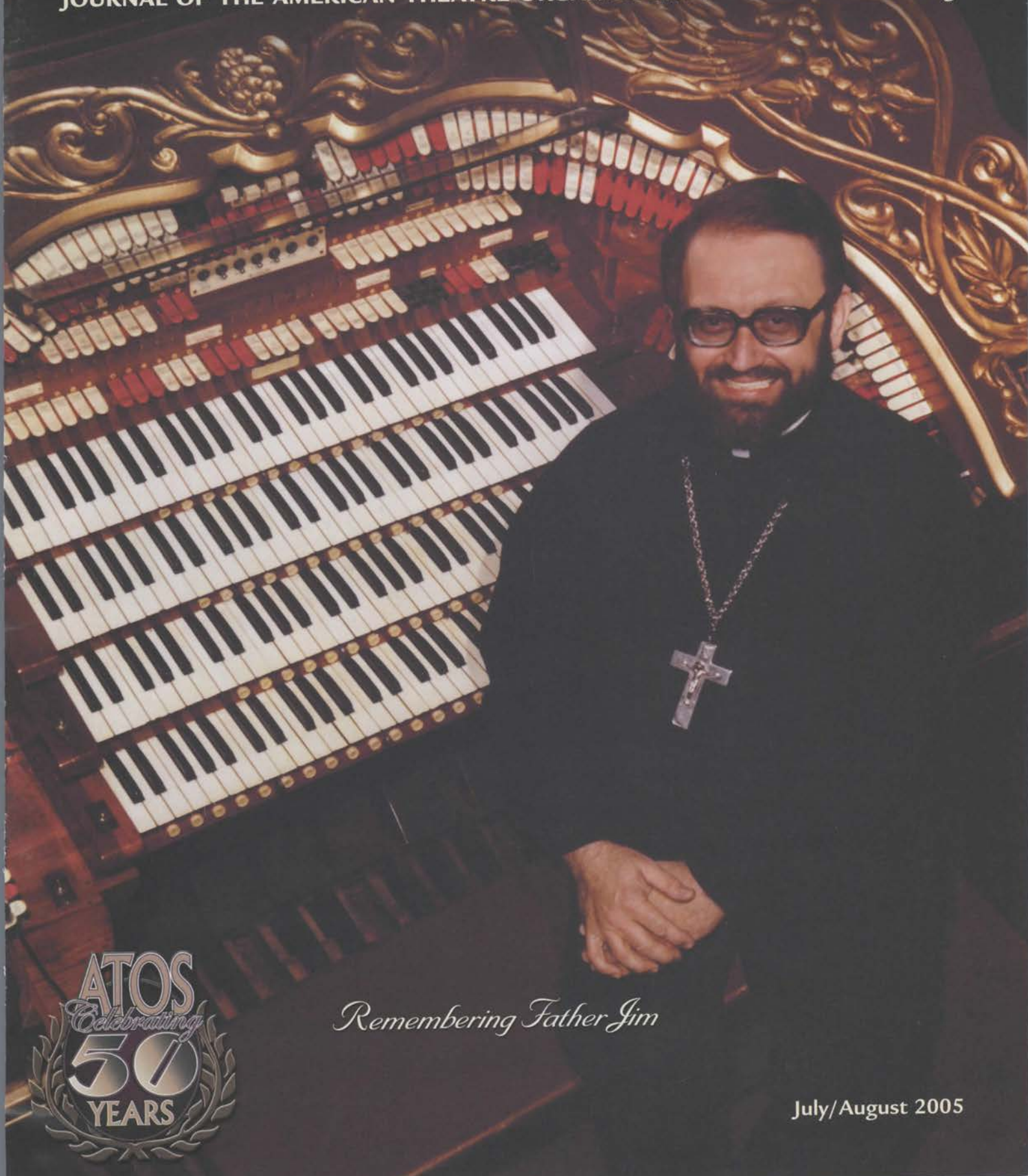


# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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*Remembering Father Jim*

July/August 2005

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# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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July/August 2005 • Volume 47, Number 4

PRESIDENT: Gus Franklin

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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Jim Merry

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## President's Message



If you ordered a copy, the new "Wurlitzer book" is now in your hands. Making such a statement without qualification, as I write this message near the end of May, is clearly an act of faith. However, we have very recently heard directly from the printer that the book is scheduled to be shipped the first of June or, at the latest, in mid-June. I am certain that everyone will be more than pleased with this monumental work since even the annoying delays proved to be occasions for assuring that the book would be as nearly user-friendly and professionally done as is humanly possible. We sincerely appreciate the patience of everyone who placed an order. Please know that the members of the Board of Directors found the bites of those nasty delay bugs just as frustrating as did anyone else. However, this book is certain to become a collector's item in the near future. Nearly half of the copies printed have already been sold! So, if you would like to have an additional copy for whatever reason, I strongly suggest that you to order it soon.

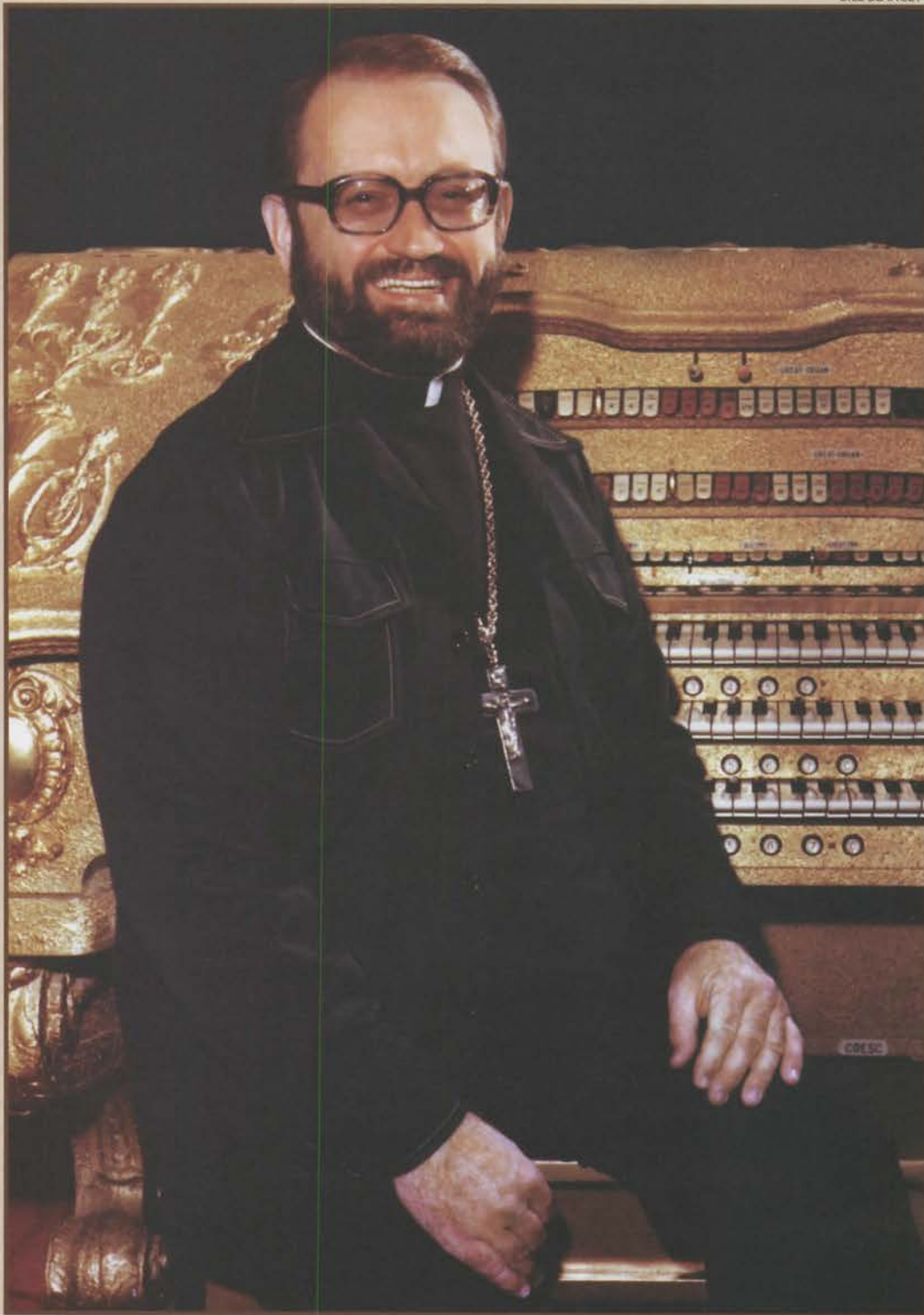
Obviously I would like to be able to write something about what will surely be a fantastic 50th Anniversary Convention, but this issue of the journal will likely be at the printers while we are celebrating in California. Your new ATOS Board of Directors will have been seated on the morning of Wednesday, June 29. I suspect that most of you had a truly difficult time in choosing just three persons for whom to vote in the recent Board election since we had a quite lengthy list of well-qualified nominees. However, the results of the election provide us with a couple of first time situations which are most appropriate to mark the beginning of our next fifty years.

Carlton Smith was re-elected for a second three-year term. Certainly he is one of the finest restorers of theatre pipe organs and technicians in the world and is appropriately recognized as such. His ability to represent well this area of interest on the Board has been clearly demonstrated. As well as being a highly gifted musician, Russell Holmes, our 2004 Organist of the Year, has been a truly pro-active leader in the Cinema Organ Society in the UK. His election to the Board certainly validates and celebrates the international character of ATOS. Having just completed his tenure as the Youth Representative to the Board, Mike Cierski was elected as a full-fledged Director for a regular three-year term. His election definitely ratifies our commitment to the involvement of young people in the theatre organ world. The seating of Russell and Mike on the new Board is, from those perspectives, a first for us and a most fitting way in which to kick off our exciting future.

And while thinking about Directors, may I urge you to make known to them your thoughts, opinions, comments, and suggestions? Your Board earnestly desires to know what you think about any aspect of the work of ATOS. Won't you please communicate that to the Director immediately responsible for your specific area of interest or concern? The relevant contact information is conveniently available in each and every issue of the journal on that page known as the masthead. For example, in this issue you'll find it on page seven. The name of the Director—along with postal address, telephone number, and email address—is listed there. Additionally, since we are in a transition period between Executive Secretaries and Treasurers, using the information provided in the most current masthead may well save you time, effort, and even money for a phone call. In any case, please do let us hear from you.

Gus

BILL BLANCETT



*Fr. Jim's professional photo, taken in early 1980s at Theatre Organ Pipes & Pizza in Pontiac, Michigan.*

# Remembering Father Jim

*On the occasion of what would have been his 70th Birthday, those of us who knew him will remember him fondly.*

When Father Jim Miller died suddenly on February 6, 1999, a gaping hole was left in the middle of the universe . . . musically, personally, and spiritually. In the time since, it has become increasingly apparent that no one is coming to take his place. But then . . . no one could.

On the evening of June 12, 1998, a few of us gathered on the occasion of his 63rd birthday for a small, impromptu celebration at his home in Fenton, Michigan. Fr. Jim, never one to deflect attention, was actually somewhat uncomfortable in the spotlight, and did little to intentionally draw it. Despite the appearance of a gregarious, outgoing, ebullient, larger-than-life personality, he was actually a "nester" who was more comfortable at home than anyplace else, and rarely went out socially. Still, he was obviously touched by the intentions of his well-wishers, most of us students at one time or another, and most of us 20 years his junior, or more. Birthday cards, a few small gifts and our attention for a few brief hours was all he required. Likewise, we were touched by his acceptance of our good wishes. I wondered then just how long we could enjoy the gift of his being. It never occurred to me that it would be only a few short months.

I still remember exactly where I was, what I was doing, who I was with and who called to give me the news of his passing. Once the initial shock had worn off and I began to accept the unthinkable, I remembered our frequent discussions about death and the afterlife. He had, after all, been there for me through the passing of a close friend, both grandparents and a parent, as he was for virtually everyone else in his life. He would say that when his time came, he would not resist, but go willingly. "When I feel I can go to 'the other side' and help others better from there . . . I'll go." Always a man of his word, he apparently did just that. Many of us feel his constant presence, his reassurance and his love on a daily

basis. Some of us even think we encounter his impishness from time to time. He's never far away.

What follows are the words of those of us closest to him, or those whose lives he touched in a significant way. Read on, and enjoy a laugh or a tear, or both, as we remember Father Jim Miller on his 70th birthday.

## *In The Beginning*

Little is actually known about the early life of James Eugene Miller, who went by "Gene" or "Jimmy Gene" for most of his formative years. One of the most startling details of his life is that our favorite priest was the son of a gangster! His father, Eugene Miller was a member of Detroit's infamous Purple Gang, a group of east side Jewish toughs that successfully banded together to terrorize the Motor City for over 30 years. During the reign of Prohibition, the Purple Gang provided bootleg liquor not only for thirsty Detroiters, but established a line of demarcation that ran from the water's edge of the Detroit River west to U.S. 31, only miles from Lake Michigan. The narrow strip of land on the west coast of the state was left to Al Capone, who bought most of his supply of the illegal hooch for Chicago distribution from the infamous Detroit gang. As a result, the Purple Gang members were ever-present on the Chicago mob scene, enough so that several of those killed in the St. Valentine's Day Massacre were actually members of the Detroit mob. Liquor was supplied by neighboring Canadians, and transported in any number of creative ways. Windsor, Ontario is less than a mile from Detroit over the river as the crow flies in some places, and when the river froze over in winter, night deliveries were made by simply driving over the ice. Some was transported via an underwater track, and some found its way to Detroit in the inner tubes of the tires of cars traveling to and from

Windsor. The Purple Gang was primarily a bootleg outfit, so when Prohibition was repealed, their power was weakened. When World War II ended, so did the need for so much contraband, and so they disbanded. Jim's father was part of the Livernois sub-gang, who used that well-known Detroit street, among many others, to run liquor (and probably protection, too). Livernois Avenue happens to be the major street that intersects Michigan Avenue a block from the Senate Theatre, home of the venerable Detroit Theatre Organ Society, where Fr. Jim was a longtime member and concertized countless times.

By his own admission, details of his birth were sketchy, at best. Jim, however, made no secret of the fact that he was the product of an extramarital affair between his father and a young Detroit woman. As a newborn, he was literally pulled out of her hands and taken home to be raised by his biological father and "stepmother." As Jim would tell it, his father dumped the baby out onto the dining room table one day and announced, "That's our kid. We're raising him. No questions." Reportedly,

his stepmother wasn't crazy about the idea initially, but she and Jim eventually bonded into a very close relationship. Jim later came to know his birth mother, as well.

Because of the collar and the timbre of Jim's voice, many people assumed he was of Irish descent, but in truth, he was completely Jewish and readily admitted it. There were certain traumatic incidents in his life when Jim was on the receiving end of anti-Semitic epithets and actions, which only added to his deep-seated feelings of being unwanted or unaccepted wherever he went. Despite the best efforts of those closest to him to counter those feelings, they dogged him to his dying day.

It is unclear why the move to Lansing, 90 miles to the west, whether to help his father escape the law or because factory jobs were plentiful or simply to establish a new beginning away from the mob scene. I'm not sure even Jim knew for sure. The house on South Washington Avenue where he initially grew up was demolished in recent years, right across the street from where the city Interurban train tracks crossed those of the New York Central. No doubt, this is where Jim picked up his lifelong love of trains. He used to even dream of trains and traveling on trains. At some point, the family moved to a new home in a better neighborhood only a half-mile or so away on Goodrich Street. From here, he enrolled at Michigan State University in nearby East Lansing, where he studied organ from 1953 to 1957. His first professional position was as Assistant Organist at St. Mary's Cathedral in Lansing, playing a 1933 Casavant. However, his interests turned more toward the theatre organ after attending a concert by Gordon Krist at the Detroit Theatre Organ Club in the early 1960s.

In 1970, he was ordained in the clergy of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In addition to his church work, he taught organ and piano in his home, and, through special dispensation of his Bishop, he continued to play the organ in supper clubs, just as he had for years in the Flint area prior to ordination.

His parents owned a marina in Gladwin, and it was here that he had his first professional gig. As reported in an interview in the Tri-County Times in their August 7, 1975 issue, Fr. Jim played only the piano and accordion in his youth, beginning with lessons at age eight, and didn't touch the organ until he became a student at Michigan State University. "One summer, I was up at my parents' resort and there was a beer hall across the street. One night, their regular accordion player was sick, so they asked me to sit in. Man, was I terrible! I sounded like a passing funeral . . . which made me realize that popular music isn't as easy as it seems."

It was also in Gladwin that one of Jim's favorite stories about himself took place. One of the marina's best and most affluent customers arrived one Saturday

MILLER COLLECTION



*Fr. Jim as a young boy. Note the blond hair, which later turned dark. Other photos reveal attempts to stall the change through "chemical enhancement."*

morning, wanting to take her boat out of storage and put it into the water for the first time that warm spring day. Young Jim always wanted to impress his (scary) father, and so he blurted out, "I'll do it! I'll do it!" One has to realize that his father had just purchased a new top-of-the-line Oldsmobile 98 and was justifiably proud of it. Understandably, he obviously did not want it damaged in any way. Still, he didn't want to dampen the boy's enthusiasm, so he flipped him the keys and loudly announced that he'd better not let anything happen to it. Oh, no, of course not. Jim would never let that happen. In short order, he had the boat on its trailer at the water's edge, and gave it a gentle push into the water, with everyone on board. Jim smiled and wished her a bon voyage, and she waved back. However, as the boat went further and further out onto the water, Jim noticed, much to his puzzlement, that her waving became much more animated. As he turned around, he was horrified to see that the Olds was slowly, but deliberately sliding toward the water in the soft, wet, mucky sand. In a moment of panic, Jim leapt into the driver's seat, hit the gas, and succeeded only in burying the tires further down into the loamy mixture. As panic descended into dread, he ran to the front of the car, dug his heels into the sand, grabbed the front bumper and pulled for all he was worth, in an attempt to prevent it from sinking further. Now it was *he* who was the one waving to people and screaming for help. Always the screwball, everyone thought he was joking around and didn't notice that the rear wheels were now completely submerged. If they did, they probably thought it was just another one of Jim's pranks. Finally accepting that the car was going in, he ran for his father, who didn't take the news well. Dad got there, just in time to see the car go totally under. After the wrecker had pulled the car out, Jim noticed a bottle of Johnny Walker Red floating inside of the car, something his father always kept hidden under the seat for "medicinal purposes." When the rear door was opened, out came the water, followed by the bottle of whisky. His dad sat down on the wet upholstery, reached down, uncorked the bottle and tipped it back as he finished it off. Jim said that at this point, he said just about the only stupid thing that could have topped the submerged car. "Dad! This is *no* time for a drink!" If memory serves, Jim said something about the bottle connecting with him at a high rate of speed in response. The luck of the angels must have been with Jim, as the car, when totally dried out, showed no ill effects from its watery plunge, and served the Miller family for quite some time.

*Scott Smith*  
Lansing, Michigan

## *Can-Can, Can You Do The Can-Can?*

*Dr. John Courter, FAGO, is Professor of Music and College Organist at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. Originally a Lansing native, Dr. Courter recounts his experiences with the youthful "Gene" Miller in this remembrance, written for our May, 1999 tribute to Fr. Jim's life, held at the Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor, the site of Fr. Jim's last professional gigs.*

As I think back on my early years as an organist, I realize how important an influence Gene (as we knew him then) was on my development as a well-rounded musician. Around 1956, he was a young fellow in his twenties working at Huntington Music selling organs (mostly Conn) and new and used pianos. I was attending Resurrection High School, right across the street from Huntington's, and so I gravitated over to the store. Gene was still becoming familiar with the organ, having been trained as an accordion player (!). He confessed that it was taking him some adjustment to get his left hand to play the keyboard, because he'd always had his fingers "scrunched up" as close together as possible to play the bass buttons on the 120 bass accordion! Obviously, it didn't take him long to make the adjustment, and he had many hours every day to practice. I remember when Gaylord Carter dropped in for a visit; it was a thrill to meet one of the legends of the theatre organ!

He shared with me his great love of theatre organ music, and in particular, the playing of George Wright. I bought all of Wright's LP albums (and there were many available), and began to absorb the work of that genius. Fr. Jim and I took to playing organ and piano duets, or sometimes piano duos (or "duels."). He played on a Conn Artist model with a Leslie, full-range Conn and pedal speakers, so that really put out a whompin' big sound in the long, narrow store. I played an old Decker grand piano, nearly seven feet long, with a wretchedly checked finish, which was priced at \$400. It had a big, glorious tone, at least to my 14-year-old ears.

Next door to Huntington's Music was a "ma & pa" grocery store, and they knew that around 3:30 pm the music would begin: "Brazil," "Jalousie," "Granada," and dozens of other George Wright hits, all by ear. We were big on the Latin songs. Well, the grocery owners and customers didn't mind the music, and the wall between the two stores wasn't too thin. But . . . canned goods on the shelves would gradually creep forward due to the bass output of the pedal speaker right next to the wall. They would move forward to a samba rhythm until the front row would begin to plunge like lemmings, two or three at a time, over the edge! As I recall the kidney beans were usually the first to do their suicidal leap. Luckily, most of



*Dr. John Courter relaxing at Fr. Jim's home.*

the vegetables were not in glass containers. The first few times, the owner would dash into the front of the store and tell us not to play quite so loud. Eventually, he just banged on the wall until we quieted down.

Fr. Jim was very encouraging in my classical organ studies, and shared recordings of some of his favorite pieces with me: Dupre's "Cortege and Litany," Richard Purvis' "Toccata Festiva," etc. Before long, Fr. Jim had convinced Clare Huntington that I would be a good recitalist for a new installation of a Conn Classic organ in St. Casmir Church. He spoke with my teacher, who agreed that it would be a good experience for a high school sophomore. All went well, and I later played another at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. The store paid me well for these recitals.

I had been playing services and masses at Resurrection Church since the age of 12, and at 15 was named the principal organist when the incumbent organist moved away. My musicianship grew, and by the time I was to play a (high school) senior recital on the Casavant organ at Resurrection Church, I had some recital experience under my belt, thanks to the kindness of Fr. Jim and the confidence he had in my abilities. We maintained a long-distance friendship over the years, and he always asked about my parents and my sisters, who delighted in his charm, wit and sense of humor.

He came to Kentucky a couple of times to play concerts on the three-manual Wurlitzer organ from Lexington's Kentucky Theatre that had been installed in Oscar Wilson's estate. Oscar rescued it from an out-

of-state sale, and later stipulated in his will that the organ should go back to the Kentucky Theatre. Now, after renovation of the theatre, that project is underway. We're currently fundraising for the restoration of the Wurlitzer organ. I've always maintained my love for theatre organ music, in addition to the classical organ, and am happy to hear Michael Barone's "Pipe Dreams" radio broadcast, which features all types of organ music.

Fr. Jim has had a significant influence on the musical and spiritual lives of many, many people. All of us are grateful for having known him. I will miss him very much.

*Dr. Jack Courter*

### *The Baptist Choir Boy*

Before he was a priest, before he'd gone to seminary, before he gave Orthodoxy a thought, Jim spent some time as a choir member at First Baptist Church in Lansing. This was and still is the old-style Baptist church format, with lots of wood and a gracefully executed wraparound balcony. The church was attended and supported for many years by the family of Ransom Eli Olds, whose creation of the Oldsmobile and Reo motorcars put the city on the map. It still contains what is perhaps the city's most interesting church instrument, whose basis is an Aeolian residence organ, rescued from a private home in Grosse Pointe, near Detroit. The console is a beautiful, carved four-manual Casavant.

It was on Easter Sunday and the choir was well rehearsed for the morning's festivities. A professional guest soloist had been hired, and "The Lord's Prayer" was up next. Jim remembered the little-old-lady organist vividly. She was elderly, petite, and always wore tiny, rhinestone-covered slippers with rolled-up knee socks. Apparently, she was also known for something of a dramatic flair to her playing (having been a theatre organist in her youth), with the console spun around so everyone could see what she was doing at all times, but nothing she had previously done could match what was about to happen. Somewhere between "the power" and "the glory," with every stop drawn and playing full-tilt-boogie, she accidentally slipped and solidly wedged her foot between two pedal notes, unable to extract it. She apparently made it through the end of the piece, but her foot was still wedged. Jim said that two male choir members treated the incident like a major emergency, grabbing her ankle from both sides. On the count of three, they yanked the foot free. In the process, the amount of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



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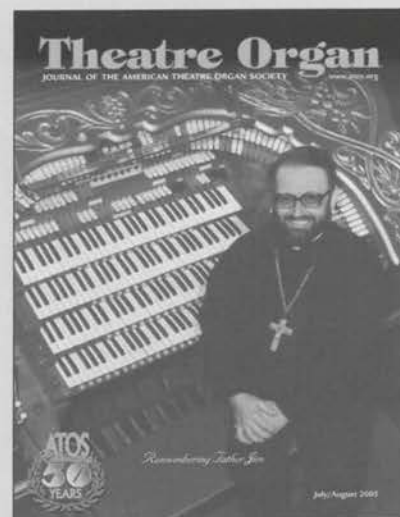
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Fr. Jim Miller at Wurlitzer in the fabulous Detroit Fox Theatre, 1978.

PHOTO MILLER COLLECTION

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# General Information

## 2005 ATOS Board of Directors' Election Results

The 2005 ATOS Board of Directors' election concluded with ballots having to be postmarked not later than April 15, 2005. We had eleven very qualified candidates. The three receiving the highest number of votes, to be seated on the Board for the term of 2005-2008, are in alphabetical order:

Mike Cierski  
Russell Holmes  
Carlton Smith

A total of 1,645 ballots were received (down from 1,920 in 2004), which included 66 international ballots. The new Board members were seated at the Annual Board of Directors' Meeting held in Pasadena, California, June 29, just prior to the 2005 Annual Convention.

We want to thank Fern Siemens of St. Louis for once again being our Election Teller. She always does a very thorough job.

*Jack Moelmann, Secretary*

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## ATTENTION ATOS Chapters

*We need your latest information!*

- Change of officer?
- Change of address?
- Change of phone number or E-mail address?

Our chapter contact information, etc. is only as good as what you provide.

Please forward your complete and up-to-date chapter officers information to the Executive Secretary immediately after your election and/or any change occurs.



## Notices

Some very important notices from ATOS are located throughout this issue. They contain detailed information about programs for members. Notices are located as follows . . .

Junchen Technical Scholarship . . . . . p. 39  
TO Installation Research Project. . . . . p. 39

# Members' Forum\*

Dear Editor,

I've enjoyed reading the ATOS Magazine/Journal for more years than I care to remember. The current version is quite beautiful and a tribute to the printers art. Part of the reason for the wonderful reproduction of pictures is the glossy paper it's printed on.

Unfortunately there is a downside to the use of this paper. It is so brittle that it cracks or breaks easily. As a consequence on its travels through the US Postal Service it suffers damage. The last half a dozen copies I've received have suffered some damage. But the last issue, (May/June 2005) looks as if it had been run over by a truck. Interestingly in the same mail was a copy of the glossy magazine *Hello* mailed from England and also a copy of *Computer Shopper*. Both of these were wrapped in transparent plastic sleeves and were completely undamaged.

Others must have had the same problem. Speaking for myself I would be happy to pay more for the Journal to ensure receiving an undamaged copy. Can something be done about this?

On the positive side the Journal is a delight to read and you are to be congratulated on doing such a fine job.

Stan Barton

*ED: Thank you for your suggestion, and kind thoughts. Coincidental to your letter, with this issue we have initiated the use of "PolyBagging" for all mailed copies of THEATRE ORGAN. (In our ongoing efforts to thwart the USPS 'Smash & Destroy machines')*



Dear Editor:

It's with great regret that I write this letter, but I feel I owe this response to the readers of THEATRE ORGAN who have read over some months in this forum a three-letter exchange between the Radio City Music Hall organ curator Richard Bishop and myself about the Radio City organ. Some readers may remember that in my last letter in response to Mr. Bishop I suggested that a grand concert be staged on the RCMH organ if the organ was in the excellent condition that the Mr. Bishop claimed the organ to be in.

Thanks to some very hard work on the part of the New York Theatre Organ Society Membership Chairman, John Valentino, who was able to wind around some ins and outs of The Music Hall's rules, a one-hour concert on the instrument was arranged for 19 February 2005 featuring two capable New York Theatre Organ Society organist members. This certainly wasn't the grand stage concert I had suggested but it was a good chance to hear the organ and judge its status and merits on its own, played in concert, which hadn't happened in many decades.

Richard Bishop in his last letter in THEATRE ORGAN

stated that, far from "throwing the organ in without care" as I had said was told to me by Ben Hall, the Wurlitzer Company had spent months in 1931 tinkering with the instrument. Now, after hearing the instrument on the 19th, it's easy to see why Wurlitzer was so concerned about the instrument and its sound in the hall, since, as we all know, the hall is half of an instrument: Wurlitzer had obviously made a horrible mistake and scaled the pipework for a hall about a quarter of the size of the mammoth Radio City, which has, to make matters worse, a ceiling design and lighting grills in front of each chamber. In addition, the entire house has a back wall five stories high made of soft fabric. And all this not to mention the huge amount of sound absorbed by an audience when the house is 5,000 full.

I don't want to make this long, but I do want to respond with what I see as an accurate and fair answer to the RCMH organ question once and for all.

Is the Radio City Music Hall organ "grande" as the publicity claims that are made? NO is the answer! Is it "Mighty" in any sense of the word? The answer is: not even slightly. The instrument was scaled way to small for the hall from the outset. And we're not talking about pipe voicing or number of sets of pipes, which have nothing to do with scale; we're talking about overall scale of each set of pipes. Scaled correctly, half the number of pipes could make twice the sound we now have. Even the two sets of 32's, which are loud, add nothing musical to the ensemble. They're very unmusical.

You can't imagine how difficult this is to write. I'm a New Yorker through and through and there is nothing I would like more than to trumpet what a loud and wonderful and unique Wurlitzer we have in Radio City Music Hall.

Christian Orlov  
New York City



Dear Editor,

I was very impressed with Jesse Kohl's article in the recent issue of THEATRE ORGAN (May/June 2005). I agree with his statements about getting younger people into the 'hobby' and keeping organs in restored vintage condition as much as possible. It's great to see people like Jesse involved with this 'hobby'.

Mike Roseboom



*\*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.*

# Closing Chord



## **BOB KLINZING** 1929 - 2005

We are saddened by the death of Tulsa's Sooner State Chapter's First Vice President Bob Klinzing, on April 8, 2005. Bob had been an active member of our Chapter for the past few years, and we had just elected him as our First Vice President.

He was born on April 7, 1929, in a town founded by his own grandfather: Hot Springs, South Dakota. Although Bob was born before his family moved to Tulsa, but he was raised here and always called Tulsa his hometown. He had a genius for science and engineering, from his earliest days, and he could fix anything!!

He served in the Air Force during the Korean War, and earned a degree in Physics, and a Doctorate in Law, both from the University of Tulsa. He married, and in 1962 moved with his wife, Jeanne, and their two daughters, Melissa and Susan, to Cape Canaveral, Florida, where he started on the Titan II Rocket Program, the system that put some of the first

communications and weather satellites into orbit. In 1965 he was hired by IBM at the Cape, and worked on the Apollo Moon program. He retired from IBM in 1990, and had recently moved back to Tulsa with his family.

He had a passion for music, and had stereo equipment, speakers, and musical instruments (including a small Hammond organ and a Yamaha Grand Piano) in every room of his house! He could play the piano beautifully by ear! He never learned to read music, but he could hear an arrangement of just about anything once, and then play it, exactly! When his daughter Melissa was three-years-old, he was trying to teach himself the Bach organ "Tocatta and Fugue in D-Minor." She listened to him for days . . . and then got up in the middle of the night, fired up the organ, and started playing it herself! She apparently inherited his gift of music, and eventually learned to out-play her Dad, by reading music!

Bob was a delight to know, and we shall miss him very much.

*Dorothy Smith, Sooner State Chapter*

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## “THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS!” Or... SELLING THE SIZZLE, NOT THE STEAK

By Don Reasons

Remember that sizzling plate of fajitas from that Mexican restaurant? There was no sizzle until the waiter squeezed a lemon on the plate as he stepped up to your table.

Does the perfume actually smell better because it has Elizabeth Taylor’s name on it?

Do you want to **buy** a Cadillac, or would you rather . . . “Delight in the confidence that comes with enjoying the peacefulness of sumptuous leather seating and thick, color-coordinated wall-to-wall carpet while listening to your favorite music on the extraordinary Bose 10-speaker stereo sound system, secure in the knowledge that your pleasurable driving experience is made safer thanks to the highly evolved, 21st Century engineering of the computer-controlled positive-traction, the feather-soft power assisted steering and the mighty V-8 engine commanding your awe-inspiring new Cadillac touring machine along the superhighway?”

### **Selling the sizzle, not the steak!**

Remember back in ‘the good ole days’ when people would sit quietly, lend an ear to the music and simply enjoy the concert? Unfortunately, those days are gone. Audiences have changed. Over the years, concerts have become increasingly more “staged,” much more “show business” than a simple performance. There are so many good musicians and artists around today that the artist must not only perform well, but must present an exciting program that is also relevant to the audience and entertaining.

As beautiful as the music of Jesse Crawford is,

few people today even know his name. Compare the “Jesse Crawford concert” style to the concert styles of today. Consider the contrast between the Jesse Crawford audience and *today’s* audience.

Remember the old Liberace TV programs from the early 1950s? Those programs were very “low-keyed” compared to the live Liberace concerts 20 and 30 years later, in the 1970s and 1980s.

The first time I saw Liberace was October 31, 1967. Liberace played the entire concert with only a rhythm section and another pianist as accompaniment. His biggest, loudest, wildest costume that



*Don Reasons at the Dallas Lakewood Theatre.*

evening was worn at the end. After his final number, the audience was applauding wildly as he walked back onto the stage in a flashy white dinner jacket. He turned to his candelabra, ceremoniously “snuffed out” each electric candle and then, with one center candle left, he leaned over and “blew out” the last candle. At that point, in the sudden darkness of the room, his white jacket **came alive** with hundreds of tiny white light bulbs.

**That** was a 1967 Liberace concert ending.

Oh, but what a difference a few years can make. Liberace came to the Fair Park Music Hall in Dallas, Texas in 1985; this with a full orchestra backup. For his opener, as the orchestra ended the overture, a chauffeur drove Liberace on-stage, in a vintage, mirrored Rolls Royce limousine. **What** an entrance . . . and what a great show. His “big ending” included

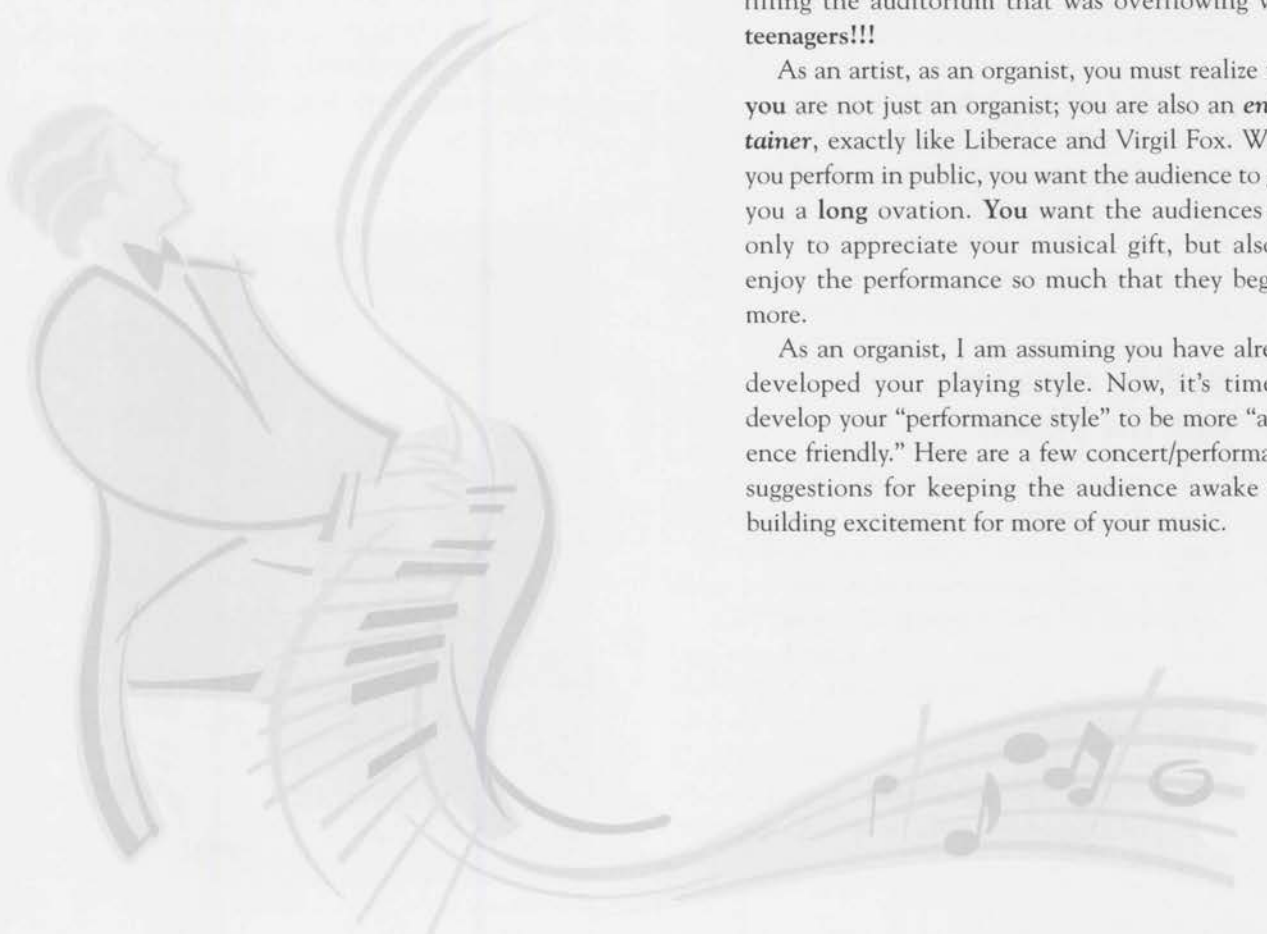
ballroom dancers and the Waltzing Waters flowing in fountains behind the piano, colored lights and sparkles. Liberace was a child prodigy, a trained musician and concert artist. The difference between Liberace and many others was not just the musical gift. It was the **presentation!**

Virgil Fox, the great classical organist, knew how to present timeless keyboard classics to a contemporary audience. At a Park Cities Baptist Church concert, he once entered stage left wearing a long English cape. He strolled across the stage to the organ console, whipped off the cape with a great swoop, and seated himself on his “throne,” revealing his shiny, gold organ slippers. Again, **what an entrance!**

During the 1970s and early 1980s, Virgil Fox presented concerts on “Black Beauty,” his solid black Rodgers electronic organ . . . classical organ masterpieces accompanied by a wonderful synchronized **Light Show** with smoke effects and colored lights filling the auditorium that was overflowing with **teenagers!!!**

As an artist, as an organist, you must realize that **you** are not just an organist; you are also an **entertainer**, exactly like Liberace and Virgil Fox. When you perform in public, you want the audience to give you a **long** ovation. **You** want the audiences not only to appreciate your musical gift, but also to enjoy the performance so much that they beg for more.

As an organist, I am assuming you have already developed your playing style. Now, it’s time to develop your “performance style” to be more “audience friendly.” Here are a few concert/performance suggestions for keeping the audience awake and building excitement for more of your music.



# 1 Open with a BANG!

Your goal is to get the attention of the audience. Prepare something big, loud and/or shocking. Up-tempo tunes are great openers. Listen to any Broadway overture. There is usually an opening fanfare, followed by a loud, up-tempo tune from the show. A toe-tapping opening song will always get the attention of the audience and ensure applause for your opening number.

# 2 Develop a rapport with the audience.

Your goal is to develop a friendly relationship with them. Speak to the audience directly, using eye contact. Although you can't see them because of the spotlight, **look directly** where the people are supposed to be sitting. Keep your focus on one seat in the audience for each sentence. Practice this at home, speaking to the furniture, looking directly at your phantom audience.

# 3 Use *Contrast* in the format of your concert. Use contrast in tempo and contrast in style.

Your goal is to keep the audience awake with an interesting program. Too many slow tunes in a row will have everyone snoozing in a couple of minutes. Too many fast tunes will have them wondering why you drank so much coffee before you played.

Vary the styles. Use many of the styles such as 2-beat/fox-trot, slow-4 ballad, slow-3/waltz, up-3/jazz waltz, Latin or bossa nova beats in mid or up-tempo, even march rhythms or a polka.

A great study of a concert format would be the simple format of any Broadway music overture.

Clever opening "fanfare," usually leading into the first . . .

- Up-tempo tune
- Slower ballad
- Mid-tempo or 'novelty tune'
- "The other fast song" in the musical.
- More romantic ballad . . . leading into
- The "big closing number with the big ending."



*Don Reasons.*

Do you see the contrast? Can you see how it will hold the attention of your listeners?

# 4 Learn new tunes.

Your goal is to involve more of the audience in the experience. My song list is around 2,000 songs. However, most of those songs are from 1980 and earlier. To perform before a group of people in the year 2005, a performer should also include songs of the past 20 or 30 years. There are plenty of beautiful songs written since 1980, mostly from musicals or movies. If you want to make the theatre organ relevant to younger audiences, then you will have to **learn some new songs!** Try some Madonna or Celine Dion or some of the newer love ballads. The Beach Boys, Jimmy Buffet or even many of the EAGLES tunes sound good on the theatre organ.

# 5 Pace your medleys.

Your goal is to keep the audience awake. After "medley-izing" a crowd to sleep once, I discovered that if you play a medley you break it up into smaller medleys. Play no more than three songs without adding a "breathing point" where the music stops. This gives the audience time to applaud and prevents "ear fatigue." Even MUZAK in the grocery store is programmed with a 90-second period of silence every 15 minutes.

## 6 Know WHEN to stop.

Your goal is to leave them wanting **more** of you and your wonderful music. You don't want to overstay your visit on the organ bench. You don't want them to think, "When will this guy ever stop???"

You want them to clamor for more of your wonderful music. As wonderful as banana-pudding is, eating banana pudding every day will soon make me want strawberries. Give them some of your best playing **but not all of it**. Then, you **end your last song**, you stand and bow . . . and **walk off the stage**, listening to the thunderous applause behind you. You want to leave them wanting more!

## 7 Go out with a BANG!

Your goal is to make them stand and applaud at the end of your concert. Someone once said if you open and close well, the audience will forget what's in the middle. Even if you close with a slower tune, **put a big loud ending on it!!!** Big chords, high on the keyboard, lots of pedals, bombard them with sound! You could even add a short reprise of the

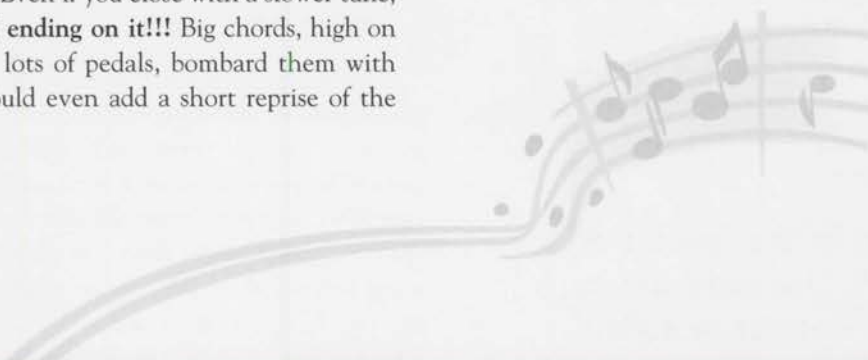
opener with your last song to demonstrate more of your creativity.

The quintet known as Classical Brass, Etc. ends with a big closer. Then as the audience is applauding, they immediately play the short "Warner Brothers cartoon theme." It lasts only 15 seconds and leaves the audience with smiles on their faces.

## 8 And finally....

**Do it again!** Write these performance suggestions down, and keep them near your music. Apply this formula to your next concert and you will have the audience standing on their feet yelling, "More, more!" As long as your music is prepared, you can begin . . .

**"Selling the sizzle!"**



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# Pop Organ Workshop

By Bill Irwin



## THEATRE ORGAN

### STYLES & TECHNIQUES

*A harmonic salute to two patriotic icons...*

- “America” (My Country 'Tis Of Thee) in a moderately easy “Simply Irwin” format.
- A traditional arrangement, playable by non Bass Clef readers.
- “America, The Beautiful” in a semi-concert arrangement for Intermediate and Advanced players.
- Meet Kim Bogan, and try her Theatre Pipe Organ Registrations for “Pop Concert Series” arrangements.
- Questions & Answers:  
Major Moving Counter Melody Patterns.

## A Time for Patriotism

In this particular Workshop Session, I offer a patriotic salute to our Independence Day, with recognition of the freedom and opportunity in our great country, one that allowed a poor welfare kid from the “Sidewalks Of New York” to climb a

musical ladder to success in the popular keyboard music world. I offer you my arrangements of two historic American melodies that have stood the test of time. I suggest that you play them with the majesty and grandeur that they deserve.

## AMERICA

### (My Country 'Tis Of Thee)

Before analyzing the arrangement of America (My Country 'Tis Of Thee), let me briefly explain the notation.

The purpose of this “Simply Irwin Series” format, is to offer the non Bass Clef readers, the opportunity and ability to perform advanced, harmonically rich arrangements, using the following formula:

1. The melody is written in single notes.
2. The L.H. accompaniment consists of simple two note intervals, written in the Bass Clef for traditional readers, but also spelled out, from left to right, in a parenthesis, shown below the chord symbol.
3. All Bass Pedal notes are to be played on the Roots of the various chords shown in symbol form. Note: If a melodic Bass line requires a Bass note that is not the

Root of the indicated chord symbol, the suggested Bass note is shown following a slash after the indicated chord. Examples: Measure 7 . . . G7/C (f,d). Your L.H. will play the interval of the notes F and D (from left to right), with the Bass Pedal note C. In both measures 7 and 8, the Bass Pedal is Pedal Point and creates a bit of tension, which, in turn, is resolved by resolution of the chord.

4. A good example of indicating Bass Pedal changes in this format, is shown in measures 20 and 21, where the two L.H. notes of G and E are held for all 4 beats of the measure, while the Bass Pedals move down from C to A (Am7), to G (C/G), to E (C/E) until in the final measure, the Bass Pedal plays the low C, indicated by the final chord symbol C.

## Interpretation

In this stately Waltz, I suggest that you play it Ad-Lib or Rubato. Both terms mean, "without a steady beat."

The Dynamics abbreviation of "mf", representing the term Mezzo Forte, meaning to play Moderately Loud, will, together with a majestic, solemn tempo, help to create a dignified and respectful setting for one of the country's most revered historical melodies.

Try singing or humming along as you play the melody and, in this instance, have your playing follow your singing. Your singing will help establish the proper tempo and your phrasing will be reflected in the performance of the song.

## Fingering

Fingering can be a very personal choice, depending on several factors, including finger length, flexibility, independence, etc. If you will take the time to figure out a basic hand position that will allow all five fingers to perform without constantly glancing up at the music and down to your hands, you will find fewer fingering surprises as you play through the arrangement.

For example, as your R.H. approaches the first six measures of the piece, you can see the melody note C on the 1st beat and the note D moving up on the 3rd beat. I suggest that, without looking ahead, the student would choose the 1st finger of the right hand to play the note C. Simply looking ahead into the 2nd measure, you can see that the melody drops down to B, below the starting note C and therefore, I would play the first note C with the 2nd finger, waiting to use the 1st finger (thumb) on the lower note B.

Once you've assumed the proper hand position, with the five fingers of your right hand poised over the keys of B, C, D, E, F, you won't have to glance down at your right hand for six measures. While you're using your 2nd finger to hold the note C in measure 6, substitute your 1st finger on C, without releasing the key/note. You are now in a slightly different hand position, enabling you to play five more measures without looking at your right hand. In Measure 12, use the space between your right thumb and 2nd finger in order to use the 2nd finger to play the note E and you will be in position to play through the 1st Ending. By crossing the 2nd finger over the 1st finger (thumb), you will be able to reach the note C on the staff.

When you play the 2nd Ending, fingers 5 and 3 of the right hand, will be over the two pick-up notes in the 2/4 Time Measure 15. If you look ahead, you will see that you have to play high notes that will require a shift in position and a finger substitution. Use the 1st finger of your right hand to play the note E in the 16th measure . . . use your 2nd finger to play the G in the 17th measure and immediately substitute your 1st finger on the sustained note G, which will allow you to reach up and play the high C with your 3rd finger. Your 5th finger is now in position to add the high note E above the C . . . to the End.

It is not polite to point, but it is smart to point the correct finger at the proper key.

## Performance Notes

Suggested Registration: **Upper Manual:** Full Organ 16", with Brass 4'. **Lower Manual:** Flutes & Strings 8', 4'. **Bass Pedals:** 16', 8' Tremulants: On, Full.

In measures 7-10, if you opt to play "Both Hands Lower Manual" for a quick and easy Registration change, in Measure 11, your R.H. will return to the Upper Manual.

*Poco Accel* = a little bit faster, *Poco Rit* = a little bit slower. A *Tempo* = return to the original majestic Tempo. In Measure 20, *Rit* - start to play slower. The long V on its side, indicates that the volume is to be increased while you are slowing down the Tempo, until you reach Measure 21, where the volume will be at its loudest point (with discretion) and you will hold the final notes, counting slower and slower, like a huge stone wheel gradually coming to a stop. That's "Performance"! When your audience reacts favorably, accept the applause graciously.

## America, The Beautiful

If you like a BIG sound in your patriotic performance, you'll find a concert hall approach in this arrangement of "America, The Beautiful." Plan a Full organ Registration, with emphasis on 8' Brass settings for your Upper Manual(s) settings. If you have adjustable pre-sets, then you'll want to set up a realistic 8' Brass Choir for the opening fanfare, followed by a mellow Flute/Tibia and Strings 8' and 4' setting on the Lower Manual, which will both echo and paraphrase the opening fanfare. For additional contrast, play the fanfare in a non-legato (detached) manner, holding notes for full value, followed by a legato (smooth and connected) touch on the Lower Manual, with less volume.

## Performance Notes

When playing the full chords in both hands, you will find that you are forced to play in a detached manner, which is exactly the way you would perform the piece in a great hall, taking into consideration the large amount of reverberation that would be present. You can simulate the concert hall setting by adding more reverberation on the organ. The disconnected playing will avoid having the notes blur into each other.

In Measure 13, bottom line of Page 1, as you slow down the Tempo during the Modulation, gradually increase the volume so that the pick-up notes, for the main Theme, played with both hands on the Upper Manual, fairly loud, will not shock the listeners with a sudden burst of volume. The Theme should be played fairly loud in a majestic manner.

# America

## My Country 'Tis Of Thee

Arranged by  
Bill Irwin

Words and Music by  
Samuel F. Smith and Henry Carey

1 AD-LIB

C (G,E) Dm (A,F) Em (B,G) F (A,F) G7 (B,F) Am7 (C,G) B $\flat$ 7( $\flat$ 5) (A $\flat$ ,D) A7( $\sharp$ 5) (G,C $\sharp$ ) A $\flat$ 7( $\flat$ 5) (G $\flat$ ,C) G13 (F,B) Am (A,E)

5 F (A,F) G11 (A,F) G7 (G,F) F/C (A,F) C (G,E) C (G,E) G7/C (F,D) C (E,C) C (G,E) G7/C (F,D) C (E,C) Dm (A,D) Dm(7) (A,C $\sharp$ ) Dm7 (A,C)

Optional: Both Hands Lower Manual

10 G7 (F,D) G11 (F,C) G7 (F,B) C (C,G) F/C (C,A) C (C,G) F/C (C,F) C (C,G) Cmaj7 (B,G) B $\flat$ 7( $\flat$ 5) (A $\flat$ ,D) A7 (G,C $\sharp$ ) 1. E $\flat$ 9( $\flat$ 5) (G,D $\flat$ ) D9 (F $\sharp$ ,C) G7 (F,B)

Enharmonic

14 Csus $^4$  (G,F) C (G,E) **(R)** 2. E $\flat$ 9( $\flat$ 5) (G,D $\flat$ ) C (C,G) C $^6$  (A,G) Cmaj7 (B,G) C (C,G) G7 (G,F) G9 (A,F) Gm7 (B $\flat$ ,F) G7 (B,F)

Poco Accel. Poc

18 C (G,E) E $\flat$ 6 (G,E $\flat$ ) A $\flat$ maj7 (A $\flat$ ,G) D $\flat$ maj7 (A $\flat$ ,F) C (G,E) Am7 (G,E) C/G (G,E) C/E (G,E) C (G,E)

A Tempo Rit ff

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time. It features a treble and bass clef. The piece begins with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 1, 5, 10, 14, and 18 indicated. Chord symbols are placed above the notes. A section starting at measure 14 includes a key signature change to one flat (B $\flat$ ) and a tempo change to *A Tempo*. The score concludes with a *Rit* (ritardando) and a *ff* (fortissimo) dynamic marking.

# America, The Beautiful

By Katherine Lee Bates and Samuel A. Ward

Arr. by BILL IRWIN

MOD. SLOW (AD-LIB)

1 UPPER

*mf*

LOWER

PEDAL

4 UPPER

*mf* A TEMPO

7 UPPER

11 UPPER

Poco Rit.

THUMB GLISS

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14

A TEMPO

18

22

GRADUALLY GET LOUDER

*f*

(USE TYMPANI BASS)

25

FASTER

RITARD

*ff*

*fff*

# Questions & Answers

## Q The Students ask . . .

Are you going to explain Moving Counter Melody Patterns in Accompaniments?

## A Bill:

In the May/June '05 issue, I discussed the Simple Sustained Counter Melody Accompaniment. In this Session, I'll cover the Major Moving Counter Melody Patterns in both the "Down" and the "Up and Down" formats. In the Sept/Oct issue, I'll discuss the Minor Moving Counter Melody Patterns.

### The Major Moving Counter Melody Pattern . . . "Down"

There are two basic forms of movement in using the Major Moving Counter Melody Patterns . . . "Down" and "Up and Down". Both patterns use the steps of the Major Scale. Illustration 1 shows the Major Moving Counter Melody Pattern Down in C major.

The counter melody starts on the Root "C", played with the 2nd finger and moves down the scale of C major, playing the notes B, A and G, in the reverse order of steps/tones...Half, Whole, Whole, (Playing "Up" the original scale, the pattern of Whole and Half Tones/Steps, is "Whole, Whole, Half, Whole, Whole, Whole, Half" or "Two Whole tones, a Half tone, three Whole tones and a Half tone". Playing down the scale, in reverse order, you will play a "Half tone, Whole tone, Whole tone". In "C", that is C, B, A, G. In "F", play F, E, D, C. In "G", the Down Pattern is G, F#, E, D.

Before proceeding, I suggest that you use your L.H. to play the 8th, 7th, 6th and 5th steps of the Major Scales around the Circle of Chords, using the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers of the L.H.

In 4/4 Time, when the 2nd finger of the L.H. is on the Root, the thumb or 1st finger of the L.H. will play the 3rd step of the scale on the 2nd Beat, called the "After Beat". (In C, that is "E") When the 3rd finger plays "B", the L.H. plays the Root and the 3rd step together, crisply, on the 4th Beat. (In 4/4 Time, the 2nd and 4th beats are the After beats. In 3/4 Time, the After Beat chords are played on the 2nd and 3rd beats.) In the second measure, the two note interval After Beats are maintained.

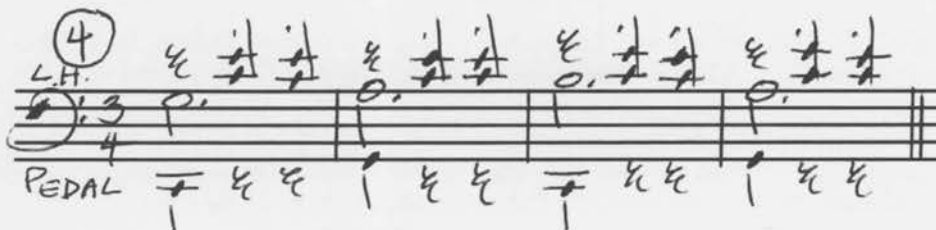
### The Major Moving Counter Melody Pattern . . . "Up And Down"

In the "Up and Down" Pattern, the sustained counter melody notes do not include the Root. Also, the order of the notes is reversed in the Up and Down Pattern. (The Up and Down Pattern is a standard Latin Rhythm introduction, usually associated with the Beguine Rhythm Accompaniment.)

In Illustrations 1 and 2, the 4/4 Time versions of the Major Moving Counter Melody Patterns, "Down" and "Up and Down" are shown. See the 3/4 Time versions in Illustrations 3 and 4.

Be sure to practice all 4/4 and 3/4 versions in C, F G, Bb and Eb. Later, practice the patterns with all Roots around the Circle of Chords.

(Note: A complete study of the Major and Minor Moving



Counter Melody Patterns, both Down and Up and Down, used in Accompaniments, can be found in the volume *Rhythm Accompaniment Magic, Book 2*, in the Bill Irwin Magic Study Series for the Popular Organist.)

**Important:** Try using both of the Major Moving Counter Melody Patterns (Down and Up and Down) when a Major chord is indicated for two or more consecutive measures . . . with either constant movement in the melody, or if the melody notes are sustained on the 3rd or 5th steps of the Major Scale.

Look for more information about the *Minor* Moving Counter Melody Patterns in the September/October Session of Pop Organ Workshop. I'll also show you a sustained chord version of all the patterns and name some tunes in which you can apply both the counter melody and the sustained chord versions.



Kim Bogan

### Meet Kim Bogan, Theatre Pipe Organist

Kim Bogan was an interested young lady when she sat close to the organ, watching me practice, at an Organ Festival in Minneapolis many years ago.

Kim was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1966, the youngest of ten children. She started piano lessons at age six and organ lessons as a sophomore at the University of Minneapolis, MacPhail Center of Music. Later, she studied at Walker West Music Academy in St. Paul.

"After three months of actual study", Kim performed on the 122-rank Kimball in the Minneapolis Auditorium in 1987, in a fund raising program for restoration and installation in the new Convention Center. In following years, she performed on numerous theatre pipe organs throughout the area, including theatres, churches, restaurants and private residences.

"On February 20, 2003, I made history by being the first African American female theatre organist to play in the twin cities at the Heights Theatre, located in Columbia Heights in northeast Minneapolis". She is now one of the four organists at the theatre. She plays the WCCO Radio Wurlitzer pipe organ, a 4/13 (Opus 2080). She's a member of the Land O'Lakes Chapter of ATOS since 1986 and has served as Secretary,

Board Member and Newsletter Publisher. She was involved in the restoration of three theatre organs, including the Heights project.

She is Senior Organist at Macedonia Baptist Church . . . she serves as Academic Dean of the Minnesota-Twin Cities Chapter of the Rev. James Cleveland Gospel Music Workshop of America and is Assistant Organ Instructor on the National Faculty. Kim also plays for several groups, ranging from Gospel to R & B and Blues.

In addition to her musical activities, Kim is currently employed as an Insurance Technician at the Corporate Headquarters of the Thrifty White Drug Company in Maple Grove, Minnesota.

### Theatre Organ Registrations

In playing arrangements from my Pop Concert Series of advanced organ arrangements, Kim developed some special Registrations which she sent in to share with theatre pipe organists. Here are her suggestions:

**VALENCIA** (as performed on the 3/16 Wurlitzer Opus 1404, style 260 Special at the Phipps Center for the Arts in Hudson, Wisconsin)

Prepare . . . **Solo:** Tibia Clausa 8', 4' . . . Salicional (String) 8' . . . Solo Sub Octave coupler. **Great:** Full ensemble consisting of Tibia 16', 8', 4', 2' . . . Diaphone . . . Diapason 8', Viol D'Orchestre (VDO) and Salicional 16', 8', 4' . . .

Bourdon 16' . . . Flute 8', 4' . . . Clarinet 16', 8' . . . Saxophone 16', 8' (optional) . . . Posthorn 16' . . . Trumpet 16', 8' . . . Tuba Profunda 16' . . . Tuba Horn to Octave coupler (The Great to Octave coupler can be omitted in favor of using Octave (Diapason 4', Clarion . . . (Trumpet Octave), Flute & String 2' . . . Tibia 1' **Accompaniment:** Diapason 8' . . .

Tuba Horn 8' . . . Quintadena 8' . . . Salicional 8', 4' . . . Flute 8', 4' . . . Piano 8' **Bass Pedal:** Diaphone . . . Bourdon . . . Contra Viol . . . Tibia 16', 8' . . . Tuba 8' . . . Accomp to Pedal coupler . . . **Accomp Second Touch:** Posthorn 8' . . . Trumpet 8' . . . **Tremulants:** On, Full !!

**JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS** (played on the 4/11 Wurlitzer, Opus 2080, formerly of WCCO Radio, now installed and restored at the Heights Theatre, Columbia Heights, Minnesota.)

Prepare . . . **Solo:** Tibia Clausa 8', 4' . . . Viol D'Orchestre 8' . . . Vox Humana 8' (On Bridge section) **Great:** Full

Ensemble, as in VALENCIA **Accompaniment:** Diapason 8' ... Flute 8' ... Quintadena 8' ... VDO and Salicional 8' ... Accompaniment to Octave (4') coupler. **Bass Pedal:** Diaphone 16' ... Bourdon 16' ... Tibia Clausa 16', 8' ... String 16' ... Diapason 8' ... Accompaniment to Pedal coupler. (Note: No second touch stops on Accompaniment.)

"And now, a bonus Registration for **I COVER THE WATERFRONT** (Key of G) and how to navigate the beautiful arrangement on four manuals, exactly the way I performed it at the Heights".

Prepare ... **Solo (Manual IV):** Diapason 8' ... Trumpet 8' ... Tuba Horn 8' ... **Solo (Manual III):** Bombarde/Orchestral ... Tibia Clausa 8', 4' ... Viol D'Orchestre 8' ... Vox Humana 8' ... **Great (Manual II):** Tibia 8', 4', 2 2/3', 1' ... **Accompaniment (Manual I):** Diapason 8' ... Flute 8' ... Salicional 8' ... Chrysoglott (*Celesta ... coming very soon to Opus 2080*) **Bass Pedal:** Bourdon 16' ... Tibia 16' ... Accompaniment to Pedal coupler ... VDO ... Salicional Celestes Off. **Tremulants:** On, Full.

### Performance Suggestions For "I Cover The Waterfront"

**Introduction:** Both hands on Accompaniment, with octave coupler. At the end of the intro, turn off coupler. Right hand moves to Great ... **Bridge:** R.H. to Bombarde. L.H. alternates between Accompaniment and Bombarde.

**Return to Theme:** Right hand to Great. **Jazz Improvisation:** New key of Eb. Right Hand to Solo, Tremulants Off. **Reintroduction of Bridge:** Tremulants On. Both hands on

Accompaniment. **Return To Theme:** (Original Key of G) Right Hand on Great Manual.



My thanks to Kim Bogan for her suggested Registrations and detailed performance suggestions.

### Contact Information

If you would like to contact Kim Bogan, or get additional information from me, please contact me by

E-mail: [Irwin@ATOS.org](mailto:Irwin@ATOS.org)

Web Site: <http://theatreorgans.com/uk/irwin/>

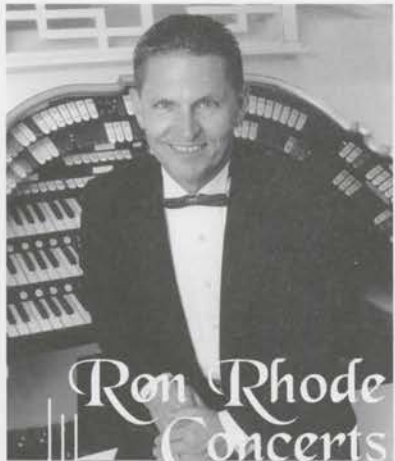
Tel: (480) 380-5250

Fax: (480) 219-8974

or "Snail Mail": Bill Irwin, 7864 East Natal Avenue, Mesa, AZ 85208-6161, USA

In the Sept/Oct Workshop Session, I'll show you how my student (and later, an Associate Teacher) harmonically stylized the famous Gospel tune "Swing Low Sweet Chariot." I'll explain the **Minor** Moving Counter Melody Patterns, and perhaps have one or two surprises. Until next time ...

'Bye now,  
Bill





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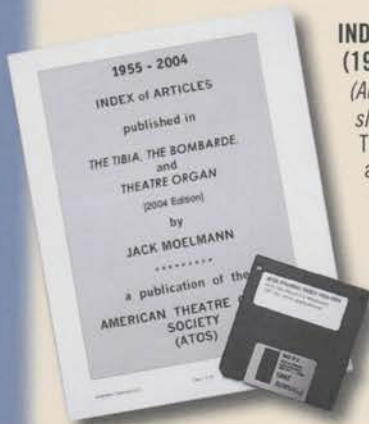
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The back issues of *THEATRE ORGAN* contain invaluable information about the history of the theatre pipe organ. The articles that have appeared in the Journal provide the necessary information to fully understand and appreciate the rich heritage of 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.

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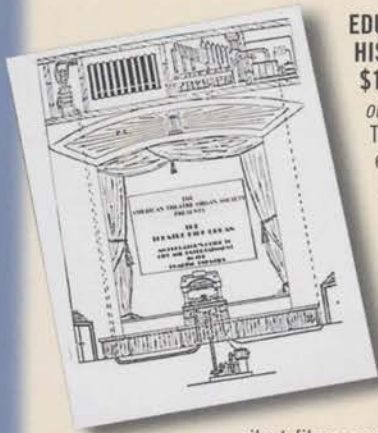
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upward force exerted knocked the organist, bench, and two choir members all onto their backs, in full view of the congregation. As the assembled multitude gasped in disbelief, the annoyed organist, with legs kicking in the air, and arms outstretched was clearly heard to have said, "Well, for Christ's sake, will **someone pick me up?**" Without thinking, Jim let go with a cackle and a belly laugh that could have been heard in the next county. The choir and congregation followed, but the whole incident was apparently embarrassing enough for some that the soloist slipped out the side door (without collecting his fee), the organist died a short time later, and Jim was asked to leave the choir and the church for his "inappropriate" behavior.

Scott Smith

### *The Words Of A Grateful Student*

*Greg Yassick was always considered to be Jim's closest protégé. With a keen, inventive mind, Greg's arrangements always provide something different and something challenging for the listener. While studying dentistry at the University of Michigan, Greg performed regularly at the Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor on the Barton organ. Dr. Yassick now has his own dental practice in Flushing, Michigan.*

I was fortunate to have been an organ student of Father Jim Miller's for nearly seven years. I had 256 "formal" lessons with Jim starting at age 12 and continuing until I was 18. Of course, the teaching/learning never really stopped, and it continued as long as we could get together to talk about music and share musical discoveries. Although it has been over 36 years since that first lesson, many of the memories of that time are as vivid as if they just happened yesterday, while others have taken up residence in the sentimental attic of my mind.

I first met Jim at Olmstead Music Company in Flint, Michigan where he was working as a salesman and I was taking organ lessons from Agnes Rogers. Aggie was a neat gal . . . all 300 pounds of her. She was a demon rag-time piano player and would often stage some remarkable piano/organ duets with Jim after the lessons. After working with Agnes for a year or two she suggested that I continue my studies with Jim.

My first lesson was on Jim's 2/5 Wicks pipe organ that he somehow managed to shoehorn into the basement of his Flint home. I can't remember Jim's reaction to having

essentially a rank beginner as a student, other than the fact that he seemed impressed that I could simply harmonize a right hand melody and play a basic 4/4 rhythm with alternating pedals. (He was probably happy to discover that he wouldn't have to start all the way back to square one.) Anyway it was a start, and it launched me into the world of Harold Gleason, J. S. Bach, Richard Purvis, Flor Peeters, Bill McMains, Jesse Crawford, George Wright, Billy Nalle, John Mehagen, and Bill Irwin. It may be surprising to some that I worked on a great deal of classical organ literature in those 256 lessons as well as written arrangements of popular music. In the later years a lot of time was spent on arranging, improvisation, and jazz theory. Jim always felt that to be a complete musician one needed to read music, play by chords, fake, transpose, and play by ear. Although I (thankfully) haven't had to provide a living from music performance, Jim provided a decent training ground for most gigs that have and continue to come up. Most importantly it was simply a gas to learn music from this extremely talented, wild and crazy guy. To this day, rarely do I sit down to play and not think of what Miller might have thought about what I'm playing.

*Special Memories that come to mind during that time 1967-1974:*

*Going to the Senate* – The first time I ever played a theatre pipe organ. Jim would usually reserve the organ from 10 pm – 2 am because he could have the organ for a longer block of time. I remember stacking up books on top of our Thomas spinet to simulate the height of the Wurlitzer's music rack. Jim would often "get lost" in a song for a half an hour or more, just "working things out;" exploring. These were probably some of my favorite times hearing him play. Not everything was great, but some was exceptional. Then, there were those post-practice coney at the Senate Coney Island. One time, with a car full of people, Jim decided to get a dozen to go . . . big mistake. Of course, there was the time Jim stuck his partial into a coney and told the waitress there was something in his hot dog. I thought she was going to throw up! I played a concert at the Senate with Jim and fellow student Nancy Dunsire. That was a lot of fun. There was also the time that Henry Prybylski showed up at 2 am and we went over to the Fox. The organ and the theatre were both pretty rough at that time but it was still quite a thrill for a kid at 15 or 16.



A youthful Greg Yassick at the Barton console, Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor, Michigan (early '80s).

*Jim's Ordination* – Jim was ordained as a deacon in the Russian Orthodox Church at Saint Nicholas Church in Flint in 1970. Very elaborate ceremony with processions around the church (actually 3 times). Jim was very humbled and proud as we were for him. Looked pretty good in his new vestments.

*Tradewinds* – Jim had me play a supper club gig while he played at the Flint Generals hockey games. I think he lasted about four games before he got canned, purportedly for playing “Three Blind Mice” when the referees skated on the ice. Anyway, he went back to the Tradewinds and I took over at the hockey games. Classic Miller line: he asked the owner of the team what time was puckoff!

*First Recording* – Jim recorded an album, part of which was made on our Thomas Palace III organ. He'd come over in the middle of the night because it was quiet in the neighborhood. Half the time he was pretty looped from whatever gig he was coming from so often not much got accomplished.

*First Concert at the Senate* – I know Jim was nervous about this gig that I think took place in 1971. He played pretty well as I remember despite the nerves. The classic Miller moment occurred before the concert. Jim was concerned that his denture was getting a little loose so he attempted a “home” reline in the microwave. To make the long story short the denture was deformed to the point it wouldn't fit into his mouth! Not deterred, Jim put it back in the microwave, zapped it again, and then jammed the extremely hot denture into his mouth. Apparently the denture had all sorts of retention after that.

As Jim became more established in the theatre organ world, many came to realize that he did things musically that were different from what the majority of organists were doing, and that these things were not normally taught in the “traditional” scope of music education. When I first started with Jim he was a musical dynamo,

literally a George Wright on speed. He had such a phenomenal ear that he could play and reproduce anything he heard but not only that but play it louder, faster and better. In the course of my time with him he began to delve into the study of jazz and here again he was able to play what he heard, but at this point did not have a complete understanding of *why* jazz musicians did what they did. It was exciting for me to study with him during this period of his musical life because he was so juiced about the possibilities of this music that he couldn't wait to teach to me what he was discovering. As he came to understand the “why” behind the music, he eventually was able to distill this information in a logical way that could be passed to students, many of whom were already talented musicians in their own right but without a background in functional jazz theory. This may be his true legacy.

The musicianship of this man was miles beyond what came out of the pipes of a theatre organ. I've heard those that characterized his playing as second rate and dismissed him as more of an entertainer and a personality than a musician. These people were ignorant of the scope of his talent. Although Jim had consciously developed a comfortable stylistic niche, his playing always had more rhythmic drive, harmonic inventiveness, and an adventurous jazz feel than nearly anyone on the theatre organ scene. He was always keenly aware of who his audience was, and was wise enough to give them what they wanted. I personally looked forward to his ballad playing at his concerts. Here, with only a framework of the song's form, he would take the tune to new and unexpected places surely unknown even to him at the time. If only more theatre organists would take such chances.

Jim Miller was probably the most unique individual I have ever met, a man of amazing contradictions. He was incredibly gregarious, yet intensely private. He was

deeply spiritual, yet hysterically irreverent. He was extremely intelligent, yet unbelievably goofy. He was outwardly confident, yet inwardly uncertain. Hundreds loved him, yet his friends were few. He was a man of many talents beyond music and was generous in sharing those talents with others. He was a voracious reader of nearly anything he could get his hands on. He had a zest for life that few could match. Jim once said that goal of an improvising musician is to be able to play what you hear, but I think Jim Miller took that one step further because he had the ability to play what he felt and he felt everything. I miss him.

*Dr. Greg Yassick*  
Flushing, Michigan

### *The Words Of A Fellow Teacher*

The loss of Father Jim Miller was not confined to the theatre organ world. Judging from my own brief encounters with Father Jim, sharing his ebullience, energy, positive attitude . . . and there are many more words that come to mind to attempt to describe the strength that emanated from the very manly man behind the collar.

There was the one occasion I had to visit Father Jim in his home, where the pipe organ was installed. It was a short visit but the memory of a large, very active, smiling bulk of enthusiasm, going through the crowded room, wearing the austerity of the clerical collar very lightly, was a living picture of faith and determination conquering hesitation and fear.

The man was a mover and a shaker. Things were made to happen when the good Father was around. He didn't take himself or life too seriously when it came to having fun, being with his friends and making music, but when the occasion required looking a troubling situation in the eye and helping his fellow man to face life, he was a true man of faith.

When Father Jim left us, the theatre organ world lost a fine organist. The world lost a fine man.

*Bill Irwin*  
Mesa, Arizona

### *The Words Of A Fellow Organist*

I can remember that Fr. Jim was one of the first organists I heard do a program at Hinsdale, Illinois back when I moved to Milwaukee to play Pipe Organ Pizza in the late '70s. I didn't really know him, but he came out and proceeded to keep the audience in literal hysterics throughout the show, at one point laying down across the bench, (like it was a fainting couch) and propping a



*Bill Irwin during a packed seminar at the Miller residence. Fr. Jim held Irwin in the highest regard, as he did other "out of the box" musician-teachers, including Searle Wright, Don Miller and John Mehegan.*

hand under his head while talking up a storm and telling jokes. He laughed so hard at himself that his face turned deep maroon, which made everything all the funnier. The same delightful things went on at subsequent concerts that we went to.

By the way, I also remember that he was a \*gem\* of a person and played darn well.

*Clark Wilson*  
E. Liverpool, Ohio

### *Laugh Til You Cry*

*Bob Beck, a man of many talents, has played an endless string of intermissions over a period of many years on the Kilgen organ at the Palace Theatre in Canton, Ohio. As well as being a fine organist, Bob is a voicer with the venerable A. R. Schopp's Sons in Alliance, Ohio.*

Jim played at the Palace in Canton twice. My wife and I had the honor of hosting him in our home for both events. Jim had a God-given talent to entertain standing next to **any** organ console . . . be it a 2/7 Wurlitzer or at the Chicago Theatre. Jim played what people wanted to hear and he told me to play that way for movie pre-shows, no matter what; play Big Band and you'll live.

We took him to our church to hear the organ and he liked the Viole and Celeste I voiced. He told me to approach the voicing of **any** Celeste ranks as if God was wrapping his arms around you.

The second concert Jim did in Canton followed his new knee surgery. He was like a kid in a candy store. After his console-riser, he turned to the audience and exclaimed that he reported to his knee doctor that he was the bionic man. His doctor replied that all he did was replace his knee. With that, Jim said listen, and held the mike to his ear to make his hearing aid whistle. The response was as expected. The rest of the concert was the typical Fr. Jim "laugh 'til you cry" event.

Frankly, (I think) Jim was a person God loaned to us. Jim and I had many conversations about faith and denominations. He touched everyone's heart; I don't care if it was an organ-crew person or someone listening to his music. He touched so many people with his music and humor. There will never be another Father Jim in the Theatre Organ world. Vicki (my wife), Tristan (our son) and I feel blessed that we knew Jim and will meet him again.

I do think of Jim every time I ride that console up.

*Bob Beck*  
Canton, Ohio

## *Pre-priest Antics*

*The irrepresible Don Jenks has been president of the Detroit Theatre Organ Society on several occasions, has served the organization in countless ways over nearly the entire duration of its existence. Don knew Fr. Jim for many years, and lived only a short distance from his Fenton home.*

Long before the church ordained Fr. Jim he was the entertainer at a nightclub in Flint. He had a combo of a gal who played drums and viibraharp (whose name was Arvella, but Jim insisted on calling: "Rubella, our diseased vibraharpist"), and a man (Eugene) who played the trumpet, sax and clarinet. Since the name of this place was The Ritz Supper Club, Fr. Jim called his combo the Ritz Crackers, much to the dismay and disapproval of the owner of the club. Fr. Jim played a Wurlitzer electronic bar organ with two full manuals and a half manual above the others. Someone had to make Fr. Jim a special speaker for the organ. It was a voice coil with the bell of a trumpet shoved into it. It had a very "unusual" sound.

One night a lady who was dancing came past the bandstand and through her alcohol-slurred mouth, she asked the trumpeter to play "The Anniversary Waltz." Fr. Jim heard this and turned a control on the organ, which caused the voice through this ridiculous speaker to sound like Wayne King. The trumpeter had not played a note.

The lady came around the floor again and with a threat in her voice she told the trumpeter to play that straight and to quit fooling around. "Lady, I haven't played a note." Fr. Jim, with a devilish look on his face, cranked up the sound even more nasty and the trumpeter still stood motionless on the stage. It was even more Wayne King.

The lady came around again and bellowed at the trumpeter, "I told you to quit fooling around. Now, cut it out or I will put that horn where the sun never shines." By this time Fr. Jim was all but rolling on the floor laughing. The trumpeter turned around and with a look of panic on his face told Fr. Jim to cut it out, or else he could be killed.

This might have been about the same time when Fr. Jim came into work and found a sandbagged bunker in the front doorway with a cannon aimed toward the restaurant across the street. A man who had been an officer in the German army owned this restaurant. The owner of the Ritz had been in service also. The two owners had carried on a friendly debate for years and this was the latest salvo. There is nothing like crossed cannons at your favorite restaurant.

So much for the Ritz Supper Club.

## *Father Don*

In 1980, my wife Shirley and I took Fr. Jim to Seattle for a vacation, the first one he had had in years. The trip out went without incident and we had a great time. I knew Dick Shrum quite well and I took Fr. Jim out to the pizza parlor where Dick was playing. We arranged for Fr. Jim to play the organ and he galvanized the house. The

MILLER COLLECTION



*Fr. Jim on the bench, in a slightly unusual position.*

next night, we went to the other pizza parlor where Dick was performing. As soon as we walked through the door, Dick jumped off the bench and indicated that Fr. Jim should take over.

That night, we found out that Dick was the Chairman for the 1981 Seattle Convention. Dick asked Fr. Jim to be an artist for the convention. Then, Dick said that he enjoyed Fr. Jim's sense of humor, and would he also be the Master of Ceremonies. The answer was, of course, yes to both. This was the beginning of his international concert career.

The 1981 convention was held in mid-July of that year. That was also the time the great non-event of the year took place. The Air Traffic Controllers were going to go out on strike and it was to begin the weekend we were to go to Seattle. Shirley had gone out a week earlier. Fr. Jim and I plotted on how we could get to the West. Fr. Jim pointed out that it would be easier for two priests to bump onto a flight than a priest and a civilian. He pointed out that I wore the same size shirt as he did. It was a great idea. Then, the strike did not take place. But, Fr. Jim hated to waste this good idea, so, I became Fr. Don.

On the Saturday morning we were to leave, I dressed in the priest shirt complete with collar, and Fr. Jim put a huge silver cross around my neck. I was now a priest. When we got to the airport, we were going to park in the off-airport lot. I got ready to turn left into the access road and I saw a blonde in a Camaro, ready to cut us off. She went in through the outbound road, forcing a bus off the road, and roared into the parking lot. We went in and found an empty space.

The blonde jumped on the shuttle bus and said to the driver, "Oh my God, I just cut those two guys off. You aren't going to pick them up are you?" The driver answered, "Yes." Then our blonde got a look at us as we got out of the car. "Look what they are. Please leave," she pleaded. The driver said no and came over to pick us up. We had two boxes, one of junk and the other with a Honey Baked ham in it plus our suitcases. Fr. Jim told me to say what he said and act like he did.

Fr. Jim put bag and box on the bus and with a toothy smile, said "Good Morning" to the driver and the blonde. I followed on and did the same thing. The blonde was huddled in the right rear of the bus facing toward the aisle. So, we sat on the front left and could easily smile at her. She was a flight attendant and had on a skirt so short they could call the cops, and her blouse was open down to her navel. She struggled to hold her blouse closed and her skirt down at a level suitable for two priests. As soon as we got to the North Terminal, she sped off of the bus, and at that point the driver and both of us collapsed laughing.



*With George Wright, after his concert at the pizza parlor in Pontiac in the early '80s. Fr. Jim first met Wright years before at a convention of the National Association of Music Merchants in Chicago. When he asked Wright for advice on how best to approach theatre organ playing, he instructed Fr. Jim to simply image himself at the center of a giant symphony orchestra.*

We had wonderful service on the flight out. When we got to Seattle, Fr. Jim told me he would deplane first so that he could get some pictures. He went out of the jetway first and waited for me. Shirley had no idea what we were up to and was waiting to take a picture when I deplaned. I came through the door. She snapped the shutter and let out a scream when she saw me. All the way from the gate to the baggage claim area she was almost speechless. Our friend, Margaret, went to get the car up to the door and left us to handle the baggage.

Our two suitcases came down and only one of the boxes. The box that was missing was the ham. There was a baggage coordinator for American Airlines there. I told her that one box didn't come down, and could someone please check to see if it missed getting onto the conveyor. She swung around and told me in no uncertain terms that, if it didn't come down, we probably didn't put it on the plane, and that wasn't her fault. My temper very quickly reached the boiling point. I finally swung her around and bellowed at her, "I only have one question. Where the Hell is my Goddamned ham?" At that point, Shirley headed for one door and Fr. Jim for another with neither wanting to associate with that madman priest off of the plane. Finally the girl took the information about the box and I went out to the car. They really didn't want to let me in.

We got to Renton where we were staying and learned that American Airlines found the box at the top of the conveyor. They had called and said that normally they do not deliver baggage left behind at the airport, but in this case they would deliver it.

Shirley decided to take some pictures of this ersatz priest. Shirley's cousin (where we were staying) picked a huge lily from his garden and handed it to me and the picture was taken with me holding the lily.

Only Jim Miller could have come up with such a wild idea.

*(Fr.?) Don Jenks  
Howell, Michigan*

## *A Tribute to Fr. Jim Miller*

In 1990, I found myself faced with the gloomy prospect of writing yet another textbook that few people would read. The contract had been signed, and it was time to get down to work. The first two books had been difficult to write and the sales had been disappointing. I was really beginning to wonder if I should spend three years on this new one.

On a lovely summer afternoon, I decided to go for a walk and think through my options. By the time I had finished my short excursion, I had made a life changing decision. Instead of writing a textbook, I was going to take theatre organ lessons from Fr. Jim Miller if he would have me.

For at least 25 years, I had been trying rather unsuccessfully to play the theatre organ. I had taken a few piano lessons and several years of classical organ. These enabled me to read music and work up some existing arrangements. But unless the music was all written down, my playing ranged from boringly adequate to very bad. I would listen in frustration to the performances of my fellow organists at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor. Their chord progressions seemed magical; their harmonies magnificent. The music floated and soared when they played. When I asked them to explain their secrets, they all suggested that I talk to Fr. Jim Miller.

I had heard Fr. Jim play a concert once at the Fox Theatre in Detroit. His arrangement of "Misty" was incredible. Where did those harmonies come from? They unfolded one after another in a shimmering cascade of rich and evocative chords. How did he do that, I wondered.

A few months before my monumental decision to abandon professional goals in favor of personal enrichment, Diane and I had run into Fr. Jim and Fr. Andy having dinner at a restaurant in Fenton, Michigan where they lived. I introduced myself to Fr. Jim, and he invited us to visit his home to see his Barton pipe organ. So when I called Fr. Jim to ask about lessons, we were at least not complete strangers.

On a Friday morning a few weeks later, I drove to Fenton and entered into one of the richest experiences of my adult life. At that first lesson, Fr. Jim said, "play for me." After a few moments of patient listening, he said, "let me show you something." He scooted onto the organ bench and for the rest of the morning and for the next

five years shared his musical wisdom, his ribald humor, his deep spirituality, and his sheer love of life with me.

Within a few weeks, Fr. Jim had introduced me to the secrets of the whole tone scales, the Schillinger method of harmony, and had me practicing those parallel 7-9 chord progressions. He showed me styling tricks of George Wright and Buddy Cole and regaled me with personal anecdotes about famous musicians. After a while, my playing began to open up, and I was beginning to do those chord substitutions automatically.

One day I brought Fr. Jim a recording of Bob Van Camp's rendition of "Strangers in the Night." Because we had lived in Atlanta while Bob was regularly playing at the Fox, I was particularly fond of this arrangement. After years of trying, I had given up attempting to figure out its tricky harmonies. Fr. Jim listened to it once and proceeded to write down every chord progression. "There you go," he said, as if what he had done was the easiest thing in the world. Maybe it was for him! Over the next few years, he transcribed arrangements by Dick Leibert, Ashley Miller, and Buddy Cole. Fr. Jim's ear was flawless, and I always say a quiet thanks whenever I play these arrangements at the Michigan Theatre. Without Fr. Jim, they would not be possible.

Eventually my playing got better, but something else happened that was even more important. I became a better person. I was happier, more relaxed, more interested in music and life-in general a much nicer guy to be with. And how could anyone not be transformed by Fr. Jim Miller? He had a wide ranging curiosity about music, pipe organs, trains, ships, dirigibles, and a host of other

MILLER COLLECTION



*The group of former students who performed at the "Tribute to Fr. Jim" at the Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor in May, 1999. From left to right: Steven Ball (who performed on the carillon at Burton Tower, University of Michigan), Dr. Henry Aldridge, Dr. Greg Yassick, Fr. Andrew Rogers and Scott Smith. Not pictured: John Lauter, who played later in the theatre lobby on an electronic organ donated by the Miller estate.*

things. Fr. Jim had an infectious enthusiasm for life. Virtually everything was an occasion for happiness and celebration. He had an intense spirituality, and a repertoire of some of the most amazingly dirty jokes I have ever heard. (How these two traits resided happily within the same individual I never did figure out.) We spent those happy Friday mornings together talking about all kinds of music and musicians. We discussed travel and politics, and had many conversations about religion. While doing all of this, we simply enjoyed each other's company.

I spent five happy years visiting Fr. Jim. Eventually, he found time to join the organ staff at the Michigan Theatre, and so I was able to see him even more often. Fr. Jim visited our home on many occasions and always the most popular guest at a party. Gracious, kind, thoughtful, decent, interesting, talented, fun—the adjectives describing Fr. Jim could march past for hours. There's not a day that goes by that I don't think about Fr. Jim Miller. I miss him. I loved him.

*Henry B. Aldridge, Ph.D.*  
Professor, Film Studies  
Eastern Michigan University  
Ann Arbor, Michigan

### *A Tribute to Fr. Jim Miller: from a student and co-pastor*

I remember his concerts—his bouncy, toe-tapping style, his audiences' laughter and gleeful smiles enjoying both the man and his music. I think his abilities and charisma partially grew as a result of playing in a trio with a trumpeter/drummer and a vibraharpist, playing in local bars and restaurants that featured dancing (prior to getting 'ring-around-the-collar'). That constant interaction between members of the trio and the interplay with the dancers got fully transplanted into the concert scenario with the instant connection he was able to make with his audience—joking and telling stories as if you were a patron where he was playing or a guest in his living room.

He said that although it was important to play well, it was equally important to entertain, to give an audience something more than they would get just listening to a recording at home—and entertain he did! He kept his audiences laughing between—and, sometimes, during—a song with his stories and antics. His arrangements in concert were not always set in stone, either. He usually left room for improvisation, which Ashley Miller once confessed to him that he wished he could do.

Ashley said it was so difficult for him to relax in front of a live audience and admired Fr. Jim's ability both to communicate with his audience and change his arrangements—creating and recreating them at the console to fit his mood, not just playing a well-rehearsed number note-for-note.

Fr. Jim had perfect pitch and certainly knew his music theory. He insisted that all of his students learn the theory, too. He was less interested in making you technically proficient at the organ than he was helping you understand the theory behind what you were doing, especially chord substitutions and everything that makes music more interesting to listen to. Bill Irwin and his treasure house of arrangements was one of his inspirations and even had Bill over to the house for workshops with his students. He enjoyed the artists who originated playing styles, but attended few concerts, both because of his schedule and because most artists only copied someone else's style. "You only have to listen to the first few bars of the opening number and know exactly how the rest of the concert is going to sound," he would say. He enjoyed carving out his own, unique, style.

When one of his hosts discovered Fr. Jim was a 'rail-fan', they scheduled his next concert for them to coincide with the Philadelphia Trolley Ramble (in 1998). The people who had experienced Fr. Jim in concert the night before had the opportunity to get up-close-and-personal with him during the Ramble. It was a fun experience for everyone involved.

### *The Church*

In addition to his audiences, his parishioners also benefited from his charisma, humor, and other skills. The parish he first served for most of his priestly career was a small parish with a limited budget, about 45 minutes away from his home. Sometime when he was younger, he had gone bankrupt and moved back home. To get back on his feet, he helped his dad at the marina repairing, rebuilding, and refinishing boats. What he learned then, helped him on all of the later projects he undertook, whether the projects were at home or for the church. Fr. Jim served the parish not only as its senior pastor, but also as their main carpenter, electrician, plumber, etc. for both the church, the parish house, and rental property next door.

There were no boundaries to the extent he'd go to make the most of every situation and it was, sometimes, the little things that made all the difference. He began making all of the Easter baskets long after the parishioners had abandoned the practice, made huge shutters for the church windows when breakage became excessive, made a loan available to the renters to enable them



to fix their car, shortened and refinished used pews that looked nicer and were more comfortable than what they originally had, secured and installed 'new' church interior furnishings that were being discarded by a local Greek church that was undergoing remodeling and, if I looked through the pictures, could probably jog my memory on enough other projects to fill this entire issue.

Although he could open the hearts of an audience in concert, he could also impact their lives in other ways. He took his religious job very seriously. If he would have been asked to make a list of adjectives to describe himself, serving as a priest would have been at the top of the list and everything else was subservient to that. He was a very insightful and spiritual person. Many at the funeral relayed stories about the highly personal information he had given them and often heard the phrase, "How did he know that!"

One student's father looked at the picture of Padre Pio that was displayed on the piano. Pio's hand was extended in a Blessing—revealing a wrapped, blood-stained palm from the stigmata (wounds resembling the crucifixion wounds of Jesus). The father asked what was wrong with his hand. When Fr. Jim explained, the father's response was that they didn't believe in that stuff. They just went to church and took communion every Sunday and **that** was the end of the conversation! After they left, Fr. Jim turned to me and with an expres-

sion full of patience and understanding, said, "That's why they call it the **Mother Church**, for it has to be a mother to everyone at every level of understanding."

One of the perks of being a parishioner at the church we served, was being able to sample his cooking at the monthly church fund-raising dinners. After one lady brought in spaghetti with husband-provided venison that made more than a few of us feel ill, Fr. Jim volunteered to make spaghetti for the following month. His offering was such a success, that he was asked to contribute something to each following dinner. His home-cooked Thanksgiving meals were also true feasts to be thankful for!

### *Family*

Fr. Jim had been married and had two daughters; one was 'special'. Even though her doctors said her abilities would be minimal, they never accepted their diagnoses or predictions. They sent her to an appropriate school and worked with her diligently when she was home. Later, when they went back to the same doctors and showed them what they achieved with her, they were shocked at the level of competency she had achieved. It was yet another experience that enabled him to help others. It always excited him to come back from a concert venue and share a story of a conversation with someone whom he felt he was able to help in some way.

### *Maybe I Should Have Taken Up Piano*

Most artists have their horror stories of performing in "less-than-optimal" conditions and Fr. Jim's collection of stories was abundant. The story I always think of, first, is one warm, humid, summer evening when the air conditioning wasn't working in a theatre. The doors were all left open and the stage lights aimed at the console became a beacon that attracted swarms of mayflies! During the first half of the concert, he continually squished them under his fingers as he performed. At intermission, they had to thoroughly scrub down the keyboards while Fr. Jim had to scrub up, as well!

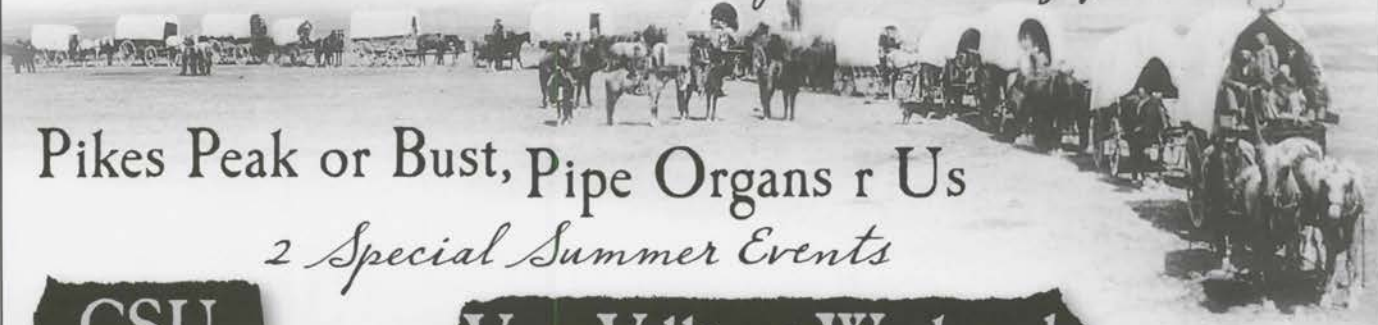
Then there was an organ that he was to feature first in a convention. Its console had been disconnected for a very long time. The cable had just been reattached to the console about two days before the convention. He played for a movie the night before the convention to find out ahead of time what wasn't working, but it worked surprisingly well. However, an inexperienced theatre employee decided to do work on the relay while Fr. Jim was playing his convention spot. The employee's poor soldering was causing more and more notes to go 'dead' on the pedalboard. As a result, he had to begin playing the rest of the concert like a piano, while



*Fr. Jim at the Senate Theatre Wurlitzer, showing off his trademark red suspenders.*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 52

*Pikes Peak Area Theatre Organ Society presents:*



## Pikes Peak or Bust, Pipe Organs r Us

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Afterglow  
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*Featuring:  
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**Sunday, August 14, 2005**

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Joel's Organ Barn/Picnic-Program,  
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**Very Valliant Weekend**

*Featuring: Brett Valliant*

**Thursday, September 1, 2005**

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**Saturday, September 3, 2005**

7:00 pm  
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Brett and Tom O'Boyle  
Historic Mt. St. Francis Auditorium,  
Colorado Springs, CO

**Sunday, September 4, 2005**

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

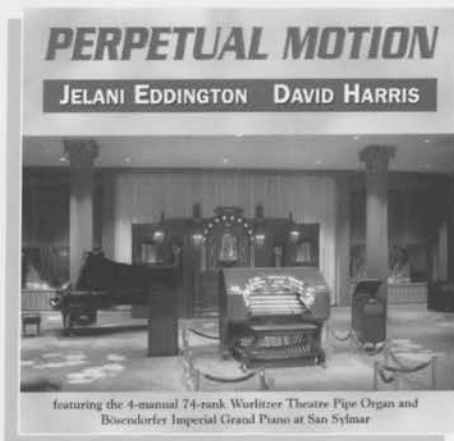
# For the Records

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.

## PERPETUAL MOTION

Jelani Eddington & David Harris



The "Dynamic Duo" have returned with a sizzling new program of mostly familiar favorites garnished with fascinating arrangements, fresh registrations, and as before, immaculate, sensitive musicianship. In the January 2002 Journal Lew Williams reviewed their first Duo CD *Fascinating Rhythm*, recorded in Wichita's Little River Studio with its 3/19 Wurlitzer. He commented, "... this is a first-class product both musically and technically. Let's have more of these two!" Their second CD, *Christmas Wonderland* (Journal November 2004) was recorded at the Wheaton Fox/Van Der Molen studio with its 4/16 Robert-Morton and we said, "... we give this a Must Have rating for their selections and sparkling arrangements." Now we hear them at the 4/74 Wurlitzer and 97(!) note Bosendorfer Imperial Grande Piano of Cloud 99 at California's world-famous San Sylmar collection of magnificent classic cars, beautiful art objects and unique music makers.

In May 1995 Journal's cover story tells about the rebuilding and expansion of this organ (originally a 4/39) after the Northridge earthquake. The liner notes also have a summary of San Sylmar's history; however, due to the superb quality of this recording, we will locate the

chambers for you. The Main chamber is on the left and the Solo chamber is on the right. At the far right side is the Ethereal (Echo) chamber and exposed Pedal Tibia. Centered between the Main and Solo is the 19-rank String chamber and the percussions. Since the room is heavily carpeted and beautifully furnished we must mention that recording and mastering engineer Chris Gorsuch has perfectly balanced the piano and organ chambers and given this disc a warm, rich room sound. As Jelani writes in his excellent liner notes, "The resulting instrument is not only the third largest theatre organ in the world, but is a highly versatile, subtle, and orchestral instrument, making it among the finest in existence today." Amen! In the 19th Century, Vienna's Strauss family virtually dominated the popular music world. Johann Strauss Senior (1804-1849) was a composer, formed a dance orchestra and fathered three sons who followed him into the music business. They established their own dance orchestras and also compose music for them, (much as Sousa did for his marching band). Their popularity was so great they played all over Europe, and in 1872 Johann Junior and his orchestra performed 18 concerts in Boston and New York. He was also by far the most prolific composer of the three Strauss brothers. But don't expect Jelani and David to open with a waltz for they've picked the sprightly musical joke "Perpetual Motion" which can only be stopped, as they do in mid-phase! Their second tune was made popular by the well-scrubbed young barbershop harmonizers from Sheboygan, Wisconsin on the Arthur Godfrey radio show. Of course, they are The Chordettes. Their biggest hit, "Mr. Sandman," gets the full treatment including a waltz chorus and then a jazzy novelty ending. Wow!

The Dynamic Duo's next selection comes from a composer "... who was, without question the greatest composer in history who was, by profession, a chemist." Of course, that has to be

Alexander Borodin whose music was so exotically enchanting it was easily transformed into one of the most successful Broadway, London, and Hollywood musicals ... *Kismet*. David and Jelani play that show's love-at-first-sight ballad, "Stranger In Paradise," with the richest sounds of both the piano and organ. Another kind of classical musical joke is next. It's a 13-minute visit with seven of Saint-Saens' musical portraits of some of his friends (and enemies) in the provocative yet charming *Carnival of Animals*. The liner notes give some fascinating details about the origins for each of the pieces they play. Jelani's organ solo is that deliciously effervescent "Root Beer Rag." It's another wowser! Now for something different and new to theatre pipes. It was written by a French composer Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) who never learned to play the piano, spent several years in Brazil assisting the French ambassador, and taught music in the US during the 1940s. But, musicologist Jim Svejda states that Milhaud was, "One of the most prolific and entertaining composers that history has known ..." Our Duo performs his exciting, indeed exhilarating, "Braziliera."

Back to more familiar territory as Jelani and David salute one of our most beloved composers with a 17-minute medley titled *Richard Rodgers On Broadway*. Did you realize Rodgers wrote the scores for 39 Broadway musicals between 1920 and 1979? That's almost 60 years on the Great White Way! There are eight Rodgers' melodies, which receive a full arrangement; but there are also about ten more you'll surely recognize scattered here and there in this medley. We'll comment on just a few of the selections. The melody for "Getting To Know You" (in the *King and I*) was originally written for *South Pacific* (with the title "Suddenly Lucky") but was cut before that musical opened. "How Can Love Survive?" is one of two numbers Captain Von Trapp's German friends had in the stage version of *Sound of*

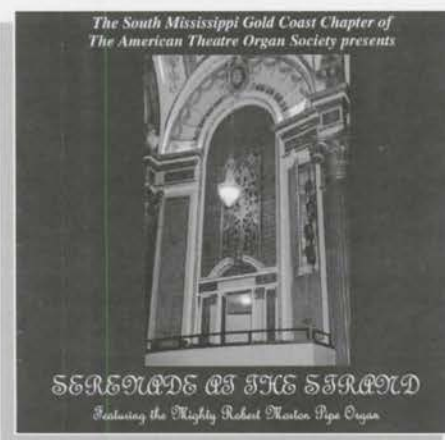
Music. But both their clever, up-tempo songs were deleted from the film. "Love Look Away" comes from the not so well known musical *Flower Drum Song*. Although we've all heard many medleys of Rodgers show music over the years, each one of the pieces on this disc has been given a fresh approach and comes out shiny new. This medley is a tuneful treasure in every way!

David Harris at the extraordinary 97-note Bosendorfer Grande Piano has the next-to-closing spot with a truly magnificent arrangement of Harold Arlen and "Yip" Harburg's best known song . . . "Over The Rainbow." And David includes the rarely heard verse, which is not sung in the film. In fact it isn't even on the *Wizard Of Oz* soundtrack CD (which, surprisingly, does have the "Jitterbug" music which was also cut from the film!) Here are the lyrics to the verse: "When all the world is a hopeless jumble/And the raindrops tumble all round/Heaven opens a magic lane/When all the clouds darken up the sky-way/There's a rainbow highway to be found/Leading from your windowpane/To a place behind the sun/Just a step beyond the rain." For their Grande Finale the Dynamic Duo play the complete, original 17-minute arrangement of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody In Blue." Because the San Sylmar organ has such a generous selection of orchestral voices and marvelous Strings, from the opening Clarinet glissando you can easily imagine yourself sitting in New York City's Aeolian Hall back in 1924 when Paul

Whiteman and his Palais Royal Orchestra accompanied George Gershwin at the piano in its world premiere!

This is organ/piano entertainment at its finest, and on all counts . . . selections, musical artistry, organ, piano, recording and liner notes . . . Yes, it is a Must Have CD! This album is \$18.00 (plus \$2.00 postage in the US or \$5.00 overseas) or, if it is ordered with Jelani's *Musical Fireworks* CD (reviewed in the last Journal) each disc is \$17.00 (plus postage). Mail orders go to RJE Productions LLC, P. O. Box 45486, Madison, Wisconsin 53711-5486. You can also order online and use your credit card at: [www.rjeproductions.com](http://www.rjeproductions.com)

## SERENADE AT THE STRAND



Congratulations to the South Mississippi Gold Coast Chapter of ATOS for

finding, restoring, and playing a long dormant and almost forgotten original installation theatre organ! Shreveport Louisiana's Strand Theatre opened in 1925 with a 2/13 Robert-Morton to play the 'silent' and vaudeville acts. The liner notes tell us that the Strand is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is Louisiana's Official State Theatre, and that their Morton is one of only 15 original Morton installations left in the country. It should be noted too, that while they have been able to raise some money for the organ's rehabilitation, including an ATOS grant, the complete restoration project is ongoing and this CD is a musical fund-raiser that well deserves our support. Again, from the liner notes: "Only a small amount of remedial work was performed by ATOS volunteer technicians prior to the recording session, and the recording illustrates not only the greatness of this instrument but also the work that remains to bring the project to completion."

The four organists heard on this disc have been intimately involved with saving the organ. In alphabetical order they are: Richard Ahlvin who is Vice-President of the Chapter and plays nightly at a local restaurant; John DeMajo who is President of the Chapter and has a theatre organ in his home; Jonathan Fox is a middle-school teacher, organist at the Baptist Church, and is the one who rediscovered the Morton and spearheaded its restoration; and Ray Peebles is an accomplished classical organist who also

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enjoys playing a theatre organ. Each organist's selections are scattered throughout this 66-minute CD; however, we'll review the selections in order heard on this disc. (The liner notes indicate who is playing each number.) The Serenade tune listed has a number of well-known favorites along with some real 'Golden Oldies' one doesn't often hear on theatre pipe organ discs!

An appropriate, though rather raucous, console raiser is from the wonderful Dietz/Schwartz score for the 1953 film *The Bandwagon* . . . of course, it's "That's Entertainment." The disc's only medley is next, and it's the somewhat odd pairing of "Sentimental Journey" with "Music Of The Night" from Lloyd Webber's *Phantom*. (Les Brown and His Band of Renown . . . do you remember them on all the Bob Hope specials? . . . was one of the all-time very best Big Bands. Brown composed "Sentimental Journey" in 1945 especially for his star vocalist Doris Day.) March time is next, and it's Radio City Music Hall organist Dick Leibert's "Radio City March." The first of several "Southern" numbers on this CD is a song Louis Armstrong helped put on the Hit Parade . . . the languid "Sleepy Time Down South." Some of the Morton's solo voices are heard on the wonderful old tune from 1914 "Has Anybody Seen My Gal?" That's followed by a rather stately "Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans?" which was sung by Louis Armstrong and Billy Holiday in the 1947 film *New Orleans*. Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer's title

song for the 1941 film *Blues In The Night* receives a cute bouncy treatment, and is followed by a Herb Alpert composition . . . surely you remember his "Spanish Flea," don't you?

"Danny Boy" is given a lovely soft, subtle presentation; much the way Judy Garland sang it in the 1940 film *Little Nelly Kelly*. Another shake-the-dust-from-the-rafters tune is the "Hi Ho Silver" conclusion to the *William Tell Overture*. From the late 1920s we hear that sentimental favorite "As Time Goes By" and "Ain't Misbehavin'," which "Fats" Waller wrote for the 1929 musical review *Hot Chocolates*. Turning off the Morton's tremulants demonstrates that this organ can do a quite respectable performance of Bach's "Toccatina In D Minor." In startling contrast is one of Broadway's all-time greatest songs. It's from the show that was originally titled *Dolly, A Damned Exasperating Woman*. Yes, it was renamed *Hello Dolly!*, and opened on the Great White Way in 1964 starring Carol Channing. Actually that role was written for Ethel Merman (1909-1984) who turned it down! But, before the show closed after 2,844 performances, Merman relented and it became her final starring role on Broadway in 1978.

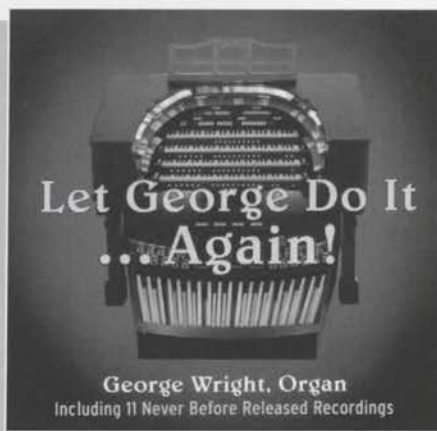
Time for a bit of silliness with a tune made popular by Bent Fabric. That just has to be "Alley Cat." Believe it or not, Bent Fabric really was his name since, being Danish, it was just a shortening of his full name Bent Fabricious-Bjerre. Although he was a fine jazz piano player and composer, he won the Grammy in 1962 for his version of "Alley Cat," which was actually written by someone else we haven't been able to identify! Fabric discovered this song when it became the theme music for a Danish TV program on which he was the musical director! A slightly swinging "Serenata," by Leroy Anderson, is followed by "My Wild Irish Rose" and a sun-shiny march titled "Step Lively." Nearing the end of the program is the hymn "Jesus Is Coming Again," and a brilliant untremmed classical bon-bon, Widor's devilish "Toccatina."

Appropriately, according to the liner notes, the final number is (one of) the official Louisiana State Songs . . . that old time favorite "You Are My Sunshine," written by former governor Jimmie Davis and Charles Mitchell. (The other song was written by Doralice Fontane and is called "Give Me Louisiana.") Our South Mississippi Gold Coast Chapter has good reason to be proud of their progress so far in returning this historic Morton to top-

notch condition. As we mentioned at the beginning, this CD is a limited edition fund-raiser that is certainly worthy of our support. The CD is \$17.00 (post-paid in the US) and you can charge it to your credit card. Mail orders should be sent to Jonathan Fox, 316 1/2 Albany Avenue, Shreveport, Louisiana 71105-2002, phone orders to 318/865-1859, and e-mail to jank0902@earthlink.net

## LET GEORGE DO IT... AGAIN!

George Wright



"You may be asking yourself how, six years after his death, George Wright could record a new CD using an organ he never saw or played. Well, it's quite a story." With those words Dwight Beacham introduces the new 76-minute George Wright album. He goes on to explain in detail how this was accomplished. In brief, Wright's Hollywood Philharmonic pipe organ had a solid-state relay system, which could store on reel-to-reel tape every note, stop and expression pedal position for later playback. When the Allen Organ Company designed its 4/33 George Wright Signature Series organ it sampled the pipework of Wright's organ. Then Wright's reel-to-reel tapes were converted to MIDI files, which could be used on the Allen Renaissance GW4 in Dwight's home where this recording was made. Eleven of the 22 tunes on this disc are of numbers Wright made on his Philharmonic pipe organ but were never before released. Several are different "takes" of songs that Banda has previously released. The reminder, for those who may wish to make an A-B comparison, will demonstrate how splendidly the Allen GW4 duplicates George Wright's Philharmonic pipe organ.

As always George gets his program started with a vivacious finger-snapping

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number. This time it's "Shaking The Blues Away" which Irving Berlin wrote for the *Ziegfeld Follies of 1927*. Ruth Etting introduced it on stage, but you'll probably better remember it from the 1949 Fred Astaire/Judy Garland film *Easter Parade*. But in that film this number was sung and danced by long-legged Ann Miller. Ms. Miller (1923-2004) starred in numerous Hollywood musicals, and claimed a record of being able to do 500 taps-a-minute. (Thirty years later she and Mickey Rooney starred in the Broadway musical *Sugar Babies*, which ran for over 1,200 performances. She continued to appear in stage musicals around the country until the late 1990s!) Like his idol, Jesse Crawford, George Wright was an occasional composer of lovely, gentle melodies. His "The Blue Dove" features Chimes and a light Tibia combination that is exquisite.

Ethel Smith made "Tico Tico" popular, but Wright's nimble-fingered version zips right along and has a really fun ending. By now the listener will be aware that there is a very nice room ambiance in this recording and that George's "less-is-more" registrations ring out the beauty of every organ voice and combination. That's well demonstrated in his next number, Louis Alter's beautifully descriptive "Blue Twilight." Note how gently twilight fades into darkness at the end. Franz Lehar (1870-1948) was the last composer of genuine Viennese operettas, and Wright's next selection is one of his most beautiful melodies... "Frasquita Serenade" which features the Allen's softest, sweetest voices. By now you've probably noticed this disc has a surprising number of songs with "Blue" in the title, but each number is a turquoise delight, and none is more enchanting than Richard Rodgers "Little Boy (Girl) Blue" from the stage and film musical *Jumbo*.

Next, George and the Allen skip

right along to a cheery "Singin' In The Rain." Of course, we know that Gene Kelly made it a hit in the 1952 film with that title. But that was many years after it was composed for the early MGM "all-talking, all singing, all-dancing" (to which one critic added "all lousy") *Hollywood Review of 1929*. A sweet solo voice with a light percussion accompaniment is heard on the "Blue Bird Of Happiness," and then the tempo picks up for Vincent Youman's saucy, samba-like "Carioca" from the 1933 film *Flying Down To Rio*. A smooth, swinging tune from 1953 is next. We'll identify it by the first lines of the lyrics Johnny Mercer wrote for it five years later: "Cigarette holder/Which wigs me/Over her shoulder/She digs me/Out cattn'/That Satin Doll." On this Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn classic George features some wonderful untremmed Reeds and Brass along with a fabulous big band beat. Wow!

Cole Porter wrote one of his lushest love songs for Broadway's leading man in the early 1940s, Wilbur Evans, who introduced "I Love You" in *Mexican Hayride*. Since George also includes the rarely heard verse to this number we'll quote some of its lines: "If a love song I could only write . . . But, alas, just an amateur am I/And so I'll not be surprised, my dear/If you smile and politely pass me by/When this, my first love song you hear." Note the smooth solo voices and how well Wright lets the music breathe. From the same decade we next hear Harry Warren's gently swinging "Serenade In Blue" which Glenn Miller and his Orchestra played in the film *Orchestra Wives*. (This is one of only two films that featured the Glenn Miller Band, with... would you believe... Jackie Gleason on bass, George Montgomery with a trumpet and Caesar Romero at the piano!) "Charmaine" is a Tibia-laden delight that leads into Ray Henderson's

"Birth Of The Blues," which gets a subtle, jazzy beat and some delicious Wright "inventions" that we don't recall ever hearing before. Although that great song was first introduced by Harry Richman in the *George White Scandals of 1926*, it was also the title song for the 1941 movie, which starred Bing Crosby and Mary Martin! (Although we usually associate Ms. Martin with her many Broadway stage roles, between 1938 and 1953 she was featured in ten Hollywood films!)

Continuing with the "Blues" theme, George has a lot of up-tempo fun on the "Farewell Blues." For the romantic "Moonlight On The River" he plays in pure Jesse Crawford style but then gets downright raunchy for a bump-and-grind arrangement of "A Good Man Is Hard To Find." Going to the other musical extreme George next plays a lovely melody Jesse Crawford composed "Forgotten Dreams," which is followed by a near heartbreaking arrangement of Jerome Kern's "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes." To brighten things up again we hear a dashing "Holiday For Strings" with the Allen's fine Strings and pizzicato touches. Next to closing is another red light runway special "Hard Hearted Hannah" with lots of Wright-on fun and a few "ooh hoos," too! His finale is an almost reverent arrangement of Oley Speaks' sentimental ballad "Sylvia." This disc is a musical treasure in every way and is Very Highly Recommended. Compact disc is \$20.00 (postpaid in the US and Canada, add \$3.00 for Europe and Africa, and \$4.00 for Asia and Australia.) VISA and MasterCard are accepted, and you can order by mail from Banda Records, P.O. Box 1261, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104; by fax to 720/733-2137; or on-line at [banda9@msn.com](mailto:banda9@msn.com)



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## A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

Bob Power



Gonna take a sentimental journey,  
Gonna put my heart at ease,  
Gonna take a sentimental journey  
To renew old memories.

Although that well-loved song isn't heard on this disc, it perfectly sets the stage for the 22 wonderful 'Golden Oldies' heard on this 71-minute CD. Since the Bob Power name will be new to most readers we'll quote some of Lyn Larsen's interesting liner notes. "This is a very special recording by a very special person . . . Bob first took lessons when (he) was in high school . . . (and) made arrangements with the manager of the Oxnard Theatre to be able to practice on that theatre's six-rank Robert-Morton . . . in return (he) would play the 'pre-show' music for the patrons . . . from around 1937 to 1939, thereby ranking him as an honest-to-God working theatre organist in a theatre. So, we have this young whipper-snapper . . . who takes his organ lessons around 1931 and then practices for the next 70 years or so and is now ready to make this recording as a

gift filled with love and friendship for his family and friends."

Over the decades Bob has been a very successful Ventura County businessman, and built a beautiful home in the hills overlooking Camarillo, California. In 1970 Bob had a 3-manual custom-built (as a Wurlitzer Style-260) Rodgers electronic organ installed in his home. A number of LP recordings were made on his Rodgers. We'll name the artists and the dates their LPs were reviewed in the Journal. The first was Lyn Larsen (April 1971). Next was Larry Vannucci, (October 1972). That disc had the wonderful title *Larry Plays Music For Teenagers Of All Ages*. Rex Koury, (April 1973) and Maria Kumagai, who came from Japan to study pop organ with Bill Thomason and classical organ with Richard Purvis, and became a sensation on the concert circuit before returning to her native land (June 1975, June 1977, and October 1979.) Finally, George Wright recorded his LP *42nd Street and Other Goodies* (August 1981) on Bob's Rodgers.

Also, Bob was an important figure in the ATOS Los Angeles Chapter where he served a number of years on its Board of Directors and was President in 1978. He frequently hosted George Wright concerts in his home; the most notable one took place during the 1987 ATOS Southern California Convention. In 1983 Bob set up Banda Records to produce George Wright LPs and CDs starting with the live recording of Wright playing the premiere concert of the magnificent Wurlitzer in Oakland's Paramount Theatre. Dozens of releases later, Bob passed the Banda label on to his friend Terry Cutshall, who has been closely involved with the production of all the Banda records . . . both the ones Wright made on his Hollywood Philharmonic Organ and the many landmark "archival" releases of Wright's earlier performances. In 2000, as Lyn's notes tell

us ". . . Bob moved up to the instrument you hear on this recording. The present organ is an Allen GW4 theatre organ, and is a digitally sampled copy of the organ George Wright had in his home in the Hollywood Hills. The music on this disc is a collection of lots of Bob's favorites, and much of it represents some of the best popular music of the days when Bob was growing up."

Our sentimental musical journey begins with "Walkin' My Baby Back Home," which the famous song and dance man Harry Richmond introduced in 1933. Then it's on to another song from that same year, Jimmy McHugh's cute 'denial' about falling in love . . . "Don't Blame Me." In 1919 the hit Broadway musical was *Irene*; Bob's third and fifth selections come from that show. First is the cheerful title tune, and a few minutes later it's the lush waltz "Alice Blue Gown." In between those numbers is the bouncy "You're The Cream In My Coffee," from the 1928 musical review *Hold Everything* in which Bert Lahr (later the Cowardly Lion, you know) had his first starring role. A warm, romantic "Diane" is next, and then it's on to the French singer-composer-lyricist Charles Trenet's 1946 hit song, the delightfully upbeat "I Wish You Love," which is followed by Jimmy McHugh's pledge that "I Can't Give You Anything But Love."

Back in 1935 composer Harry Ruby wrote a cheery number titled "Moonlight On The Meadow" for the Marx Brothers' film *A Night At The Opera*, but it wasn't used! However, the melody didn't go to waste, for 16 years later Oscar Hammerstein wrote new lyrics for it and Louis Armstrong introduced "A Kiss To Build A Dream On" in the Mickey Rooney film *The Strip* . . . and it was nominated for an Academy Award! Al Jolson helped popularize Bob's next tune; Walter Donaldson's somewhat sorrowful "My Buddy," which is followed by Gershwin's

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heartbreaking lament about "The Man I Love." Do you recall ever hearing that wonderful old smoothie "The Gypsy" being played on a theatre organ? Well, here it is with some Tibia/Vox combinations, and Bob plays its verse between choruses. Next up is surely one of Jerome Kern's best-known melodies, "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes." You may be surprised to learn this song also has a fascinating history. The tune was originally written in march tempo as the theme song for a radio show, which never aired. But, when Otto Harbach wrote new lyrics, and Kern provided a more leisurely tempo, it became a hit number in the 1933 Broadway musical *Roberta*.

Surely the next two songs are near the top of everyone's sentimental favorites. First is a neat arrangement of Youman's "Tea For Two" . . . with the addition of a few notes from "Never On Sunday" in the middle! Then it's a number Frances Williams introduced in the 1931 review *Everybody's Welcome*. However, it's the Dooley Wilson version in *Casablanca* that we all remember . . . yes, it's Herman Hupfeld's immortal "As Time Goes By." Bob's next two selections are relatively recent additions to the Great American Songbook. First is Jimmy Van Husen's rather somber "Here's That Rainy Day," and then Bob plays an upbeat "Mr. Sandman." In 1930 composer Johnny Green was the pianist for Gertrude Lawrence when he

composed his magnificent "Body And Soul" for her to introduce in the review *Three's A Crowd*. It's claimed that Isham Jones had the all-time "sweetest" Big Band. And he was also recognized as a fine composer, as Bob proves by playing his 1924 hit tune "It Had To Be You."

Nearing the end of our Sentimental Journey down Melody Lane is Harry Warren's luscious "Shadow Waltz" from the *Gold Diggers of 1933*. For this number Busby Berkeley created one of his most spectacular stagings . . . a screen full of blonde-wigged girls, all dressed in white and playing neon-edge violins, who merge to form one huge violin at the number's end! Bob concludes with another comparatively new hit song; it's P.G. Reddi's 1952 melody "Non Dimenticar" which was written for the Italian film *Anna*. Yes, this has been a Sentimental Journey with lots of beautiful songs we rarely hear played today. And it's obvious Bob is thoroughly enjoying his 4-manual George Wright Signature Allen organ. The recording is close-up and just like being there in Bob's spacious living room. Compact disc only for \$20.00 (postpaid, Europe and Africa add \$3.00, Asia and Australia add \$4.00) from Banda Records, P. O. Box 1261, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104. VISA and MasterCard are accepted and you can fax our order to 720/733-2137 or e-mail to banda9@msn.com



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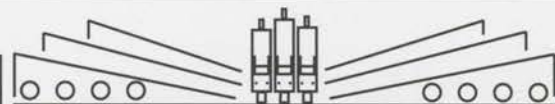


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Although a number of original Wurlitzer drawings are presently available through the Smithsonian Institution, they represent less than 10% of the total number

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Contact Carlton Smith, Chairman, ATOS Technical Committee, for further information, assistance and coordination.  
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*HARRY HETH, EDITOR*

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
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ORGAN SOCIETY

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 4

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July, 2005

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**Alabama Theatre**, 1817 3rd Ave N, 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; <<http://www.organstoppizza.com>>

**Orpheum Theatre**, 203 W Adams, Phoenix, AZ, (602)252-9678, (3/30W); <<http://www.silentsundays.com>>

### ■ CALIFORNIA (NORTH)

**Angelino's Restaurant**, 3132 Williams Rd, San Jose, CA, (408)243-6095, (3/13W); Tue, Thu, 6:30pm - 9:30pm, Dean Cook; Sat, Dean Cook & "A" Street Band, 6:30-11pm; Silent movies Sun, 4:00pm, Dean Cook; Sun, Jul 21, Dean Cook, Mark of Zorro; Sun, Aug, 21, Dean Cook, A Night of early L & H Shorts; Sun, Sep 18, Dean Cook, A Night at the Show; Sun, Oct 23, Dean Cook, Nosferatu; Sun, Dec 11, Dean Cook, 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); <<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

**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)>

**Johnson's Alexander Valley Winery**, 8333 Hwy 128, Healdsburg, CA, (707)433-2319, (3/10RM); Daily in tasting room from 10:00am to 5:00pm

**Kautz Vineyards and Winery**, 1894 Six Mile Rd, Murphys, CA, (209)728-1251, (3/15RM); Winery tours, theatre pipe organ; <<http://www.irostonevineyards.com/main.html>>

**Paramount Theatre**, 2025 Broadway, Oakland, CA, (510)465-6400, (4/27W); Public tours on 1st and 3rd Sat, 10:00am; Movie Overtures, Thu 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; <[ds3@att.net](mailto:ds3@att.net)>

**Visalia Fox Theatre**, 308 W Main St, Visalia, CA, (559)625-1369, (4/22W); <[www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org)>

**YE Olde Pizza Joynet**, 19510 Hesperian Blvd, San Leandro, CA, (510)785-1866, (3/14W); Venue temporarily closed due to a fire. Anyone have the real scoop on this?

### ■ CALIFORNIA (SOUTH)

**Arlington Theatre**, 1317 State St, Santa Barbara, CA, (805)963-4408, (4/27RM); All concerts on Sat, 11:00AM; <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, Sun 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 7, 8:00pm, Chris Elliott; Sat, Oct 8, 2:00pm & 8:00pm, Chris Elliott; Fri, Nov 11, 8:00pm, Doug Montgomery, Piano; Sat, Nov 12, 2:00pm & 8:00pm, Doug Montgomery, Piano

**Old Town Music Hall**, 140 Richmond St, El Segundo, CA, (310)322-2592, (4/26W); Bill Field at the Wurlitzer; <<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; <<http://www.laorpheum.com>>

**Plummer Auditorium**, 201 E Chapman, Fullerton, CA, (714)671-1300, (4/36W); Sun, Sep 11, 2:30pm, Tom Hazleton 75th Anniversary Concert; <<http://www.octos.org>>

**San Gabriel Auditorium**, 320 S Mission Dr, San Gabriel, CA, (888)LATOS22, (3/17W); <<http://www.latos.org>>

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, 3092 Kenwood, Spring Valley (San Diego), CA, (619)286-9979, (4/24W); Sat, Oct 8, 7:00pm, Russ Peck; Sat, Nov 12, 7:00pm, Chris Gorsuch & Esther Jordan; Sun Dec 4, 3:00pm, Rob Richards & Alex Zsolt; <<http://theatreorgans.com/ca/tosss/TOSSD/TOSSD.html>>

## ■ COLORADO

**Colorado Springs City Auditorium**, 221 E Kiowa St, Colorado Springs, CO, (719) 385-5969, (3/8 W); The Sacklunch Serenade series runs Thu from May-August, 12:00noon, local and guest artists; Thu, Aug 11, 12:00 noon, Jonas Nordwall; <[theatreorgans.com/PPATOS](http://theatreorgans.com/PPATOS)>

**Holiday Hills Ballroom**, 2000 W 92nd Ave, Federal Heights, CO, (303)466-3330, (elect); Sun, Jul 17, 2:00pm, Mike Bryant, Bob Castle, & DeLoy Goeglein, Pizza & Pipeless; Sun, Sep 18, 2:00pm, Jim Calm, Cool, Calm, & Collectible

**Paramount Theatre**, Glenarm & 16th St Mall, Denver, CO, (303)446-3330, (4/20W); Sun, Oct 23 & Mon, Oct 24, 2:00 pm, Bob Ralston; <<http://www.RMCATOS.home.comcast.net>>

## ■ CONNECTICUT

**Thomaston Opera House**, 158 Main St, Thomaston, CT, (203)426-2443, (3/15MC); Sun, Oct 30, 2:00pm, Dave Wickerham; <[ThomastonOperaHouse.org](http://ThomastonOperaHouse.org)>

## ■ DELAWARE

**Dickinson High School**, 1801 Milltown Rd, Wilm-

ington, DE, (302)995-2603, (3/66K); All concerts Sat, 8:00pm; Sep 17, Lyn Larsen; Nov 5, Robert Wolfe; Jan 28, 2006, Ron Reeseigh; Mar 11, 2006, Rob Richards; Apr 29, 2006, Jonas Nordwall; June 10, 2006, Neil Jensen; Jul 15, 2006, Ken Double; <<http://www.geocities.com/dtoskimball>>

## ■ FLORIDA

**Grace Baptist Church**, 8000 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL, (941) 922-2044, (4/32W); Concerts Sun 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 Hwy 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; <[www.roaring20spizza.com](http://www.roaring20spizza.com)>

**Tampa Theatre**, 711 Franklin St, Tampa, FL, (813)274-8981, (3/14W); Movie Overtures, Bob Baker, Stephen Brittain, Bill Brusick, June Carter, Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbs, Richard Frank, & Bob Logan; <<http://www.tampatheatre.org>>

## ■ ILLINOIS

**Arcada Theatre**, 105 E Main St, St Charles, IL, (630)845-8900, (3/16GMC); Organ interludes Fri and Sat nights; <<http://www.arcadatheater.com/>>

**Coronado Theatre**, 314 N Main, Rockford, IL, (815)547-8544, (4/17B); Sun, Nov 13, 2:30pm, John Grune & Airflow Deluxe Swing Band with Mae West character; <<http://www.centreevents.com/Coronado/>>

**Gateway Theatre**, 5216 W Lawrence Ave, Chicago, IL, (773)205-SFSC(7372), (3/17WH); Silent film showings on Fri 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; <<http://www.lincolntheatre-belleville.com>>

**Rialto Square Theatre**, 102 N Chicago St, Joliet, IL, (815)726-6600, (4/27B); Organ pre-shows and Intermissions Jim Patak or Sam Yacono; Theatre Tours with Jim Patak at the console.

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

## ■ INDIANA

**Embassy Theatre**, 125 W Jefferson, Fort Wayne, IN, (260)424-6287, (4/16P); <<http://www.EmbassyCentre.org>>

**Hedback Theatre**, 1847 N Alabama St, Indianapolis, IN, (317)356-3561, (2/11PW); Sun, Oct 23, 2:30pm, Mark Herman

**Long Center For The Performing Arts**, 111 N 6th, Lafayette, IN, (765)589-8474, (3/21W); Sat, Jun 18, 2:30pm, Ken Double; <[www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org)>

**Manual High School**, 2405 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN, (317)356-3561, (3/26W); <[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 11, 2:30pm, Ken Double; <[www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org)>

## ■ KANSAS

**Century II Civic Center**, 225 W Douglas, Wichita, KS, (316)838-3127, (4/38W); <<http://www.nyparamountwurlitzer.org>>

**Little River Studio**, 6141 Fairfield Rd, Wichita, KS, (316)838 3127), (4/19 W); <<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; Jul 19, Ron Rhode; Aug 2, John Weaver; Aug 9, Erik Suter; Aug 16, Gabriel Dessauer; Aug 23, Paul Jacobs; Aug 30, David Wickerham; <<http://www.foko.org/>>

## ■ MARYLAND

**Rice Auditorium**, Stoddard St, Catonsville, MD, (410)592-9322. (2/8M); <[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); <[www.emcatos.com](http://www.emcatos.com)>

**Shanklin Music Hall**, 130 Sandy Pond Rd, Groton, MA, (978)670-1269, (4/34W); Sun, Oct 23, 2:30pm, Richard Hills; <[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 min 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>

**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 Sun 1:00pm - 3:00pm

**Redford Theatre**, 17360 Lahser Rd, Detroit, MI, (313)531-4407, (3/10B); Movie Overtures, Fridays at 7:30pm and Sat at 1:30pm & 7:30pm; Guest Organists: Steven Ball, Gus Borman, David Calendine, Jennifer Candea, 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

## ■ MINNESOTA

**Center For The Arts**, 124 Lincoln Ave W, Fergus Falls, MN, (218)736-5453, (3/12W); <http://www.fergusarts.org>

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

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

## ■ 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/>

## ■ NEW JERSEY

**Broadway Theatre**, 43 So Broadway St, Pitman, NJ, (856)589-7519, (3/8K); Venue closed

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

**The Music Hall at Northlandz**, Rt 202 So, 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, (2/4E); Friday 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>

## ■ NEW YORK

**Auditorium Center**, 875 E Main, Rochester, NY, (585)377-5552, (4/23W); Sat, Sep 17, 8:00pm, Byron Jones; Sat, Oct 8, 8:00pm, Stephen Ball; Sun, Nov 6, 2:30pm, Scott Foppiano; <http://theatreorgans.com/rochestr/>

**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); Fri, Aug 12, 7:00pm, Sat, Aug 13, 1:00pm & 6:30pm, Sun, Aug 14, 10:00am, 3:00pm, Philip Carli, Dennis James, & Avery Tunngley; <http://www.theatreorgans.com/ny/rome/>

**The Clemens Center**, 207 Clemens Center Pkwy, Elmira, NY, 1(800)724-8191, (4/20MC); <clemenscenter.com>

**Empire Theatre**, 581 State Fair Blvd, Syracuse, NY, (315)451-4943, (3/11W); All concerts start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise; <www.jrjunction.com/estmim>

**Lafayette Theatre**, Lafayette Ave, Suffern, NY, (845)369-8234, (2/11W); Thu, 7:30pm & Movie Overtures, Ed Fritz; Fri, & Sat, 7:30, Movie overtures, Dave Kopp, Earle Seeley; Sat 11:00 Jeff Barker; Sat eve and Sun before matinee, John Baratta

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

**Riviera Theatre**, 67 Webster Ave, N Tonawanda, NY, (716)692-2113, (3/19W); Wed, Oct 19, 7:30pm Michael Xavier Lundy

**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-Sun eve before and between performances; Short organ concerts, Lance Johnson, David Knudtson, & Steve Eneboe; <http://www.fargotheatre.org/>

## ■ OHIO

**Akron Civic Theatre**, 182 S Main St, Akron, OH, (330)253-2488, (3/19W); Sat, Oct 15, 8:00pm, Lew Williams; <www.akroncivic.com>

**Gray's Armory**, 1234 Bolivar Rd, Cleveland, OH, (216)521-7269, (3/15W); Sun, Sep 25, 2:30pm, Jelani Eddington

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

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

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

## ■ OKLAHOMA

**Tulsa Technology Center**, 129th E Ave & 111th St, Tulsa, OK, (918)355-1562, (3/13M); 3rd Friday of each month, programs & Open Console; Fri, Sep 16, 7:00pm, Tom Hazleton; <members.aol.com/SoonerStateATOS>

## ■ OREGON

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

**Elsinore Theatre**, 170 High St SE, Salem, OR, (503)233-7274, (3/24W); Silent Movie Programs start Wed 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 Sun, 12:00noon, Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri & Sat, 5:00pm, Wed, 7:00pm; <http://www.wanamakerorgan.com/>

**Keswick Theatre**, Easton Road & Keswick Ave, Glenside, PA, (215)572-7650, (3/19M); Musical Overtures Before Live Shows; House Organists: Barbara Fesmire, Michael Xavier Lundy, Wayne Zimmerman; <www.keswicktheatre.com>

**Keystone Oaks High School**, 1000 Kelton Ave, Pittsburgh, PA; (412)921-8558, (3/19W); All concerts on Sat at 7:30pm; <http://www.aol.com/wurl12/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>

**Strand-Capitol PAC**, 50 N George St, York, PA, (717)846-1111, (3/20W); <http://www.strandcapitol.org/>

## ■ TENNESSEE

**The Paramount Center for the Arts**, 518

State St, Bristol, TN, (423)274-8920, (3/11+W); Sat, Oct 22, 7:00pm, Clark Wilson;  
<[www.theparamountcenter.com](http://www.theparamountcenter.com)>

**Tennessee Theatre**, 604 So Gay St, Knoxville, TN, (865)684-1200, (3/16W); Organ played before movies throughout the year and at free "First Monday" concerts, the first Mon of every month at 12:00noon. Subject to cancellation due to other scheduled events;  
<<http://www.tennesseeetheatre.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>>

## ■ UTAH

**The Organ Loft**, 3331 S Edison St, Salt Lake City, Utah, (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 Gullledge

## ■ WASHINGTON

**Everett Theatre**, 2911 Colby, Everett, WA, (425)258-6766, (3/16K); Tue, Sep 13, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Jan 11, 7:00pm, Dennis James; Tue, Oct 12, 7:00pm, Dennis James;  
<<http://www.everetttheatre.org>>

**Kenyon Hall**, 7904 35th Ave SW, Seattle, WA, (206)937-3613, (2/10W); Sat and Sun, 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, Aug 1, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in The Navigator; Mon, Aug 8, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in Our Hospitality; Mon, Aug 15, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in Sherlock Jr; Mon, Aug 22, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in College; Mon, Aug 29, 7:00pm, Dennis James, Buster Keaton in Steamboat Bill, Jr;  
<<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, Tue, 5:30 to 9:00pm, Wed 5:30 to 10:00pm with live band, Thu 5:30 to 9:00pm; Fri 5:00 to 9:45pm; Sat 12:30 to 9:45pm; Sun 12:30 to 8:45pm; Ron Reseigh, Ralph Conn, & Dean Rosko

**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);  
<[www.ThePhipps.org](http://www.ThePhipps.org)>

## ■ AUSTRALIA

**Capri Theatre**, 141 Goodwood Rd, Goodwood, SA,(08) 8272 1177, (4/29W+H); Sun, Sep 25, 1:45pm, Simon Gledhill; Sun, 20 Nov, 1:45pm, Paul Fitzgerald & Dave Brookes; Organ used Tue, Fri, & Sat eves

**Dendy Cinema**, 26 Church St, Brighton, VIC, (03) 9781 5349, (3/15W); Organ before films, Sat eves

**Karrinyup Center**, Perth, WA, 61-9-447-9837, (3/21W); All concerts Sun at 2:00pm; Aug 28, Ray Clements & John Fuhrmann; Oct 2, Simon Gledhill; Nov 13, John Atwell

**Marrickville Town Hall**, Cnr Marrickville & Peter-sham Roads, Marrickville, NSW; (02) 9629 2257, (2/11W); Sun, Oct 22, 2:00pm David Parsons;  
<<http://www.tosa.net.au>>

**Orion Centre**, 155 Beamish St, Campsie, NSW, (02) 9629 2257, (3/17W); Sun, Sep 25; 2:00pm Simon Gledhill; Sun, Nov 20; 2:00pm Concert; Sun, Dec 11, 2:00pm John Atwell (organ) Sergei Golovko (marimba); <<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, Mon @ 8:00pm; <[www.theatreorgans.com/toronto/](http://www.theatreorgans.com/toronto/)>

**Church of the Redeemer**, 89 Kirkpatrick St, Kingston, ON, (613)544-5095, (3/28K); KTOS c/o John Robson, 412-217 Bath Road, Kingston, ONT, Canada. K7M 2X7; All concerts 8:00pm unless otherwise stated; <[kingstonkimball@cogeco.ca](mailto:kingstonkimball@cogeco.ca)>

## ■ HOLLAND

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

**Theatre de Meenthe**, Stationsplein 1, Steenwijk, Holland 0521-514004 (4/29 Strumk); <[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 Rd, Worthing, Sussex, (0)1903-206 206, (3/23W); All concerts Sun at 3:00pm unless noted otherwise; Dances Sat, 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 St, Wolverhampton, W Midlands, (0)1902 552121, (4/44C); Fri 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)>

**The Burtey Fen Collection**, 3 Burtey Fen Ln, Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincs, +44 (0)1775 76608, (3/12C), (2/8W); Sat, Aug 20, 7:30pm, Len Rawle; Sun, Sep 11, 2:30pm, Andrew Nix; Sun, Oct 2, 2:30pm, Nigel Ogden; Sun, Oct 30, 2:30pm, Robert Wolfe; <<http://www.burteyfen.co.uk>>

**Fentham Hall**, Marsh Ln, Hampton-in-Arden, Solihull, +44 (0)1564 794778, (3/11C); All Concerts Sun at 3:00pm; Aug 7, Penny Weedon; Sep 4, Trent Simms \*USA\*; Oct 2, John Mann; Nov 6, Adam Evans; Dec 4, Nicholas Martin; Dec 18, Russell Holmes;  
<<http://www.cos-centralandwales.co.uk>>

**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 St, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, Co, Durham,(0)1388 762 467, (3/12W); Concerts are on Sat at 7:00pm and Sun at 2:30pm.; <<http://www.theatreorgans.com/uk/netoa>>

**Ossett Town Hall**, Market Place, Ossett, Wakefield, W Yorkshire, 44 (0) 113 2705885; (3/13C); All concerts Sun at 2:30pm

**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 Rd, Brighouse, W Yorkshire, 44 (0)1274 589939, (3/10W); All concerts, Sun, 2:30pm; Aug 21, Richard Hills; Sep 18, Trent Sims; Oct 9, Richard Openshaw; Nov 13, Nicholas Martin; Dec 11, Robert Wolfe; Jan 8, 2006, John Bowdler; Feb 12, 2006, Russell Holmes; Apr 9, 2006, Joe Marsh; May 14, 2006, Donald Mackenzie; Jun 11, 2006, Trevor Bolshaw; Jul 9, 2006, David Ivory; Oct 8, 2006, John Mann; Nov 12, 2006, Robert Sudall; All Dances on Sat at 7:45pm, Aug 6, Nicholas Martin; <[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);  
<<http://www.stalbansorganmuseum.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

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

**Thomas Peacocke 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)>

**Town Hall**, Victoria Rd, Portslade, Sussex, 011-44-1293-844788, (3/20C); <<http://www.organfax.co.uk/clubs/southcoast-tos.html>>



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# Chapter News

**ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS:** The deadline for receiving Chapter News items for the Nov/Dec issue is September 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.** On January 9, the chapter finally heard Dolton McAlpin bring forth the dulcet tones of our mighty Wurlitzer. Dolton had been scheduled to play for us in October 2004, but a medical problem with an arm, and subsequent recovery period prevented that. Dolton had a happy reunion with *Bertha* and friends. His performance was followed by an 'open-console' session, which allowed several of our members and guests a chance to play too.

A first for the chapter was a concert performance by Randy Magnuson, which took place on March 6. Randy is a talented amateur musician who was runner-up in the ATOS Hobbyist competition in 2003. His recording for this

competition was made at the Alabama Theatre, with the able assistance of Alabama member Tom Cronier. For his concert performance, Randy traveled from his home in Georgia to spend several days playing with and practicing on *Big Bertha* before the big day. The result was a delightful performance to an appreciative audience.

The Alabama Theatre usually has an open Sunday for us during spring break each year, and we scheduled the silent film *King of Kings* for March 20. Atlanta Chapter member Ron Carter, who usually accompanies these spring silent film

events, was originally to be our guest organist. Unfortunately, due to a scheduling problem, Ron was not able to play for us on that date. The chapter decided that the show must go on, and Steven Ball was contacted.

Steven Ball flew down from Michigan on Friday morning, was given the grand tour of Birmingham including lunch before finally being able to start setting Wurlitzer registrations in the afternoon. On Saturday, Steven practiced and became better acquainted with *Bertha* and Alabama chapter members. Steven was the "guest of honor" when several

THURMAN ROBERTSON



Dolton McAlpin and "Bertha."

THURMAN ROBERTSON



Randy Magnuson.

SABRINA SUMMERS



Pat Seitz at the Steven Ball Concert.

SABRINA SUMMERS



Steven Ball.

chapter members accompanied him to an evening at a local restaurant. Sunday's performance was top-notch, and Steven's accompaniment perfectly suited the drama on the silent screen. During intermission and after the performance, Steven greeted the audience in the theatre lobby and was a most gracious ambassador for theatre organists. Thanks to Steven for doing such a phenomenal job for us ... you are hereby granted honorary status as a "Southern Gentleman."

Sabrina Summers

## ATLANTA

Larry Davis, President  
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acatos@earthlink.net

Atlanta, Georgia. 2004 ended with a bang as Jelani Eddington presented a fantastic program at the Bucky Reddish residence on his Walker RTO. Jelani is a consummate musician and theatre organist. The Reddish residence was literally packed to the seams with ATOS members and guests. As chapter board member Fred Boska stated in our January newsletter "This was not just our average pops program, but a sublime, full symphonic treatment of the theatre organ exemplified by carefully planned, intricate arrangements characterized by the interlacing of classical themes and colorations from Dupre, Vierne, Purvis." What a theatre organ year Atlanta has experienced.

In January Ron Carter and friends presented a varied program at the Bob and Elise McKoon residence in Newnan, Georgia. The McKoon's have a wonderfully installed Custom Allen 317 with speakers housed in an attic organ chamber. Bob had just added the new Allen Ensemble, which Ron used throughout the program. Those extra 32' voices real-



Barry Lancaster serenades "Miss Elsie."

ly shook the house! Ron and tenor soloist Barry Lancaster presented both 'oldies' and some more recent selections. They ended the program with a touching selection by new and contemporary soloist Josh Groban. Barry at one point even sang a solo to Ms. Elsie McKoon, a truly southern lady!

Ron also accompanied a short Buster Keaton silent. Just before the screening of *The Blacksmith*, Bob delivered freshly popped popcorn to the audience. Just like at the movies! Everyone attending enjoyed an afternoon of wonderful fellowship, music and refreshments and, as always, the McKoon refreshments were first class.

In February the Atlanta Chapter presented Dolton McAlpin at Ron

and Donna Carter's GW4. Dolton, an attorney, is also a very accomplished theatre organist, and has been on the organ scene for many years. Over 60 chapter members and guests were thoroughly entertained by Dolton's down to earth console personality and top of the line musicianship.

Ron has added the digital toy counter to the Allen, which added an additional 16 effects on a piston rail underneath the accompaniment manual, and by four new Allen toe studs. After the program a drawing was held with several nice door prizes given to the winners by the Carters. After which everyone enjoyed 'open-console' and wonderful refreshments provided by Donna Carter. In March we were thrilled to have our old friend and chapter member Ken Double in concert at the Reddish RTO Walker.

Ken is well known to all our ATOS friends in all chapters as a professional emcee. Many still don't know what a professional and talented theatre organist he is. John McCall in a great review



Ron Carter at the McKoon Allen.



Ken Double.



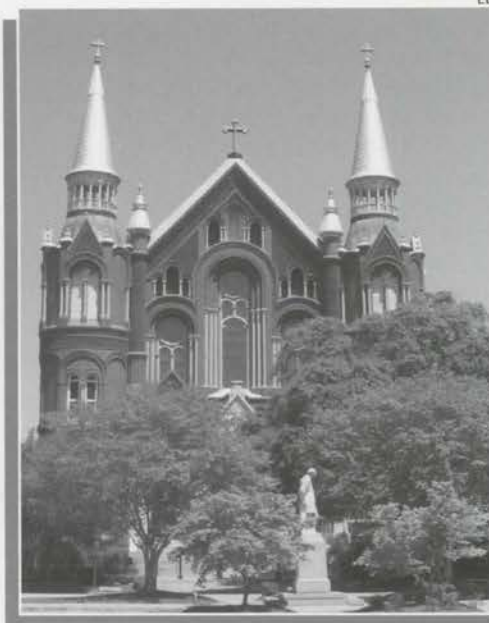
Jelani at the Reddish Walker.



Dolton McAlpin at the Carter GW4.



*Imperial Theatre in Augusta.*



*Sacred Heart Cultural Center.*



*Walt Strony at Parrott Residence.*

of Ken's program, talked about "The Mystique of Ken Double" in our chapter newsletter. What makes Ken so different? "It is his enthusiasm . . . not only for the theatre organ but for life itself." John continued his review by stating that Ken's program was seamlessly balanced between toe-tappers and lush ballads, with a few surprises . . . such as a demanding Julius Fucik's selection. ATOS should be proud of Ken Double. He should be our emcee at every annual and regional convention. His professionalism and stage personality is right out of Hollywood. When he is not at a convention, it is just not the same!

Our April program was a well-orchestrated Organ Crawl planned by Ron Carter to four venues in Augusta, Georgia.

We were thrilled to be invited to the Bob and Amanda Polglase and Dale and Susan Parrott residences for back-to-back programs by Walt Strony. However, before these concerts we were treated to a behind the scenes tour of the Imperial Theatre in downtown Augusta.

Theatre Director Lara Piocha opened the theatre to the 30 participants, and we combed every nook and cranny of this 1917 house. The 2/7 Wurlitzer that was original to this theatre might be available again as Lara is **very interested** in this possibility. Ron Carter, Rick McGee, and Larry Davis inspected the chambers and found that they only contained a few speakers, and are ready for a re-installation of a theatre pipe organ! After this tour, our group continued for



*Waltin action at Polglase GW4.*



*(L-R) Bob Polglase, Walt Strony, Dale Parrott at Sacred Heart.*



*Rick McGee playing at Sacred Heart.*

our theatre organ concerts at the Parrott and Polglase venues. Both of these installations are brand new to the Georgia theatre organ scene. The Parrott's have a neatly installed Allen GW 319 with a studio sound to die for.

Both of these instruments are state of the art and first class but totally different in their sound. Walt was supposed to perform 'mini' concerts at both venues but instead gave 110% to his very appreciative audience. Walt had voiced both of these instruments to his impeccable standards. After Walt's program at the Parrott's guests were treated to refreshments and a chance for 'open-console'. Having finished our first program, we checked into a local hotel, freshened up and then proceeded to the Polglase residence for an outdoor barbecue picnic next to the Olympic-size swimming pool. As we consumed this scrumptious fare one could see the GW4 looming through the large music room windows. The Polglase residence GW4 was designed by Ron Carter of Allen Studios of Atlanta and proved to be a great instrument. Walt again provided us with a great performance. After this program we were invited to 'open-console'. Many members burned the midnight oil enjoying this fine installation.

On Sunday morning we were treated to a wonderful tour of the Sacred Heart Cultural Center in downtown Augusta. This was a Catholic Church that has

been converted to the Cultural Arts Center of the City of Augusta.

It is home to the Augusta Symphony, Choral Society and many other art groups. It has a large 2-manual Allen Classic instrument with a full range of speakers in both the balcony and altar area with a distance of over 150 feet between them. It also has 60-foot high barrel vaulted ceilings and a 6-second reverb! The stained glass windows in this facility, which have been completely restored, are valued at over a million dollars. Sandra Fenstermacher, Executive Director, gave a very interesting talk on the history of Sacred Heart, and had us laughing and shaking our heads that a wonderful edifice is still standing . . . and so beautifully. Rick McGee did a tour deforce impromptu performance on the Allen, again demonstrating his excellent musical skills! A tired, but satisfied, group of travelers headed back to Atlanta feeling fortunate to have experienced such an enjoyable weekend.

Ron Carter

## BINGHAMTON NEW YORK

Paul Stapel, President, 607/773-1495  
BingTheaOrg@stny.rr.com

Binghamton, New York. This is the first report of the newly formed Binghamton

Chapter of the ATOS. Our organization has been around for about 16 months, and we are thankful to ATOS for endorsing our new chapter. We are located in Binghamton, New York. This area is in the southern tier of New York, halfway between New York City and Buffalo. The area has a rich history of industrial activities and is home to many great companies including the Link Piano and Organ Company.

We are very fortunate to have two working theatre organs in Binghamton. The first is a 3/17 Link Organ, originally installed at the Capital Theatre. When the theatre was scheduled to be torn down in 1968, the organ was removed and restored by Ed Link, Jr. and installed at the Roberson Museum of Science Center in Binghamton.

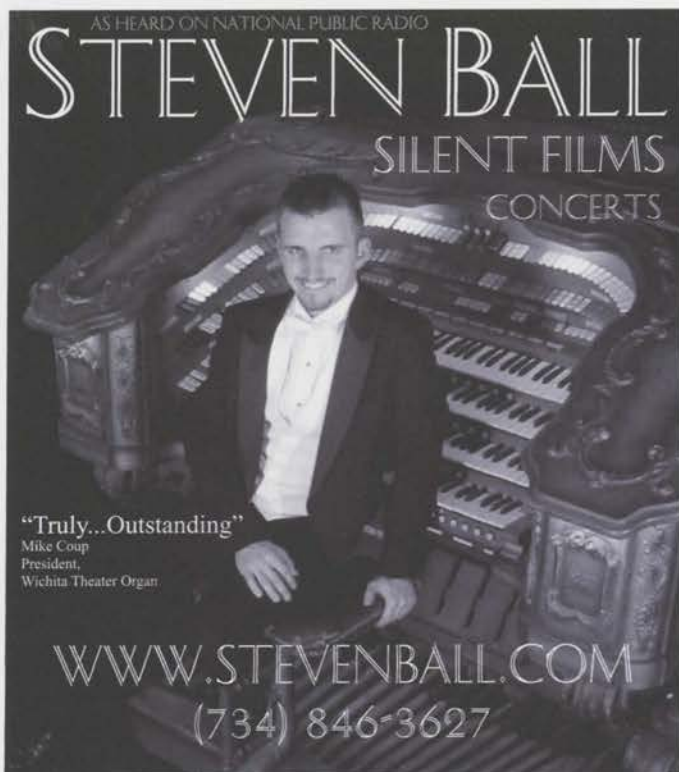
The second organ is a 4/24 Robert-Morton. It was originally used in the America Theatre in Denver, Colorado in the 1920s, and later installed in the Pillar of Fire Church in Denver. The church used it until about 1970, when it was removed and stored in a chicken coop in Michigan. In 1975 the organ was purchased by the Binghamton Savings Bank as a gift to the community, and was restored and installed in Broome Center for the Performing Arts (The Forum) under the direction of local technician George Melnyk.

Although only 16-months-old, we have produced two full concerts on the

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This much-anticipated release has been described as a "landmark" recording that must be part of every collection. Recorded at the 5/80 Sanfilippo Wurlitzer, this album features 70 minutes of spellbinding arrangements, including: *Broadway Rhythm*, *Madley from "My Fair Lady"*, *Polovtsian Dances*, *Anything Goes*, and *Overture from William Tell*.

### Perpetual Motion

Jelani Eddington and pianist David Harris join forces at the beautiful 4/74 Wurlitzer and Bösendorfer Imperial Grand Piano. This album offers 70 minutes of some of the finest, most intricate organ-piano orchestrations ever recorded. Highlights include: *Perpetual Motion*, *Mister Sandman*, *Suite from Carnival of the Animals*, *Richard Rodgers Madley*, *Rhapsody In Blue*.

### Sarasota Spectacular!

This album features a show-stopping performance at the newly installed 4/32 Wurlitzer at Grace Baptist Church in Sarasota, Florida. This album will captivate your senses with thrilling arrangements of great music of the ages, including: *Madley from South Pacific*, *Another Op'nin Another Show*, *Orchestral Suite From Carmen*, *With A Song In My Heart - The Way You Look Tonight*.

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Link. The first played by members Richard VanAuken and Andy Meagher, and the second played by Richard VanAuken and his wife Evelyn. We have also made arrangements to restart the long tradition of playing a 45-minute concert prior to the Binghamton Philharmonic Pops Concerts. For many years the organist was the late M. Searle Wright. Member Bruce Bozdos played the concert in March and member Richard VanAuken played the May concert. These concerts will continue into next seasons Pops Concert Series.

We are planning a Grand Re-Opening Concert on the Robert-Morton for August 20 with guest artist David Peckham. More information can be found on our website:

<http://theatreorgans.com/btoc/>

David Clark

## CHICAGO AREA (CATOE)

John Peters, President  
847/470-0743

**Chicago, Illinois.** In January CATOE members were guests of the Jefferson Park Historical Society for a tour of the Gateway Theatre in Chicago's Jefferson Park neighborhood. This included a mini-concert on the Gateway's Kimball-Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ and a silent film comedy with organ accompaniment. At the keyboard was CATOE member Jay Warren. The 3/17 pipe organ is the second organ installation at the Gateway. The original 3/11 Balaban 1 Wurlitzer was removed in the '60s, and is installed in a suburban Chicago area residence. The Historical Society was hoping to generate an increased interest in the theatre, which is one of the last remaining atmospheric theatres in the Chicago area. With escalating property values in the Jefferson Park area, the theatre could be lost in the not too distant future. The theatre is currently part of the Copernicus Polish Cultural Center. For the past several years the theatre has been the site of the "Silent Summer Film Series" sponsored by the Silent Film Society of Chicago.

Our February, March and April socials were held at the "Wheaton Fox" music room at the home of CATOE members Paul and Linda Van Der Molen. The 4/26 Robert-Morton makes this a dynamite location, which is very much appreciated by the visiting artists as well as our membership.

Our February artist was Ken Double. As is often done with artists from distant



(L-R) Tom Hazleton, Mary Kukla, Mark Macaben, and Adam Gruber.

locations, Paul hosts several organizations on different days to give the artist a great opportunity to be heard by more folks. This weekend turned out to be a bit unusual. When Ken arrived for his practice session, Paul quipped as he turned on the blower; "I hope this works!" But it didn't! Investigation determined that there had been a sump pump failure and the blower room had over a foot of water in it! Panic... three concerts scheduled and no organ! Fortunately a 'white knight' appeared... Lee Maloney... who brought a 3-manual Allen Quantam 311 in time for the first program. Lee, as many of you know, was the featured organist for the Chicago Theatre's 80th Anniversary and along with CATOE member Don Springer conducts theatre organ workshops. Although pipeless for the social, Ken was terrific and gave us the kind of fantastic program that is Ken's forte. Ken and the 311 performed flawlessly.

In March the pipe organ was back in action and Tom Hazleton treated us to a fantastic program. Tom is no stranger at the Van Der Molen's and had played the former 3/20 Morton a number of times. He mentioned that the other organ had been more sedate and was affectionately known as *Martha Morton*. This name would no longer fit the re-invented 4/26 Robert-Morton with the 'Wedding Cake' Wonder Morton console. It is much more raunchy and raucous and he promptly dubbed it *Mae Morton*. Tom took *Mae* through the paces and more than adequately proved that the new name was well deserved. CATOE is always pleased to see younger organ fans come to our programs and later take part in the 'open-console'. This time member Mark Macaben brought his friend Mary Kukla, who played the flute for us with Mark accompanying on the Morton. Also with us was Adam Gruber, our youngest member, who brought his dad with him.

In April we had another great program when Jelani Eddington provided his keyboard artistry at the Morton. Three great artists to start the year, each one providing us a different taste of what *Mae* can do.

Work continues on the Oriental Wurlitzer project, and I hope that the next time I can report that the console is on display and we have started on the more complicated second phase of restoring the major parts of the Wurlitzer.

Jon C. Habermaas

## CENTRAL INDIANA

Jason Young, President,  
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Jyoung1208@insightbb.com

**Indianapolis, Indiana.** With the continued unavailability of the auditorium at Manual High School (due to construction and remodeling) and the nearly constant use of the auditorium at the Warren Performing Arts Center, the Central Indiana Chapter has had to become a bit creative in our choice of venues in which to hold our monthly meetings. On April 10, 38 members found themselves in one such unusual venue; the sanctuary of St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church on the near north side of Indianapolis. The church was built in 1929 in the Roman Basilica style and is home to a 3/37 Kilgen built and installed there in 1931. Even though the organ is not a theatre organ, it dates from the end of the period of the theatre pipe organ building and consists of pipework similar to that found in theatre organs. Long-time CIC member Tim Needler is a parishioner at St. Joan of Arc and was one of the featured performers. Also heard was CIC member Keith Mikesell and the church's music director, Kathy Muller. The very live acoustics of this church... with its high ceiling, marble columns and nary a stitch of carpeting provided a most favorable environment for music making, as the three performers capably demonstrated during their turn at the Kilgen console.

April 24 found several members making a trip to the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, to enjoy the musical mastery of Simon Gledhill (who also maintains membership in the Central Indiana Chapter). Simon and the Embassy's well-known 4/16 Page get along very well, as was evidenced by his performance that afternoon. It is always a pleasure to share some 'Hoosier Hospitality'

with our organist friends from abroad!

Work continues each Wednesday evening on the 3/10 Walker Wurlitzer organ project. Who can resist the smell of hot glue and freshly trimmed leather? Manual chest rebuilding is the order of business at present. We are excited by the knowledge that CIC will be responsible for providing an historic Indianapolis theatre with an appropriate theatre pipe organ.

Speaking of that, as previously announced in this column, another historic Indianapolis theatre will also see the installation of a theatre pipe organ in a few years; The Hilbert Circle Theatre, home of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra on Monument Circle, in the very heart of the city. The latest news is that an agreement has been reached and a contract has been signed between Carlton Smith Pipe Organ Restorations and The Hilbert Circle Theatre. A Wurlitzer Style-240, donated to CIC-ATOS by Harold Huffman of Fairfield, Ohio, has in turn been gifted to the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra for this project. The organ, which is nearly identical to the Circle's original Wurlitzer, will be completely rebuilt and enlarged by Carlton's firm. It is hoped that the organ will be installed and playing by the next time CIC hosts an ATOS Annual Convention.

In closing we express our sympathy to the family of Ann Giezendanner, who

passed away March 30. Ann and her late husband Les were longtime supporters of CIC-ATOS and she left instructions in her will that any memorial contributions should be made in her name to our chapter.

Tom Nichols

## DAIRYLAND

Gary Hanson, President  
414/529-1177  
organpipr@aol.com

**Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin.** DTOS celebrated St. Patrick's Day on March 13 at the Racine home of Bob and Gene Leutner. Their instrument is a 3-manual Rodgers 360 with Kurzweil and MIDI, plus all the bells and whistles offered! Our featured artist was Perry Petta, who is equally at home on piano or organ. Perry presented a fine program and after his planned presentation we finished it off with an Irish song sing-along! During 'open-console' an impromptu duet was featured with Perry at the organ and Bob Leutner and Gary McWithey sharing the piano, what fun! DTOS presented prizes to those who reflected their Irish heritage by wearing the most green!

April was a month with two special events at DTOS. Our annual spring concert on April 3 featured Clark Wilson at the Weill Center in Sheboygan and its

wonderful 3/12 Kimball. Clark presented a great first half, but with any program there can be those unforeseen hitches... which appeared in the second half. We were to have a silent film and sing-along, but as Clark lowered the organ and prepared for the film the screen remained blank. As the projector room worked to correct the problem, Clark provided movie accompaniment but to no avail. We were not to see a film this day! Clark, taking it all in stride raised the organ and improvised with a great second half of wonderful music. Thanks Clark for all your hard work and being the professional you are! Since Sheboygan is an hour drive from Milwaukee, DTOS chartered a bus to take our members to this event, and by picking them up at four 'park and ride' locations we had approximately 35 additional people attend this fabulous event!

April 10 was our second event, and a change from our usual social. Marilyn Stulken Rench presented a concert on the 4/47 Skinner organ located at the St. Mathew's Episcopal Church in Kenosha. This extraordinary event featured the organ that Marilyn's husband, Tom, a local organ builder had just rebuilt. The music featured was from the 15th Century to the 21st Century. What a special occasion and many thanks Marilyn and Tom for allowing DTOS to be a part of the celebration

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Tom Croke.



Barbara Fesmire and Richard Schmidt.



Bernie McGorrey at the Keswick Möller.

## DELAWARE VALLEY

Harry Linn, Jr., President  
610/566-1764

Media, Pennsylvania. On Sunday February 27 we had our Annual Meeting at the Kenswick Theatre in Glenside, Pennsylvania, just outside Philadelphia, with President Harry Linn, Jr., presiding. Our officers were reelected for another year with President, Harry Linn, Jr.; Vice President, Dick Auchincloss; Secretary, Al Derr; and Treasurer, Tom Rotunno; Directors, Bill Gellhaus, Michael Xavier Lundy, and Jack Serdy. Many thanks to Dick Metzger and Rose Etzel for their past service as Directors.

Once that 'small' piece of business was complete, the music started with Tom Smerke as emcee. Barbara Fesmire

was scheduled to play but was under the weather so several chapter members filled the day with music that was dedicated to Barbara. For a time, Barbara was organist at the Atlantic City Convention Hall, now the Boardwalk Hall. Young Tom Croke was first, and he played an original composition on the piano. Tom is a very talented young man, and he will soon be taking organ lessons. We look forward to hearing great things from him,

Next, the 3/19 Möller was cranked up with Richard Schmidt at the console. He played a kaleidoscope of show tunes that we enjoyed. Richard used to play this organ, and it was great to welcome him back.

Next, subbing for Barbara was Bernie McGorrey who played popular numbers

and ended with a salute to the late, great Dick Leibert, head organist at Radio City Music Hall for 40 years. Thanks to all the artists for the wonderful music, and best wishes to Barbara. We hope she gets well soon.

Everyone, including Dick Metzger and Michael Xavier Lundy, who had their chance to make the Möller sound great, enjoyed 'open-console' and refreshments! Congratulations and thank you for their various efforts in the care and feeding of this great instrument go to: Tom Rotunno, Bernie McGorrey, Bill Gellhaus, Jack Schwartzberg, Ben Rosco, Tom Rosco, John Howard, and Edward Ulrich from EMUTEC, which provided the control system. Also, none of this activity would be possible without the help and support of the Keswick Theatre with Judith Herbst. What a show!

Dick Auchincloss

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## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

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

Wellesley, Massachusetts. EMCATOS's March 6 social at Babson College featured member and Vice President, Len Beyersdorfer at our Wurlitzer console. This gentleman gave us a fine session with show tunes and a tango with a nice beat and perfect rhythm... a real foot tapper. Len utilized the Kawai upright piano when appropriate and a definite addition. Variety characterized his program making for a well-executed concert.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 58



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## Bob Ralston

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—Theresa Bachman-Myers, Executive Director, Council for the Arts (Capitol Theatre, Chambersburg, PA, 7/18/03)

*A thrilling program—A nearly full house*

"One of the most talented showmen on the artistic scene...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..."

—Priscilla Arthur, Rocky Mountain Chapter, ATOS (Denver Paramount Theatre, 3/30/03)

*A family oriented musical show*

"Bob Ralston worked his tail off for us, was fun to work with...presented a delightful, family oriented musical show. Bob kept us spell-bound for over two hours. It was a wunnerful, wunnerful show...a real crowd pleaser."

—Clint Meadway, Puget Sound TOS (Seattle Paramount, 3/16/03)



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searching for the appropriate stops to cover the increasing number of notes he was losing. In front of any audience that would be frightening, but in front of a convention audience of your peers, it almost unnerved him and he was relieved when the program was finally over.

## ATOS

Fr. Jim served on the board of ATOS for a short time in the early '80s. He rarely saw eye-to-eye with the other Board members and voiced several differences with their opinions and decisions including their decision to include the performance of a classical number as part of the youth competition. He would say, "Good classical organists don't always make good theatre organists. It's a different style with different demands and should not be a part of a theatre organ competition." Later, at another convention, when he was the only person housed at a separate hotel from the rest of the attendees, he called and relayed some of the things that were going on and said, "I'm leaving early. They really don't need my input." He "dusted off his shoes," left the convention, and resigned from the Board although, by request from the president, that was never made public. His chair was left vacant for the remainder of his term. Fr. Jim had no difficulty in immersing himself in other projects that were clamoring for his attention at the time.

## Another Secret

During the summers of '97 and '98, he had his knees replaced, and he never let on how much pain he was actually in. At a joint concert we did together after his first operation, one person asked Fr. Jim, "What does it feel like to have your student surpass his teacher?" If only that person had known how much pain Fr. Jim was experiencing that evening. Even his doctor didn't know how bad the second knee was since the amount of deterioration didn't show up on the first x-ray, and his jovial attitude in his office masked any obvious pain.

Even in the hospital after his heart attack he would mask any pain he was feeling from those who came to visit him. After his passing, I asked his regular doctor if Fr. Jim ever told him about any of his symptoms including dizziness, feeling like there wasn't enough fresh air in the house, etc, and his doctor just looked with amazement at me and said, "No! He was always laughing and telling stories, so I thought he was doing fine." By the time he had his heart attack, his main artery was 100% blocked and two others were 75% blocked. Funny that wasn't caught before either of the prior knee surgeries!

Even today I occasionally feel his presence, and his

other students and friends have also relayed the same. Not long after his passing, I wanted the Clarinet rank properly voiced on his Barton organ, a Wurlitzer rank that had never been properly regulated and, thus, was mostly unusable. It was one of several Wurlitzer ranks that had been added to the original 2/7 (not 2/6 as Dave Junchen's book lists). When Clark Wilson and Scott Smith came over to regulate the rank while I was at work, Clark had walked upstairs to the chambers, with Scott right behind. As Clark stepped over the wind-line between the chambers, the door to the Orchestral chamber that housed the Clarinet rank opened—by itself! He slowly turned to Scott and softly said, "I don't suppose that door does that every time, does it?" Scott simply replied, "No, I think Fr. Jim just wanted to welcome you!"

## Birds Of A Feather

Two parrots graced our home—a scarlet macaw and a talkative yellow-naped Amazon. A prankster in many ways, Fr. Jim enjoyed teaching the Amazon how to meow like a cat, cluck like a chicken, and imitate his belly laugh—among other things. One New Year's Eve, no one cared when midnight rolled around as everyone was laughing at the little green entertainer in the next room going through his entire routine for everyone. Today, it sometimes sounds like Fr. Jim really is still here!

His music, love of life, and positive attitude is still expressed through his students, parishioners, and friends who knew him well. Our lives were changed by the encouraging, supportive input from a wonderful teacher and friend.

Thank you, Fr. Jim.

*Fr. Andrew Rogers*  
Fenton, Michigan

## Happy Birthday, Old Friend

Fr. Jim's concert of August, 1975 at the Senate Theatre, Detroit was reviewed in the DTOS News as follows: "Reverend Miller has just written the 11th Commandment: thou shalt have fun with thy music." Could anyone ever disagree with this statement? I believe it was also in this review that his performance was first distilled as a "sermon in sound." As he told me, he didn't go for the organs or the theatres or even necessarily the money. "It's for the people," he would say, with a wistful look in his eyes. "It's the people."

As a teacher, he was absolutely remarkable. He gave you more in three lessons than others gave you in three months. The more you absorbed, the more he gave you. It excited him to see us grab on to new concepts, to see our minds open up. Jim never intended for us to see these concepts as rules . . . only as maps, as a place to go, and an alternate way to get there, easily. He had such a probing mind, and would exhaust every possibility to research what he wanted to know, including studies with the legendary Detroit theatre organist, Don Miller, to unlock the mysteries of that genius . . . and did.

Inversely, he was also prone to letting you know his disapproval when you didn't listen to what he said, or work with what he gave you. Because so much stuff came spilling out of him during a lesson, he insisted that we all record our lessons on a cassette machine. If he suspected you weren't listening or reviewing the tape from the previous lesson, he would set you to play, while he deftly picked up the recorder, walked into the bathroom, and held the microphone down into the bowl as he flushed the toilet. He would then return to your lesson, replacing the recorder where it had been originally. If you didn't call in the next few days, or at least comment on this during your next lesson, you would suddenly find yourself without a teacher! Luckily, this never happened to me, but I know for a fact that it did to others. I still have all of my lesson tapes, and periodically listen to them again and again. You'd better believe that not a time goes by that I don't glean something new out of them, all these years later. Jim frequently cautioned me

about the importance of developing my own style. In and out of our lessons, he often groused about organists who only imitated each other, squandering their talent by "playing it safe" in a "commercial style."

Among his mighty arsenal of teaching tools were the hyper-intricate arrangements of George Shearing and Jesse Crawford, not to mention the numerous books of Bill Irwin and anything by Julliard professor John Mehegan, particularly "Tonal & Rhythmic Principles" from his four-volume set of jazz studies. Students were encouraged to memorize, improvise, but most of all, think out of the box. If he knew you had "it" in you, he'd find a way to pull "it" out, and had a near complete success rate at this.

There were times when it would appear that he lived his life with divine intervention . . . and times when it didn't. On the morning prior to one particular DTOS (Senate) concert, he was hurriedly making the bed, happily humming the evening's selections to himself. As he rolled the heavy brass bed back into position, he heard an alarming crunching sound, and by the way . . . where were his teeth? Sure enough, he had rolled one of the bed's wheels over his false teeth, severing them in two! With an emergency trip to the dentist for a temporary wire job, he was in business for the concert, with a new story to tell. Then, there was the time when, having finished another DTOS concert only hours before, he was awakened in the wee hours of the morning with an excruciating kidney stone attack. Divine delay? You decide.

Jim never quite got over an auto accident during which a woman stepped off the curb, late one night, in front of his car. There was no time to stop, and she was killed, instantly. No conclusion was ever drawn by the authorities, whether she unintentionally slipped off the

MILLER COLLECTION



*Fr. Jim with organist Billy Nalle at the 1981 ATOS Convention, Seattle.*

MILLER COLLECTION



*David Jones, Fr. Jim, Scott Smith and Walt Strony aka: The Three Brothers Plus One. Pipe Organ Pizza, Milwaukee, ca. 1977.*



*At the Ready Theatre during removal of the Barton.*

curb or if it was suicide. It was, however, an extremely painful incident that shattered a part of Jim for the rest of his life. He knew he wasn't at fault, but he never stopped blaming himself, nor did he talk about it much. If he ever made you cry during one of his ballads, you can rest assured that he spent at least part of that time thinking about this tragic event.

On the lighter side, he was notorious on the local restaurant scene for breaking in the new help. When the waitress would come to take his order, he would have flipped his false teeth over (and sometimes even his glasses, too), delivering the order totally deadpan, as if nothing were out of place. Other times, he would parody or intentionally mispronounce the names of the food, asking for "sewer bass and cold slop," instead of fish and cole slaw.

When CB radios were the rage in the late 1970s, Fr. Jim had one installed in his tiny blue Chevy Monza. Running from church to hospitals to lessons, he became a staple on Michigan's highways and well known to the truckers. Always in a hurry, there were times when he'd ask for a clear path, and one of the truckers would be heard to say, "It's the Flyin' Friar, and he's got his hammer down!"

There was one notable trip we took together with a third friend to the Chicago area in the late '70s. Fr. Jim performed a concert at the Hinsdale Theatre on Saturday evening, and I played a social for CATOE the next afternoon at Sally's Stage. With extra time on our hands, we decided to drive up to Milwaukee to see and hear Walt Strony at Pipe Organ Pizza on Sunday evening. Before entering, Jim distributed a couple of extra priest shirts (replete with collar) to David and myself and instructed us to put them on. The three of us entered, unannounced, and stood against the back wall until

Walt completed some rather difficult number. He spun around to take his bow, taking notice of the three priests who had just entered. Rather speechless for what seemed to be a long period of time, the crowd eventually caught on why, and laughed loudly with the visage of the three of us. Finally, Walt said to the audience, "Do you all know that store down the street here called The Three Sisters? Well, tonight, folks, we have three brothers!" The audience roared. For the rest of the evening, Fr. Jim, Walt and I took turns at the console, and, of course, Jim performed all of his usual antics behind our backs. It was an evening I'll never forget.

Speaking of unforgettable, there was that fabulous concert at the Detroit Fox Theatre in the late '70s. He performed his best material, and even turned the heads of a few people who had previously rated him as a second-rate organist. It was around this time that I took a former writer for this magazine to Fr. Jim's house. He, too, had berated Jim's playing. "How does he see himself, musically?" my friend queried. I quoted Jim directly. "He calls himself the 'slushy Billy Nalle,'" at which my friend scoffed. That is, until we spent but a few minutes at Fr. Jim's home in Fenton, listening to him play the Barton. "Oh, my God!" he exclaimed. "He really is the slushy Billy Nalle!" It was not long after this that Jim actually met Billy Nalle at the 1981 ATOS Convention in Seattle. Jim had such high regard for Billy's inventiveness, gutsiness and musicality, and was positively thrilled when Billy privately told Jim that he was a "human dynamo!"

While they coexist in peace today, there was a long period of time when the two major theatre organ clubs in the Detroit area were in a constant sparring match. If the situation wasn't already one of constant annoyance to Fr. Jim, he was forced to hear about it from his students on



*Somebody once said the Fr. Jim's laughter could only be measured in a quotient of "rooms full." Here's proof, after investigating just how out of tune this wretched old grand piano could be. Note that console has now been removed from pit. Ready Theatre, Niles, Michigan.*

a near-daily basis, many of whom were members of either club or both. When he had reached the boiling point, he summoned the boards of the two clubs to a meeting at one of the two theatres and proceeded to scold those assembled like an angry dad lecturing a group of ill-mannered children. Throughout the "sermon," he strode through the crowd, citing one negative incident after another, until he felt he'd said it all. When it was at last over, all departed the scene in stony silence, with Fr. Jim's terse words and piercing tone still ringing in our ears. As soon as I returned home, the phone rang. It was Fr. Jim. "I wasn't too hard on them, was I?" he softly queried. Here again was that amazing contrast . . . outwardly confident that he had done the right thing, but inwardly fearful that they all hated him for doing it. Only Fr. Jim could have pulled it off.

If you were ever in need in any way, Fr. Jim would be right there to help. It mattered not what faith you were, your financial standing, your social status, or if he really didn't like you. When he loved, he loved all the way. He even tried to divide his time equally to the organ clubs in the area, whether it was playing, mechanical work, restoration . . . you name it. The truth be known, he really wasn't there for the club or the organ. He was there for *you*.

Happy birthday, buddy. We miss you.

*Scott Smith*

*The authors are indebted to the assistance of the following people in the production of this article: Bill Blodgett, Ed Corey and Michael Przybylski.*

## *Father Jim's Barton*

Fr. Jim's long-held desire for the acquisition of a theatre pipe organ happily coincided with the desire of Butterfield Theatres to divest themselves of their aging downtown theatres and related equipment in the late 1970s. Surprisingly, there were several options from which to choose, but for various reasons, he settled on the greatest unknown . . . the 2/7 Barton in the Ready Theatre, Niles, Michigan. Niles is the sister city of South Bend, Indiana, just over the state line, and the 1927 movie house still operates today, although triplexed. At the moment, its fate is uncertain.

Barton #247 Organ was installed in the Ready in late 1927 (Ann Arbor's Michigan Theatre contains Barton #245 Organ). So far as anyone knew, the organ had not

played publicly since the late 1940s. A preliminary inspection managed to get the blower running, revealing a very out-of-tune, tired-sounding organ. Still, save for some squashed treble pipes, it was all there, and basically untouched.

Fr. Jim's dedicated volunteer crew contained friends, students and at least one organ professional. Removal was only able to take place in the wee hours of the morning, and completed over several weekends. Once the organ was back at his home in Fenton, Michigan Fr. Jim wasted no time in converting two of the upstairs bedrooms into organ chambers. In fact, so zealous was he in doing so that he neglected to wear any sort of protective breathing mask as he tore down walls and raised the

BILL BLODGETT



BILL BLODGETT



*Close up of the Miller Barton console.*

ceiling. By the end of the first day, he had inhaled so much dust, insulation and debris that he knocked himself totally out of commission for weeks. Once back on his feet, he went at it again, all day, every day . . . however, this time with a mask.

It is here that we should introduce Ruth Morris, a major angel in Fr. Jim's life. "Aunt Ruth," as he called her, was a retired schoolteacher from Flint, who was a

member of his parish, Holy Trinity in Saginaw. Following his divorce, it distressed her to see him in such dire straits, financially and emotionally. Ruth took action, basically "adopting" Jim by providing stability in his life and a place to call home. "Aunt Ruth" stories were a staple of Fr. Jim's concert commentary, and for good reason. It was a symbiotic relationship. She was his constant companion, and he was the son she never had. In fact, while reinstalling the organ, it was this septuagenarian who helped Jim lift chests and heavy components into place . . . at **her** insistence!

Over time, Fr. Jim added a few things, but kept the basic organ original. He acquired Barton #09 Organ, a small church instrument from Fred Northrup in Mason, Michigan and several parts formerly a part of the Kalamazoo Capitol Theatre Barton #108 Organ. Feeling that he lacked much in the way of subtle accompaniment voices, he added his "Orchestral" chamber, containing mostly Wurlitzer voices, and enlarged the console to accommodate a third manual.

Now, if you look closely at the stoptabs on this instrument, you'll see that Fr. Jim is still making us chuckle

BILL BLODGETT



Barton console, flanked by Allen church and Conn theatre organs. Fr. Jim used all three for teaching.

BILL BLODGETT



Side view of console. The "GT" stained glass was donated to Fr. Jim by Glenn Rank and Dave Voydanoff, and was originally a part of Detroit's Granada Theatre, which contained a small Wurlitzer.

## Father Jim Miller - Discography

**"Premiere Performance of Father Jim Miller at the Organ"** (utilizing the following instruments:)

- 1) Thomas Palace 3-manual theatre organ, with two Leslie speakers: #301 and #103
- 2) Hammond Organ #N-300
- 3) Wicks pipe organ, Opus #2711, 2 manuals, 5 ranks (Miller teaching studio)

**"Padre, Pipes & The Blues"**

3/21 Barton/Hybrid, Granada Theatre, Kansas City, Kansas

**"Late Night"**

3/21 Barton/Hybrid, Granada Theatre, Kansas City, Kansas

**"Father Jim Miller In Concert, Volume I"**

4/17 Barton, Coronado Theatre, Rockford, Illinois

**"Father Jim Miller In Concert, Volume II"**

4/17 Barton, Coronado Theatre, Rockford, Illinois

with phonetics and intentional misspellings engraved on the tabs, as follows:

SOLO VOKS  
 ZYLO  
 TIBIA TO LESLIE (tremolo tab)  
 16' SO-LOW PIANO

With the sound of the organ cascading down the open staircase into the living room, the sound of it is reminiscent of a radio studio instrument. The original Stopped Flute is very pretty, and the Tibia is a real wailer, with a beautiful singing quality. Fr. Jim used to refer to the Barton Vd'O as his "Viol d'Bandsaw," and for good reason. One thing's for sure . . . Fr. Jim loved this instrument, and he loved sharing it with others who could play well.

One other thing . . . Fr. Jim believed his house to be haunted, but found that if he didn't play it past 10 pm, the spirits didn't make obnoxious noises, flash lights or toss things about. Apparently, even ghosts have a set bedtime. Do we believe it now? No one wants to find out, so none of us play it after 9:59!

BILL BLODGETT



Orchestral chamber, featuring mostly-Wurlitzer voices. Diaphone is against the wall, Concert Flute, Salicional, Voix Celeste and Clarinet. Casavant Voix Angelique pipes are the large scale spotted metal pipes in the foreground.

BILL BLODGETT



## Analysis

16' Stopped Flute	Barton	97 pipes	Low 12 - Wangerin (original)
16' Open Diapason	Wurlitzer/Barton	85 pipes	Low 12 - metal Diaphone
8' Tibia Clausa	Barton/other	85 pipes	Top 12 - addition
8' Viol d'Orchestre	Barton	73 pipes	
8' Vox Humana	Barton	73 pipes	
8' Tuba	Barton	73 pipes	Small scale, harmonic @ 2' C
8' Kinura	Barton	49 pipes	Tenor C
8' Voix Angelique	Casavant	49 pipes	Tenor C
8' Voix Celeste	Casavant	49 pipes	Tenor C
8' Concert Flute	Wurlitzer	61 pipes	
8' Salicional	Wurlitzer	49 pipes	Tenor C
8' Voix Celeste	Wurlitzer	49 pipes	Tenor C
8' Clarinet	Wurlitzer	61 pipes	
Chrysoglott Harp	Barton	37 notes	C-C compass
Xylophone	Barton	37 notes	C-C compass
Glockenspiel	Robert-Morton	37 notes	C-C compass
Piano	Hardman	85 notes	Vacuum action
Cathedral Chimes	Wurlitzer	18 notes	
Traps	Barton		Standard traps
	Wurlitzer		Additions
	Brewer		Hi-hat
Relay	Barton		Original
	Wangerin-Barton		Avalon Theatre, Detroit
(additions)			
Blower	Spencer/Woods		Originally 3-hp Motor rewound to 5+hp (Doug Gammage)

BILL BLODGETT



Xylophone, from the Ready Barton. Fr. Jim used a favorite screwdriver to temporarily support the bar frame several years ago, and now no one has the desire to pull it back out!

Chamber shot containing all of the original Barton ranks. From left to right: Vox Humana, Kinura (obscured), Viol d'Orchestre, Stopped Flute, (harmonic) Tuba, Tibia basses and Diapason basses. One has to question the wisdom of whomever designed these three-rank Barton chests, which appeared in virtually all of their small instruments. The short compass (and short in stature) Kinura was placed in the center between a rather tall Vox and an even taller Virole. To say that tuning is difficult is an understatement . . . one has to be almost airlifted in to reach pipes in the center! Now, where do you suppose that errant tuning sleeve belongs . . . Fr. Jim, did you have anything to do with this?



Mr. Beyersdorfer is now a regular artist at the spring and late summer free concert series on the 5/21 Wurlitzer in the Providence Performing Arts Center, as well as members, Robert Legon, and James Duncan. Three out of five from our chapter is not a bad percentage.

March 19 at our 'home base' Connecticut Valley Chapter's Juan Cardona, Jr. again skillfully accompanied the 1922 silent movie featuring Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. in *Robin Hood*. This is a movie full of action with intrigue, spying, betrayal, humor, and romance with Enid Bennett and Wallace Beery on the 'good' side. The 'evil' actors were Paul Dickey and Sam De Grasse in what were most authentic sets and costumes in the medieval life at the time of the Crusades. Fairbanks was at his swashbuckling best as he robbed the rich and relieved the distressed.

Juan played one selection before the screening, then over an hour and one quarter straight without relief . . . not an easy task. Complete concentration was

required with so much action. After intermission Mr. Cardona gave us an upbeat number completing the movie at the end of which the very good house accorded him a deserved long-standing applause. An encore wrapped up the evening of fine performance and a great movie. A silent movie attracts many who would not attend an organ concert per se, but being exposed to the sound of the theatre pipe organ brings several back.

Member Robert Legon was our April 3 social entertainer, and he mentioned that on this date 50 years ago he had his first organ lesson. Bob opened his program with a medley from the show *My Fair Lady*, and other medleys were from songs by the Beatles, one by Frank Sinatra and music from the *Student Prince*. Silent movie music written and played by the first organist at the Radio City Music Hall, Richard Leibert, comprised another portion of Bob's offerings. It was a well-chosen mix of songs to entertain those present on a pleasant afternoon. Thank you to Henry (Hank) Lysaght who provided the details of this social in absence of the chapter news correspondent.

*Stanley Garniss*

## **GARDEN STATE**

Don Hansen, President  
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**Trenton, New Jersey.** Sunday March 13 was a pleasant interesting day and our GSTOS members arrived at the famous Newark Symphony Hall in Newark, New Jersey, for a meeting and 'open-console'. We were delighted to be in this theatre to visit and make music again. Our older members remember the strange history of the magnificent building that was built in 1925 by the Ancient Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. It later became the Newark Symphony Hall, and was known as an excellent Art Center with many well-known musicians, singers and Hollywood talent performing on the huge stage. A 3/16 Griffith Beach theatre pipe organ was installed and enjoyed. Time passed and unfortunately the console of the Griffith Beach organ was removed from the building . . . but the pipes remained in their chambers lonely and forgotten. In 1999 curious theatre organ buffs asked permission to search the chambers and they found the pipes cov-



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The happy 'open-console' line-up at Newark Symphony Hall.

ered with many years of dust. All that was needed was a console! Bob Martin and friends formed a crew who located and restored a 3-manual Marr & Colton console, which had belonged to Don Plenkens. When Don passed away his sister donated the console to GSTOS in his name, and a memorial plaque was placed on the Newark Symphony Hall console. The Symphony Hall management was amazed and delighted to have the Griffith Beach theatre pipe organ once again filling the building with music.

After touring the chambers and this huge theatre, members were seated and our President Don Hansen conducted a short meeting. Our eager organists then lined up and placed their name on the player list and waited for their turn to plan this interesting pipe organ during 'open-console'.

Ralph Ringstad, Jr. began the afternoon with a great lively mini-concert. Jinny Vanore at a gorgeous 9-foot Steinway Grand Piano joined Ralph for several duets. The afternoon was filled with music and our members enjoyed Reverend Jiggets classical music. Don Hansen also joined the Reverend playing the fantastic grand piano. A very satisfying day for all who attended and a great thank you goes to Greg Klingler, our Vice President and Program Chairman. GSTOS cannot show enough appreciation to Bob Martin and the crew for spending many hours to have this organ playing after a 50-year rest!

April was an interesting month as the long awaited spring came and our chapter in conjunction with the Union County Arts Center continued with the Silent Film Series "See You At The Movies." Sunday April 3 two films *Kid Boots* and a long lost short subject *Florenz Ziegfeld's Midnight Frolic* were

featured with professional organist Bernie Anderson accompanying the films on the 2/7 "Biggest Little" Wurlitzer theatre organ.

The star of both films was Eddie Cantor, a well-known entertainer, with Clara Bow, Billie Dove and Laurence Gray added to the delightful film *Kid Boots*. It was filled with humor, laughter, exciting dangerous stunts and love in the end. Great dynamic music by Bernie pleased everyone especially those who heard a live theater organ presentation for the first time.

The lost short, a special sound film and one of three Vitaphone shorts made by Eddie Cantor in 1929, was discovered hidden in an old part of the "Old Rahway Theatre," now UCAC. The audience was excited since Eddie Cantor's daughter and her grandson were present to view the films and answer questions about Eddie. They were very gracious answering the many questions, which seemed to be endless. The afternoon sped away and once again we departed talking about the great "lost" sound film and how fantastic it was to experience this "found" treasure!

Looking at the April calendar our members realized Sunday April 10 was a special day because of Catherine Oliver's invitation to her beautiful home at the Jersey Shore. This meant a day full of music including a mini concert and 'open-console'. Many members arrived at the Oliver residence to hear the guest artist Bob Raymond, Jr., perform on the 3/11 Wurlitzer theatre organ. Chairs quickly filled as President Don Hansen introduced Bob, who is one of our talented members. Bob began his program with many refreshing tunes, some old,



Bob Raymond, Jr. entertains!

some new, but all with that special Bob variation! As Bob relaxed he proceeded to entertain us with his artistry and his knowledge of hundreds of songs. At the end of Bob's mini concert he received a well-deserved applause.

After a refreshment break, 50 members and friends enjoyed the 'open-console', which continued for several hours. It was an outstanding day, with kudos to Bob and a special thank you to our gracious hostess Cathy Oliver and to Greg Klingler, our Program Chairman, for arranging the day.

Jinny Vanore

## HUDSON MOHAWK

Frank Hackert, President  
518/355-4523

Schenectady, New York. Proctors Theatre, State Street, Schenectady, home of *Goldie*, the fabulous 3/18 Wurlitzer, and is the usual meeting place for the Hudson Mohawk Chapter. However, due to a dramatic renovation project at Proctors Theatre, resulting in the relocation of *Goldie's* console off-site, we have had to rely on the kindness of members to find alternative meeting spots. Thanks to Avery Tunngley and John VanLaak, two very interesting and hospitable locations were thus secured for the months of March and April.

Proctor's Theatre is closed until December 1, as the present stage house and stage are being removed and a new larger facility is being built. While this construction is in progress, our maintenance crew will be completely re-leathering all the actions in the main windchest along with the complete



Avery shows several members the organ.



Members viewing the organ and pipes.

rebuilding of all the pallet valves. Some Percussion are presently at Robert Lent's facility being rebuilt due to water damage. Swell shade motors will also be rebuilt during this time.

Avery Tunningley is musical director at the Union Presbyterian Church in Schenectady. In addition to planning and conducting typical church themed events, Avery has instituted a series of silent movie screenings at the church.

An accomplished accompanist, Avery plays in the style of the 'Golden Age of Silents'. This season's series culminated with the classic *Wings* on May 6. Avery hosted the general meeting of the chapter at the church on March 15. Avery demonstrated the Wicks pipe organ, which was followed by 'open-console'. Following the scheduled program we adjourned to Avery's studio and were given artistic access to the electronic Wurlitzer.

On April 25 chapter members were the guests of John VanLaak of St. David's Lane in Schenectady. His musically themed home boasts a built-in pipe organ, piano and harpsichord. John, a fabulous welcoming host, kicked off the program. Al Moser and David Lester also

performed. David and Al presented several impromptu duets, and everyone enjoyed much singing and all-in-all good cheer. Frank Boshier and Harold Russell also entertained on the organ. An announcement was made that elections for next season's officers would be held at the May general meeting.

*Norene Grose & Richard Calderwood*

## LATOS

Dorsey Caldwell, President  
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**Los Angeles, California.** It has been a rather busy spring in the world of organ events in the Los Angeles area. After another successful Wurlitzer Weekend in January, the incomparable Tony Fenelon was at San Sylmar for a three concert series on February 4 & 5.

February 26 Ron Rhode played the Avery Johnson console of our Ross Reed

Memorial Wurlitzer in the Saxon Auditorium at Pasadena City College. Ron's program was a Celebration of Life for Avery Johnson. Ron played many of Avery's favorite tunes and accompanied Orlando Mongalo, a student studying opera. Orlando was Avery's driver for the last several years, and his caretaker during the final weeks of Avery's life. Many of the people in the audience were long time friends of Avery's.

There was a sizable contingent of LATOS members in attendance at the 11th Annual Morton Madness and the dedication of the Fox/Bob Hope Morton in Stockton April 9 & 10. What a weekend!

Lots of friends from around the country, as well as the many people from the sponsoring chapters Nor Cal and Sierra, all enjoyed good music. Tom Hazleton, the "Sultan of Sleaze" did a super job of entertaining at two concerts on Saturday . . . first at Bob Hartzell's Harmony Vineyards near Lodi and then at Kautz Ironstone Winery near Murphys. The

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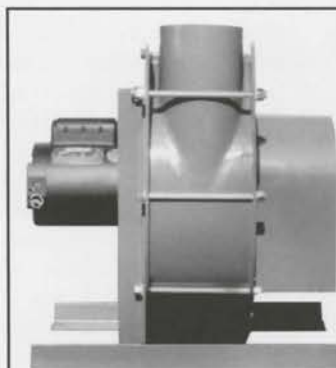
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two big, nearly identical, Mortons are very different in sound. I would be remiss not to mention the wine available at the Big Blue Barn and at Ironstone Winery, as well as the wonderful buffet dinner at Ironstone. On Sunday, Walt Strony did the honors in presenting the inaugural concert on the newly installed Morton in the Fox/Bob Hope Theatre. The theatre is a magnificent example of theatre restoration. The restoration of the Morton was a near miracle, as the organ was in a storage container for 28 years.

Some of our members thoroughly enjoyed the three concerts by Australian Neil Jensen at San Sylmar April 22 & 23. The following day, a number of our members made the journey to Fullerton where OCTOS presented Rob Richards. Rob always presents an enjoyable program, and as usual brought along his good friend Ralph Wolf to entertain us at the piano. Ralph is a delight to hear, and the arrangements that he and Rob work out for organ/piano duets are great. Rob also accompanied the hilarious Laurel and Hardy silent film *Two Tars*.

Wayne Flottman

## LONDON & SOUTH ENGLAND

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

Woking Leisure Centre  
Saturday March 12  
Organist Simon Gledhill

Simon must be one of the best-known and respected theater organists, not only in this country, but also throughout the world. This is due in no small measure to his playing style and his exceptionally high standard of performance, which he

IAN RIDLEY



Simon at Woking.

undoubtedly sets for himself and achieves. As current chairman of the Cinema Organ Society he is also thoroughly involved with the promotion and preservation of the theatre organ as well as, of course, presenting it wonderfully with his performances. He is very popular in America where he has appeared numerous times at both regional and annual conventions.

Such is Simon's popularity that we had to delay the start of the concert slightly in order to admit and seat the larger than usual audience. This accomplished, Simon whisked us off into a wonderful world of music which included a selection from *No No Nanette*, a descriptive piece by Hayden Wood, a Vincent Youmans selection and to get our toes tapping, a comprehensive tribute to the Duke Ellington Band.

After the interval which Simon spent chatting to members of the audience, we were treated to another wonderful programme of music. Included this time, was a wonderful Noel Coward selection, a novelty piece by Billy Male, some Carpenters songs from the 70's, a tribute to

IAN RIDLEY



Richard Hills at Kilburn.

Sidney Torch and a fantastic medley from that well-known, and much loved musical, *The King and I*. It was a fabulous evening of theatre organ, which was enjoyed by all. So after the demanded encore our emcee brought the evening to a close. This was yet again a virtuoso performance from Simon and was certainly not a concert to be missed.

Kilburn State Theatre and Harrow  
Gold's Gym  
Sunday April 8  
Organist Richard Hills

This was the first concert for this year in our "Double Touch" series, which features the same organist on two Wurlitzers on the same day, the first at the State Theatre Kilburn in the afternoon, and then in the evening at Gold's Gym

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## The Organist Entertains

The Organist Entertains is a weekly radio program broadcast on BBC Radio 2 in the United Kingdom and worldwide via the net. British organist Nigel Ogden hosts the show. You can listen to the show every Tuesday at 20:00 hours UK time at:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio2/shows/organist\\_show/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio2/shows/organist_show/)

Harrow in North West London. This venue was formally the Harrow Granada Cinema.

As you can imagine this is a bit of a marathon for any organist. They need to have two completely different programmes ready for this event, which is three hours worth of material, and be able to perform on the Harrow Wurlitzer virtually unseen . . . practice not being possible at this venue. The gym closes early especially for us, only 15-minutes before the audience comes in. Despite his years, Richard is a very talented and experienced musician who is much in demand for concerts at home and abroad. He won our Young Theatre Organist of the Year Competition at the age of 12 at the Harrow Granada on this very Wurlitzer, and two years later at the age of 14, he won the International Competition held by the parent body in America. The Harrow venue can only accommodate approximately 100 audience members and has to be a ticket only event. Those buying a ticket for Harrow have free entry to Kilburn in the afternoon. Entry for Kilburn alone is as usual, pay at the door.

At Kilburn Richard elected to use the Howard Seat rather than the usual Wurlitzer bench. This had not been used for years, so it had to be brought down from the chambers and dusted off. Richard explained to the audience that dismounting from it in order to speak to them was a bit tricky and was going to slow him down a bit!

So before a large audience, which included guests from South Africa, America and Canada, Richard got the Kilburn section of our "Double Touch" day off to a flying start with a march. He gave us a wonderful programme of music, which included a very comprehensive selection of Cole Porter songs, which he described as his 'greatest hits', music from the pen of Jerome Kern and a 12-

minute selection of music from *New Moon* by Sigmund Romberg. We were also treated to some beautiful ballads, which as Richard said, demonstrated some of the lovely quite ranks on the organ and also a wonderful selection of favourite melodies from Richard Rodgers, which were featured in a film about Rodgers and Hart called *Words and Music*. Our emcee had trouble quieting the audience in order to say his usual thanks, after which Richard delighted the audience with his own unique arrangement of a well-known rag for his encore.

It really was a wonderful performance by Richard and well appreciated by the audience. However we were only half done, so after a quick tidy up at Kilburn, our car convoy set off across London in a north westerly direction for Harrow.

At Harrow Gold's Gym we were able to fix up some lighting and a sound system while we waited for the venue to close to its clients at 7:30 pm. At this point we were able to place the 100 or so chairs around the console, and give Richard a brief chance to check out the organ. At 7:50 it was time to let in the capacity audience who had previously assembled in the foyer. So without delay we all settled in for a wonderful evening of theatre organ music.

Richard started off in lively style with a march from Eric Coates and continued the first half with music from an operetta by Richard German, arranged by Quentin MacLean, a selection from the *Vagabond King* and a tribute to early British radio theme tunes which he used as part of his programme when he won the competition at this venue in 1993. For the start of the second half we again had a rousing march from Eric Coates followed by the music of Samuel



Richard Hills at Harrow Wurlitzer.

Coleridge Taylor and all three movements from the *Robin Hood Suite*, which was tremendous and brought well deserved and prolonged applause from the audience. He finished with a delightful item from Bobby Pagan and a great selection of British folk songs. Again it was difficult to quiet the audience applause, and of course we had the demanded encore. Richard gave us a tremendous day of theatre organ music played with great mastery on the two quite different instruments, bringing out all the best qualities of both. It was a very long and tiring day not only for our committee and volunteers but also of course for Richard to whom we extend our thanks for a job well done. The old Harrow Wurlitzer, to which it is difficult for the technical team to gain access, did give us a couple of ciphers, but as Richard said to the audience, "If you were made of bits of wood, old leather and soft metal you might feel like ciphering once in a while!"

The next 'Double Touch', which has already been set with Gold's Gym, will be on September 25 so once again we will be able to present this wonderful Harrow Granada Wurlitzer to the public.

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**Woking Leisure Center  
Chapter A.G.M. & 'Open-Console'  
Wednesday April 27**

This was held in the restaurant annex at the Woking Leisure Centre as usual. The weather this year was thankfully much better than last, so no delay was required in starting proceedings in order for enough members to arrive to have a quorum. Notice of the meeting, the previous minutes, accounts detail and chairman's report had been sent to all members in good time with the previous newsletter. This meant that the business side of the meeting was conducted fairly swiftly, but with plenty of time allowed for members to ask questions and engage members of the committee in discussion. With no nominations for the committee, the present committee was re-elected en bloc. The meeting closed just before 8:30 pm, and everyone adjourned to Wurlitzer Hall where members were reintroduced to our Wurlitzer, (now with two extra ranks, a Clarinet and a Kinura). Our non-playing members enjoyed listening while playing members had 'open-console' session on our 3/19 Wurlitzer until 10:00 pm.

*Ian Ridley*

**MANASOTA**

**Charles Pierson, President**  
941/924-0674

**Sarasota, Florida.** On Sunday February 20, the Manasota Chapter enjoyed a terrific program performed by David Harris on piano and Jelani Eddington on organ. The duo was brought back by popular

demand and they did not disappoint their fans. In fact, our attendance was well over 800 people. Word spread quickly about their last year's great program, and this year many people brought friends. With their lively new program these note perfect talented artists thrilled the audience, and there were plenty of smiles and positive comments as the audience departed.

After the program, an organ fundraiser was held at the home of John Fischer and Jim Weisenborne where guests met the friendly artists, dined and were treated to an impromptu dual piano performance. Jelani and David are consummate artists and their CD's sold well.

We had a wonderful concert in March by David Wickerham, one that folks are still talking about. David got three standing ovations by the large audience and much enthusiastic applause for his spirited performance and his genial stage presence. He showed himself to be a first class entertainer. Dave performed on the Forker Wurlitzer, playing many numbers from his CD, which was met with great approval, and there was a rush during the intermission to purchase his CD.

With the Easter season upon us, Dave interpolated two religious numbers and this resulted in an emotional standing ovation. Dave is a skillful organist and clever arranger. His easy rapport with the audience and selection of popular tunes easily endeared him to his audience.

In April, Fred Boska came from Americus, Georgia to delight over 80 members and guests at a regular chapter meeting with a variety of organ styles

and a selection of lesser-known tunes from well-known composers.

At this writing, we are planning for a lively patriotic concert in May by the always-popular, energetic and accomplished Bill Vlasak, to round out this season's concert schedule.

GEORGE MILBURN



*Fred Boska.*

JIM WEISENBORNE



*David Harris.*

JIM WEISENBORNE



*Jelani at the console, as David announces the next selection.*

GEORGE MILBURN



*David Wickerham at Forker Wurlitzer.*

ALLAN FRANCE



Mike O'Brien at 'open-console'.

As much fun as this season has been, some exciting plans are already shaping up for next season's concerts. We will publish the new schedule as soon as it is firmed up. Updated information is always available on our Chapter's website: [www.mtos.us](http://www.mtos.us)

Jim Weisenborne & George Milburn

## NEW YORK

Bernard Anderson, Chairman  
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**New York, New York.** On Saturday March 26, New York Chapter members gathered at the Lafayette Theatre in Suffern, New York, for an 'open-console' session featuring the chapter's Ben Hall Memorial 2/11 Mighty Wurlitzer and the theatre's Big Screen Classics Matinee. Our host for the day, Nelson Page, who operates the Lafayette, provided a friendly greeting and a first class spread of refreshments. Members took turns at 'open-console', and while some remained in the theatre and enjoyed listening, other gathered in the lobby to chat with old and new friends.

At 11:00 am, as the doors were opened to let in the more than 300 matinee movie patrons, the console was turned over to organist Jeff Barker, who provided our morning mini concert as he 'played in the house'. As the show started with a Bugs Bunny cartoon followed by the feature film, Irving Berlin's *Easter*

ALLAN FRANCE



Jeff Barker at the Lafayette Wurlitzer.

*Parade*, starring Judy Garland and Fred Astaire, it became very clear why the Lafayette ranks among the nation's "Ten Great Places To Revel In Cinematic Grandeur" according to USA Today. As one chapter member put it, "I can't imagine a nicer way to spend Easter Saturday." A big thank you goes to Nelson Page and his staff for providing a delightful day of theatre organ and great movies, and thanks to crew chief Dave Kopp, along with Tom Stehle and Don Hayek, the Ben Hall Wurlitzer was in fine tune.

Two weeks later, our Ben Hall Wurlitzer was again featured at the Lafayette Theatre's "Sounds of the Silents" film festival. Performing throughout the weekend, were organists Jeff Barker, Ben Model, John Baratta, Michael Holmes, Robert Israel, and Dennis James accompanying a wide variety of silent classics. Among the highlights was Dennis James' masterful accompaniment of the 1924 version of *Robin Hood*, starring Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.

Organist John Baratta was our featured concert artist on Sunday April 17, at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York. John demonstrated his keyboard artistry at the Chaminade 3/15 Austin-Morton mighty theatre pipe organ. He played an enjoyable program that featured several medleys of old favorites, Broadway hits and light classics. Throughout the program John showed off the organ's many beautiful voices that include lush Austin Strings, and two beautiful Tibias . . . one a Wurlitzer and the other a Barton.

The Chaminade crew, Brother Bob Lahey, Ken Ladner, and Bob Atkins have succeeded in blending voices from Austin, Morton, Wurlitzer and Barton into one unique yet cohesive and mighty theatre pipe organ that is exciting to

ALLAN FRANCE



John Baratta at Chaminade.

listen to and to play. John's program was clearly a hit with the audience, and he was called back for an encore. Following the concert, chapter members had an opportunity to take a turn at 'open-console'. Many thanks to the Chaminade crew for all their work and for their warm hospitality.

Tom Stehle & Allan France

## NORTH TEXAS

Richard Stewart, President  
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**Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas.** One of the major shop projects for a number of

IRVING LIGHT



President Rich Stewart.



(L-R) John McCall, Warren Thomas, Susan Cole-Shaw & Clayton Shaw.



'Packed house' at John McCall concert.

months has been the restoration and improvement of the Geneva organ slated for the Divine Peace Lutheran Church in nearby Garland, Texas. In February, after having erected the finished organ in an area of the shop where it was configured exactly as it was to be erected in the church, North Texas TOS chapter member Danny Ray gave a recital for members and friends to preview the sights and sounds of the 2/7 Geneva.

Now, in April, the organ is completely installed and checked out and tonally complete. The North Texas Chapter held its April meeting in the church to hear and see the results and to enjoy the fruits of our labor. Selected to play the program was Tawny Kingsley, who has played for NTC twice before on other chapter organ venues to the great delight

of all who were fortunate enough to hear her unique styling.

For this spring occasion Ms. Kingsley chose to label her program "It Might As Well Be Spring," choosing her selections from a variety of sources including Broadway shows, light classics and classic organ literature. Despite the uniqueness of this particular instrument, Tawny managed to find tonalities that suited each of her varied musical selections. The audience was charmed and delighted with Tawny and her music and showed it with a standing ovation. During the following 'open-console', several organists tried their hand at the little Geneva console.

It was divulged at the meeting that the church is planning to enlarge by adding a new larger auditorium in front of the existing building, at which time they are prepared to enlarge the organ in ways now planned and prepared for. It is to the credit of the chapter technical leaders working with the church leaders that they had this foresight.

The next major project for the chapter is the preparation of a 3/16 Wurlitzer organ for installation in the McKinney Performing Arts Center (MPAC), formerly the Collin County Court House, now being restored. Completion of the restoration is projected for December 2005, so there is much work ahead to prepare a suitable instrument from the collection of ranks of Wurlitzer pipes and all of the various components that are presently in storage. The plan is to produce an instrument that will be a credit to all concerned, and that will attract concert organists from all over the theatre organ world to play for North Texas.

Work has started on the restoration and refitting of the 3-manual Wurlitzer console that will be the centerpiece of the MPAC organ.

*Irving Light*

## ORLANDO

Warren Thomas, President  
386/761-0492

**Orlando, Florida.** John Clark McCall, Jr. was guest artist for the Orlando Chapter on Sunday March 13 in Mount Dora, Florida. John was featured at the residence of Susan and Clayton Shaw on their new Allen 319 EX. This installation is nothing short of spectacular, having been carefully designed for the Shaw's music room by Orlando Allen dealer and ATOS member Tom Drake. The Allen was voiced by Walt Strony, which has insured a realistic and unforgettable sound. In the return engagement for the Orlando Chapter, John included a medley of selections, which recalled the recordings done at the San Francisco Fox by Everett Nourse and Tiny James. There were also ballads and novelties ... all designed to show off the Allen's resources. The artist was brought back for an encore, which was a medley from a show penned by Lerner and Loewe. Refreshments were served pool-side afterward, and the Allen was made available for 'open-console'.

Our April meeting was scheduled to be at the home of former chapter president Wayne Tilschner, but due to a major plumbing problem, we were forced to relocate the meeting. Thanks to Tom Drake, it was held at the Allen Show-

IRVING LIGHT



Tawny Kingsley.

room. Our feature artist was Gene Stroble from Jacksonville. He presented a varied program on the Allen 319 EX. It was particularly impressive due to the size of the room and Gene's talent for making each number sound exciting.

Our next meeting will be at our 'home base' Lake Brantley High School and our Wurlitzer.

Warren Thomas

## PIKES PEAK

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

**Colorado Springs, Colorado.** The Pikes Peak Chapter tried to bring springtime to the Rockies with a social at the home of Gene and Sandy Holdgreve on March 20 (the first day of spring). Chapter member Mike Bryant gave an excellent program of "Music from the Movies." It was a very chilly afternoon with a mixture of rain and snow, but there was warmth and fun inside. Mike presented music from both well-known and lesser-known movie successes at the box office. With each movie and musical selection, he gave the audience little known facts regarding the stars, directors, and set locations of the movies. In some cases he was a great critic, expounding on who should and should not have had singing parts in movies. We had a special guest, David Bruce from Australia. David was in Colorado Springs on business and found us on the website. It was a great afternoon of music on the Holdgreve's 3/21 mostly-Wurlitzer organ.

The Pikes Peak area Sack Lunch Serenade begins Thursday, May 5 and continues through the Labor Day Weekend. We have several special guest artists coming. On June 23 Stephen Brittian from Florida will be here, and on June 30 Patti Simon from Wichita, Kansas will perform. On August 11, Jonas Nordwall will be our special guest artist, and on September 1 Brett Valliant from Wichita, Kansas will be here. The Sack Lunch Serenades are presented each Thursday from May 5 to September 8 at Noon. These programs are free to the public, so if you are coming to the Pikes Peak area, please be our guest.

Plans also are being made for a very special program on August 14 with Jonas Nordwall at Joel's Organ Barn in Kiowa, Colorado, and for another weekend of music featuring Brett Valliant. This will happen during Labor Day weekend, with four great programs featuring Brett

and PPATOS resident organist/ragtime pianist Tom O'Boyle. So we hope to see you here.

Please visit our website for further information:

[www.theatreorgans.com/ppatos](http://www.theatreorgans.com/ppatos)

Owanah Wick

## PUGET SOUND

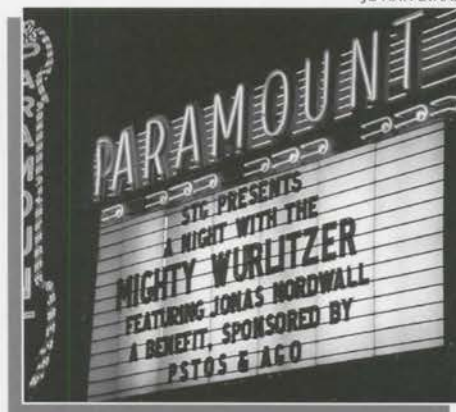
Clint Meadway, President  
360/805-1619  
cbmeadway@wwdb.org

**Seattle, Washington.** It was a trip back in time when Puget Sound Chapter members participated in a well-organized Bremerton Organ Crawl. Tom Blackwell was responsible for planning the event, which included visits to the Masonic Lodge and the Bremerton Community Theatre. Bremerton is an hour's ferry trip across Puget Sound from Seattle.

The Masonic Lodge boasts an original 1927 Style-F Special Wurlitzer, moved intact from the Rivoli Theatre in 1941. An original Krumet replaces the standard Clarinet, and with the chambers high in the balcony, a grand sound is produced.

Members of the Bremerton Pipe Organ Society installed the 2-manual 1921 Robert-Morton instrument in the Community Theatre in 1979; they added Wurlitzer and Kimball parts to bring it to 2/11 (with two Tibias and two Voxes). Great music came from the fingers of a number of talented PSTOS members, making it a very special and enjoyable day.

Another unusual event happened in April, also masterminded by Tom Blackwell with help from Carl Dodrill. Sponsored jointly by PSTOS and the Seattle Chapter of AGO, "An Evening With The Mighty Paramount Wurlitzer" featured Jonas Nordwall at the console.



Paramount Theatre.

The goal was twofold . . . first to present to AGO members an overview of the history of the development of theatre organs and the evolution of musical styles played on these instruments over several decades. Secondly, the event was a benefit to raise funds for ongoing work on the Paramount 4/20 Wurlitzer, one of only four theatre organs still in their original theatres in the State of Washington.

Jonas presented an interesting historic perspective of the theatre organ, from its first use in 1910 to the present. He played music encompassing every time frame, and many styles, from "Bach to Rock," much to the delight of the crowd, who rewarded him with a well-deserved standing ovation. Jonas generously donated his time and talent for this worthwhile cause, and with the theatre matching all funds donated at the event, over \$8,000 was raised for much needed organ improvements. Sincere thanks to Jonas!

View nearly 700 pages of Northwest theatre organ history on our website: [www.pstos.org](http://www.pstos.org)

Jo Ann Evans

## RIVER CITY

Bob Markworth, President  
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kimballorgan1@msn.com

**Omaha, Nebraska.** Once again, RCTOS was privileged to present The Rose Theatre's Mighty Wurlitzer during the Omaha Press Club Show on March 18 & 19. This event has been an ongoing Omaha tradition for more than 33 years. Many State of Nebraska and Omaha dignitaries attend this event, and numerous favorable comments regarding the Wurlitzer were made. President Bob Markworth and Secretary Jerry Pawlak were on hand promoting RCTOS and the theatre pipe organ.

RCTOS had the opportunity to present The Rose Theatre's Mighty Wurlitzer at the monthly chapter meeting with many members and guests in attendance. The Silvercrest Assisted Living Facility of Omaha was well represented with 25 residents and their families. Jerry Pawlak was the guest artist, and as usual he 'put the pedal to the metal' a few times. His program presented many melodic mood changes, and concluded with a medley tribute to Fred Astaire. Since The Rose Theatre presents an "Astaire era aura" with a little imagination, one could see Fred comfortably entertaining on stage.





5th graders experience the theatre organ.



JERRY PAWLAK

Greg Johnson.

Many chapter members are participating in performing major maintenance to The Rose Theatre organ in anticipation of RCTOS special event on July 10, when we will be presenting Dave Wickham in concert. Many thanks to the crew that put in numerous hours getting the organ in great shape for the Wickham event.

The April chapter meeting was held at the Greg & Stacia Johnson residence in Fremont, Nebraska. Greg is the proud owner of a Rodgers organ as well as a Bob Ralston Series Thomas organ. Greg was the featured artist at the meeting. As it was a beautiful spring day Greg appropriately titled his program "Think Spring." Almost all the selections Greg performed had the word spring in the title. Greg rotated between playing the Rodgers, and the Thomas. As an encore, Jeanne Mehuron joined Greg as they played "dueting organs." It was a crowd pleaser and a great finish to a fine afternoon of listening pleasure.

On April 28 and May 11, RCTOS entertained groups of students from the Omaha Public School system at the Markworth residence. The students were 3rd and 5th graders who have never experienced the thrill of the theatre pipe organ. The students selected the music to be played in connection with their studies of 1920's era music history. The program included a chamber slide show, chamber tour, explanation of the unit orchestra organ and console. The organ program centered on the music they are studying, a sing-along, and a silent movie. Chapter members Warner Moss, Harold Kenney, Paul Kanka, and Steve Witt were on hand to help with the presentation and chamber tour. President

Bob Makworth presented a slide show explanation of the theatre organ and Jerry Pawlak was on hand at the console. The students were very receptive to the presentation and organ program. Many of the students are studying piano and were not shy about asking questions about the theatre pipe organ. The chapter feels this is a good effort to expose the theatre pipe organ to young musicians, plus it was a pleasant experience and everyone had a great afternoon.

Jerry Pawlak

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Jim Burt, President  
719/388-2101

Denver, Colorado. By *George*, it was *George... & Bob*. About 50 hardy souls braved the weather to attend our chapter social of March 13. They were richly rewarded for their efforts as Bob Castle, supplemented by projected images of George Wright LP covers, treated us to the music, the moods and the memories

of his long time friend, theatre organ great George Wright. Our *George* instrument is a digital 'clone' of the Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ in George Wright's home, so it was interesting to learn more about it and its owner. As usual, Bob's music was 'top drawer'. Thanks to the projector provided by member Corky Carlson, we were able to see a visual review of RMCATOS events over the past years. Jud Murphy provided the light refreshments.

Saturday April 11 was a beautiful early spring day to have an artist's reception for members, honoring our guest artist Brett Valliant at Holiday Hills Ballroom. Brett loves to play *George*, so he favored us with a wonderful array of spontaneous and unrehearsed (but flawless) music. We enjoyed refreshments, and had the opportunity to talk with and get to know Brett better.

There was to have been a very special event on Sunday at the Paramount Theatre, featuring Brett Valliant and The Hot Tomatoes Swing and Jazz Dance Orchestra, however, the Denver area was hit with a snowstorm that produced



BILL KWINN

Brett Valliant (piano) and Dick Koeckel (organ) performing!



Bev Bucci and Jim Calm performing at the twin consoles.

snow 26 inches deep! Snow started late Saturday night and continued for most of the day on Sunday. Therefore, regretfully, the Sunday program had to be cancelled. 'Springtime in the Rockies' being true to form, by Monday morning temperatures were in the 60's and most of the roads were cleared, and we were able to go forward with the third leg of the weekend consisting of a delightful joining of two great talents, Brett Valliant and Dick Kroeckel back at Holiday Hills Ballroom.

We had some organ and piano duets, some solo work on both and even a four-hand set with Brett and Dick on the piano bench. It was truly fabulous! The Paramount Theatre program with Brett and The Hot Tomatoes has been rescheduled for June 9. We hope everyone who was scheduled to hear this great program didn't miss it!

The City of Denver opened 82 buildings to the public April 16 & 17 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm for the "Doors Open to Denver" program. The Denver Paramount was one of those buildings, and our chapter responded by leading tours of the theatre and providing the Mighty Wurlitzer in non-stop action! This meant six hours straight each day, and sometimes the artists used the twin consoles! Members who played were Bev Bucci, Jim Calm, Bob Castle, Deloy Geoglein, Douglas Thompson, Lee Traster, and Kevin Utter.

Over 1,100 people visited the Paramount and enjoyed listening to the Wurlitzer. Visitors stayed to listen to the wonderful music from one minute to six hours! Several of the first day visitors returned the second day to hear more! Most of the visitors had no idea that the Paramount had an organ, but they do

now! Thanks to every one who helped make this program a huge success!

Other coming events:

Sunday June 12

Kevin, Doc & Big George  
Kevin Utter & Harry Ferguson  
Holiday Hills Ballroom 2pm

Sunday July 17

Pizza and Pipeless II  
Holiday Hills Ballroom 2pm

Hope to see you there!

Priscilla Arthur

## SIERRA

Craig Peterson, President

916/682-9699

craigpeterson@cs.com

Sacramento, California. Apropos of Good Friday, Sierra Chapter's March event was Jim Riggs accompanying Cecil B. DeMille's masterpiece, *King of Kings*. Jim's entire score was ad-libbed! We were at the Towe Auto Museum with the Dale Mendenhall Memorial 3/16 Wurlitzer. Prior to and after the film, Jim gave us two theatre organ selections. He did an excellent job on the film score and selections. Jim received a well-deserved ovation. We received excellent coverage from the local PBS FM radio stations. This coverage included a half-hour interview of Jim on the organ at the Towe on the Sunday evening preceding the film. Then, there was an hour-long interview on the afternoon of the film; chapter member Martias Bombal conducted both interviews. There were 90 persons at the film who had ever seen a silent film before. We hope this will not be their last!

April was Morton Madness XI featuring Tom Hazleton at the consoles. This event combined two concerts on two different 3/15 Robert-Morton's on the same beautiful spring day. The Nor-Cal and Sierra Chapters jointly sponsored this event. The afternoon concert was at the

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organ fund.



Hartzell's "Blue Barn" in Lodi where they have installed an earlier, gentler Robert-Morton in a more intimate setting. The evening concert was immediately after dinner on a late-edition Robert-Morton, which can really breathe fire into the large room at the Kautz Winery in Murphys. Tom's concerts covered a wide range of music, and included many of our long-time favorites from Tom. Standing ovations were appropriate at both concerts.

The next day was the opening concert for the Robert-Morton just installed at the Bob Hope Fox Theatre in Stockton. This organ was originally installed at the Seattle Fox in 1928 as a 4/16, and later was installed in the Carl Greer Inn in Sacramento. It is now a 4/21 as installed in Stockton where it is beautifully matched to the theatre. Our artist was Walt Strony who presented an absolutely spectacular concert ranging from Bach to just a tad of that famous hot dog number he does so well! Walt received well-deserved standing ovations, both before and after his encore. The combination of artist, instrument and room left us breathless by concert end.

Many thanks go to several chapter members for the Stockton installation. Thank you to Bob Hartzell whose passion it was to install a pipe organ in the Stockton Fox and who was the ramrod for the project, to Dave Moreno who was and continues as the lead technician, and also to the 15+ chapter volunteers who have worked over the last five years to install the Robert-Morton in the Fox. Special thanks also go to Dave Moreno and his helpers in having all three Robert-Morton organs in excellent condition for the concerts. Dave was very busy trying to be in three places at the same time, but did it so well!

*Pete McCluer*

## SOUTHERN JERSEY

Joseph Rementer, President  
856/694-1471

**Franklinville, New Jersey.** Our chapter has been shaken by bad news. The 75-year-old Broadway Theatre in Pitman, New Jersey was closed by bankruptcy. The theatre houses the wonderful 3/8 Kimball that was the center of most of our movie overture and silent movie activities for many years. We were responsible for the restoration, maintenance, up-keep and playing of the instrument. The Broadway is now padlocked and dark. A court appointed trustee is currently seeking a buyer. The future of the building and its Kimball are yet to be determined.

Meanwhile, the chapter is sharpening its focus on the 3/16 Wurlitzer in the Cinnaminson, New Jersey High School. Extensive rehabbing is underway; this involves cleaning, rewiring, voicing, and tuning. A whole rank of pipes has been moved. For some reason the 16-foot Contra-Bass was installed in a large closet with little or no opening through which to speak, inadequate winding was also a problem, it is now in the left pipe chamber and gives the organ a much-improved sound. This Cinnaminson instrument could well become the center of our activities if the Broadway Theatre bankruptcy does not have a 'happy ending'. We can only hope for the best, and that would result in two wonderful instruments to share with everyone!

*Fred Oltmann*

## SOONER STATE

Bill Rowland, President  
918/355-1562

**Tulsa, Oklahoma.** Sooner State Chapter's March meeting was once again held

at the Broken Arrow Campus of Tulsa Technology Center and featured organist Wally Brown at the 3/13 Robert-Morton theatre organ. Our meeting opened with President Bill Rowland accompanying our salute to America. Bill introduced Wally, a professional organist, who formerly played at Tulsa's Oral Roberts University and now lives in Oklahoma City. After opening with a brisk Latin-rhythm selection and a slow popular song, Wally told us some special things about this performance . . . he was not wearing a white shirt and tie and he has never played with a ring on his finger before, however he does play by ear and 'improvisation' is his middle name! He did tell us that he does read music, a little, but not enough to interfere with his playing! Wally stated he appreciates the talent God gave him and the brains to go with it!

Wally's program consisted of popular standards, more Latin numbers, and even requests from the audience! He introduced a friend, Bill Cobb, who sang two beautiful gospel selections with Wally accompanying. Wally accompanied the audience in a sing-along and closed with a rousing rendition of our state song! After this wonderful concert, it was time for 'open-console' and seven members participated.

The following Sunday we were in for another special treat as Hector Olivera was in Tulsa to play a dedicatory recital at the Asbury Methodist Church on their 4-manual Rodgers Custom. This organ is a combination digital/pipe organ. Hector was absolutely magnificent as his program of classical music, began with soft and pretty and then burst into full organ selections. He was fascinating to watch, as we could see close-ups of his hands and feet since a camera provided great video of the

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whole concert! Hector was a pleasure to experience and we truly enjoyed his concert and his delightful Spanish accent!

Our April meeting was held at Broken Arrow's Tulsa Technology Center, and was a Piano/Organ program featuring President Bill Rowland and new member Larry Mitchell. After Joyce Hatchett led our salute to America, Bill and Larry began their excellent dual program! Since both are organists at the Broken Arrow First United Methodist Church they are familiar with all types of instruments, and they entertained us on both the 3/13 Robert-Morton and a grand piano.

This duo presented a fascinating mixture of music from popular, country, gospel, jazz; you name it they played it! Larry played three of George Gershwin's preludes on the piano, and Bill played some of the gospel numbers he composed and arranged. They moved back and forth between the organ and piano and

were experts on both instruments! Just when we were all about to catch our breath, Larry and Bill surprised us with another duet . . . with Larry at the piano and Bill playing a Tuba for a rousing Scott Joplin number. Barely recovering from that number, Larry appeared with a guitar and played two delightful country selections, singing the verse and having the audience join in on the chorus! Larry and Bill certainly entertained us and demonstrated their mastery of all the instruments. It was a very entertaining meeting, and we only had time for five members to play for 'open-console'.

Sooner State chapter is sad to report that our First Vice-President Bob Klinzing passed away suddenly on April 8. Carolyn Craft played for his funeral, which many members attended. Bob will be missed by not only his family and friends, but by the members of Sooner State.

*Dorothy Smith*

## SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY

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

**York, Pennsylvania.** After over two years in storage and nearly a year in rebuilding and restoration, the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Capitol Theatre in York, Pennsylvania was brought to life again on Sunday, March 13 with Don Kinnier at the console. The program began with some opening remarks and rededication by Dr. Ben Hoover, past Chairman of the Board of the Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center and an introduction by Gary Collier, Vice President and Program Chairman of the Susquehanna Valley Theatre Organ Society. Don played a variety of tunes to show off the capabilities of the instrument including a march he wrote in honor of the occasion.

Karl Hausman, noted honky-tonk pianist formerly at Walt Disney World and now at Hershey Park, joined Don on stage. Don and Karl exchanged a light banter as they collaborated on a variety of melodies . . . some with piano only, some with organ only, but most with one supporting the other in a somewhat extemporaneous duet.

Now enlarged to 3/20, the Mighty Wurlitzer sounded better than ever. The Reeds were bright and brassy, the low



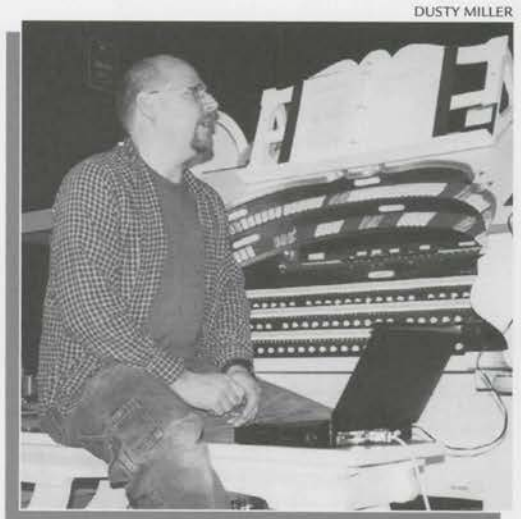
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*Larry Mitchell (piano) & Bill Rowland (organ) performing their duet specials.*



JOHN PAVONCELLO, THE YORK DISPATCH

*Chapter Officers (L-R) Garry Collier, Glenn Thompson & Sam Groh enjoy the 'new' Wurlitzer.*



DUSTY MILLER

*Project leader Terry Nace conducts one final electronic check!*

Tibias and Diapasons shook the seats in the back row, the voices blended well and there was excellent balance between solo and accompaniment. Sam Groh, President of our chapter, compared what he heard to the sound he remembered from the same instrument in the past only, "stronger with a much better blending of voices."

A small but dedicated crew of volunteers and professionals were at the heart of the restoration and installation of the instrument. Special appreciation goes to the unnamed benefactors who donated the money and to Terry Nace who guided the project. It was his vision and his dedication that gave new life to the Capitol Theatre's Mighty Wurlitzer.

Dick Smith played a concert on April 23, and four area artists will share the billing in June. While there is still some work to do, a full schedule of events featuring the organ is planned for the 2005-06 season including silent movies, a Christmas concert, and a champagne brunch with Bob Ralston.

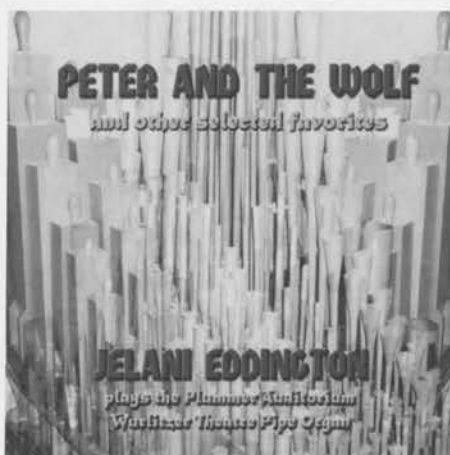
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Don Kinnier at the 'New' Mighty Wurlitzer.



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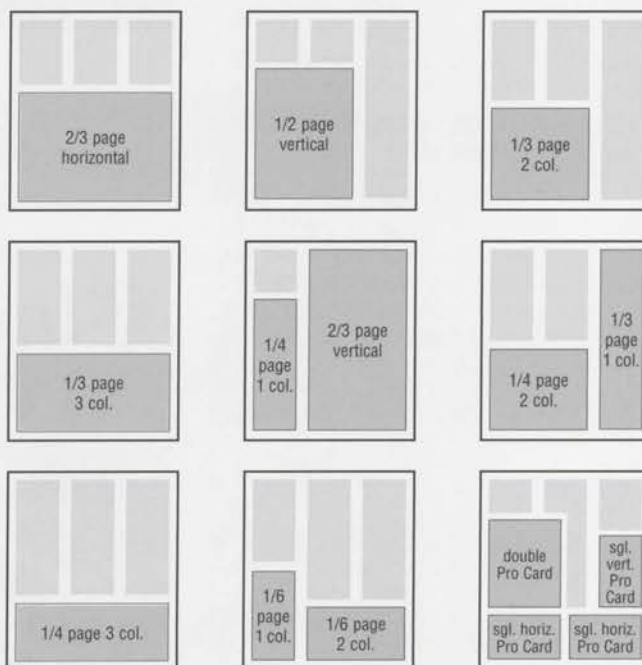
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# Repairing A Cracked Chime Tube

By Randy A. Bergum

Keeping a theater organ maintained properly can be very rewarding, although sometimes challenging, especially when many of the original vendors have gone out of business. Because some of the repairs necessary in any installation require parts that are no longer made, the technician must seek creative solutions.

A few years ago Bob Trousdale faced the problem of repairing several large-scale chimes at Plummer Auditorium in Fullerton, California. Each of these chimes had a vertical crack about six inches long starting at the top end near the plug and catgut hanger, adversely affecting the sound quality. Bob had asked members of the Plummer crew if anyone knew of a solution to this problem. There had been a few articles published in THEATRE ORGAN magazine, as well as the *Glue Pot* newsletter, but these repair schemes yielded various results, from "Pretty Good" to "Not So Good."

There have been many attempts at restoring the sound of cracked chimes. Hose clamps have been installed on the crack to pull it closed, but this does not work completely. The tone is not fully restored, and a low frequency undulation can result. Filling the crack with epoxy and wedges has been tried, although this still permits a discontinuity along the crack surface, which interferes with the vibrations.

The original chimes used by Wurlitzer and other makes were supplied by J. C. Deagan of Chicago. They were made of nickel-plated brass, and they tended to crack during the 60 to 70 years of hard use. The typical crack occurs at the end of the

tube in a longitudinal direction, and tends to dull and shorten the strike tone by interfering with vibration propagation.

A possible cause of cracking could be found in the way the tubes are formed during manufacture. The better grades of chimes—Class A, B and C were drawn, but the Class R tubes were rolled from brass sheet, shaped into a tube, and joined at a seam. Solid plugs are then pressed into one or both ends, which affects the tone quality of the chime. This added mass acts to lower the pitch of the fundamental and the first few harmonics, effectively stretching the perceived pitch to one that is more pleasant to the ear (source 3). Pressing the plugs into the tube with an interference fit is necessary to match the impedance between the tube and the plug, making the assembly behave like one solid system. However, this interference fit causes a tensile hoop stress in the tube, much like that found in a rain barrel full of water, where the weight of the water places a bursting force in an outward direction. Steel hoops are usually installed around the circumference to contain these outward forces.

Local stress at the tip of a chime crack is extremely high, and easily exceeds the tensile strength of the base metal, causing the crack to propagate quickly once formed. In addition, microscopic imperfections in the base metal and seams made during manufacture cause local stress risers, which encourage the formation of cracks. Furthermore, the typical chime is struck repeatedly by a hammer, encouraging crack growth.

One method of chime tube repair in the past has been to cut

off the offending part and turn the tube into a higher note. This is not usually the best way to solve the problem for two reasons: First, the scale of the trimmed tube usually won't match the rest of the original set, and second, there are no guarantees of finding a larger set that is close in scale.

We have found that chimes can be repaired by welding with a TIG welder (Tungsten Inert Gas). Silicon Bronze rod is used as the filler metal because it closely matches the parent metal mechanical properties, and it has very good welding characteristics.

First, a bit about brass. Made of varying parts of copper and another element, usually zinc or sometimes silicon, brass is easy to machine and finish. The zinc contained in the brass will vaporize at an amazingly low 1,663 degrees F, and is very toxic, so you'll want to have adequate ventilation and the proper respirator for metal vapors.

The chime shown in this article is cracked at the bottom end, and has a recessed bottom plug inserted. Double plugged tubes usually have a very small hole drilled to allow for pressure escape during manufacture.

The repair process is as follows:

### Fig 1:

#### *Crack in the tube before preparation.*

1. Remove the catgut hanger if it is near the weld site.
2. Mark the radial location of the top plug if welding that end, since it has a hole through it for the hanger, and it will need to be realigned back to its original position after the welding. A pair of small punch marks will suffice. If removing a bottom plug, you will need to measure the depth if recessed, then drill and tap a hole through it in order to thread in a removing tool. I use a tap of 1/4" – 20 size, then insert a bolt for knocking it out with vice grips and a hammer. Notice the silver paint on the tube and plug in Fig. 2 – electroplating does not work well in a recessed hole, so the factory painted the area to make it blend in with the rest of the nickel finish.



### Fig 2:

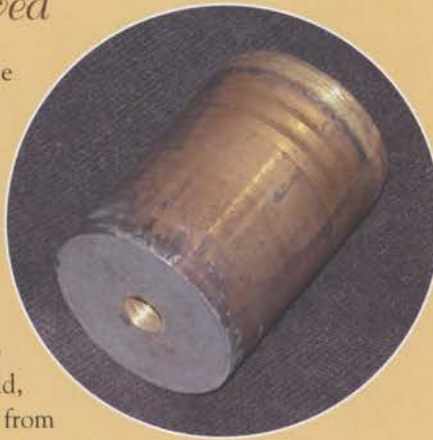
#### *Tapping the Bottom Plug*

3. Remove the plug by first heating the end of the tube with a propane torch. While the tube is hot, drive out the plug by placing a long bar in the chime from the other end, and gently tapping it with a hammer, or if pulling the Bottom Plug, extract with a threaded puller. Because there is an open crack in the tube, the interference fit of the plug will be reduced, and at this point the plug may simply fall out – Fig. 3.

### Fig 3:

#### *The Bottom Plug Removed*

4. Using a fine file, gently file off the nickel-plating on the outside of the tube back to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch away from the weld area. During the welding process the arc temperature can reach 6,000 degrees F, hot enough to vaporize almost all metals. Any plating should be removed around the weld area to prevent contamination of the weld, and also to limit any heavy metals from being vaporized into the air, posing a health hazard.
5. Drill a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " hole in the chime about  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an inch beyond the last visible part of the crack. This gives the crack a "friendly" place to end its travel, reducing the enormous stress that occurs at the tip of the crack, and will prevent further propagation during welding and while in use later.
6. Chamfer the crack to about 80% depth at 45 degrees using a rotary file, such as a Dremel tool or die grinder. This will provide for proper weld penetration (Fig 4).



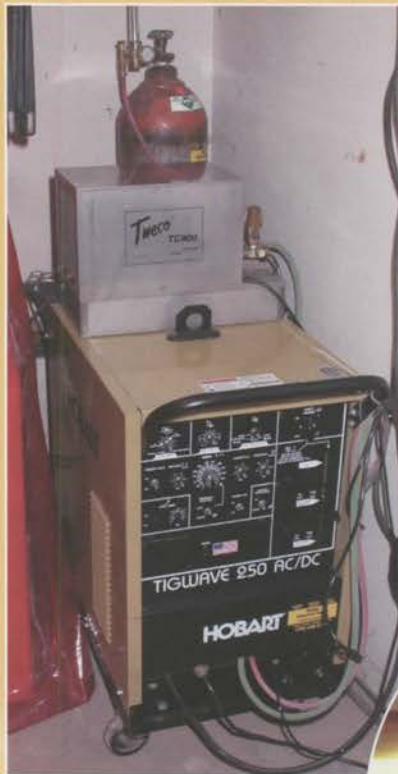
### Fig 4:

#### *Prepped tube showing stop drilled hole and chamfer edges*

7. Place a hose clamp at the end of the tube and tighten it to close the crack completely.
8. TIG weld the crack closed using Silicon Bronze rod. I use a Hobart TigWave 250 with the following settings:

DC Electrode Negative  
Argon 20 CFH  
150 Amps current  
AC balance set to dc welding  
AC arc stabilization on  
Crater fill on - 1 sec  
Remote amperage control on  
Postflow 3-5 sec  
Electrode - 2% thoriated tungsten,  $\frac{1}{16}$ " diameter  
Silicon bronze filler rod -  $\frac{1}{16}$ " diameter  
Positive ventilation of shop space (poison fumes)  
and filter mask





**Fig 5:**  
*The Tig Welder*



**Fig 6:**  
*Completed  
weld bead*

9. After the weld cools, dress the interior bore using a rotary file. Before driving the plug back in, this area will need to be smooth and as close to the original bore as possible—do not increase the inside diameter!
10. Heat the tube end with a propane torch and drive the plug in to the same position as it was originally. If inserting a bottom plug, replacing to the same depth as measured earlier.
11. The Bottom Plug will need to have its threaded hole filled with the same amount of mass as was removed during drilling and tapping. Countersink the bottom of the hole to accept a brass flathead screw. Place a drop of Loctite on the screw threads to keep the screw from vibrating loose, and install to a tight fit.
12. File, sand and polish the weld area. This step is best done after replacing the plug because the interference fit will cause a local waviness in the tube, which will need to be filed out again – Fig. 4. If you really want a clean tube, polish the remainder with Chrome Cleaner, clean it off with a surface prep, then clear coat it with lacquer.

## Fig 7:

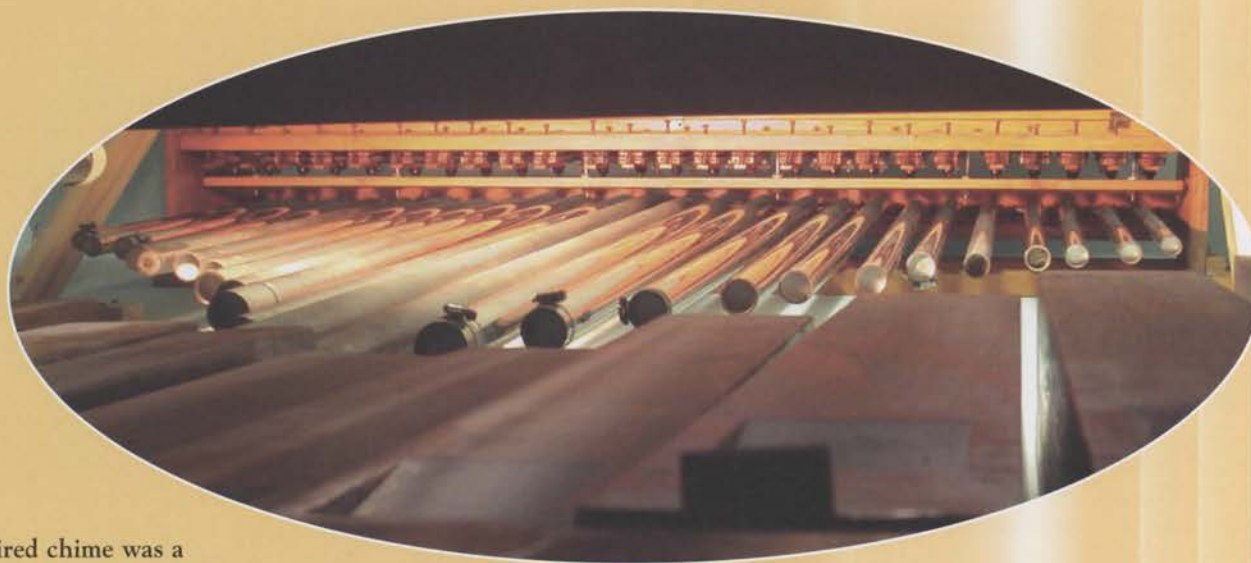
### *Bead filed off and tube polished*

13. Replace the catgut hanger if removed.
14. Check for sound quality.



The completed chime has the tone restored, and matches the timbre of the other tubes in the set. The appearance of the chime reveals that the repair site is visible, but not overly noticeable. The nickel plate has been removed in the area adjacent to the welding, and the underlying brass has been polished. This may not be a problem since many chimes are hung vertically with the tops hidden by the hammer action, so your handy-work might be covered up in the end. The actual weld bead can be distinguished by its color, which has slightly more copper in it than the native brass in the tube, since some of the zinc has boiled off during welding.

To date we have about 10 chimes in service, the longest one being in use for about seven years with no observable failure. The projected service life is not known, but it seems that the repaired area should be stronger than the original seam.



Repaired chime was a C# (4th from the right).

You can see a flathead brass crew in center of bottom plug. This set of chimes is big—the bottom note is about 7 feet long.



Many thanks to Bob Trousdale, John Ledwon, and Al Sefl for their help in preparing this article.

Randy Bergum enjoys, "repairing unusual organ parts, swearing, and Zamboni racing." Randy says that he is, "a Social Recluse, and cannot be reached in Fullerton, California."



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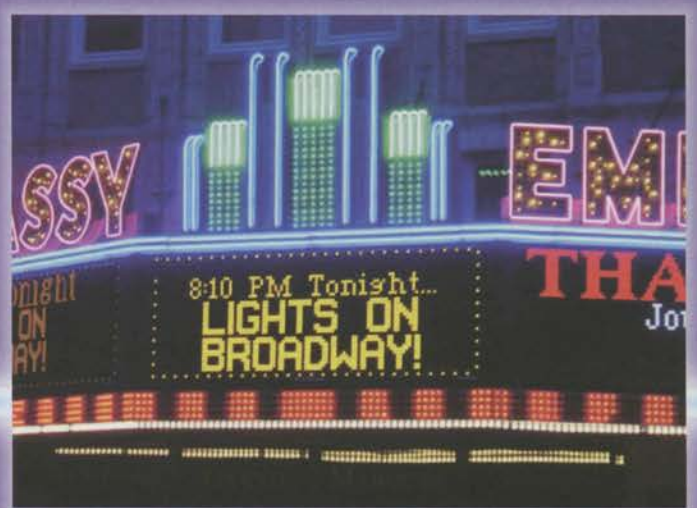
# Fort Wayne, Indiana Embassy Theatre

## *Honored By Architecture & Community Heritage*

The Embassy's Grand Marquee and Vertical Blade Sign won a 2005 Commendation for Outstanding New Construction at the ARCHIE AWARD ceremony on Wednesday, June 1, held at the Pavilion at Memorial Park.

Architecture & Community Heritage (ARCH) only gives this award when the ARCH Preservation Committee determines that exceptional efforts to create a new structure that harmonizes with existing historic structures have been made. "ARCH is particularly excited to honor your efforts to use modern technology in a way that harmonizes with and honors the designs of the original signage of the landmark Embassy Theatre and Indiana Hotel," stated Angela Quinn, ARCH Executive Director.

The new Embassy Grand Marquee and Vertical Blade Sign was unveiled on May 22, 2004 as an end to the official 75th Anniversary celebration. "This was a project that was years in the fundraising, planning and completion. We were proud to unveil it for our 75th Anniversary and are equally proud and honored to be acknowledged with this award," stated Lori Lobsiger, Executive Director.



## History of the Embassy Grand Marquee and Vertical Blade

The Emboyd Theatre opened on May 14, 1928 and featured a lighted marquee and a six-story vertical blade marquee that brilliantly spelled "EMBOYD" into the night. The vertical marquee was heralded as the largest sign in the State of Indiana. The Emboyd was named after Emmaline Boyd, mother of Emboyd founder Clyde Quimby.

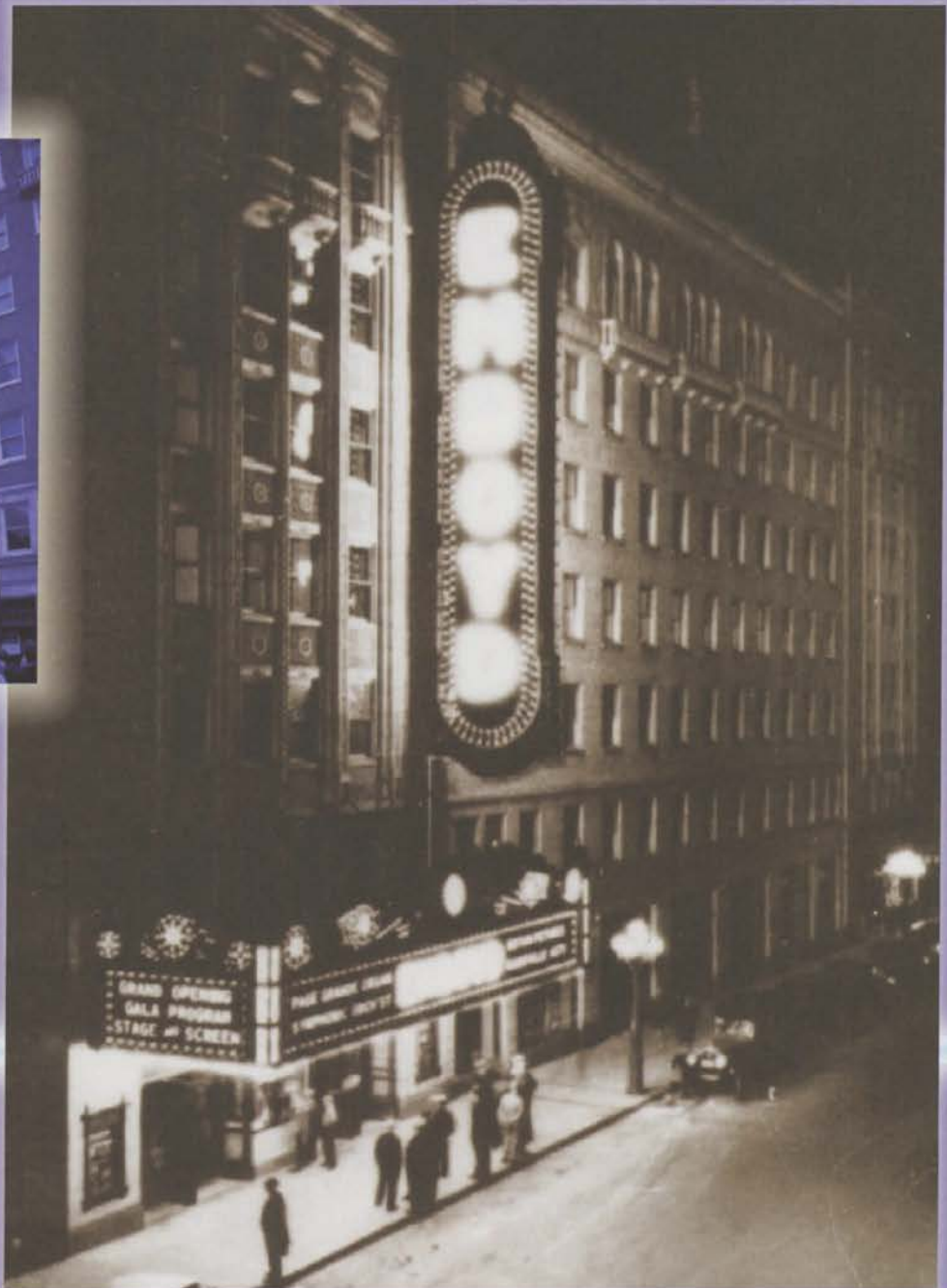
In 1952, the Emboyd changed owners and was re-named the "Embassy." The newly installed marquee featured 345 feet of neon tubing. The Embassy letters were 3 1/2 feet tall, and contained a total of 718 bulbs collectively.

After 52 years, the Embassy marquee was deteriorating rapidly and had lost its colorful luster. To renovate the historic sign, plans included not only a complete restoration of the

lighting and infrastructure, but also the addition of digital reader boards replacing the previous white message panels to technologically update the marquee. The Embassy also returned to its original historic look with the vertical blade marquee proudly spelling "EMBASSY" in bold letters. The new blade was modeled after the original 1928 "Emboyd" blade marquee in design.

The 1928 Embassy Theatre is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Embassy is owned and operated by the not-for-profit Embassy Theatre Foundation.

More information on the Embassy can be found by visiting [www.embassycentre.org](http://www.embassycentre.org).



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