in Miami, Oklahoma for 'Open-Console' playing the 3/10 Wurlitzer. This was certainly a wonderful way to spend a Saturday! We were rather small in number this time, but that just meant that everyone got to play the organ a little longer. The day started about 10 am, and Lee Lomas was the first one on the bench. Next up was our President, Vernon Jackson, followed by Sam Collier, Dick Deaver, Dorothy Smith, Dan Kimes, and Carolyn Craft. The organ was shut down for lunchtime, to allow the blower to cool off a little, and then we all had a second opportunity to play! It was wonderful fun, especially when we saw Theatre Manager, Jerold Graham dancing to one bright selection played by Dick Deaver! Carolyn Craft finished up the day with some great songs, including some beautiful gospel numbers. We also took time to admire the gorgeous restored chandelier in the ceiling.

Our June meeting was another special treat! Bill Flynt, from Dallas, Texas, was here again to accompany 1920's Silent Film *High and Dizzy*, starring Harold

Lloyd and Mildred Davis, on our 3/13 Robert-Morton at Broken Arrow's Tulsa Technology Center's Campus. After singing the traditional National Anthem, with Carolyn Craft at the console, Bill then climbed onto the bench. Before the movie began, he told us that he was wearing a blue jacket because he'd belonged to a group called the 'Blue Diamond Trio', so his opening numbers would all have 'blue' in their titles, and they did! He also told us that Harold Lloyd did all of his own stunts, and never used a professional stunt man. This became very noticeable, as the film progressed. There were many scenes of him and the girl, on a window ledge three-stories above the street. Harold slipped once and started to fall off, but managed to pull himself up to safety! The basic plot of the film was that Harold was a young recent medical school graduate, trying to set up a practice . . . dressing up as all kinds of patients to impress two people in his waiting room, who accidentally ingest some home-brew hooch. His merry adventures include a young girl with sleep-walking problems, and in the end a preacher on the floor below, who from his window, pronounces them man and wife!

The meeting closed with some delightful sing-along songs, with the words displayed on the screen. Bill Flynt is truly a master at silent film accompaniments. He plays all 'his own' music, and as always, one has to remember to listen to the music, as it blends into the action on the screen so well! We estimated that there were about 350 people in the audience!

There's still more progress to report on the Dorothy-and-Lee-Smith home Wurlitzer installation. There are now 'Chimes-by-Kimes' playing . . . installed by organ man Dan Kimes! The new relay system has been ordered, and Dan has been busy installing the push buttons and pedal pistons to get ready for it. Everyone who comes by to play it still says, "It sounds great!"

Dorothy Smith

CONTINUED ON PAGE 74

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# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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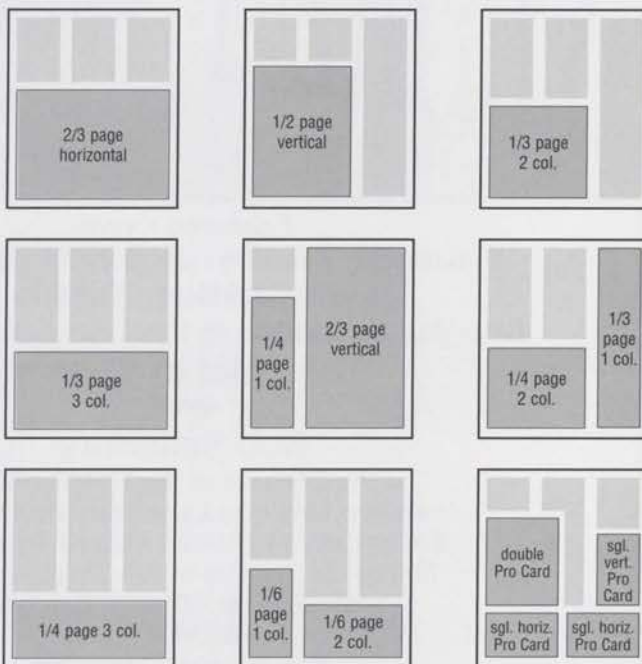
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## CHAPTER NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71

### SOUTHERN JERSEY

Joseph Rementer, President  
856/694-1471

Franklinville, New Jersey. We are in various stages of completion on two large projects. The project closest to completion is the 3/8 Kimball in the Broadway Theatre in Pitman, and the project just started is the rehab of the Cinnaminson High School 3/16 Wurlitzer. Here are some details: The Broadway Theatre and its Kimball are pretty much in 'as built' condition. It is the 1920's frozen in a time capsule. Unfortunately, pipe organs need a lot of TLC and in 1993 the chapter found the organ in very poor condition. With the cooperation of the theatre management, an extensive get-well program was

launched, and that was completed in 2001. The crew worked on Saturdays for eight years. A major change, accomplished during the work, was the replacement of the Kinura with a Kimball Clarinet rank. The installation of this Solo rank enhanced the organ's sound considerably. The only thing missing now is the combination action, as rehab of the action was considered impracticable and we hope to be able to install a solid-state combination action soon. In the meantime, the organists must make registration changes manually. The Kimball is played for movie show overtures every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evening, and a few extra weekdays as organists are available. For more info see our listing in the ATOS International News section.

The Cinnaminson High School organ was the 3/11 Wurlitzer from the

Royal Theatre in Bloomfield, New Jersey. Some where along it's way to its present home, it was expanded to 3/16. The chapter's recent survey of the organ found it barely playable, but salvageable. Work has been started in the left chamber, where many pipe ranks were relocated to improve the sound. This is a sizeable project and will take several years, as the Broadway organ restoration did.

On Halloween evening 2003, Jeff Barker played the accompaniment for the Bela Lugosi silent movie *Phantom Of The Opera* at the Broadway. He did an awesome, seamless job using his own music. Jeff is the organist at the Galaxy Theatre, Guttenberg, New Jersey.

At least a dozen chapter members attended the 100th birthday celebration of Lord and Taylor's Wanamaker Organ in center city Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Great music filled the Grand Court all day on Saturday June 12. One of the guest organists was Ron Rhode, who played a 'theatre' type concert on this largest of orchestral organs. It was amazing to hear him master that huge instrument, which he did with ease and aplomb. Fantastic!!

Fred Oltmann


### SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY

Sam Groh, President, 717/534-2470  
TallPipes@msn.com

York, Pennsylvania. On Saturday June 12 our club had the great pleasure of being invited to the home of Jim and Lorraine Stetts in Williamsport, Pennsylvania to see and hear their wonderful 3/13 Wurlitzer organ, which is in pristine condition. Some 35 members and guests enjoyed a full afternoon of great music, food and fellowship. Our two talented professional members, Don Kinnier and wife Judy, entertained us for almost two hours with songs old and new, borrowed and blue, that had everyone singing, laughing, applauding and enjoying the Wurlitzer. Don and Judy are fine entertainers who love the organ and love people.

After a short break, Bob Lilarose (that's me!) and Don did an extemporaneous duet, switching back and forth between the Wurlitzer and a Hammond RT3 the Stetts had in the same room. Thanks again to Jim and Lorraine, along with Sam Groh, our club President, for a fun day.

Our own 3/19 Wurlitzer is being rebuilt and revoiced, and will be reinstalled in the newly renovated Strand-Capital Performing Arts Center in York, Pennsylvania. Thanks to club member and organ tech Terry Nace, and the crew at R.J. Brunner & Co. We can't wait!

Bob Lilarose and Dusty Miller 

# Los Angeles Wurlitzer Weekend 2005

Saturday - Sunday - Monday  
January 15 - 16 - 17  
Martin Luther King Weekend

#### Featured Event

Saturday Evening - January 15 - 8:00 pm

The Orpheum Theatre

Douglas Fairbanks in the 1926 Silent Classic

The Thief of Bagdad

With

Bob Salisbury

at the Console of the 3/14 Wurlitzer

Pre-show Music by Legendary Bob Mitchell

SATURDAY MORNING AND AFTERNOON

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SUNDAY

Bay Theatre - Tentative

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All Events Subject to Change

## A GRAND IDEA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 58

had been removed to storage. The console went onto the truck with some struggling, but would not come off without some sort of Herculean effort involving several more sets of hands. I will always remember standing in a foot of water to use the only working pay phone I could find on Washington Avenue, a block from the theatre. It paid off. Extra help came, including out-of-town guests of one of our people who had never seen a theatre organ before, and couldn't have cared less. They only knew they were there to help ease the console down the impromptu ramp, hastily fashioned out of swell shades.

A local construction-development company generously granted us free storage in what had been the old Gladmer Theatre, just three blocks up Washington Avenue; a space that we shared with a local professional theatrical group. The Gladmer had also been a longtime Butterfield house, and had been closed for a couple of years. It had at one time housed a 1917 Wurlitzer, Opus 0121 that presumably disappeared in the fire of 1939. Oddly, save for the original stagehouse and working stage, the remaining portion of the late-19th-century "theatorium" was demolished and a new 'Moderne' building went up in its place (with the same name) almost immediately.

Once again, a year later, we were told that we had to move; this time with less than a week's warning. The Gladmer had been sold to the phone company next door. It was soon to be razed for parking, and we were suddenly excess baggage. From the theatre building, we went to rented warehouse space that had been previously used for decades by a local department store in a not-so-nice section of town. The console was too big to fit through the door of our rented space, so one of our board members agreed to house it in his garage indefinitely. At the warehouse, the organ miraculously escaped two magnificent arson-set fires, both set within two days of each other in October 1984. Coincidentally, out-of-town visitors wanted to inspect the Barton on the day of the second fire, and we rolled up to the front door of the burning structure at the same time as the first fire trucks. By this point, escalating pressure from others to install the organ "somewhere" (read: "anywhere") and personal frustration mounted to a point where I stood, transfixed, and mused briefly about the possibility of it all burning up and taking my woes with it. The thought dissolved quickly, and, a few days later, I was allowed to inspect the storage space. I was amazed at what I found. Our space was in the oldest section of the building, and had at one time been a stand-alone structure, around which the huge steel building was constructed. It was elevated about a foot above the rest of the complex. Had it not, the deluge of water used to fight the fires would have rendered our project a moot point. As it was, a portion of the carpeting upon which several of the zinc basses of the Open Diapason were stored soaked up some water and firefighting chemicals and damaged the finish. An even more dramatic sight was the blackened evidence that the

OAK HARBOR IMAGE



*Oblique view of console. Much attention was focused on making the console conform as close as possible to the standard AGO specifications. In keeping with that thought, the knee panel was brought forward, the bench reduced slightly in height and all pedal caps were displaced in favor of new, narrower replacements.*

second, much more intense fire had been stopped less than twenty feet from our storage room. We were lucky...but not for long. On two later occasions, the space was broken into and the organ vandalized. The 37 Chrysoglott bars, a new 20" Zildjian cymbal and, curiously, the middle three octaves of the Clarinet rank were stolen. Taking the hint, we moved to a pole barn owned by one of our people in a location that was so remote, we often got lost going out there! Later, the console had to be moved again from one board members garage to another where we were already storing pipes. In the last city block of the journey, the truck hit a curb, and the console tumbled forward to the floor, in spite of our best efforts to tie it in and shore it up. While it looked bad when the tailgate was opened up, only a hinge was bent, and miraculously did more damage to the floor of the rented truck than to the console. Once again, the organ escaped injury in what appeared to be a charmed life. Well... mostly.

In 1987, we were approached about accepting donation of a 3/10 Geneva theatre organ, still in its original installation of the Deerpath Theatre in Lake Forest, Illinois. The affluent northern Chicago suburb was ripe for more boutique shops and office space, and the theatre was in a prime location. The owner wanted to see that the organ was not only removed, but reinstalled in a deserving home. With the assistance of several members of CATOE, we removed the organ during two very, very cold January weekends, and brought it back to Michigan. The original plan was to install the organ in the Michigan Theatre in Jackson, Michigan, more or less intact. We would still have to deal with the Barton later, but nothing concrete was in sight for it. The Michigan Theatre seemed like an ideal candidate. It was a 1,600-seat Butterfield house, designed (by Maurice Finkel, who also designed the Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor) and built



LTO ARCHIVES



*George Gephart wiring plugs for electric stop action magnets.*

in 1930 to house an organ, even with chambers roughed in, but, with the advent of sound motion pictures, the whole concept of an organ was nixed early on. Given Butterfield's long association with Bartola, one can only deduce that this would have been the site of yet another Barton organ. Large horn speakers were installed in the tone openings and 78-rpm records of Jesse Crawford were convincing enough that some people still insist there *was* a pipe organ in there at one time. But, there never was. The Michigan Theatre, however, was in constant turmoil, and would never commit to accepting our plan, nor to the necessary internal structural and electrical changes necessary to admit an organ . . . never a yes, never a no. Just excuses. Seemingly, another wild goose chase.

By 1989, we had two pipe organs, a dwindling bank account and roadblocks at every turn. Everyone liked the idea of the organ, but no one wanted to commit. Years of seeking a suitable, permanent home had finally hit a dead end. Schools, public buildings, even locations in other cities as far away as Grand Rapids were considered. Churches were philosophically out of the question. We had entered into lengthy negotiations with the City of Lansing (a new exhibition/convention hall), the Lansing School District (a basically unused 1,200-seat auditorium in what had been a junior high school), and a local developer, who owned another former junior high school with an 800-seat auditorium with fabulous acoustics. Each time we came up short, just at the pivotal moment when all looked well after months of ironing out details. We were at the end of our collective rope. It was time to pull the plug and move on. But then, fate intervened.

LTO's longtime treasurer, John Putnam, happened to meet up with an old friend while both were seeking the perfect cooking utensil at a kitchen shop in March 1990. In their discussion of events past and present, the old friend, Terry Smith revealed that he was vice-president

of the newly-formed Grand Ledge Opera House Authority, and that they might be seriously interested in housing the former Michigan Theatre organ. Upon returning home, John wasted no time in calling me to suggest that we pursue the location. The next day, I found myself at the site of the Grand Ledge Opera House, assisting David Wade, GLOHA's then-president with an aluminum extension ladder out of his small pickup. It was an awesome sight. The entire 172-ton building had been jacked up, and its crumbling fieldstone foundation demolished carefully, so as to preserve the original stones to be later split and applied over the new block and poured concrete foundation. As we ascended the ladder from the basement area to the main hall, I was astonished by Wade's enthusiasm for the project. The roof was mostly torn off, and the inside of the building, as a whole, was a shambles. Still, my instinct told me that we were finally home. We had finally met up with a group whose project was as large, complex, and hopelessly impossible as our own, and that had apparently been the missing link all along. Two weeks later, on a Saturday morning in early April, the LTO board assembled at the building for a site inspection. I will never forget standing on the edge of the balcony where the organ is now installed, trying to convince the glassy-eyed board that we were indeed home at last . . . as a monsoon-like rain poured in the open roof at the other end.

After months of negotiation between LTO and GLOHA, a long-term agreement was struck. During Thanksgiving weekend of 1990, our newly energized group moved both pipe organs into the newly constructed basement of the Opera House. On the first Saturday of May 1991, we assembled our fledgling group and began restoration of the organ. This wasn't as easy as it sounds. To begin with, there was no heat, no water, no lighting, no bathrooms, and the only electricity that was available was a construction drop on a temporary pole just outside the side door of the building. We spent our first few weeks just hanging lighting, sorting out the mounds of organ parts and figuring out how we would get by without the usual creature comforts. Water was transported from home in gallon milk jugs and heated in a leaky coffeemaker. It would be then transferred to a 30-cup percolator, and the process started again. By Fall, minimal heat was generously provided by the Authority via a residential-sized furnace, left over from a fired general contractor and used to keep the building from freezing. On the coldest days, we would fire up a large kerosene heater and supplement with electric heaters, the total combination of which made it barely tolerable. Then, a marvelous accident occurred. The Michigan Department of Transportation decided to replace the crumbling bridge adjacent to the building, and declared eminent domain on the area immediately behind it in order to erect a temporary bridge. This way, M-100 traffic could continue through downtown Grand Ledge around the rear of the building. The upshot of all of this was that we could spread our project out over the entire

4,000-square-foot area of the basement instead of the much smaller area originally allotted to us. The original plan was for offices and possibly a small restaurant to rent the spaces in the basement level, thereby creating some income, but the bridge project rendered that plan impractical. Best of all, the funds generated by the eminent domain claim pushed the speed of the building project up considerably, and by the beginning of the next winter... we had real heat!

The next 3½-years are a blur in my memory. Days, nights and weekends of planning, restoration and installation, plus long trips for organ parts took up most of that time. Fundraising was a constant challenge, including a fair amount of grant writing, which proved successful in many cases. A downsizing effort at my place of employ resulted in a permanent layoff, which allowed me more time to work on the organ during the last year or so of the restoration effort. If it had to happen, the timing was right; moving parts and workspaces could occur at a moment's notice, due to the finishing of the building. It could be very frustrating, even maddening at times. Through it all, we kept our focus on the end product, and, in the late evening hours of November 30, 1994, the organ coughed and sputtered its way to a new life. The next day was spent tuning and correcting wiring errors. While the organ needed weeks of shakedown, it announced itself to the world during the next two days as it played for the annual Grand Ledge Home Tour. It was unbelievable. After all of what we went through, it was *finally* playing. While it ciphered no less than a dozen times that weekend, it was playing for the public only two days after it began speaking in its new home. More importantly, we had proven ourselves to a sometimes-doubtful GLOHA, who began to wonder if the organ would ever play, and helped to significantly increase the number of persons attending the annual event. After four more months of tonal and mechanical refinement, Walt Strony played the official premiere on April 30, 1995 in two concerts. Three more months of further regulation and refinement later, the organ played for the 1995 ATOS Annual Convention with organist Tom Hazleton, who publicly declared it a "world-class organ."

## The Organ

When faced with the need to combine the Geneva and the Barton organs into one instrument, it was a whole new ballgame. One had whole-tone chests, while the other had chromatic. Duplications existed all over the place. Odd chamber shapes didn't exactly help, either. Where to start? It was not exactly inspiring to start with two rather undistinguished, unremarkable instruments and try to make something out of them. Neither stood very well on its own, other than as an intermission organ. But, when looking at both of them pragmatically, it was obvious that the deficiencies of each instrument were often filled with something from

the other... truly a marriage, of sorts. Fate perhaps? Ultimately, my approach was similar to that of organists John Seng and George Wright when assembling their own studio recording organs from disparate elements. Choose the best of what you have to begin with, and consider what the organ's needs are beyond that. With carefully planned, sympathetic additions, the organ eventually became a full-fledged, concert worthy instrument. The key element was that whatever we ended up with, it had to work in the modest sized Grand Hall of the Opera House. The only major flaw in the plan, of course, was my pronouncement that the organ would go together just once and there would be none of this changing around nonsense! If you wish to pause here and chuckle mildly or laugh uncontrollably, please, be my guest. Makes me laugh now, too!

## The Riverside Pops Series

The Riverside Pops concert series was born in September 1995, featuring Jeff Weiler accompanying the 1925 silent classic, *The Phantom of the Opera* to a record crowd of 435. They were literally hanging off the balcony for that one. Now entering its tenth season, Riverside Pops continues to offer four public events each year utilizing the organ, including one feature-length silent film and three concerts, one of which features the works of a well-known composer. In our first nine seasons, Riverside Pops has featured a wide variety of musical programming, including piano-organ, brass, swing band, and synthesizers. Our philosophy is simply to utilize musicians who clearly demonstrate excellence in performance, or demonstrate a type of uniqueness in what they do that creates its own type of excellence.

Season Ten celebrates our longevity and tenacity, as well as our dedication to our goals. In fact, this season is aptly titled "*Celebration*." Performances are as follows:

LTO ARCHIVES



Organist Tom Hazleton during Afterglow concert of 1995 ATOS convention.

September 26, 2004  
 Tom Hazleton & Jonas Nordwall –  
 “The Battle of the Organs”  
 November 21, 2004  
 Steven Ball –  
 Silent film: Douglas Fairbanks in *Robin Hood* (1922)  
 February 13, 2005  
 Barry Baker –  
 “Happy With The Blues”  
 (tribute to composer Harold Arlen)  
 April 10, 2005  
 Lyn Larsen with Jack Bethards & Orchestra –  
 “Time Machine”

## Grand Ledge and the Opera House

Let's be clear about this. It's Grand Ledge, *not* Grand Lodge. Eleven thousand or so years ago, the last glacier plowed out a clear swath through the rock that sat just below the Earth's surface at that time. By the time it had melted into the Grand River that it created and beyond, the edges of the rocks cut by this natural phenomena proudly jutted out to form several ledges high over the river. While it's not the Grand Canyon, for our part of the world, it's a 'grand ledge'... hence, the name Grand Ledge. Mind you, there still are lodges here, but none of them are particularly grand.

Grand Ledge is a town of around 8,000 on the north-western edge of the Lansing metropolitan area. Despite its diminutive size, it was the second most popular tourist spot in the state of Michigan in the latter part of the 19th century. Natural mineral springs and the Seven Island Resort attracted people from hundreds of miles around. There was even a hexagon-shaped building in the middle of the Grand River, dubbed “Mudge's Folly” by the locals, aptly named, as it never amounted to much. It has long since disappeared. Since roller-skating was becoming the rage in the larger cities at this time, enterprising types in the area decided that Grand Ledge was ripe for this type of “sophisticated fun.” The Riverside Rink, among Michigan's first roller skating facilities went up in 1884 at the corner of Bridge and River streets, on the banks of the Grand River. A band organ often provided music. Within the first two years, it was decided to modify the building into a multiple-use facility, and a portable stage was brought in. In addition to various types of vaudeville and operetta, everything from evangelists to snake oil salesmen appeared in the Opera House. Grand opera probably never appeared in the building, but at that time, it was thought to be a high-minded, wholesome name that implied entertainment of

SCOTT SMITH



OAK HARBOR IMAGE



*It took four sets of pipes to find the “perfect” Main tibia, this one being a 1926 Wurlitzer standard scale.*

SCOTT SMITH



*With a ceiling height in both chambers that dramatically reduces from 10' to 6' over a distance of 16' from side to side, we found it necessary to reorient the order of the 8' bass octaves of the Open Diapason and French Horn in order to accommodate it.*

*Main chamber shot depicting Wurlitzer Salicional, Kimball Clarinet, Wurlitzer Voix Celeste and Geneva (Organ Supply) French Horn.*

that type, or at least delineated it from a common saloon. Every small town had some sort of "Opera House." In fact, at a time when the local schools lacked proper auditorium and gymnasium facilities, the building was used for high school graduations, basketball games and other indoor sporting events. During the Teens and Twenties, the building was called the "Theatorium," showing silent films and hosting dances. In 1929, the building was converted for use as a retail store, and Stephens Furniture occupied the building until the late 1960s, when it became a furniture warehouse. It saw its last hurrah in 1976 as the area headquarters for the nation's bicentennial. Finally, in its state of abandonment for several years, it became an eyesore with a crumbling foundation, and there was much discussion of demolition. Luckily, the owners of the building felt it was more important to preserve the building than to demolish it, and so, in 1988, the large white eyesore on Bridge Street was deeded over to the Grand Ledge Area Historical Society, which joined the Grand Ledge Area Chamber of Commerce in an effort to restore the ramshackle building and convert it into a community center. Together, they hold joint title to the totally renovated building, which continues to serve the community in much the same way it did in the beginning, with a wide variety of activities ranging from meetings to wedding receptions to exercise classes to concerts. The Grand Ledge Opera House Authority, a cooperative effort of the two local organizations, governs the building. Today, the chamber office resides in the rear of the Opera House building. In keeping with the idea of preserving the best of the old, the exterior of the building has been returned to its original color scheme of mustard yellow and hunter green.

## The Mini-Theatre Museum

The console room doubles as a museum of sorts, that contains old photos of area theatres, and artifacts ranging from original theatre wall damask and carpeting to decorative plaster and other artifacts. The museum is open at every concert for inspection.

## Reflections, Recollections and Grand Ideas

Ten years after the beginning of something good seems like a good time to pause and reflect on it.

Grand ideas, like this one, begin in a vision, but especially in a project of this magnitude, they go nowhere without the aid of others. When I first became involved with the theatre organ in the early 70s, it seems that Wichita Theatre Organ and the Paramount Wurlitzer were "the buzz" at the time. As I learned more about their unique operation and moreover, their success, I became more and more intrigued. Coincidentally, shortly after becoming involved with DaCapo, I was engaged for an important concert in my young performing career

LTO ARCHIVES



*Interior of Opera House during a live performance. Note Main and Solo chambers separated by hallway over console. Exposed 16' Violone on balcony left, obscured by ballisters.*

and I felt I needed some inspiration of a special sort. In addition to wanting to hear Billy Nalle perform live on "Mother" Wurlitzer, I also wanted to see, hear and soak in the whole "Wichita Experience." I went, and found the experience to be amazing and uplifting. In less than a day's time, the Wichitans went from complete strangers to old friends. While I had hoped to find a way to marry the Wichita Pops concept into the overall DaCapo scheme, the theatre's sale negated all of that. When we decided to go it on our own, we started from scratch, and

OAK HARBOR IMAGE



*For the stop tablets and identification tags, the type font, abbreviations and most nomenclature was done in Barton style, but their order was rearranged by dynamic level within a given pitch, as used by Wurlitzer. Likewise, piston buttons were engraved in the unique Barton style, but numbered as one would find on a Wurlitzer; the exception being a Divisional Cancel for each keyboard (ala Barton), as well as "Set" and "General Cancel" buttons. In other words, visually, it's a Barton, but ergonomically, it's a Wurlitzer.*

SCOTT SMITH



*The challenge was to fit the 8' Solo String bass between the 16' Tuba offsets. When no offset chest could be found to fit within our tight parameters, Rick Swanson turned out a beautiful new offset that did.*

WTO was very generous in sharing documentation and overall philosophy. We essentially cloned their concept in total. Lansing Theatre Organ is especially indebted to them for their generosity, and especially to Michael and Karen Coup for their unwavering support through these many years.

The aid and consultation of organ craftsmen who specialize in the theatre organ was enlisted throughout all phases of the project. All proved themselves to be complete professionals, as well as delivering exactly what we had hoped for. Tim Rickman provided the Uniflex Control System, 24/7/365 support, and even came running in the middle of moving from one city to another when problems cropped up at a critical time that we could not sort out ourselves. When we could not find new pistons that felt "right," Carlton Smith provided new piston rails made up from old Barton pistons that do. Carlton also designed and fabricated two swing-out "junk" trays, modified trap actions and sold us several parts now functioning in the organ. In addition to concertizing for us twice on the series, Clark Wilson has assisted at various times with tonal regulation. The Crome Organ Company also provided parts and dispensed advice from time to time. Rick Swanson is actually a church organ builder, but is sympathetic to our project and lives only blocks from the Opera House. He provided consultation, use of shop equipment and parts from time to time. Their combined talents have made for what we think is an eminently playable, "user-friendly" organ.

Along the way, we picked up pieces of other people's grand ideas that, for one reason or another, never quite made it to fruition. In some way, those ideas live on in Grand Ledge. Those include parts from the hoped-for studio instruments of organists Rob Richards and Joel Gary.

As stated earlier in this text, it took another group whose project was as hopelessly impossible as our own in order to make it happen. After years of searching, hoping and failing to convince others of our passion and dedication to our own cause, the Grand Ledge Opera House Authority welcomed us with open arms. They provided space within the building to restore the organ, constructed and finished the chamber areas and blower rooms before any other portion of the building and provided all of the electrical and structural needs we required. Likewise, the Grand Ledge business and residential community was there to support a great number of our needs, from hardware to custom woodworking to upholstery to paint to you-name-it. As one person close to the project said, "Grand Ledge feels like it has stolen something from Lansing. . . and we're **not** giving it back!"

To have the opportunity to bring a grand idea to fruition without active resistance from within is something any artist dreams of, but doesn't always get. This particular organ would not have been built nor as well, without the overwhelming cooperation and support of the LTO board and volunteer staff, whose dedication, tenacity and willingness to work under the worst of working conditions speaks to their collective and individual character. In name, they are Fred Brufodt, John Bunday, Stan DeWitt, Linda Fitzgerald, Larry Graszler, Bob Hill, Mark Mitchell, Lisa Palmer, Bob Preston, John Putnam, Pat Rider, Russ Rowan, J. Margaret Smith, Roger Stone and Bill Worthy. In addition, those key personnel who have passed on during the course of the project shall not be forgotten. They are George Gephart, Chuck Mullins, Wayne Schaner, and Floyd Young.

## Mary Harrison


I praise Mary Harrison, from whom all blessings flowed. Not only was she a fine music teacher and superb musician, but was indeed the person in the key role to put this project all together, albeit unwittingly. It was Mary who put me on the path to good musicianship, provided numerous opportunities of exposure to organs and good musicians, introduced me socially to others in the community who were interested in the organ, was instrumental in getting me a job at a local music store, and whose home pipe organ project got me interested in organ building at age ten. It was she who taught me that "can't" usually means "won't," and whose teaching studio featured a copy of the famous "Press On" philosophy that speaks to the need for tenacity, even above talent and education. A copy of that now hangs in my office, and in times of despair, I look to it for inspiration. Always smiling, frequently laughing, never negative. Mary was unforgettable. I simply adored her. Who could not? I've never heard anyone say anything unkind or insulting about Mary. Her positive energy was infectious. Unfortunately, she died a few years ago, but her photo now holds a prominent and permanent place in the Opera House Mini Theatre Museum, and for good

reason. Simply put, had it not been for her, you would not be reading these words.

On behalf of all of us, thank you Mary...for *everything*.

Grand Ledge Opera House, 121 S. Bridge St. (M-100), corner of River and Bridge streets, Grand Ledge, Michigan. Call the LTO PopsLine for programming information: 1-888-333-POPS.

www.lto-pops.org

Email: ltopops@aol.com 

## The 3/21 Grand Ledge Opera House Organ

### Main Chamber

- 16' Concert Flute (97n)
- 16' Open Diapason / (wood)
- Diaphone bass (85n)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (standard scale) / (85n)
- 8' Salicional (73n)
- 8' Voix Celeste (73n)
- 16' French Horn / (metal)
- Diaphone bass (73n)
- 8' Clarinet (61n)
- 8' Trumpet (61n)
- 8' Vox Humana (61n)
- Chrysoglott / "Carillon Harp" (49n)
- Various drums, cymbals and traps

### Solo Chamber

- 16' Solo Tibia Clausa (97n)
- 16' Solo String (85n)
- 8' Viol d'Orchestra (85n)
- 8' Viol Celeste (73n)
- 8' Quintadena (61n)
- 16' Tuba Horn (73n)
- 8' English Post Horn (61n)
- 8' Saxophone (61n)
- 8' Orchestral Oboe (61n)
- 8' Kinura (61n)
- 8' Solo Vox Humana (61n)

- Xylophone (37n)
- Glockenspiel (37n)
- Cathedral Chimes (20n)
- Marimba Harp (49n)
- Various drums, cymbals and traps

### Exposed

- 16' Pedal Violone (32n)
- Upright Grand Piano (85n)
- Master Xylophone (37n)
- Master Chrysoglott (49n)
- Various drums, cymbals and traps

Other plans currently in the works include the addition of a 16' Solo String Celeste (85n), 8' Stopped Flute (73n), 8' Pedal Tibia (32n), 8' Dolce Vox (61n), Chrysoglott/Vibraphone (49n) and various other drums, cymbals and traps.

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The "liquid" sounding Geneva French Horn, built by National Organ Supply.

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Geneva (Organ Supply) French Horn, flanked by Wurlitzer Voix Celeste.

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The Barton console as it appears in "concert mode." Most of the time, the console lives in a large closet, designed especially for it, and rolls out for use. In exchange for that minor inconvenience, it allows us to place the console nearly anywhere, up to halfway back into the Grand Hall.

Note-by-note voicing, tuning, and regulation are only the beginning. The accuracy of digitally-sampled tremulants and the spatial dimension of Acoustic Portrait™ actual sampled acoustics show you why Allen's Quantum™ TO-5Q will take the theatre organ world by storm.

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