

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

# Theatre Organ

MAY | JUNE 2009



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# Contents

THEATRE ORGAN MAY | JUNE 2009 Volume 51 | Number 3

## The Mighty Organ

(to be sung to "The Holy City")

Last night I lay a-sleeping  
There came a dream so fair,  
I saw an old Æolian  
Inside a mansion bare.  
I heard the Voxes singing,  
And ever as they sang  
Methought the voice of Deagan chimes  
From Echo chamber rang,  
Methought the voice of Deagan chimes  
From Echo chamber rang.

Æolian! Æolian!  
Open your shades and sing,  
From deep notes to the highest!  
Of organs you are King!

And then methought my dream was changed,  
The chimes no longer rang.  
Hushed were the glad pulsations  
The Vox Humanas sang.  
The tune grew dark with mystery,  
The strings were keen and thin,  
As a solo on an open flute  
Arose from deep within,  
As a solo on an open flute  
Arose from deep within.

Æolian! Æolian!  
Hark! How your pipes now sing,  
From deep notes to the highest!  
Of organs you are King!

And once again the tune was changed,  
New sounds there seemed to be.  
I heard the Mighty Organ  
In full-blown majesty.  
The tuning lights were all turned on,  
The doors were open wide,  
And all who would might enter,  
And look at it inside.  
No need of high-priced organist,  
Upon the bench to stay;  
It was a true Æolian  
With automatic play,  
It was a true Æolian  
With automatic play.

Æolian! Æolian!  
Play 'till the night is o'er,  
From deep notes to the highest!  
Play on forevermore!

© 2009 by Matthew M. Bellocchio  
(with apologies to F. E. Weatherly)

Matthew Bellocchio is well known to his colleagues in the Organ Historical Society and the American Institute of Organbuilders for his wit and ability to turn a phrase. We felt that one of Matthew's most recent offerings would set the perfect tone for James D. Crank's article, "Preserving a Great Musical Heritage," which begins on page 46.

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*On the Cover: The Western Reserve chapter, hosts of the upcoming annual convention, have been working steadily on a new installation at Cleveland's Masonic Auditorium, set to premier this July. Additional details may be found on page 34.*

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**THEATRE ORGAN EDITORIAL OFFICE**  
1845 South Michigan Avenue #1905  
Chicago, Illinois 60616  
Voice/Fax 312-842-7475  
j.weller@atos.org

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**  
Craig Peterson  
7800 Laguna Vega Drive  
Elk Grove, California 95758  
916-682-9699  
c.peterson@atos.org

**VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**  
Mike Hartley  
17 Whippoorwill Drive  
Palm Coast, Florida 32164  
386-445-7562  
m.hartley@atos.org

**SECRETARY**  
Bob Evans  
798 Old Warren Road  
Swansea, Massachusetts 02777  
Voice/Fax 508-674-0276  
b.evans@atos.org

**TREASURER**  
Paul Van Der Molen  
0 N 468 Willow Road  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187  
630-653-4986  
Fax 630-653-4987  
p.vandermolen@atos.org

**DIRECTORS (current term)**  
Don Near (2009)  
Donna Parker (2009)  
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Jelani Eddington (2010)  
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David Barnett (2010)  
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1240 East Broomfield Street, Apt 00-8  
Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48858  
906-367-1454  
t.morkin@atos.org

**PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
Ken Double  
5705 80th Street North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33709  
281-798-6205  
k.double@atos.org

**JOURNAL ADVERTISING**  
Jeff Weller  
1845 South Michigan Avenue #1905  
Chicago, Illinois 60616  
Voice/Fax 312-842-7475  
j.weller@atos.org

**ATOS MARKETPLACE**  
Dennis Unks  
4002 Westbury Ridge Drive  
Erie, Pennsylvania 16506  
814-838-8794  
Fax 440-338-5651  
marketplace@atos.org

**MEMBERSHIP/EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
Jim Merry  
P.O. Box 5327  
Fullerton, California 92838  
714-773-4354  
Fax 714-773-4829  
membership@atos.org

**JOURNAL STAFF**  
EDITOR Jeff Weller  
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS  
Vern Bickel, Jonathan Orloff,  
Scott Smith  
PUBLISHER Doug Powers  
PUBLICATIONS MANAGER  
Alden Stockebrand  
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REVIEWS Andy Antonczyk,  
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Edward M. Stouf III  
WURLITZER RARITIES Ron Mitchell

**CORPORATE OFFICE**  
American Theatre Organ Society, Inc.  
5 Third Street, Suite 724  
San Francisco, California 94103

**DESIGN & TYPESETTING**  
Sleeping Giant Creative  
Indianapolis, Indiana

**PRINTING & MAILING**  
Johnson Press of America  
Pontiac, Illinois

**ATOS COMMITTEES & CHAIRS**

**ACQUISITIONS & EXPANSIONS**  
Ken Double (see above at President)

**AMATEUR THEATRE ORGANIST COMPETITION**  
Susan Cole  
P.O. Box 653  
Mount Dora, Florida 32756  
352-383-6875  
s.cole@atos.org

Mike Hartley  
17 Whippoorwill Drive  
Palm Coast, Florida 32164  
386-445-7562  
m.hartley@atos.org

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Jim Patak  
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Joliet, Illinois 60432  
708-562-8538  
j.patak@atos.org

**ARCHIVAL LIAISON**  
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**AROUND THE CIRCUIT**  
Dave Luttlinen  
4710 225th Place SW  
Mountlake Terrace, Washington 98043  
425-678-8813  
calendar@atos.org

**AWARDS & RECOGNITION**  
Don Near  
9700 Chapman Avenue  
Garden Grove, California 92841  
714-544-1106  
Fax 714-539-5734  
d.near@atos.org

**BYLAWS**  
Jelani Eddington  
1706 West Palomino Drive  
Racine, Wisconsin 53402  
262-639-8788  
Fax 262-639-8242  
rj.eddington@atos.org

**CHAPTER RELATIONS**  
Mike Hartley (see above at Amateur Theatre Organist Competition)

**CONVENTION PLANNING**  
Mike Kinerk  
2655 Pine Tree Drive  
Miami Beach, Florida 33140  
305-532-9000  
Fax 305-376-3679  
m.kinerk@atos.org

**EDUCATION**  
Jelani Eddington (see above at Bylaws)  
Donna Parker  
P.O. Box 6103  
Aloha, Oregon 97007  
503-642-7009  
Fax: 503-530-8610  
d.parker@atos.org

**THEATRE ORGAN WORKSHOPS**  
Jonas Nordwall  
7221 SW 13th  
Portland, Oregon 97219  
503-246-7262  
j.nordwall@atos.org

**ELECTRONIC ORGANS (ETONES)**  
Bucky Reddish  
5370 Vinings Lake View Drive  
Mableton, Georgia 30126-2542  
b.reddish@atos.org

**ENDOWMENT FUND**  
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Chesterfield, Virginia 23832  
504-858-7689  
j.demajo@atos.org

**INNER-CITY YOUTH/SCHOOLS PROGRAM**  
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623-694-1746  
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Fax: 317-322-9379

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CPU 274369  
Rochester, New York 14627  
518-572-8397  
j.orloff@atos.org

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**  
Donna Parker (see above at Education)

**PUBLICATIONS REVIEW**  
Doug Powers  
3323 Belvoir Boulevard  
Beachwood, Ohio 44122  
216-401-9671  
Fax 440-338-5651  
d.powers@atos.org

**RESTORATION & PRESERVATION**  
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**WEBSITE (www.atos.org)**  
Tom Blackwell  
9717 Dayton Avenue North  
Seattle, Washington 98103  
206-784-9203  
206-778-2724 mobile  
t.blackwell@atos.org

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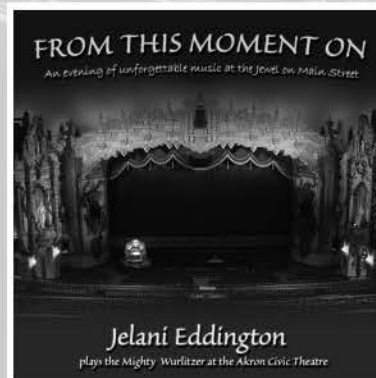
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# Experience the thrilling sounds of the Akron Civic Theatre ...and get a sneak peek at this year's convention!

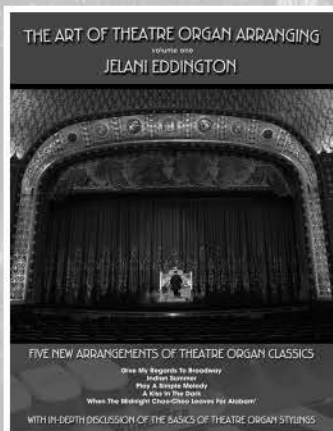
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# Vox Humana

## The annual convention approacheth!

---

This is the time of year when we start to see green (at least in this part of the country), and on the first day the mercury reaches 60° we start making plans for the summer. For many, that includes the annual ATOS convention. These events have always been remarkable gatherings in which the social and musical components vie for importance.

It's a time when I recall the first ATOS convention I attended in Detroit in 1974. I was fresh out of the eighth grade and had cajoled my mother into taking me. The convention headquartered at the venerable old Sheraton Cadillac hotel—perhaps a bit worn, and maybe even rather crusty, but impressive to young eyes nonetheless. Not that I spent any time there, but I recall the lobby bar featured an old barber chair and was called “Klip Joynt.”

It was a great adventure: I met Scott Smith, Jerry Nagano, Dick Simonton, and I remember hearing programs by Don Baker, Rex Koury, Helen Dell, Searle Wright, and Lowell Ayars. I recall Mr. Ayars' program in particular; he played a beautiful two-manual, five-rank Style 150 Wurlitzer at the Punch & Judy Theatre. Equally impressive was a lecture on the life and work of Jesse Crawford presented by Dr. John Landon in the hotel ballroom. (I'm hoping he'll be convinced to repeat

his lecture.) At that time, tours of home pipe organ installations were common. Scott Smith's fine playing of David Voydanoff's three-manual Style D Special remains with me to this day. Although no convention programs were scheduled at the Fox Theatre, word got out that Don Baker and others would be playing the Fox organ unofficially after the last film one night. Howard Adams piled me in a cab in front of the hotel, and we drove off in the dark of night to the Fox, arriving just as the last movie audience spilled. There was an element of mystery and, in those days, considerable danger.

Toward the end of convention week, I even snuck into a party being given in the presidential suite and hosted by Rex Koury. I was in hog heaven!

So here we are, 35 years later. Our conventions still welcome wide-eyed kids, leaving them with powerful impressions, life-defining moments, and lasting memories. Some things never change.

See you in Cleveland.

—Jeff Weiler, Editor

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# Headquarters



This particular message to you will be on a single, very important topic for ATOS. Just over a year ago, the ATOS board of directors was confronted by a difficult issue with far-reaching effects. It has to do with conventions and particularly focuses on those members who have attended conventions and recorded the concerts for posterity.

The very first time I can recall hearing major objections to this practice, which has gone on during conventions as long as individual members had recording equipment portable enough to travel, dates back to the early 1980s, when some artists were objecting to their works being recorded and traded back and forth. But times have changed.

As the Internet has come of age, ATOS has been faced with a different problem, and it does not stem just from the artists. With a simple “click” on a computer, material copyrighted by publishing firms and individual

composers can now be distributed around the world. Those publishing firms and individuals own the rights to that material, and with that ownership comes the right to dictate how that material can be distributed. Copyright law strictly prohibits the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material.

The issue facing the ATOS board was fairly simple; making the decision, however, was not. Because material at our conventions was being recorded and distributed without the permission of the copyright owners, ATOS was allowing a practice to continue that was against the law. Because this practice has gone on for decades, the board well knew the reaction that would come from the percentage of members who have brought tape recorders and video recorders to conventions. We have heard the reaction. It was voiced during the annual meeting in Indianapolis last July. Several letters and e-mails have been received. Member Richard Neidich wrote eloquently and passionately to the board offering several suggestions. And you will note Russ Shaner’s letter to the editor in the following pages that also represents “the recordists” point of view in no uncertain terms.

The most common question asked of the board by these members is “What in the world were you thinking of?” The question of dwindling membership, attendance at conventions, and our loving memories of certain concert performances are among the subjects raised as to why this new policy should not have been enacted. And all those points of view, and others, are what made the decision so difficult. But once we strip away the sentiment of what has been allowed for years and get to some serious facts, I hope the membership will understand that the board of directors had no choice in this matter.

In light of the legal issues raised by recording of convention concerts, it was felt that the board and the membership would be best served by having experienced, outside legal counsel. Longtime member Dolton McAlpin, a fine organist, is also a practicing attorney in the state of Mississippi. He recommended we seek the input of attorney Whit Rayner, who is chair of the Intellectual Property Bar Association

of the State of Mississippi and a leading expert in copyright law.

Mr. Rayner was presented with all sides of the situation, including ATOS’ long-standing history of recording at events, research from board members, information and research from the membership at large, and other pertinent material.

Mr. Rayner’s response was thorough, direct, and all-encompassing on every front. And the bottom line is simple; unauthorized recording and distributing of copyrighted material, under any circumstances, is illegal, and ATOS could be held directly responsible for copyright violations by allowing the recording of any concerts sponsored by ATOS, whether individual programs or convention concerts.

Furthermore, the potential damages are nothing short of staggering. Now being aware of the legal ramifications, should ATOS continue to allow recording and thus the potential for distribution, the damages could amount to as much as \$150,000 for any single work infringed. That means one single convention concert, with its 15–18 selections, could potentially generate millions in damages, should ATOS find itself in court.

As upsetting as ATOS’ new policy is to the percentage of members who have brought recording devices to concerts, the fact of the matter is that the board has no choice. We must enact a policy that places ATOS within the law.

The simple explanation is voiced with the comment, “You don’t go to a Broadway play with a recorder and a video camera, and take that home with you, do you? Or a symphony concert? Or a Tony Bennett concert?” The answer to that question is indeed, some do, and they are breaking the law.

Over the past two years, this board of directors has been focusing on fresh ideas to help bring on new members. We most certainly have not been sitting around the table asking the question, “What can we do today that will really make some of our members hopping mad?” The board was faced with a difficult, yet simple question: do we continue an illegal practice and face a potential lawsuit with staggering financial ramifications? Or, do we abide by the law?



The answer is simple, no matter how distasteful to some. And the reason we must enact this policy today is the ease in which material can be distributed via the Internet. It is happening, and the owners of intellectual property are working hard to stop it.

On a comparative note, two years ago as we created the new Summer Youth Camp, ATOS moved into the realm of what in Latin is termed *in loco parentis*. By inviting youngsters to a four-day event, ATOS is responsible for their care and safety. The Youth Protection Policy was enacted to make ATOS pro-active in keeping our youth safe while they are attending any ATOS-sponsored event. It also helps protect ATOS from potential litigation.

This situation is similar. This policy protects ATOS from the potential consequences of illegal activity.

Do we stand armed guards at the doors of every venue? Do we have uniformed "recording police" patrolling the aisles of each theatre? Can we control those who will flaunt the policy and break the law by sneaking in the now-tiny devices that create incredibly good sound? Certainly, policing this policy will present some challenges, but rest assured ATOS will have to take some reasonable steps to ensure that the policy is respected. We will have no choice but to ask someone with a recording device to remove it, disengage it, and or put it away. Again, ATOS has no choice in this matter.

Furthermore, we have been at venues in the past where the local theatre or church did not allow recording devices. One clear example was the home of the Indianapolis Symphony, the Circle Theatre, which enacted a serious ban on recording devices for Walt Strony's concert in 2007 and was extremely pro-active in enforcing that policy.

As president, I am not pleased that a small, good, vocal, and passionate percentage of our membership is upset with the organization. The board asked this question of Whit Rayner: "Under what guidelines might we allow recording to take place?" His response was one word, "None."

We cannot and will not operate outside of the law. We cannot and will not jeopardize the organization and all that we have worked for and achieved over the past 54 years. The board of directors has no choice in the matter. Thus, the recording ban is in effect immediately, including the upcoming convention in Cleveland hosted by the Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society.

By consulting an attorney who is not on the board, and one who is widely recognized as an expert on copyright law, we trust the membership understand that the advice we received is fair and unbiased. We know that distribution of material helps the marketing effort. We know those YouTube videos and other tracks "spread the word." But posting that material without first getting the consent of the composer, publisher, and/or

artist is illegal distribution of copyrighted material, and ATOS cannot condone the practice. The policy set forth by the board and announced at the Indianapolis convention is now the standard practice of ATOS. We do not apologize to those "recordists" who are upset by this, but we do empathize. We know that for some of you, the recording practice is as much a part of the convention as the attendance itself.

In an effort to take to heart the interests of those who would like to relive the convention, the board is currently exploring how it might be able to make an official recording of future convention events, and then create a "highlights" double CD commemorative set—much like what is done for the pipe organ extravaganzas some of you attend. In fact, this is a standard practice for the popular Joliet event known as *Rialtofest*, and it has been done for years by the Organ Historical Society for its conventions. This practice would provide convention memories for attendees and non-attending membership alike.

We hope that the music and the gathering with friends will continue to be the overwhelming reason for your continued attendance.

My contact information is posted in these pages for those who wish to write or call.

—Ken Double, President and CEO

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# Letters

## Richmond Hill

I was quite surprised to see the letter from Robert K. Legon in the January/February 2009 issue of THEATRE ORGAN. In it, he made some references to organist Arlo Hults—the accompanying ad announced Hults playing the Keith's Richmond Hill organ.

I grew up in the Richmond Hill area in the New York City borough of Queens, and frequently went to movies at the Keith's. However, I only recall hearing the organ (Robert-Morton 3/15) once. This would have been around 1947 at a sing-along performance. By 1955, I moved from the Richmond Hill area.

In the late 1950s, I was able to visit the theatre and see the organ. The console appeared to be in reasonably good condition as it was protected by a heavy cover. The cushion part of the Howard seat was missing. Unfortunately, the instrument was not in playing condition. I got a few pipes to "toot" as well as some percussion to "boom." Beyond that, it was just wheeze. After 1960 I lost all touch with the theatre. The last I knew, it had been converted into a bowling alley or perhaps a bingo hall. Historically, the Keith's was opened in 1928 with a seating capacity of 2,900. It was designed by Thomas W. Lamb.

—John T. Kojanic  
New Port Richey, Florida

## Vox Humana Response

I appreciate your allowing me to respond to your thought-provoking discourse in "Vox Humana" on page 4 of THEATRE ORGAN, March/April 2009.

Being in the business of design, I know of Matthew Frederick's book, *101 Things I Learned in Architecture School*, and the quotation regarding "specific and non-specific" design ideas and how those values might apply to the theatre organ. You are indeed right about its relevance, and this excerpt continued to haunt me until I went to my bookshelf, dusted the volume off, and found an additional paragraph from which your quote was taken (No. 17):

"Designing in idea-specific ways will not limit the ways in which people use and

understand your buildings; it will give them license to bring their own interpretations and idiosyncrasies to them."

If one substitutes "theatre organ" for "your buildings" we have somewhat of a contrasting view. In my opinion, whether we are considering buildings or theatre organs, a good example of either is designed in a way that makes them adaptable, relevant, and worthy of contemporary consideration. To preserve and expand our art, I think we must keep this clearly in mind. The theatre organ has seen an incredible amount of change and adaptability; I hope those who embrace this magnificent contribution to the musical world will be as flexible and farsighted as those who designed it in the first place.

—John Clark McCall, Jr.

## Headquarters

Scott Smith presented a stirring vision in his Op Ed article, "Make No Little Plans: The Need for a National Headquarters." Having just released the results of the member survey (located on the ATOS website, in the "What's New" section), ATOS should include this in its long range planning. We should give strong consideration to a location in a city where there are already lots of visitors who would come to a place where there are exhibits.

—D. John Apple

## Diaphone Drama

After reading the "Diaphone Drama" response on page eight in the January/February issue [THEATRE ORGAN, volume 51, number 1], I was prompted to contribute some related material. I attended Marquette University in 1955–56 and had access to a number of the theatres, including the Wisconsin Theatre 3/17 Barton which was still fairly well playable.

The manager there related the same story of how powerful the Diaphones were. His story was that the Monday morning after the first use many of the building offices reported their typewriters and books were on the floors, and many suspected that vandals had raided the offices. The Wisconsin Theatre was a six-story building with offices on many floors around the exterior and a

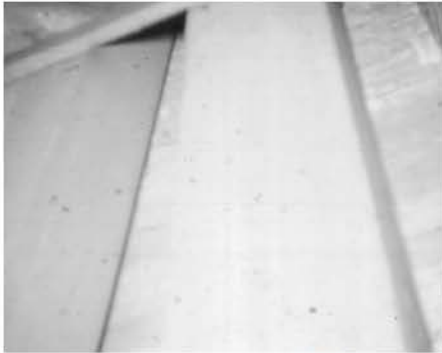
dance hall on the roof called the Roof Ballroom. There was also comment that patrons in the ballroom had fears the new building was collapsing because of structural defects. They were standing point blank at the ends of the 32' pipes under the floor they were on.

I had worked on the 3/10 Barton at the Tower Theatre on 27th Street which was part of the same chain that operated the Wisconsin Theatre. After conversations between managers of the Tower and the Wisconsin, I was asked if I would be interested in getting the Wisconsin organ playable again so it could be used Friday and Saturday evenings as an attraction to compete with that going on down the street with the Riverside Theatre's 3/13 Wurlitzer. It was used for a short pre-feature presentation that was becoming popular with downtown theatregoers.

After getting the big Barton playable and tuned, I actually played a few Saturday noon overtures myself. While fixing numerous dead notes and such, I was particularly interested in why the 32' Diaphone did not play. At the relay, the Pedal 32' stop switch was disconnected and dangled wrapped in electrical tape from the switchstack busses. I rigged a hot wire and tried to activate the switch contacts but none functioned. Next I searched down where the pipes were installed between the auditorium plaster walls and brick exterior walls. Very tight quarters to say the least; even at 19 years old and pretty thin, it was a tough job getting down to the chests. I was ready to hear my first real 32' pipe speak and pressed the primary valve stem with my finger...and nothing. Then I discovered the wind had been blocked. They were thorough in disabling them electrically and pneumatically.

This brings me to the one photo in the slides I took there. At that time my camera was an economy Ansco 35mm with a small size flash bulb pan. I found an access door through which I could aim the camera up at the towering 32' Diaphones that were set full length up the walls behind the other pipe chambers and shot my last flashbulb of the day into the total darkness where the pipes stood. Thus you have what may be the only photo of the infamous Barton 32' Diaphone set.

The flash sync on cameras then was always erratic, and in dark conditions the shutter might cycle before the Walgreen's flashbulb reached peak output; many images were underexposed or overexposed if the math for calculating flash exposure was wrong. Being in total darkness I set the aperture for maximum light, but focus suffered either because the camera moved or the depth of field was only a coin toss.



—John Shanahan  
Harrisburg, Illinois

## Convention Recordings

What in the world was the ATOS board of directors thinking! I could barely believe my eyes when I read in the minutes of last summer's ATOS board meeting that it was proposed and approved unanimously that recording of all ATOS events by members will be banned after the 2009 convention. In one breath the board trumpets the desperate need for attracting new members and keeping current ones and in the next imposes a severe restriction that is guaranteed to alienate many members. Rumor has it (where is Tom B'hend when you really need him) that this was rushed through the board to protect artists' intellectual property, avoid lawsuits, limit online posting of audio/video files, etc. Baloney! This was done with no advance notice to the membership and apparently very limited opportunity for members present to provide input to. Methinks that this rule will only serve to breed ill will and hamper the future of this great organization.

For years I have heard the arguments that recording by members impacts sales of artists' commercial products. I don't believe it. Since 1964 the Rochester Theatre Organ

Society has allowed members to record concerts. In the intervening years we have had only one complaint of someone attempting to profit from this. One letter to the offender resolved the problem. I have personally observed that the people recording are usually among the first in line to buy the artist's "jams and jellies."

In my early years of attending ATOS conventions I was among those rushing to get a good spot from which to record. It was great fun jockeying for position with the other would-be recording engineers. I treasure my recordings of artists, many of whom are no longer among us, often performing at venues which no longer exist. For example, you will have to pry my coveted tape of Tom Hazleton at the Chicago Stadium from my cold, dead hands! And yes, I have copied some of those tapes for others; never for profit, but often in exchange for something they had that I didn't. In the grand scheme of things, the world still turns, and I'm sure that no one has been even remotely injured by these actions. While I seldom record live performances anymore, there are many who do. Particularly affected will be people who shell out big bucks for travel, hotels, and entrance fees to attend and support ATOS conventions. For many of them, the ability to make their amateur recordings is a major reason they continue to attend these events. With the economy in the dumper, people are very carefully evaluating how they spend their recreational dollars. It is insanity to do anything to spoil their fun at ATOS events.

I seriously doubt that offering a high-lights recording of convention performances will satisfy many members. Who would select these "highlights?" How would they be made available to the membership and at what cost? It is a great idea for those who wish to purchase them and could be a good revenue generator for ATOS and the artists. But! Not at the expense of shutting down those who wish to record for themselves. Thank you, but I prefer to do my own editing.

Apparently this rule applies not only to national conventions, but also to all events sponsored in whole or in part by ATOS. Does the board seriously think that individual chapters will agree with and enforce such a rule at their events? Were the chapters

polled for their input? How do they propose to monitor and enforce this rule? Will recording police frisk everyone at the entrance to every venue and confiscate recorders and turn our members who object away? Will there be roving spotters in every audience to nab and forcibly eject violators? Since many recordings are now made on easily concealed recorders, cameras, cell phones, etc using solid state media, are you going to force people to turn over their hard drives or media cards if you catch them? How absurd!

Wake up! With all due respect to the artists and technicians who make or supplement their living from the theatre organ, for most of us this is a hobby. It is our dedication and dollars that provide the means for this hobby to continue. Why is the board taking our toys away? This is akin to telling me I can't take my camera to an antique car show that I've paid to attend. Ken Double and others are working their tails off to build up ATOS. Everywhere we go and in everything we do there are more and more laws and rules restricting personal freedoms and activities. Please don't shoot ATOS in the foot with this heavy-handed, hastily adopted, and really stupid rule.

While I strongly dislike the way that this rule was adopted and the way it was disclosed to the membership (buried in the meeting minutes), if it can be shown that not implementing the policy puts ATOS at risk legally then it is something we will have to accept and live with. Otherwise I hope the board will consider an alternative approach to this "problem."

—Russ Shaner  
Rochester, New York

## Board: Copyright Law

In response to Russ Shaner's letter, as well as the several letters, e-mails, and calls received on this issue, we direct you to Ken Double's "Headquarters" column (page 6) which clearly explains how the ATOS board was faced with a most difficult question. While we do not wish to upset a passionate few, we must abide by the law. A ban on convention recordings has been enacted after exhaustive research by leading outside counsel with direct expertise in the field. ATOS has no other choice in this matter.

—The ATOS board of directors

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# News & Notes

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS OF ATOS OFFICERS

To all ATOS members throughout our world-wide organization: it is again time to request nominations for ATOS chairman, vice chairman, treasurer, and secretary.

The process begins with nominations, and there is no shortage of qualified individuals in our organization who have the talent and energy to help. If you deem yourself one of those individuals and wish to be considered for an officer position, your participation is most welcome.

As provided in Section 5.2 of the ATOS Bylaws, the board of directors appoints the ATOS officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) each year at its annual board meeting. This year the board of directors will have that meeting in Cleveland on June 30, 2009, beginning at 1:00pm.

Any person at least 18 years of age who has had continuous ATOS membership for at least the last two years is eligible to seek appointment as an officer. Candidates for these offices are encouraged to submit written résumés to the ATOS chairman of the board, Craig Peterson, by **June 1, 2009**. It is strongly recommended that nominations be sent via "return receipt" or similar mail class if international. Nominations may also be sent digitally; however, the sender **MUST** verify receipt of the nomination by the ATOS chairman. Any written materials that are submitted to the ATOS chairman by the above date will be

distributed to the board of directors prior to the board meeting. **In addition, any ATOS member may attend the board meeting in person (at his or her own expense) and nominate at the meeting any eligible candidate for these offices.**

Candidates are expected to present themselves at their own expense to the board for a personal interview on **June 30, 2009 at 1:00pm**. Appointment will immediately follow the interview process. Following appointment, the new board members must be ready to assume the duties of their office and to participate in the remainder of the board meeting. Reimbursement of travel (economy airfare or equivalent) and hotel expenses will be made by ATOS for those appointed.

The path ahead for ATOS is a most exciting one indeed. The current board has begun the task of re-energizing and re-organizing our group so that we can grow in every way. Those with experience in business, marketing, promotions, fundraising, performance production, and organbuilding technical expertise can all help make a difference in this time of growth.

—Craig Peterson  
7800 Laguna Vega Drive  
Elk Grove, California 95758  
916-682-9699  
c.peterson@atos.org

## OFFICIAL NOTICE TO MEMBERS

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING of the American Theatre Organ Society  
Saturday, July 4, 2009

The annual meeting of the members of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) will be held at 9:00am in the Gold Room of the Cleveland Renaissance Hotel.

Agenda:

- Approval of the 2008 annual membership meeting minutes as printed in THEATRE ORGAN (September/October 2008)
- Presentation and acceptance of the treasurer's report
- Old Business: Report of board actions during the past year by the secretary. Other status reports as needed.
- New Business
- Announcement of the next annual membership meeting
- Adjournment

—Bob Evans, Secretary

## CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

Now is the time to consider nominating someone you feel is deserving of consideration for one of the ATOS honors. As a people organization, we need to recognize individuals who have done an outstanding job in promoting, preserving, presenting, and otherwise furthering the art form we all hold so dear.

There are many unsung heroes working quietly and diligently who may be unknown to anyone outside of their local chapter. Please take the time to nominate these folks so they may receive the recognition they deserve.

As chair of the Awards Committee, I stand ready to help you or to provide any information you may need. Nominations may be submitted to any director or chapter liaison.

All nominations for ATOS awards must be in writing, not to exceed one typewritten page. Any member of ATOS may nominate anyone for any ATOS award.

Some of the categories are:

- Hall of Fame
- Honorary Member
- Organist of the Year
- Ron Musselman Member of the Year
- Awards for Technical Excellence—Technician of the Year
- Volunteer Technician Awards

There are an additional 20 categories!

More information, and a complete listing of categories, may be found on the ATOS website ([www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org)), ATOS Front Desk, Board meetings and reference documents, ATOS Policies, #4 Awards.

—Don Near, Director  
Chair of the Awards Committee

# News & Notes

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## ELECTION ERROR

During board deliberations via teleconference on March 16, 2009, the issue of an election platform statement abnormality was discussed. The nominee statements and ballots for this election were approved and sent with one error; the statement of candidate Susan Cole-Shaw exceeded the word limit of 150 (by one word) and thus, as per ATOS election policy, her text should not have been included in the document. The board of directors has noted the error which only affects her platform statement, not her eligibility as a candidate. The board and the election committee regret the error but felt it necessary to bring this matter to the attention of the membership.

—Craig Peterson, Chairman of the Board  
 American Theatre Organ Society

## NEW ATOS MEMBERS

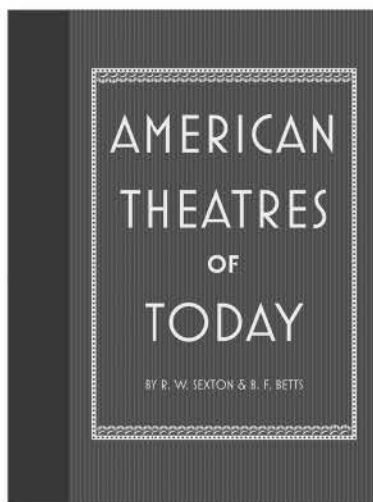
January 15 to March 15, 2009

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 Gerald D. Allen, Trenton, Michigan  
 Stephen D. Benson, Ridgecrest, California  
 Donald F. Brennan, Rockville, Connecticut  
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# THIS INVITES YOU TO HELP CELEBRATE OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A SPECIAL OFFER!

In celebration of its 40th anniversary, the Theatre Historical Society of America is proud to offer a limited edition reissue of the classic 1927-1930 reference book, *American Theatres of Today*. This rare volume has long been out of print and is highly prized by collectors and historians. Written and published at the height of the movie palace era, the book, by R.W. Sexton and B.F. Betts, was originally published as two volumes in 1927 and 1930. The combined reprint is 368 pages and features 113 theatres, 275 photographs and 278 drawings and plans; it also contains an introduction by famed showman Samuel L. "Roxy" Rothafel.

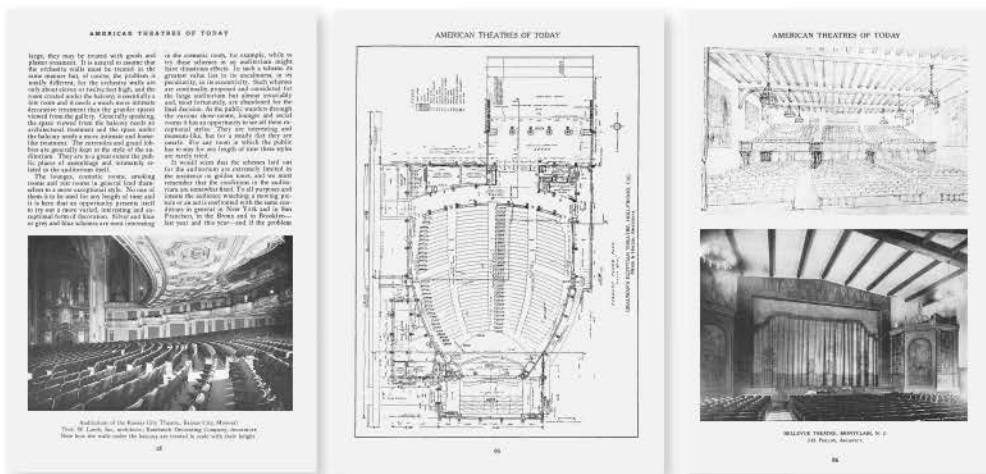
As a special courtesy to our colleagues in the American Theatre Organ Society, we



are making available a small quantity of this limited, numbered edition at the pre-publication price of \$75, or \$125 for the deluxe slipcase edition. (Any remaining copies will be offered to the public at \$95, or \$145 for the deluxe edition).

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# From the Archives

## Mystery Solved

Don Hansen of Whiting, New Jersey called to inform us that the mystery woman seen in the photograph on page 28 of the March/April 2009 issue of THEATRE ORGAN (volume 51, number 2) is Dottie MacClain, wife of famed Philadelphia organist Leonard MacClain, and a fine musician in her own right. Mr. Hansen and Mrs. MacClain were old acquaintances.

Dick Auchincloss of the Delaware Valley chapter of ATOS agrees that the lady was once married to Leonard MacClain, also known as "Melody Mac." He further tells us her name was Dottie Whitcomb, she was a long-standing member of Delaware Valley chapter, and she passed away a few years ago.

The identity of the gentleman in the second photo remains unknown.



(ATOS Archive Collection)

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*The ATOS Summer Camp is open to all participants up to 25 years of age. Registration per student is \$295.00 (including all tuition, meals, and transportation to and from the venues during the event). Special arrangements will be made for out-of-town students to stay at a nearby hotel. For more information, please visit us online at [www.atos.org/front-desk/forms](http://www.atos.org/front-desk/forms). Please also feel free to contact Jelani Eddington at 262/639.8788 ([jl.eddington@atos.org](mailto:jl.eddington@atos.org)) or Donna Parker at 503/642-7009 ([d.parker@atos.org](mailto:d.parker@atos.org)).*

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# For the Records

## REVIEWS



### KEN GRIFFIN Skate On

You would assume that with an album title like *Skate On* that this double CD set is an entire collection of skating music, but if you were a pre-pubescent kid in the '50s or early '60s, the mellifluous sound of Ken Griffin at the Hammond was so much more than music by which to skate. Ken's music was the sound of a much simpler time, a time when popular songs all had discernable melodies and folks sang along with Mitch Miller, or relaxed listening to the radio in the evenings. Ken was one of the most popular recording artists of that era, and one of the very few organists to be successful in the cross-over pop music market. He also had his own network television show in the '50s called *Sixty-Seven Melody Lane*. Ken's recording sales were stellar, even by today's standards. In fact, no other organist has ever come even close to the sales figures Ken Griffin accumulated over the years. A year before his death in 1956, sales of his recordings had already topped over 11,000,000 units. Now, over 50 years later, there is a steady

stream of rereleases of his historic recordings in various international markets.

Ken's music has a pleasant simplicity; it's the kind of music that, when you hear him play a tune, you'll find yourself humming it all day through. It always has a very strong melody set to a rhythmic steady tempo, sans pounding drums or a thumping gimmicky rhythm machine. It's the consistent rhythm that made it so popular in skating rinks. Although Ken's music has a simple sound, it is not particularly easy to duplicate. There have been many imitators of Ken's style over the years, but there are only a handful of organists that have ever accurately reproduced the

Ken Griffin sound. Ken's harmonies are deceptively sophisticated, and his recording techniques and effects are quite innovative for their time.

This album includes 52 of Ken's most popular songs: "Cuckoo Waltz," "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," "Doodle Doo Doo," "American Patrol," "Little Brown Jug," "If I Had You," "Bumble Bee on a Bender," "Till We Meet Again," "You, You, You Are the One," "My Blue Heaven," "Miller's Daughter," "Five Foot Two," "Tiger Rag," "In a Little Gypsy Tea Room," "Side by Side," "Lumberlost," "Shine," "Waltz of the Roses," "Dipsy Doodle," "To Each His Own," "Stormy Weather," "Walkin' to Missouri," "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers," "You Belong to Me," "Little Old Mill (Went 'Round and 'Round)," "I'm Drifting Back to Dreamland," "Louise," "For All We Know," "There'll Be Some

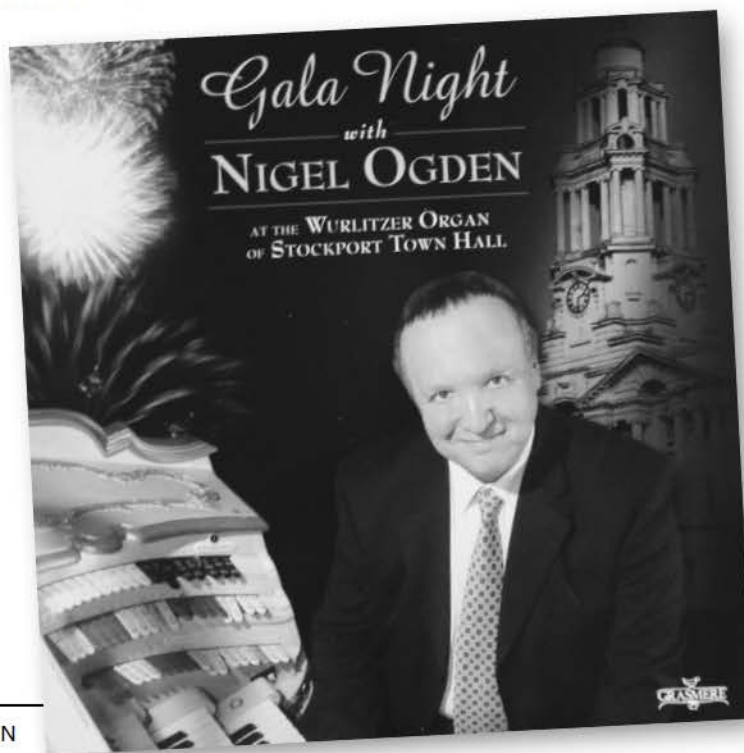
Changes Made," "Syncopated Clock," "Woman in the Shoe," "San Antonio Rose," "Bei mir bist Du schön," "Freight Train Boogie," "Wunderbar," "Somebody Loves You," "Doll Dance," "In a Shanty in Old Shanty Town," "Tea for Two," "Josephine," "In an 18th Century Drawing Room," "Put Your Little Foot (Right Out)," "If You Knew Susie (Like I Knew Susie)," "Crying in the Chapel," "Little Sally One Shoe," "Turkey in the Straw," "Lonesome," "Ain't She Sweet," "Sunday," "Darling, Je Vous Aime Beaucoup," "Indiana," and "My Pony Boy."

This particular CD set was produced by Jasmine records in the United Kingdom. The source material was taken from various archives that were digitally re-mastered for this project. It is a slice in time from a simpler era when most popular music had an actual melody and life itself sure seemed less complicated. This recording is available from the following sources: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.tower.com](http://www.tower.com), and [www.organo.co.uk](http://www.organo.co.uk).

—Andy Antonczyk

### NIGEL OGDEN Gala Night

I really enjoyed listening to Nigel Ogden's new CD, *Gala Night*. Nigel is one of



Compact discs, cassettes, videos, books, and music to be reviewed should be sent to the editor, Jeff Weiler, 1845 South Michigan Avenue #1905, Chicago, Illinois 60616. Items must be received three months prior to the issue date in which the review will appear.

the UK's most respected organists and the presenter of a BBC Radio 2 program, *The Organist Entertains*. Nigel regularly travels around the UK, playing concerts of popular and light classical music on all types of organs. He is also a composer and arranger.

The instrument on this disc is the Stockport Publix #1 Wurlitzer. It started its life in the Paramount Manchester when the theatre opened in October, 1930. In 1939 the Paramount was renamed the Odeon and in 1973, when the Odeon was divided into a multi-cinema, the owners of the building donated the four-manual, 20-rank instrument to the Lancastrian Trust. Over a four-year period, the organ was installed in the Free Trade Hall and was premiered in a special BBC *The Organist Entertains* program in 1977. It remained in the Free Trade Hall for some 20 years until the hall was converted into a hotel and conference center. With the combined efforts of the Lancastrian Trust, Stockport Council, and English Heritage, the organ was moved and installed in its present location, the Stockport Town Ballroom, preserving it and making it available for future generations to enjoy. The sound of the instrument is spectacular in this venue due to the hard surfaces and curved ceiling of the room.

One of the facets I like most about Nigel's playing is how he associates and weaves medleys of popular and light classical compositions into a unique musical fabric. *The History Boys* medley of "L'Accordioniste," "Bewitched," "Wish Me Luck as You Wave Goodbye," "Bye Bye Blackbird," and the Rachmaninov *Piano Concerto No. 2* excerpt is a fine example. The segues are just brilliant. Another clever medley is "Mrs. Henderson Presents" and includes "The Girl in the Green Hat," "All the Things You Are," "I'll String Along With You," "Sails of the Windmill," and "Goody Goody." His *Music from France* medley includes "Ca C'est Paris," "Boom," "Windows of Paris," "Louise," "Pigalle," "I Wish You Love," "Farandole," "Under Paris Skies," "Under the Bridges of Paris," and Offenbach's "Can Can" effectively paints a musical picture of the locale.

Mr. Ogden's ballad offerings showcase the lush Tibias and beautiful solo voices of the instrument in his renditions of "Georgia on My Mind," "Doreen," and "The Hour

of Parting." His snappy "Celebration March" just effervesces in the acoustics of the ballroom, as does his *Waltzing with Waldteufel* medley which includes "Estudiantina," "Dolores," "Skater's Waltz," "The Sirens," and "Mon Rêve."

It is obvious that Nigel really enjoys the music that he plays. You can just feel it in his style and delivery. The Wurlitzer in the Stockport Town Hall is clear and reverberant. The four-color CD booklet tells about the instrument, as well as includes photographs of the artist, the beautiful Publix #1 console, and the ballroom itself. I highly recommend this recent CD recorded in September, 2008. It is available at [www.organ.co.uk](http://www.organ.co.uk) and [www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk).

—Andy Antonczyk

## RON RHODE Arizona Stars

The 30-rank theatre pipe organ in the Orpheum Theatre is really a carefully crafted hybrid instrument assembled by dedicated individuals from the Valley of the Sun chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. The project was spearheaded by Bill Brown, Adrian Phillips, Lyn Larsen, and Don Reasor. The pipework was accumulated from various sources and includes 14 Wurlitzer ranks from the Radio City Center Theatre, a pair of 1948 Æolian-Skinner Violes from the Tabernacle organ in Salt Lake City, the Main Tibia Clausa and Open Diapason from the Fox Theatre in Tucson, the Flute Celeste which was formerly the Concert Flute from the Phoenix Fox, an Austin Horn Diapason and Principal from the Los Angeles Philharmonic organ, and a three-manual Wurlitzer console from the Paramount Theatre in Middletown, New York. *Arizona Stars* is the world premiere recording of this instrument and features 18 selections and over 75 minutes of music. The organ's refined colors and its subtle definition were meticulously



recorded and mastered by Chris Gorsuch for this recording.

The console rises on this CD with a rip-snorting rendition of "Entry of the Gladiators," and you can just feel the power and dynamics of this instrument. "I'm Confessin' That I Love You," performed in a Crawford-esque soft-shoe styling, brings out some of the more subtle stops and twinkling percussions and is followed by "You Took Advantage of Me." In the very theatrical "Mein Lippen, die küssen so heiß," the Horn Diapason and un-enclosed traps are especially effective. You will notice the balance of the hi-hat and cymbals to the total instrument are just perfect in "I'd Rather Be Blue Over You." I feel very assaulted sometimes by the "frying pan in the face" cymbals found on too many reworked organs today, but the balance of the Orpheum's is so good, you'd swear there was a percussionist in the chamber. The Tibias and strings are beautiful in "Twilight Time," and in "My Beautiful Lady" Ron builds and builds the musical theme to a climactic crescendo. You will notice the especially nice mutations in the ensemble in "You Turned the Tables on Me." In "The Valentino Tango" Ron provides very subtle but effective counter-melodies using second-touch stops of the Accompaniment manual. In the next song, "I Cried for You," you'll again appreciate the Orpheum's beautiful Tibias and strings.

The title song of this CD, "Arizona Stars," is definitive musical theatre. Ron's rendition is romantic, passionate, and

powerful; the Tibia-Vox passage is especially stunning. Starting with a dancing glock in “Doll Dance,” Ron builds on this tune to a smashing finish. “España,” a medley of Spanish-style waltzes, is a rousing tour through this instrument. In the ballad “You Don’t Know Me,” you’ll again notice how well the rhythm percussions suit the instrument, blending perfectly with the orchestral sounds of the instrument. Ron demonstrates his skill in flawlessly playing a tricky ragtime rhythm in “When That Midnight Choo-choo Leaves for Alabam’,” “Dein ist mein ganzes Herz” starts out quietly and builds to a powerful *sforzando* finish. “On the Beach at Bali-Bali” is a toe-tapping schottische, and Ron’s blending a chorus of “Aloha Oye” at the end showcases the gorgeous shimmering Tibia ensemble. In the final track on this album, Mr. Rhode exuberantly presents the orchestral side of this organ in his performance of “No. 3, On the Trail” from

the *Grand Canyon Suite*. In my opinion, I would acquire this recording for this single cut. It is the perfect fit of a consummate artist with a superb instrument.

As I’m sure you are aware by now, I really liked this album. Ron’s playing exudes pure joy and harmony with the organ, which, in itself is a masterful assemblage of tonal color. The CD is available at [www.ronrhode.com](http://www.ronrhode.com) for \$20 including shipping and handling to the United States and \$24 elsewhere.

—Andy Antonczyk

## CHALIE BALOGH LEW WILLIAMS JACK BARZ

### Organ Stop Pizza and the Mighty Wurlitzer

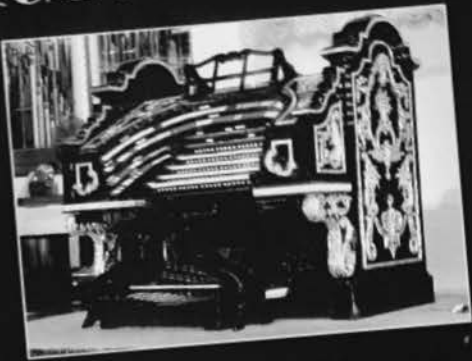
The folks at Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona have released a truly educational and highly entertaining DVD about their establishment and their fine theatre organ. The core instrument was a Style 260 Wurlitzer originally installed in the Denver Theatre in 1927. Actually, although the video may have been made as a promotion and souvenir item for the restaurant, it is much much more than that. It’s a beautifully photographed and professionally produced documentary that covers the history of the development of the organ from Hydraulis to the Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra. The video features narration and dazzling performances by the organists at Organ Stop Pizza, Lew Williams and Charlie Balogh. In addition, Jack Barz, the co-owner of the restaurant, shares some insights on the development and history of the eatery and their unique and tremendous four-manual, 78-rank theatre pipe organ, the largest theatre organ in a public venue.

What I found most interesting is that this business is not a restaurant with an organ in it, but it really is a theatre organ with a restaurant and entertainment facility built around the actual instrument. It is a highly visual theatre experience and, judging by the customers’ reviews and reactions in the video, the food just couldn’t be any better. The place is a total experience in entertainment, blending theatre organ with great visual effects and wonderful pizza. As a former restaurant and night club owner, I can really appreciate Mr. Barz’s explanation of the behind-the-scenes footage and his explanations of the careful development and execution of this facility.

In addition to the a full 54-minute documentary feature presentation, this video also includes another 84 minutes of mighty fine musical performances by Lew and Charlie and some additional “back-stage” comments by Jack. The mini-concerts by Messrs. Williams and Balogh are especially interesting in that they are visually detailed. We get to see close-up shots of what the artists are actually doing with their hands and feet to manipulate and present this gargantuan instrument as well as run the other visual effects of the venue.

I found this video to be great fun, entertainment, and education from beginning to end. The production quality is superb. It could only better if it came with a slice of pizza packed inside the video box. You can get yours for \$26 from [www.OrganStopPizza.com](http://www.OrganStopPizza.com), or call in your order at 480-843-5700. If you live close to Mesa, Arizona, you can get a pizza at the same time.

—Andy Antonczyk



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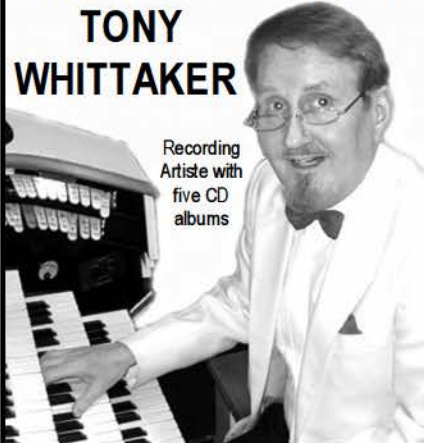
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# Professional Perspectives

## Oklahoma, Where the Corn Grows Tall, But Balabans Become Short

BY EDWARD MILLINGTON STOUT III



The idea of the American Organ Institute did not begin to emerge out of the fertile soils of Oklahoma, but it enjoyed a brief gestation period at Indiana University after being fathered by Professor John Schwandt, along with the able assistance of many creative artists within the organ community. At both campuses the Institute seemed to focus upon a “centerpiece” organ with vast tonal resources, capable of playing both “theatre organ” and “classical” music. At Indiana University the intent

was to purchase, restore and install a large Kimball organ from the Scottish Wrong Temple in Saint Louis. What a noble idea! During the investigation period and primary parenting phase, some distant relative cut the cord and that project withered away. The dream, however, was not to die with the first child’s passing. The family packed up and headed to an incubator comfortably located in the heart of Tornado Alley. It seems as though the leadership at Oklahoma University long felt the effects of

being in a low pressure area and just knew a large high pressure pipe organ was the answer for more stable conditions.

There could be no more banquets without a new centerpiece. It was determined the huge symphonic organ from the former Philadelphia Convention Hall would be worthy of restoration and installation at Tornado University. There is nothing quite like an impacted Möller to get the musical juices flowing. This particular gigantiphone was originally fitted with two impressive consoles, the first to command the traditional “churchy” ensembles and a grand horseshoe console to stimulate the more vibrant theatre-type voices. Forty disgruntled elephants were thrown off the Hagerstown Express to make room for the tons of slumbering members slowly making their way to their new and inviting home. Although the huge Möller organ seems to be taking the spotlight in center ring, it is by no means the only pipe organ in Tornado U’s collection. Generous donors have given several other valuable instruments including a Robert-Morton theatre organ and a rare complete and original Wurlitzer three-manual, 14-rank Style Balaban 2.

Early reports indicated the complete Möller was to be restored and installed in a major hall on the charming campus of Oklahoma University, with the other instruments being installed as examples of the various builders’ art. The Balaban 2 was a gift of the Hille family, and it was given with the clear understanding the organ would be kept in its unaltered condition as an example of one of the very few original Wurlitzer organs left. To that end, ATOS

expended considerable funds to ensure the safe shipment of the instrument, which was originally installed in the Colfax Theatre in South Bend, Indiana. It is believed the Robert-Morton organ was the gift of Clark Wilson and Brad McClincy, both dedicated to the relocation and preservation of all sorts of music machines. It is rumored Brad has Spike Jones' concert washboard and a real gimlet-eyed robin with pneumatic auto-chirp.

It is about time some form of music conservatory makes an effort to tear down the restraining and artificial walls between the so-called "classical organ" and "theatre organ" worlds. Professor Schwandt should be lauded in his efforts to eliminate these up-tight and prissy walls, which were erected as defensive measures by church organists and educators whose music could never soar off the page and whose rigid little fingers could not improvise more than three bars of "Jingle Bells." These are the same people who could not print a tribute to the late Tom Hazleton in their journal, *The American Organist*, because he was just a theatre organist and he was "just a salesman" for the electronic organ industry. Is it not interesting the sales staff have been only too happy to accept advertising funds from the electronic organ manufactures?

The American Organ Institute has taken on a most daunting task of restoring several significant organs, and it can only be hoped realistic estimates and budgets were established at the outset. Historically, organ projects that are fired out of a passionate dreamscape often suffer from underestimating the labor and material costs of a major undertaking like that of the Möller concert organ, as well as several other organs within their charge. Frequently seasoned professional organ restoration firms underestimate the time required for the rebuilding and installation of 80-year-old wheeze machines. Often these Diaphonic old treasures are laden with latent and unseen defects, such as water damage and infestations by vermin.

Knowing labor constitutes the largest expense, the American Organ Institute at Tornado U has arrived at a most inventive and creative method of recruiting a labor force for the rebuilding of the grand concert hall Möller organ. The concept of expanding

the curriculum to embrace the noble art of organbuilding has many attractive aspects, and the practitioners may benefit by gaining an appreciation and respect for the professionals who have dedicated entire lives to organbuilding. We could register some concern for those students who do not possess manual art skills and are not comfortable working around machinery or do not feel comfortable climbing ladders. There are those children who cannot wait to build another model airplane and occasionally those who are fond of wearing their mother's shoes. Both seem to find their way into the organ playing and building wading pool.

One concern surrounding the indentured servitude system in creating a labor force for the restoration tasks is tied directly to level of skills of each of the practitioners. Are the organ students actually learning how to re-leather note pouches, primary valves, and reservoirs on the actual Möller components? Many first-class and high-end Houses of Quality provide expendable and sacrificial blank pneumatic components to learn the art of preparing, sanding, sizing, cutting leather, and gluing with hot hide glue. In that way the novice technician is not compromising the actual instrument being restored.

It is now common knowledge a decision was made to rebuild and erect a token "Mini Möller" organ instead of undertaking the seemingly overwhelming project of rebuilding the entire Möller organ. According to several visiting technicians and guests, a 14-rank instrument has been erected within the concert hall. Reportedly, many of the manual chests are the 20" pressure unit chests from the grand Möller's Solo division, which were processed through the organbuilding school. Accordingly, the 20" chests were set to play on 10" of wind, as it was feared pipework on the high Solo pressures would overpower the room. What! If there is concern about 14 playing on 20" wind, what would the entire 89-rank powerhouse instrument do speaking into and loading the same room?

The huge Möller horseshoe console is not controlling the present Whitman's Sampler organ, as it is awaiting being outfitted with modern-day "bendo-flex-twisto-snap" stop tablet motivators. In its place is a Möller

console without Second Touch. How can theatre organ be taught or played without Second Touch? Perhaps the students just hum the counter melodies.

The next strange and unfortunate turn in the road involves the decision to desecrate and rob the grave of the Balaban 2 Wurlitzer. According to visiting organists and technicians, the Wurlitzer's Orchestral Oboe, 16' Tuba, 16' Tibia, 16' Tuba Diaphone and blower have been Frankensteined onto the Mini-Möller. Many have raised the question, why not have just installed 14 ranks of the Möller and play the 20" pipework on the 20" Solo chests and leave the 10" Wurlitzer alone? Is trying to play 20" Möller pouch valves on half the specified pressure a good practice?

Oh yes, we all know the old reply, "this is only temporary until we can get the rest of the project underway." The only thing temporary in life is life itself, but have any of us ever seen a length of Flexhaust retired? If the cost of the overall project was very much underestimated, the 14-rank miss-match conglomerate will remain until it is swept out of the building. What values are being taught the impressionable young organ students, who look up to their instructors in terms of respecting the organs under their care? The family that gave the Wurlitzer Balaban gave the organ with the understanding the organ would be properly stored, carefully restored, and then installed. ATOS should step up to the plate and demand the Wurlitzer pipes and mechanical components be returned to the rest of the rare organ. If a 14-rank organ was needed, why was not the Wurlitzer installed? What is now playing has no pedigree, as it is comprised of dismembersments from both the Möller and the Wurlitzer.

In what backstage room can we find INTEGRITY sleeping? Integrity is the safeguard that prevents rare and wonderful musical treasures from being looted in a desperate attempt "to get something playing." The idea of the American Organ Institute is a magnificent concept and is very long overdue, but without respect and sensitivity towards the instruments within their charge, the *Hagerstown Express* and the *North Tonawanda Special* will derail.

# The Story of Rosa Rio

BY LLOYD E. KLOS (originally published in the February, 1970 issue of THEATRE ORGAN)



*Insets: Rosa greets young fans after a February 2008 concert at the Tampa Theatre (Photos by Bob Smith)*

(Photo by Bill Lamb)



The love of music has been the driving force in Rosa Rio's life—not only a personal love, but also a love of sharing it with others. Anyone who has heard her in concert can see that love manifested in her playing and in her commentary throughout the program.

At the age of four, her tiny fingers could pick out a melody on the piano, and by six she could “chord” any tune she heard once. Unfortunately, the custom was to wait and begin music lessons at the age of eight, something Rosa deploras. “If a person has talent, let it be encouraged early. I have taught the color system to children of 5½ years.”

When Rosa reached eight, she had developed a rather cocky attitude, being “above the baby stuff.” She would ask the teacher to play a song; she memorized it, but got into difficulty when she added embellishments.

“I was bitten by the theatre bug at nine, having been asked to play piano for a silent movie. My instructions were to ‘play loud and don’t stop.’ Admission to the theatre was 10¢, and I was to be paid 5¢ an hour. Great was my excitement and anticipation.

“Before my first hour had ended, the news of my venture had unfortunately reached my father. Suddenly, a strong, cold hand at the back of my neck lifted me off the piano stool. The humiliation of this I’ll never forget! There was no music, just the clank-clank of the projector and my father’s ominous voice: ‘The theatre is no place for a girl.’ The bitter tears flowed, but my appetite for theatre work was whetted. Inside, I knew the bug had bitten me.”

On her mother’s side were vaudeville people, and the second time she was bitten by the theatre bug occurred in Cleveland. Her parents had decided she would be a music teacher, so off she went to college at Oberlin, Ohio. While visiting an aunt in Cleveland, she attended the newest and most beautiful theatre.

“When I saw the organ console rise from the pit and heard that magnificent sound, this was it! How did the organist do it? How did he know what music to play? I spent the entire day there, and when I came out, I made my decision. I knew then what I wanted to do. I will always remember those beautiful theatres and their organs in Cleveland: the Alhambra (Wurlitzer), Allen (Kimball), Ohio (Möller), and Stillman (Skinner), all on Euclid Avenue, the main stem.”

Rosa learned that Rochester’s Eastman School of Music was the only school having

a course in organ accompaniment of motion pictures, so she began study under John Hammond, an excellent instructor. Later, Hammond was to be featured at the Piccadilly and Warner’s theatres in New York.

Upon finishing the course at the Eastman School, her first theatre job was in Syracuse, but she does not recall the theatre’s name. She was the only organist, playing all day and evening, seven days a week, at \$40 a week.

Next, she went to New York and was employed at Loew’s Burnside, a 3,100-seat house having a three-manual Möller. This theatre was a big improvement, but the one she really enjoyed was Loew’s Willard in Richmond Hill, Long Island. It was a 2,300-seat vaudeville and movie theatre, and Rosa was again the only organist. “It was a long grind,” she says. When desiring to visit the ladies lounge, she would signal the manager and he would come down to the console and hold a chord until she returned. Male organist after male organist turned down the job because they didn’t like the three-manual Austin.

After playing the Loew’s houses around New York, she went south. In New Orleans, she studied piano with another excellent teacher, Vit Lubowski. “I then had a stint in the south’s most beautiful theatre, the 3,400-seat Saenger in New Orleans. What a place, and what an organ, a beautiful Robert-Morton!” Persons in New Orleans with good memories probably remember the vivacious young lady presiding at the Saenger’s Morton console under the name of Betty Hammond.

“I recall vividly the flood there in 1927. In the nick of time someone had the foresight to raise the console to its top position to escape the water which inundated the first 50 rows of the orchestra.”

The Saenger was the flagship theatre of a circuit which included theatres in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi. Rosa made the grand tour of them.

“While at the New Orleans Strand, a positively frightening experience occurred to me, but was a delectable treat for the audience. I had just taken a bow in the spotlight after singing a song (Yes, I was a singing organist, too). The sing-along began, and I started to hear laughs from the audience. The cause for the merriment, as I was to find out seconds later, was a huge rat which crossed the stage, stopped, glared at the screen, then looked at the audience. It then scampered from the stage onto the

organ console, stopped at the music rack, and looked down at me!

“I spotted him then, gave out a scream FFF, and in one leap I sprang over the orchestra rail into the audience *vivace* tempo. Needless to say, it broke up the house.”

About this time the talkies began to erode the field of the theatre organ, and when the Strand ended the use of its organ, Rosa and associate organist Ray McNamara were featured as a duo in closing it.

Although Rosa Rio is originally from the West, she has lived mainly in the South and Northeast. But she has the fondest memories of New Orleans, “a most charming and romantic city.”

Back she went to earn her bread and butter in the North. She got an engagement at the Paramount Theatre in Scranton, Pennsylvania as featured organist. In this theatre, Rosa learned a thing or two about music selection.

“I had purposely broken off with my boyfriend, but a few days later he stopped at the theatre to see the show. I was playing the current hit song “I Don’t Know Why (I Love You Like I Do),” which he felt I was singing to him! When I returned to my dressing room, I found one dozen red roses with a note reading, ‘You do care. So do I. How about a dinner date after the show?’ I was hungry, so... after that, I was more careful in my choice of songs.”

After closing that organ, she went back to New York in 1933 and an engagement at the beautiful Fox in Brooklyn. The organ was the largest Fox Special, a [second] Dulciana rank added to make it the biggest. “It was a joy to practice on this organ from midnight until 4 or 5am. What a thrill!”

Rosa closed this organ by playing “Auld Lang Syne,” and later did the same with the RKO Albee and Brooklyn Paramount organs.

A brief second or two, which seemed like an eternity to her, occurred at the RKO Patio Theatre in Brooklyn. “I was playing song slides and making small talk to the audience, and as I turned around to play the next song I went completely blank! Just like an inexperienced speaker who cannot remember what to say next, I was floundering in a sea of darkness.”

“As I always played from memory, I was lost completely. I wanted to expire right there! But suddenly a squeaky female voice started to sing the words on the screen *a cappella*, and I was saved. The tune was “Sittin’ on a Log,” whose starting notes



It was not uncommon to see Rosa run from studio to studio with less than a minute between the programs, as she is shown here in 1942 at NBC in New York. The time on the wall clock is 11:14, and the alert usher is holding back the tourists so our gal Friday can make her next program in time.



Rosa was the first network organist to play an electronic and a piano simultaneously. This shows her in New York's Blue Network studio in 1943, playing on her Friday program at 1:45pm, EWT.

resemble "Throw Another Log on the Fire," both current at that time.

"Recently I was performing 'Misty' with so much care that I drew a blank when getting to the bridge. Being more experienced this time, I told the audience my predicament. Sitting there and singing right on key was the well-known commentator Walter Kiernan, who saved my day."

The Crown Theatre organ in New London, Connecticut was another she closed. By now she must have been running a close race with Guy Lombardo in playing "Auld Lang Syne." "I couldn't believe it was happening, but here it was. The talkies had ended the theatre organ's original purpose, and now the depression was knocking it out of the solo and sing-along business. Fortunately for me in these dark days of the theatre organ, I was a pianist too. I had served as coach and accompanist for many prominent singers in opera and popular music."

"One of these is still one of the most wonderful persons to have ever graced the musical comedy stage: Mary Martin. Many were the auditions I played for Mary, who nicknamed herself 'Audition Mary,' but said that each audition gave her the experience of a performance. One night, however, was the most exciting of all.

"After a week of auditioning for all the top brass of Broadway musicals, the Go sign was still forthcoming. At 11:45pm after I had just retired, Mary called me and excitedly asked me to get up because 'we have to be at the Waldorf Towers in 15 minutes to audition for Cole Porter.'

"It sure was exciting: Mary sang like a lark, Cole Porter was impressed, and his final word was Go. The song she auditioned was the springboard of a meteoric career, "My Heart Belongs to Daddy." She sang that song in the musical *Leave It to Me*, which hit Broadway in 1938. And I was there to help the little girl from Weatherford, Texas on her way. We are still the best of friends."

At a private party, Mr. McCann, a WOR radio executive in New York, heard Rosa Rio play and engaged her to perform on the station. She then became staff organist on NBC under the musical director Leopold Spitalny. Next came a staff assignment on WJZ under ABC's musical director Frank Vagoni. She played as many as 13 shows a week, five days a week.

Following is a listing of the radio shows with which Rosa Rio was associated during her illustrious career:

1. *Between the Bookends* with Ted Malone
2. *Cavalcade of America*
3. *Chaplain Jim*
4. *Court of Missing Heirs*
5. *Deadline Drama*
6. *Dunninger Show*
7. *Ethel and Albert*
8. *Front Page Farrell*
9. *Gospel Singer* with Edward MacHugh
10. *Hannibal Cobb*
11. *Lorenzo Jones*
13. *Myrt and Marge*
14. *Mystery Chef*
15. *The Shadow*

#### 16. *Town Hall Tonight*

#### 17. *When a Girl Marries*

These radio programs were a part of that medium's golden days. Recognized by the older generation are some of the soap operas which were given this monicker because of their sponsors: Lever Brothers, Colgate, Palmolive Peet, or Proctor & Gamble.

Frank Hummert, a Chicago newspaperman, began the daytime serial when he introduced *Ma Perkins* and sold it to Proctor & Gamble, thereby giving birth to the soap opera. The programs were inexpensive by today's standards and could be aired in 15 minutes a day, five days a week for a cost of \$4,000, including organ music.

James Thurber once wrote that "a soap opera is a kind of sandwich. Between thick slices of advertising, spread 12 minutes of dialogue; add predicament, villainy and female suffering in equal measure; throw in a dash of nobility, sprinkle with tears, season with organ music, cover with a rich announcer sauce, and serve five times a week."

All this was in the late '30s and Rosa Rio was a big part of it, sometimes racing from studio to studio with only seconds to spare before taking her place at the Hammond. "Clock-watching was just as important in radio as it is in television today," says Rosa. "My experience as organist in mood music for silent movies gave me the instant background needed for the radio dramas. Since my rehearsal time was always limited, the director might allow eight seconds for a certain musical bridge,

only to frantically signal me from the control room during air time to cut it to four. This made it impossible to use printed music because I had to keep my eyes on the script, director, clock and the actors all at one time."

Her longest running show was *My True Story*, and it featured many actors who later starred in the movies and on television, including Bob Hastings, Ross Martin, Kevin McCarthy, John McIntire, Jeannette Nolan and Tony Randall. *Lorenzo Jones* was a long favorite of the feminine audience and featured Karl Swensen in the lead. Whenever the story included a birthday, the studio would overflow with gifts from the listeners.

Most everyone remembers *The Shadow*, and that show had Robert Andrews, Orson Welles, Bill Johnston and Bret Morrison in the lead during its life. Santos Ortega and Ed Begley starred in *Myrt and Marge*. And the list goes on and on.

By this time a young organist from the West Coast, answering to the name of George Wright, came east. Not only an excellent organist, he brought so much fun and hilarious laughter to the shows that handkerchiefs became standard equipment in his presence. "George and I palled around so much that Walter Winchell wrote that we two were altar-bound. George loved Broadway musicals and we'd see a show together, but George would go back alone and see the shows two and three times again."

"George was doing *The Jack Berch Show* for Prudential Insurance, which included Charles Magnante, accordionist, and Tony Mottola, guitarist. The studio was on the third floor of NBC, next door to the studio in which *My True Story* aired.

"Our announcer, Texas-born Eddie Dunn, with his great sense of humor and big smile, was the announcer on George's show also. Needless to say, we had a ball." Rosa subbed for George when he overslept and, according to Eddie Dunn, would stride briskly into the studio saying "OK boys, no more risqué stories. There's a lady present," which never failed to break up her colleagues. Eddie's favorite expression was "Gee, I'd give \$18 for a ham sandwich right now."

Probably Rosa Rio's most exciting experience in radio occurred at 2:00am on September 1, 1939. "My phone rang and a voice said 'Miss Rio, this is NBC. You are wanted here at the studios at once! Poland has been invaded. What music do you want

from the library?' I answered 'None. I'll be right there.'"

"I was half asleep, I couldn't think, the big war had started. However, I was out of my apartment in ten minutes, finished makeup in a cab, and was the first musician to arrive at NBC. I was the standby organist to fill in for the newscasters. It was dark, eerie, hectic, tense, frantic. Confusion reigned, people were coming and going. All this was exciting as the war news rolled in. Gallons of coffee were brought in to keep us awake as we fed the news to the West Coast, where it was not midnight yet. About 4:30am, the Ruby Foo Restaurant brought in tables of superb Chinese food—hardly breakfast food, but welcome, I assure you!

"There was utter confusion as programs either were cancelled or interrupted with news bulletins. We all worked until next afternoon. Like others, I staggered home exhausted. What a time! The public got its news, but it never knew how it got it. That was another facet of Show Biz."

During World War II, Rosa kept a busy schedule and also had her own program, *Rosa Rio Rhythms*, which was on a coast-to-coast hookup and beamed to the troops overseas.

"The war ended. Things were slowly changing. I became Mrs. Bill Yeoman, having first met him at a cocktail party in honor of Margaret E. Sangster, writer of *My True Story*. Bill, native-born Rochesterian, was an announcer by profession.

"George Wright left for California. I often wonder whatever became of him.

"When *My True Story* folded, again I played 'Auld Lang Syne.' Television became the big medium, and the programs I had done on radio either went the way of the dinosaur or switched to TV. I did a few shows for TV, among them *Appointment with Adventure*, *Bert and Harry*, *Brighter Day*, *Family Happiness*, *Mr. Jelly Beans*, and *The Today Show*. No longer was I near the actors or props, not even in the same room. Instead, I was alone with the Hammond, a TV monitor, a clock and earphones. Somehow, it was more fun and peaceful in the old radio days. I loved those days and I'm proud to have been a part of the radio era.

"For some time Bill and I had searched for a New England retreat, free of big city pressures. In 1960 we found it in a one-story cave house on the bank of the Far Mill River in Shelton, Connecticut. I left daily television for this new life. Bill built a music room to our 'cave,' and I now busily teach piano and organ, both at home and in a studio in Westport. At home we have three

electronic instruments and two pianos, one a nine-foot grand which was once owned by Jose Iturbi. We also have electronic percussion and hi-fi recording facilities.

"To paraphrase an old soaper, *Life Can Be Beautiful*. Life is beautiful for me, happily married, both of us interested in music, lovely home, most interesting students from 6 to 76. Retire? Never!"

Rosa calls her home "a Cave by a Waterfall" and exercises her hobby, gardening. This is, when she isn't practicing 13 hours a day, making an occasional record for Vox, doing a benefit show now and then, presenting an occasional concert or workshop for the ATOS, and of course instructing her many students. She and hubby, who acts as her business agent, have done shows over WADS in Ansonia and over WELI in New Haven. She has done command performances at the United Nations for U Thant and the late Dag Hammarskjöld.

Here are a few petals of wisdom, passed on to the readers of THEATRE ORGAN by Rosa Rio:

"My life, spent in a career of music, has had low points as well as high points. I wish I had known some things earlier in life than what I know now. One is 'as the door closes, another opens.' I am aware today of this Divine Guidance.

"Joseph Schillinger, a Russian teacher of 'mathematical music,' instructed George Gershwin, Glenn Miller, Jesse Crawford and Paul Lavalle. To me, he was the best teacher in this mathematical approach to composition.

"Today there are many opportunities for those who wish to make music their career. The new schools will afford many the chance to teach, to conduct, to inspire young people. Recording techniques are better. Today the musician must be tops if the monetary rewards are to be realized.

"There is no juvenile delinquent who plays piano or organ. No one has said that he hates music."

Of the ATOS and its members, Rosa says "If it weren't for the ATOS, the theatre pipe organ could become as extinct as the dodo, and it is so eminently worth saving. There is nothing like the theatre pipe organ for an experience in vibrant, wholehearted music."

"One thing so important to all organ buffs, especially the fast-growing ATOS: There are many levels of musicianship. Since it is said 'no two leaves are the same on any branch,' so it is with our breed of

organists. Many talented organists can play some of the following categories:

“Classical, semi-classical, popular, ballads, jazz, blues, modern jazz, rock 'n' roll, the beat, novelties, adaptations of the classics from piano and orchestra for organ, old-style theatre organ, new style, mood music, improvisation, pedal technique.

“Name me one organist who possesses the talent to play all the above without peer, and then you can label this organist as **THE GREATEST**.

“Remember, when you put someone so high on a pedestal, you are the same one who eventually tears that idol down when he might not measure up to your standards. And how that hurts!

“Please, fellow enthusiasts, have your own opinions; you are entitled to them. But in our family of great artists, forget the label ‘The Greatest.’ We are in the wonderful family of the great theatre, living its glorious past today. Personalities, especially the artists who perform for us, must not be hurt, or the hobby itself will suffer in the process.”

*Rosa Rio at the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Illinois  
(Photo by Bill Lamb)*



*Rosa Rio at the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria, Virginia (Photo by Bill Lamb)*

# A Rose is Still a Rose in 2009

A TRIBUTE TO ROSA RIO BY DONNA PARKER, LEW WILLIAMS, AND TERRY SNYDER

Can you guess what these headlines have in common?

- The first public demonstration of radio
- Denmark sells Virgin Islands to the US
- Schönberg's "Verklarte Nacht" premieres in Vienna
- J. C. Penney opens his first store
- President Teddy Roosevelt became first US chief executive to ride in an automobile

The answer is they all happened in 1902, the same year an extraordinary lady was born—Ms. Rosa Rio.

Rosa Rio celebrated her 106th birthday on June 2, 2008. To honor the occasion, several friends including Lew Williams, Bobbi Williams (Lew's sister), and Terry Snyder converged from different corners of the United States to spend the day with Rosa and her husband, Bill Yeoman, in their lovely home in Sun City Center, Florida. Ms. Rio greeted her guests at the door in her typical vibrant, beautiful, and exuberant way. Full of smiles and hugs, she began answering the endless rounds of questions about her prominent career and famous colleagues. And what an amazing trip down memory lane this was indeed.

Rosa attributes her longevity to a balance between the emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of her life. At almost 107 today, no one is arguing with her unquestionable success. That day, Rosa revealed her zest for life with those remarkable, flashing, brown eyes and an amazing recall for the names, dates, places, and events that shaped her career for the last 80 or 90 years.

Ms. Rio recounted humorous anecdotes of practical jokes played upon her—as well as delivered by her—while live on the radio. As long as her music went on flawlessly, like it always did, or the announcer with whom she worked kept his voice at an even keel, no one listening to the show was aware of the high jinks and shenanigans going on behind the scenes.

One memorable incident took place in the NBC studios during the heyday of radio, when a fellow staff member unfastened the buttons down the back of her blouse, then rolled her stockings down around her ankles while she continued to play live on the air. The stakes were high, as no mistakes would be tolerated during a

broadcast. This was to the amusement of the entire studio staff, and Rosa took it in unflappable stride. The story didn't end there. She evened up the score by unzipping the pants of that prankster and pulling his shirttail through the opening—again while he was live on-air and within full view of the 'off microphone' staff. Rosa could take it and dish it out! Rosa learned how to joke with an all-male staff, speak their language, and hand it right back. Without that, she never would have made it in the business. Her strength was recognized, which made her a valuable team member.

This spirited lady was highly regarded and sought after by theatre management and her musical contemporaries. Never trying to overshadow the orchestra or be "the star" or a stand-out, she figured out at an early age how to support them and make them sound successful. Rosa was called on to accompany singers, play with orchestras, and perform solo organ concerts. Rosa even had her own radio show, *Rosa Rio Rhythms*, broadcast on NBC radio in New York City. Colleagues relied on her to substitute for them when they needed to be away. They knew Rosa would never try to take their job, or "do them dirt," as she would say. There was an honorable way to act and do business. She was exemplary.

Stories of Mary Martin, Orson Welles, Richard Rodgers, Bing Crosby, the Gershwin family, Irving Berlin, and Victor Borge held everyone's rapt attention. Rosa's remembrances included non-musicians like Eleanor Roosevelt and premiere theatre organists including Ashley Miller, Dick Leibert, and George Wright. Sharing these stories at her birthday celebration made history come alive. The famous characters and details painted vivid pictures in the guests' eyes. It is agreed that these experiences comprise the makings of a powerful book and fascinating read.

The stories flowed like beautiful music. In the middle of one of the stories about playing theme songs and accompaniments for the soaps, Rosa said, "Here, let me show you on the piano." She seated herself at her 9' Baldwin concert grand that formerly belonged to José Itubi. After demonstrating the passage of which she was speaking, guests would not allow her to stop. To everyone's delight, she began playing and then improvising. A magical hush fell as

her still nimble fingers and quick-thinking mind intertwined runs, scales, and classical passages into popular Gershwin melodies with a polish and ease of yesteryear. Again her guests were spellbound by a most enchanting, elegant performance by a master musician and remarkable lady.

It is a true accomplishment to have enjoyed a spectacular career brimming with musical legends and landmark events—a career that has successfully spanned many art forms, including silent films, radio, television, teaching and accompanying Broadway's finest. Ms. Rio lived that accomplishment with great respect from colleagues. She demonstrated humility and joy for life itself. Then being able to reflect upon it all with wonderful clarity and splendid health at almost 107 years of age...well, that is the ultimate definition of true success on all levels.

When asked about working beside all the famous people of the day, she said they were all just doing their jobs. When pushed a little harder about the issue of working in all the big theatres in New York City and with the biggest celebrities and most prominent people, she said modestly, "Yes, I drank from the cup." That quote tells it all.



Rosa Rio (Photo by Bob Smith)

## The Secret is Out!



Joyce Clifford at the Wurlitzer (Photo Zerbo Collection)

I have often lamented that theatre organ is the best kept secret in the musical world.

Well, it is just possible that the efforts of Sierra chapter to present young artists in its concerts have begun to pay off. Things are beginning to happen. As mentioned in the last issue of THEATRE ORGAN, thanks to the Grant Union High School alumni association, Mark Herman presented a pre-concert concert for Grant High's students. As successful as that was for the students, it was a great awakening for the administration of the newly formed K through 12 Twin Rivers Unified School District. The district is a coalescing of several elementary school districts and the Grant Joint Union High School district. One big plus for the grammar schools was that Grant High had an auditorium, something none of the elementary schools had. It also had something no other Sacramento area school had—a theatre pipe organ! And Mark Herman had beautifully demonstrated what could be done with it.

So, when the powers-that-be decided to have fifth and sixth graders from seven grammar schools bussed to Grant's auditorium to learn about music, the adults who had attended Mark Herman's concert went to work. Perhaps the organ

should be played before the program. A call was made to Sondra Fuson of the Grant High School alumni association requesting an organist to "play the students in." On very short notice, Joyce Clifford, class of 1950, played for about 30 minutes before conductor Michael Morgan and two musicians from the Sacramento Symphony gave a "show and tell" demonstration for the 700-plus students. Not only were the students captivated, Maestro Morgan was delighted. He had no idea there was an organ in a high school, certainly not in his own city. There's that "best kept secret" thing again.

As the students lined up to ask questions after the program, Morgan wisely requested that Joyce remain in case they were curious about the organ. Curious is an understatement. They were enthralled with all the parts from the console

to the chambers. As Joyce explained the history, the voices and how the sounds were produced, it became obvious that this relic, installed by then-student George Wright (class of 1938), still had the ability to mesmerize generations later. If you present it, they will listen! There is educational value in that wind-driven music box.

For those in charge of Twin Rivers Unified School District and Grant High School, it was an ah ha moment. Plans for the auditorium's renovation are now in the works. The organ will be enjoyed by students for years to come and, who knows, maybe another young performer will find its many voices perfectly suited to his or her musical tastes. This is how we keep theatre organ alive.

—Carol Zerbo  
Rocklin, California

For membership, publication back issues,  
photo availability, research and  
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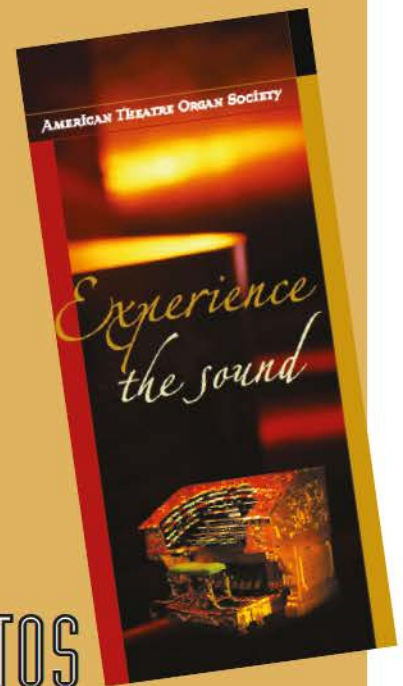
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The Kirk of Dunedin, Dunedin, Florida



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# The In-Theatre Convention

2009 ATOS Convention  
Cleveland and Northwest Ohio  
June 30–July 5



*Ken Double*



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*Jonathan Ortloff*



*David Peckham*



*Donnie Rankin*



*Ron Rhode*



*Jim Riggs*



*John Schwandt*



*Brett Valliant*



*Clark Wilson*



# TREASURES OF THE WESTERN RESERVE

## CONVENTION SCHEDULE

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
<b>Tuesday June 30</b>	Registration	Tours of Playhouse Square Center Four 1920s movie palaces!	Ron Rhode Playhouse Square Palace Theatre Jam Session Afterward
<b>Wednesday July 1</b>	Registration Chapter Leadership Workshop	Seminar Opening Cocktail Party Renaissance Hotel	Chris Elliott Civic Theatre Silent Film, <i>Mark of Zorro</i>
<b>Thursday July 2</b>	Brett Valliant Masonic Auditorium & Performing Arts Center	Members' Forum Seminar	Donnie Rankin Palace Theatre, Lorain
<b>Friday July 3</b>	Richard Hills Grays Armory	E-TONES Meeting Jonathan Ortloff and Young Artist Competition Playhouse Square Palace Theatre	Open Console Jam Session Grays Armory Open Night
<b>Saturday July 4</b>	ATOS Annual Meeting Renaissance Hotel	John Schwandt David Peckham First Congregational Church, Columbus Duelling Organs	Clark Wilson Ohio Theatre, Columbus
<b>Sunday July 5</b>	Jonas Nordwall Playhouse Square State Theatre	State Theatre Banquet and Annual Awards Ceremony (optional)	Multiple Artists Masonic Auditorium & Performing Arts Center Joint Concert with OHS*
<b>Monday July 6</b>	Open	Ken Double Palace Theatre, Canton	Jim Riggs Renaissance Theatre, Mansfield

\* Open to the public. NOTICE: Artists and venues are subject to change should conditions develop that would be beyond our control.

# Twelve Reasons Why You Should Attend

- 1 Theatre Organs**—There has not been a convention with so many theatre pipe organs in so many 1920s movie palaces in decades. Wurlitzer, Kimball, Robert-Morton, and Kilgen, including two dueling organ events—what a lineup!
- 2 Movie Palaces**—Look at all of those wonderful theatres. Just look at them!
- 3 Back-Stage Tours** of four restored 1920s movie palaces all in one block.
- 4 World-Class Musicians**—There are 15 top theatre organ and keyboard musicians appearing at this convention. That's right, 15!
- 5 An Exciting Location**—Cleveland is new territory for ATOS, our first annual convention in the "Best Location in the Nation."
- 6 It's Economical**—ATOS has not experienced such a low daily hotel rate in a world-class hotel in years. Your convention committee has contracted an extraordinarily low rate of only \$94! Also, the registration fee is priced at an extremely attractive rate of only \$295 for five full days. Overture and Encore rates are also low, low, low!
- 7 Access**—Continental Airlines maintains a hub at our convention city. We suggest you search this airline for the most non-stop flights in and out of Cleveland, Ohio. Transportation from the airport is a snap and can be done for less than \$2 via rapid transit without even going outdoors. Cab rides are also short and inexpensive. Driving? This Midwest city is easily accessible.
- 8 Convention Dining**—Whether you seek an upscale meal at the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel or other fine restaurants, or you prefer casual dining experiences, downtown locales offer many friendly and convenient options.
- 9 Seminars**—This convention has three opportunities to enjoy and grow as we hear from our leadership on issues related to our recent ATOS member survey, theatre organ technical workshop, and exploring the musical talent and styles of various theatre organists.
- 10 The Sunday Evening Extravaganza** with two organs, grand piano, and stage band, is a wonderful chance to experience an exciting gathering that celebrates the King of Instruments with a dash of family pops styling!
- 11 Local Entertainment**—The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Great Lakes Science Museum, Cleveland Indians baseball, the House of Blues, the world-famous Cleveland Art Museum, the Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum and others are all very close to our convention hotel.
- 12 Finally**, the Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society is preparing an exciting event that you will most certainly mark as one of the most enjoyable entertainment weeks you have ever had!

**Register Now!** Use the printed form found in the front of this issue of THEATRE ORGAN, or visit us online at [www.atos.org/conventions/2009](http://www.atos.org/conventions/2009) and click on "Registration." Take a look at our other links, too.

**See you there!**

## Convention Seminars

### CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Presenters: Col. Mike Hartley (ret.) and an international panel of ATOS leaders

Focus: How to lead a chapter in the 21st century. The focus of the seminar is based on the ATOS survey results including recruiting new members, fundraising, filling seats at concerts through marketing. Information will be presented on how to use resources offered by ATOS, network with other chapters, and establish relationships with non-ATOS groups to the advantage of both. Share your chapter's success stories.

### FIRST DO NO HARM

Presenters: Jeff Weiler (moderator), Allen Miller, and others

Focus: This is a panel discussion and presentation on the basics of theatre pipe organ restoration and maintenance. Plenty of opportunity for questions and answers will be included

### ORGANISTS OF THE PAST

Presenters: Scott Smith and Clark Wilson

Focus: Reflections on and comparisons of the artistic styles of Ashley Miller and Pearl White. Recorded segments from each will be presented with both serious and humorous analysis and suggestions for today's players.

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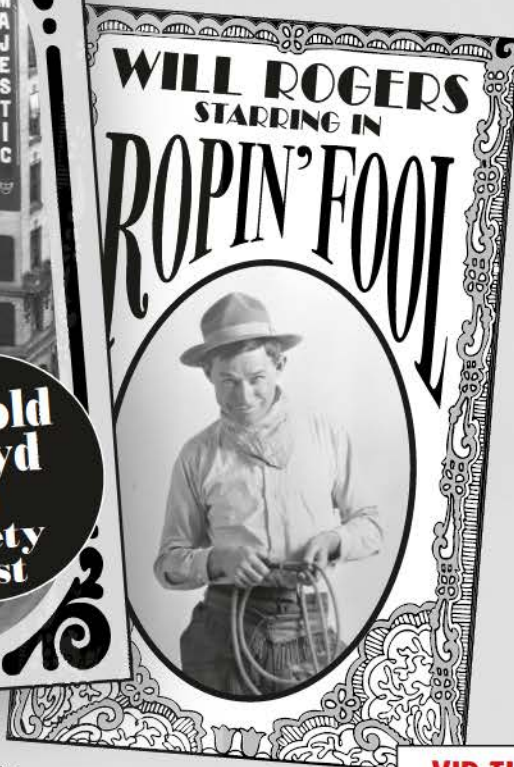
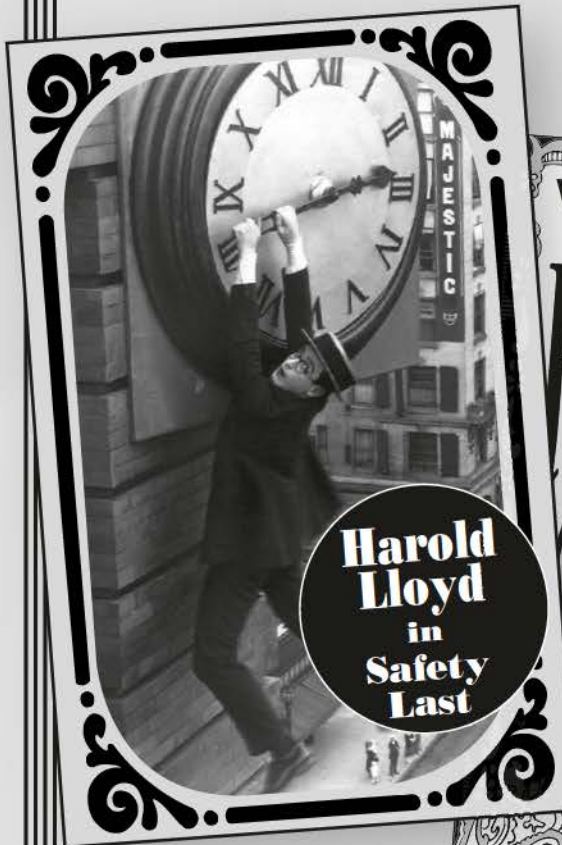
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## Cleveland 2009 and Wurlitzer Opus 793-Plus

BY DOUG POWERS

By 1924, the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company had entered the heyday of theatre pipe organ building. The Granada Theatre of Santa Barbara, California was about to accept a special four-manual organ complete with a three-rank Echo division (Lieblich Flute, Dulciana, and Vox Humana). Thirty years later, it was sold to Dr. Orrin Hostetter of Pasadena, California, one of ATOE's founders. Gordon Kibbee consulted on the installation and 11 ranks—many of which were not theatre organ sets—were added. In 1996, the organ was sold to Wade Bray of Brighton, Michigan. After 10 years of storage, plans to install the organ were rethought, and he decided to donate the organ. Meanwhile, the Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society had just concluded successful discussions with the trustees at the Masonic Auditorium and Performing Arts Center in Cleveland whereby a theatre pipe organ would be installed. Eventually our chapter became the recipient of Wade and Marilyn Bray's generosity, and Opus 793 was to have yet

another home. This time (after two residences and the passage of over 50 years), the organ would be back in public view and installed in a 2,400-seat theatre.

When the organ was donated in 2006, WRTOS was experiencing a bit of a renaissance with increased membership, a fresh board of directors, several operating improvements, and growing support for developing a chapter-owned theatre organ. Over a dozen volunteers and several large trucks delivered the organ to our hastily created storage area and workshop at the Masonic Auditorium. Over the next few months, we focused our efforts on fundraising and also expended a few hundred hours on inventory, organization, and preparation for this massive venture. The project was divided into four main segments: chamber construction, component rebuilding, pipework cleaning and repair, and console renovation. Many WRTOS volunteers spent thousands of hours disassembling parts, cleaning, repairing, replacing, re-leathering, and

otherwise refurbishing every component. Details of the work are beyond the scope of this article, but it is noteworthy to mention that the usual (and some unusual) repair and replacement work was performed during hundreds of volunteer work sessions over a 20-month period.

Some unanticipated developments led us to replace the original 10-hp blower with a rebuilt 20-hp unit. A new UniFlex control system was installed. Plans to rebuild the original piano were abandoned—at least temporarily—due to lack of space. Much of the pipework added during the Hostetter days was removed and replaced with (mostly) Wurlitzer sets, including a wood Diaphone, four strings, a second Wurlitzer Tibia Clausa and Vox Humana, Tuba Mirabilis, several new cymbals, four additional Tremulants (totaling 15), and a total of 22 reservoirs.

When the PAC was built in 1918, a 4/42 Austin was installed in a single house-right loft. That organ provides a thunderous ensemble to this day. An identical organ loft

was built opposite the Austin, but it was never used for anything but storage. WRTOS was given permission to clean out and use that space. In the spring of 2008, we began the laborious effort of scraping 90 years of soot from the brick and concrete walls, ceiling, and floor of this 24-foot tall area. After the surfaces were clean enough to accept paint, we performed plaster and mortar repair and applied a white coat to everything. We also created custom sound-proofing boxes while juggling a floor-to-ceiling scaffold from side to side. This went on for months until we finally began dividing up the single space into three chamber areas and two raised platforms in a “split-level” arrangement that was designed to take advantage of the available height. While the organ is housed on one side of the auditorium, it is divided into Main (left), Solo (right), with an unenclosed upper level. Each chamber has its own expression and grille.

The 1924 console was in generally good condition, but it had a few issues. The stoprail was quickly becoming a liability, so we replaced it. We replaced the backrail and swing-out trays and had Crome Organ Co. install all new thumb pistons and key cheek buttons. All toe pistons and piano levers were replaced, the keys were carefully regulated, a new pedalboard was obtained, and expression shoes were refurbished. The entire console was refinished in ebony and now has a period-correct music rack and lamp. Since so much of the pipework was replaced, a completely new stoplist was drawn up. Many of the stopkeys are new.

With all major repair accomplished, bench testing and adjustments made in the

shop, the console coming together, and the chambers quickly filling with Opus 793 (plus) components, we are on the fast track to the rebirth of another theatre organ; one that has not been heard in 13 years. After three years, well over \$110,000 of donated funds, grants, gifts, over 6,000 volunteer hours, many scraped fingers, banged knees, sore backs, countless late night sessions, and a tremendous amount of dedication from WRTOS members, we are happily preparing for the concert date ahead!

Console reconstruction pictures were not available at the time of this writing; however, please enjoy the images on our website, [www.wrtos.org](http://www.wrtos.org), where you can also see video and slideshows of our efforts over the past 32 months.

The Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society is working extremely hard to have the organ concert ready for our *Treasures of the Western Reserve* convention this summer. In the interest of full disclosure, it is only fair to mention the possibility that this instrument may not be fully ready in time. If that should happen, the Walker Technical Co. has agreed to bring one of their fine instruments to the PAC, and our program will go on as scheduled—but without the Wurlitzer. We are reasonably confident that this installation will be ready, but we want you to be informed of the possible substitute. Even if we miss our deadline, you will experience more theatre pipe organs in original movie palaces than any other convention in recent memory. There are so many instruments, cost-savings, and good times planned for all of you.

## MASONIC AUDITORIUM AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

### MAIN (LEFT)

- 16 Tuba Horn
- 16 Diaphone/Open Diapason (wood bass)
- 8 Tibia Clausa (10" wind)
- 16 Clarinet
- 8 Krumet
- 8 Salicional
- 8 Salicional Celeste
- 16 Viole d'Orchestre
- 16 Viole Celeste
- 8 Lieblich Flute
- 16 Bourdon/Concert Flute
- 8 Vox Humana
- Chrysoglott
- Cathedral Chimes
- Jazz Cymbal

### SOLO (RIGHT)

- 8 Tuba Mirabilis
- 8 English Horn
- 8 Brass Trumpet
- 16 Diaphone/Horn Diapason (metal bass)
- 16 Tibia Clausa (15" wind)
- 8 Brass Saxophone
- 8 Orchestral Oboe
- 8 Kinura
- 8 Solo String
- 8 Solo String Celeste
- 8 Gamba
- 8 Gamba Celeste
- 16 Oboe Horn
- 8 Quintadena
- 8 Vox Humana
- 8 Vox Humana Dolce
- Piano (Roland MicroPiano)
- Xylophone
- Glockenspiel
- Trap Assembly & effects (including original Storm Machine)

### UNENCLOSED (UPPER LEFT)

- 16 Pedal Violone (wood)
- 8 Pedal Tibia Clausa
- Master Xylophone
- Marimba Harp
- Vibraphone
- Cymbals & effects

## SPECIAL NOTE!

We also want you to know that there is a possibility of having a late addition to our convention. The world-class 4/60 Aveni installation may be available for a Friday night concert. This organ is undoubtedly one of the finest theatre pipe organ installations in the world. Housed in a large and luxurious private residence in a nearby suburb, this instrument is one that will add even more impressive memories to your long list of fond reminiscences. The Aveni home is currently on the market and, therefore, its availability will not be known until close to concert time. You will find special ticket purchase information about this must-see event at the convention registration table.



# A Second San Gabriel Celebration

BY KEN DOUBLE

## Rededication Variety Concert a Success

The buzz of excitement in the air was palpable. A Sunday afternoon in Los Angeles; the final big show of the LATOS Wurlitzer Weekend was at hand. For those standing outside of the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse, there was no question something special was about to take place.

How could one tell? The local parking lots were fast filling with cars. Attendees were crowded outside the auditorium while last minute preparations were being completed on stage. And soon, a full house of nearly 1,400 would experience what many believe is a harbinger of the future.

Four artists; a newly rebuilt Wurlitzer organ ready for its rededication; a string ensemble on stage; Laurel

and Hardy on the silent screen. This special event was a variety show of the highest order and put the spotlight on what many consider the new wave of programming for ATOS.

In a partnership that included the management of the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse and the Peter Lloyd Crotty Charitable Fund, the rededication concert of the auditorium's Mighty Wurlitzer was a spectacular success on every level. The line-up included organist and Master of Ceremonies Lyn Larsen, who performed here as part of the opening concert back in 1972; organist Chris Gorsuch; Jelani Eddington, who performed

at the Wurlitzer and the concert grand piano; Russ Peck, who showed off his versatility by playing the drums, the tympani, and accompanying a silent film; and the Gabrielino High School String Ensemble, featuring 23 teenagers.

There are almost too many highlights from which to choose, but certainly, for those of us who know Lyn Larsen and know the opportunities to hear him perform will be rare, it was a treat to have him open the show. He began appropriately with "That's Entertainment" and then performed a delightful little ballad which was part of his program on opening night in 1972, "The Stars Are the Windows to Heaven."

From there, Lyn turned on his immense charm and carried us through the afternoon as our Master of Ceremonies. He introduced Jelani Eddington, whose contribution to the variety format included a dazzling "From This Moment On," a gorgeous ode to the Beatles with "Yesterday," and concluded his solo selections with a rollicking "Comedians Gallup."

Jelani then turned the console over to Chris Gorsuch, who introduced Russ Peck at the vintage 1940s Slingerland drum set made with no metal parts (due to the war effort). This duo began with a jazzy Neil Hefti tune "Cute," followed by a Latin-infused "Prisionero del Mar."

From there, it was time to show off the Wurlitzer doing what it was invented to do. Russ Peck left the drum set and sat on the bench to provide the accompaniment to Laurel and Hardy's hilarious silent short *Liberty*, including skyscraper high jinks with scenes of old-time Los Angeles in the background.



The second half featured the Gabrielino High School String Ensemble under the direction of David Edo. These young musicians demonstrated a mastery of their instruments certainly belying their youth. There was great applause (and some “whoops and hollers” from obvious family and classmates in attendance) in appreciation for the talents and hard work demonstrated by these fine young musicians.

Mr. Edo conducted the ensemble through “Illusions,” and then with Eddington at the piano, Gorsuch at the Wurlitzer, and Peck at the tympani, the group performed the moving music “Ashoken Farewell,” made famous as part of the score for Ken Burns’ PBS series, *The Civil War*. The mix of musicians was brilliant, and the selection was most warmly received by the appreciative audience.

That audience reaction moved from warm reception to instantaneous, wild, standing ovation upon the conclusion of the program’s *piece d’resistance*.

With Chris Gorsuch’s brilliant orchestration at the Wurlitzer, and Peck’s perfect accents on the tympani, Jelani Eddington performed Grieg’s *Piano Concerto in A Minor*. This tour de force not only shows off Eddington’s brilliant touch at the piano, but the equally brilliant artistry of Gorsuch using the Wurlitzer as orchestra. It is a spine-tingling rendering of the piece that left this audience breathless. And it was the perfect ending to a glorious musical and civic event.

The Peter Lloyd Crotty Charitable Fund provided the full underwriting for the complete renovation of the Wurlitzer organ, and then literally “bought the house.” Peter Crotty wanted this to be a celebration for the city, for the auditorium, and for the community to come and enjoy the new pipe organ. Thus, tickets were free, and were gobbled up within 36 hours of availability. For many, it was an introduction to something they had never heard before.

With the extended families of the 23 musicians from Gabrielino High School, and many of the city leaders and civic leaders in attendance for a theatre organ event for the first time, it was a sensational introduction to variety programming wrapped around the singular sounds of a now-dynamic and complete new Wurlitzer installation.

Managing Director Anna Cross, who promoted use of the Wurlitzer by way of automatic playback during select holiday programs at the auditorium, was thrilled



Rebuilt San Gabriel console



Lyn Larsen

with the performance and the reaction of the audience, and is already planning for a new show with this variety format.

During ceremonies at the program’s start, there were several honorees noted, including long-time LATOS member Don Linton who was involved in the renovation at every step. Also honored was young Josh Fairman, a city employee on the technical staff at the Playhouse, who under the guidance of Crotty, Linton, and Gorsuch, is learning the fine art of theatre organ maintenance as the city’s in-house technician. This represents a major step forward for LATOS and ATOS, in uncovering new talent in the technical and maintenance field.

There will be a full article in an upcoming issue of THEATRE ORGAN to detail the complete top-to-bottom renovation to the instrument and to the chambers.

For all of ATOS, it is clearly the roadmap for the future. Similar in scope to *Rialtofest*, and most certainly the basic formula for the new national touring show, the variety format with multiple musicians performing everything from pops, to standards, to light classics, it is the potential formula for bringing big audiences once again to hear the mighty theatre pipe organ.

ATOS salutes Peter Crotty for his vision and commitment, and congratulates all involved at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse for this most spectacular rededication concert. We look forward to much more of this kind of programming in the years to come.



Chris Gorsuch



Jelani Eddington



Russ Peck

# Pipes Drearies RTOS

# RTOS Live!

We have all heard about the circle of life and the old adage that what goes around comes around. Such is the case surrounding a unique and special bond, rife with historical connections, that is developing between the Rochester Theatre Organ Society and Rochester's famed Eastman School of Music.

## Eastman School of Music and Rochester

When local industrialist and philanthropist George Eastman, the founder of Eastman Kodak Company, established the Eastman School of Music in 1921, it became the first professional school of the University of Rochester. A devout music-lover, Mr. Eastman personally financed the new downtown campus which would house not only the school, but also the opulent 3,094-seat Eastman Theatre which opened one year later on September 2, 1922.

As plans for the school evolved, Mr. Eastman installed his personal organist, Harold Gleason, as the head of organ department and charged him with selecting the organs for the new facilities. "Let's have the finest organ department in the world," said Mr. Eastman. In all, 16 instruments were installed, ranging from the "world's largest theatre organ," the 4/135 Austin (Opus 1010) in the theatre and the 4/86 E.M. Skinner (Opus 325) in the adjoining 455-seat Kilbourn Hall, to the assortment of 14 organs installed in the various practice and recital rooms throughout the complex. This assortment included no less than three theatre organs. Two practice rooms were outfitted with 2/5 Marr & Coltons, and a mini theatre complete with projection facilities was home to Wurlitzer Opus 553, a divided Style 185 (2/7).

In the beginning, the organ department was actually two schools in one. The Department of Legitimate Organ Playing was dedicated to nurturing those serious students aspiring to careers as organists for the cathedrals and symphony halls of the world. Sharing the facility was an equally talented group hoping to enter the

entertainment industry as masters of the King of Instruments in the movie palaces that were springing up nationwide. Many prominent theatre organists of the period, including our beloved reigning queen, Rosa Rio, attended the Eastman School during the 1920s. Movie studios routinely shipped prints of their latest films and music scores for students' use. Alas, the golden age was all too brief; by the early '30s talkies were all the rage, and the popularity of theatre organs, along with job opportunities for their masters, waned. At Eastman, the training of entertainment organists ceased. The three theatre organs soon went silent and were eventually replaced by new "legitimate" instruments. One of the Marr & Coltons went to a local Catholic school hall sometime around 1934 and in 1971 was purchased and installed in this author's home in suburban Rochester. It is currently in storage in Oak Park, Illinois and is basically intact. The fate of the other M&C is unknown. According to the Peter Beames' online Wurlitzer list, Opus 553 was moved to a local church then passed through several hands and was last listed as being owned by Albert Soull of Boonton, New Jersey.

Theatre organ soon became all but forgotten at Eastman and, according to legend, organ students were well advised to keep any lingering interest in these unholy relics strictly to themselves. With only a few notable exceptions, such as the multi-talented David Peckham who successfully balanced his interest in classical and theatre performance during his time there in the early 1980s, this attitude prevailed throughout the remainder of the 20th century. As we fast forward to the present decade, we find that under the leadership

BY RUSS SHANER

(Photos by Joe Blackburn)



of David Higgs, who joined the faculty in 1992, soon becoming chair of the organ department, acceptance of theatre organ and those students who dare to express interest in mastering them has greatly improved. You can learn more about the Eastman School of Music at [www.esm.rochester.edu](http://www.esm.rochester.edu).

## EROI and Rochester

Under the leadership of the Professor of Organ Hans Davidsson, the Eastman Rochester Organ Initiative (EROI) was formed in 2002. With the aim of making Rochester a global center for organ performance, research, building, and preservation, the Eastman School is assisting in assembling a collection of new and historic organs unparalleled in North America. This collection is already offering access to organs of many styles and traditions. Organ lovers from around the world are being drawn to Rochester to experience the varied sounds of these extraordinary instruments. You can learn more about the EROI at [www.esm.rochester.edu/EROI](http://www.esm.rochester.edu/EROI).

## RTOS and Rochester

The Rochester Theatre Organ Society was founded in 1964, and its reputation is well known. RTOS purchased Wurlitzer Opus 1951, a 4/21 Special, when Rochester's showplace, the RKO Palace, was demolished in 1965. RTOS members carefully removed it then reinstalled it in the 2,550-seat Auditorium Theatre where it debuted in 1967. Now a 4/23, the RTOS Wurlitzer is generally regarded as one of the finest-sounding and best-maintained theatre organs in the world. RTOS still consistently draws audiences of 500 or more for each of its nine annual concerts and has hosted nearly every theatre organist of note over its 45-year history. You can learn more about RTOS at [www.theatreorgans.com/rochestr](http://www.theatreorgans.com/rochestr).

## The Alliance Begins

In 2003 Jon Ortloff arrived in Rochester to begin studies at the University of Rochester and the Eastman School. He is pursuing dual majors in interdisciplinary engineering and organ performance, the latter under the skillful guidance of David Higgs and William Porter. Jon soon made his interest in theatre organ known and sought out RTOS where his talents were quickly noted. Yes folks, we snapped him up like the lobster at a buffet and haven't let go since. In the six short years he has been in Rochester, in addition to his studies, his work with EROI, and his church organist position, Jon has served as an RTOS director, worked on the maintenance crews of both of the RTOS instruments, and brought home the gold as winner of the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition at the Indianapolis convention last summer. Quite possibly, though, his most significant contribution locally has been to establish and nurture what we believe will be an enduring, unique, and valuable relationship between RTOS and the Eastman School.

Taking advantage of the newfound acceptance of theatre organ at Eastman, Jon began encouraging his classmates and instructors to attend our monthly concerts. This led to David Higgs bringing the entire organ department to the Auditorium on a field trip where they were afforded the opportunity to get up close and personal with the 4/23 as we told them the history of RTOS and demonstrated our magnificent Wurlitzer. Many students played, some for the first time, a theatre organ. Several expressed interest in learning more, and arrangements were made for those who wished to come back and get to know it better.

As plans were being made for the RTOS 2006–2007 concert series, Jon suggested that for February we forgo engaging an out-of-town artist and instead present a program featuring Eastman faculty and students. The RTOS board enthusiastically embraced the idea, and Jon put together a program that he shared with Bill Porter, Eastman Professor of Organ Improvisation. The show was a big hit, and with Bill and Jon's duet of



*From top: Michael Barone (l) and Dr. William Porter  
David Baskeyfield (l) and Michael Barone  
Dr. David Higgs (l) and Michael Barone  
Jonathan Ortloff (l) and Michael Barone*



Jonathan Ortloff (l), David Baskeyfield, Dr. David Higgs, Dr. William Porter, Allan Ward, and Michael Barone

“Tea for Two” bringing down the house, we asked Jon to produce a similar program for February of 2008. This time we publicized them as “The Eastman Bunch,” a group that consisted solely of four students. Again the show was a huge success, drawing in a large number of new people curious to see what could possibly be interesting about an organ with real bells and whistles and no drawknobs.

### The Plot Thickens

With the assistance of the ESM and EROI, considerable progress is being made toward accomplishing the goals set by EROI. Under their guidance, no less than four new organs are playing in Rochester, and several existing instruments under their conservancy are or will soon be undergoing restoration. Two major new instruments have been completed in the past year alone. These are the Halloran-All Saints Organ, built by Paul Fritts and Co. of Tacoma, Washington, for Sacred Heart Catholic Cathedral (Opus 26, three manuals, 53 stops), and the exciting new \$3,000,000 Craighead-Saunders Organ at Christ Church (Episcopal), a two-manual, 32-stop nearly exact copy of the famous Casparini organ built for the Church of the Dominicans in Vilnius, Lithuania in 1776. The Vilnius organ is the only remaining example of a large organ created by Adam Gottlob Casparini and is considered to be one of the most valuable musical artifacts of its time in Europe today.

### The Three-Scoop Organ Sundae Deluxe

When word of these new instruments reached American Public Media’s Michael Barone, creator and host of the nationally syndicated *Pipedreams* weekly radio program, he contacted David Higgs, suggesting the organ department present them in a *Pipedreams Live* event. For these programs Michael travels to a selected city and serves as the master of ceremonies at a live organ performance that is recorded for future broadcast. Having also heard about the growing relationship between Eastman and RTOS, he suggested including a concert on the Wurlitzer. In the fall of 2008, as Jon began preparing for this year’s Eastman Bunch concert, he approached the management of our local public radio station, WXXI-FM, with a proposal to invite Michael to host a weekend series of three live concerts in Rochester. The marathon event would be jointly sponsored by WXXI, Eastman School of Music, the Rochester chapter of the American Guild of Organists, and RTOS. All three programs would consist of performances by the ESM organ instructors along with their students.

As if by magic, the stars and planets aligned, and all parties agreed to embrace Jon’s proposal in its entirety, right down to working with the only date available to RTOS in February. Michael arrived in Rochester on Thursday, February 12 and, thanks largely to the excellent on-air promotion by WXXI, on Friday the 13th a standing room only crowd of nearly 1,000 filled Sacred Heart Cathedral to hear the opening concert. The following evening a fire code-violating audience packed Christ



Jonathan Ortloff and Allan Ward close the performance with "It's Alright with Me"

Church and stayed, rapt, for the entire three-hour performance. The playing at these concerts demonstrated the very high level of skill and talent of the students and faculty. Michael was visibly impressed, both by the playing and the size of the crowds.

## The Cherry on Top

Anyone who follows *Pipedreams* understands that although Michael's focus is normally on classical organs and literature, he occasionally presents a program that features the theatre organ. Even more significantly, Michael's *Live* programs have never included a theatre organ concert. Thanks to Jon's vision, Michael's enthusiastic interest, and the skillful planning of everyone involved, RTOS is honored to have the RTOS-Grierson Wurlitzer be the first theatre organ ever featured on *Pipedreams Live*.

Michael was even more impressed as, on Sunday afternoon, approximately 1,300 people descended on the Auditorium Theatre where we were welcomed by RTOS president Kevin Scott who introduced representatives of the other sponsoring organizations. Next up was Michael who presided for the remainder of the afternoon. Following a few brief remarks, Michael introduced Jon Ortloff, who led off with a stunning arrangement of "The RKO March" as he brought the gleaming console from the pit to concert level. The audience rose to its feet for nearly one minute, yelling and shouting as Jon, teamed up with drummer Allan Ward, ended his second selection, "It's De-Lovely." Other highlights of the afternoon included David Higgs's scintillating and sensitive interpretation of Ketelby's "In a Persian Market," David Baskeyfield's authentic Blackpool rendition

of "Beside the Seaside," and Bill Porter's comedic weaving of Bach and Cole Porter in his arrangement of "Just One of Those Things." Michael skillfully wove the fabric of the program together with his signature spot-on interviewer's skills as he introduced each of the performers and discussed their backgrounds, their interest in theatre organ, and the music they had chosen. There was even a short demonstration of some of the organ's orchestral ranks, percussions, and the array of toys that we all take for granted but are obviously objects of much mystery and intrigue to those who think that an organ's percussion section is the little bell the organist rings to signal the lads who pump the bellows to go to work. It is significant to mention that events such as this do much to show that classically trained organists can approach and perform successfully on the theatre organ.

RTOS audiences have always been generous with their applause, but the thunderous response this day was reminiscent of that afforded to George Wright and others in the good ole days when our concerts regularly drew audiences of 1,500–1,800 people. While we often think of classical organ audiences as being a bit stuffy, in our house they clapped, cheered, stomped, shouted, and carried on like steel workers at a strip show. At one point Michael asked for a show of hands of those who had never attended an RTOS event before. Our best guess is that nearly half of the audience raised their hands. To say that a good time was had by all would be an understatement. Our membership table was inundated by those who wanted to know more about RTOS, and we signed up 30 new members during the intermission. Our stock of David Peckham's *No Remaining Seats* CD recorded on the 4/23 several years ago was sold out in minutes.

## Completing the Circle

Where do we go from here? RTOS is grateful to Michael Barone for his interest, to ESM, WXXI and AGO for their sponsorship and participation, and to all of the performers and the wonderful people who came to listen. We especially thank Jon Ortloff for his vision and the tremendous amount of time and effort he devoted to making it all happen. We were thrilled by the turnout and enthusiasm generated by this event. Will it prove to be a real shot in the arm? Will a significant number of the attendees come back? Only time will tell.

This article began with reference to the circle of life as it applies to the budding relationship between RTOS and the ESM. Beyond the music and the good will generated by the collaboration to date, we believe that the best is yet to come. As part of his remarks, David Higgs spoke of his hopes to re-establish a course of study of the art of theatre organ performance at the Eastman School of Music. His vision includes the acquisition and installation of a suitable practice instrument. Admittedly this plan is only in the formative stages, but should it come to fruition, it will be unprecedented and could become a significant factor in the perpetuation of theatre organ.

Eastman and EROI have, from the beginning, recognized the place theatre organ holds in the history of organbuilding and organ performance, and counts with pride the RTOS instruments in Rochester's growing collection. As Bill Porter said at the first ESM-RTOS concert in 2007, "The department of illegitimate organ playing is open for business once again." RTOS couldn't be happier to be a part of the rebirth.

# Wurlitzer Weekend Revisited

BY BILL CAMPBELL  
(Photos Campbell Collection)



Wurlitzer Weekend 2009, co-sponsored by the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society and the Orange County Theatre Organ Society, contained something of interest to almost everyone. In all there were seven separate events in and around Los Angeles over January 13–15.

Our event began with a silent film presentation at the beautiful Orpheum Theatre. This is the only remaining Los Angeles movie palace from the Golden Age which retains its original Wurlitzer organ. The organ has been lovingly maintained through the tireless efforts of volunteers. The show featured Jim Spohn, who accompanied the short silent comedy *One Week*, starring Buster Keaton. Suzanne Lloyd, granddaughter of Harold Lloyd, gave a short talk prior to the screening of *The Kid Brother*, which she said was her grandfather's favorite. Bob Salisbury furnished a flawless accompaniment for the

film. The audience loved it, and honored Bob with a standing ovation. We would also like to acknowledge that Robert Simonton did a great job as projectionist.

Saturday morning began with a nice program at the Disney El Capitan Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard, with Lew Williams from Phoenix. Then it was off to the Nethercutt Collection in Sylmar (near the northern city limits of Los Angeles) to hear the 4/75 theatre organ played by Chris Gorsuch. Saturday evening found us in Orange County at Plummer Auditorium in Fullerton, about 35 miles from Los Angeles. It contains a 4/33 Wurlitzer maintained by volunteers from the Orange County Theatre Organ Society. At the console was Rob Richards, a resident organist at the El Capitan Theatre. Demonstrating some fine piano artistry was Alex Zsolt. This was Alex's first time appearing in one of our productions. Judging from the warm

reception, it is certain that he will be with us again. Rob Richards really makes the Plummer organ sing and seems to enjoy himself when he comes to Orange County.

We had to be up bright and early Sunday morning in order to be at the Iceland Ice Rink in Paramount, about 20 miles southeast of Los Angeles. The facility is owned by the Zamboni family who are known throughout the world as the inventors and manufacturers of the famous ice surfacing machines. We were able to obtain a brief period with the organ, with Bill Campbell at the console, before regular activities began for the day. The rink features a 3/19 Wurlitzer installed in 1941. By the '70s it had fallen into disrepair, but it was rebuilt by Peter Crotty who has kept it in top playing order ever since.

Our next program was at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse. This was a wholly separate production put on by the City of



Alex Zsolt (l), Don Near, and Rob Richards



"Hear no evil, speak no evil, see no evil"



Suzanne Lloyd

San Gabriel to re-inaugurate the 3/17 Wurlitzer. The organ, originally installed in the Albee Theatre in Brooklyn, New York, came to San Gabriel in 1968 and was installed by chapter members. It was removed from service two years ago and a complete renovation undertaken. It is now back with a few more “bells and whistles.” The emcee for the afternoon was none other than Lyn Larsen who, together with Bill Thompson and Gaylord Carter, opened this organ over 40 years ago. Lyn favored us with a beautiful rendition of “Apple Blossom Time,” honoring a special request. The principal organists were Jelani Eddington and Chris Gorsuch. In addition, Russ Peck from San Diego accompanied a Laurel and Hardy short. Finally, a string ensemble consisting of some 50 young musicians from Gabrieleno High School presented several numbers with Chris and Jelani. It was truly something to behold. Russ Peck was featured as percussionist. The program ended with Jelani at the piano and Chris at the organ playing Grieg’s *Piano Concerto in A Minor*.

For those who still had strength left, it was off to El Segundo (near the ocean, about 45 miles from San Gabriel). There we heard the one and only Ron Rhode at Old Town Music Hall. This little theatre features a 4/33 Wurlitzer which has entertained the public since 1968 under the talented hands of Bill Field and the late Bill Coffman. Ron Rhode got his professional start here many years ago and enjoys returning every January. His choice of music and skillful performance was the perfect way to cap off a great weekend. If you are in our area next January, please plan to join us for *Wurlitzer Weekend 2010*. You will be glad you did.

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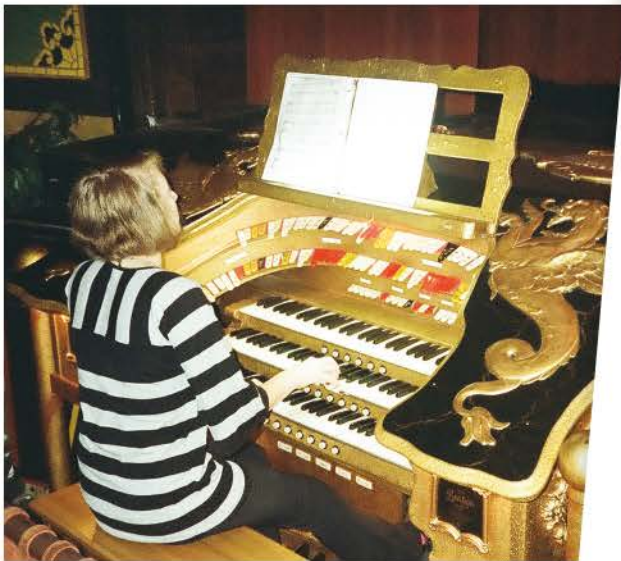
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# A Field Trip to the Redford

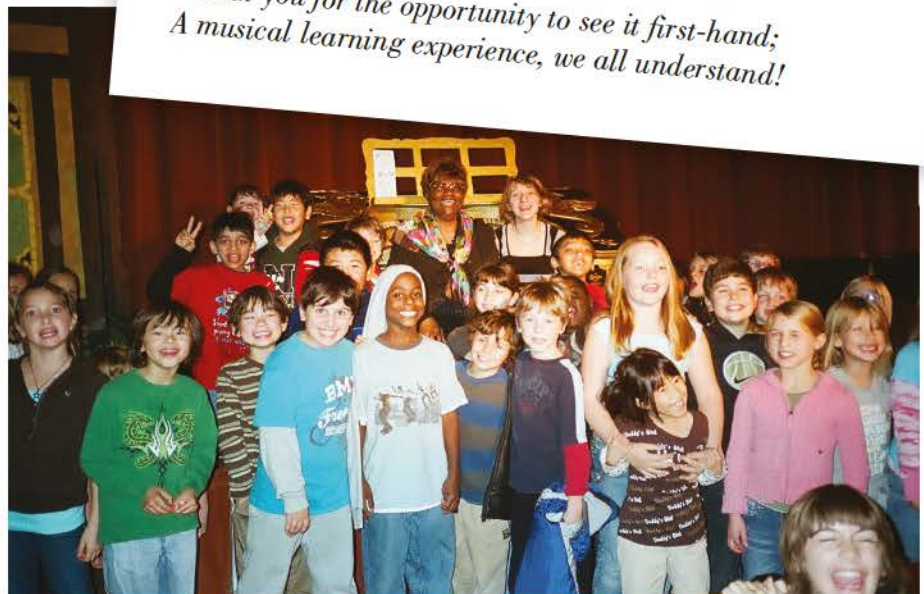
On November 14, over 190 third and fourth grade students from Orchard Hills Elementary School in Novi, Michigan, visited the historic Redford Theatre, accompanied by 50 parents, teachers, and chaperones. While Emily Seward played in the house, the kids donated \$1 at the candy counter, received a small drink and popcorn, and were ushered into the auditorium. The children were treated to a 1920s movie palace experience featuring the Barton and a short silent film. Perhaps the story is best told by the following poem composed by some of the students:



Emily Seward plays the overture for the elementary school students

Music teacher Annie Bailey and Emily Seward at the console, surrounded by the students

(Photos by Ed Seward)



Thank You for our Field Trip  
to the Redford Theater!

FROM MRS. ISRAEL'S THIRD GRADERS

*We boarded our buses with a chill in the air;  
For a day of excitement with flash and with flare.*

*A trip to a theater we'd never been;  
To learn about music from way back when.*

*Eager to get there to find a good seat;  
A thirst-quenching drink and some popcorn to eat.*

*We listened to a young girl, on the organ she played;  
The talent for music, she easily displayed.*

*We heard about the pipe organ and the sounds it produced;  
We sat in a theater restored with style and spruce.*

*A silent movie was played to bring out a smile;  
Showing entertainment can be made in its very own style.*

*Redford Theater was a place of richness in history;  
Why it is still operating is truly no mystery.*

*Those that love music and movies, galore;  
Will visit that theater for many encores!*

*Thank you for the opportunity to see it first-hand;  
A musical learning experience, we all understand!*

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*Catalog Photo of  
the Welte Style 5  
concert orchestration*

# Preserving a Great Musical Heritage

Part I BY JAMES D. CRANK (Photos Crank Collection)

Organ music has taken many forms throughout history. Concerts have been performed in churches, theatres, concert halls, municipal auditoria, and on pipe organs in the mansions of wealthy music lovers. Residence organs provided fine music for social occasions, as well as for the owners' listening pleasure. A few families retained a private organist but, more often, organs were played automatically by special perforated paper rolls. Roll-playing attachments were nearly universal in residence organs. Almost every class of music could be had; the combined music libraries of all residence organbuilders includes over 3,500 titles—a vast resource of good music. Paper rolls lasted a long time, but today they are disintegrating. Unless preservation

is pursued with diligent speed, much of this music and the efforts of skilled performers, craftsmen, and the original composers will be forever lost.

Reproducing piano music has been well preserved; however, the libraries of rolls produced for use with reproducing residence pipe organs have not been addressed to any extent. In fact, they have been almost totally ignored. These are all direct-keyboard recordings or original draft board arrangements. Requiring less editing by their very nature, they are perhaps even more indicative of artists' original performances than heavily edited and altered reproducing piano rolls.

Duplicating rolls is a very costly undertaking. The rolls are rare, in many odd sizes

with varying hole spacing and number, and they are usually long. There are few roll-playing organs left, and owners are not financially able to construct the readers and punches, much less sell off a minimum run to pay for the work. Even the tough waxed paper used originally is not available, and the paper sometimes used for recut rolls is quite fragile and easily torn. Another serious problem is trying to find working roll players. Once relatively popular, today the Duo-Art is difficult to find. The other types are impossibly rare. One may guess that there are at least 200-plus reproducing pianos in operation to each reproducing pipe organ.

Organ roll libraries are not as large as those for reproducing pianos. Yet they



contain grand music of high interest to those who love orchestral transcriptions, grand opera, symphonic scores, classical organ literature, light operetta, and vintage popular music played on the organ—an instrument well suited to the task. Welte, Wurlitzer, Skinner, and Æolian recorded the finest artists of the day. These organists generally did not make phonograph records because the technology then was simply not capable of reproducing organ music properly. This was an era of *bravura* playing; organists played extremely complex orchestral scores with thrilling effect. Fortunately, some committed transcriptions to paper rolls; otherwise their artistry would be lost for all time.

Public concerts could not supply music in the home. The piano, violin, flute, and the early phonographs had to suffice. But for those with substantial resources and space, the solution was to commission and install a residence player pipe organ—many built by Æolian. Organ owners were not only captains of industry and prominent social leaders, a great number were also very seriously devoted to fine music and were generous patrons of the arts. Pipe organs became symbols of social standing. Four famous owners of residence organs come immediately to mind: department store owner Frank Woolworth (Æolian Opus 1410, 4/107), auto baron Horace Dodge (Æolian Opus 1319-B, 4/80), steel magnate Charles Schwab (Æolian Opus 1032, 4/74), and publisher Cyrus Curtis (Æolian Opus 1374, 4/104).

The Æolian Company was the leading builder of residence organs, with some 1,000 instruments installed between 1894 and 1932. Welte, Skinner, Wurlitzer, Estey, Möller, Kimball, and other firms competed with Æolian for the residence market. Æolian, Welte and Estey had the largest music libraries and aggressively marketed their instruments. If the organbuilder did not have his own sales studio, his instruments might be sold by exclusive department stores that had specially designed and lavishly furnished salons just to display the instruments in a refined setting similar to a buyer's home. This was a subtle and effective sales device, and it certainly worked.

Æolian's suave salesmen also had another trick up their sleeves. The demonstrator organs were usually large ones, and the player had three little buttons for the salesman to use: "soft," "normal," and "loud." These controlled how many ranks the player could use. "Now, here is what

you are considering, Madame; but just listen to this one. Certainly nine ranks to start with, then maybe 15 or so, then 26 or 35 ranks." You can just hear the response, "Oh, yes, I hear what you are saying, and that one is so much better. We will take that one." The upsale resulted in a bigger organ, at a big boost in price, too.

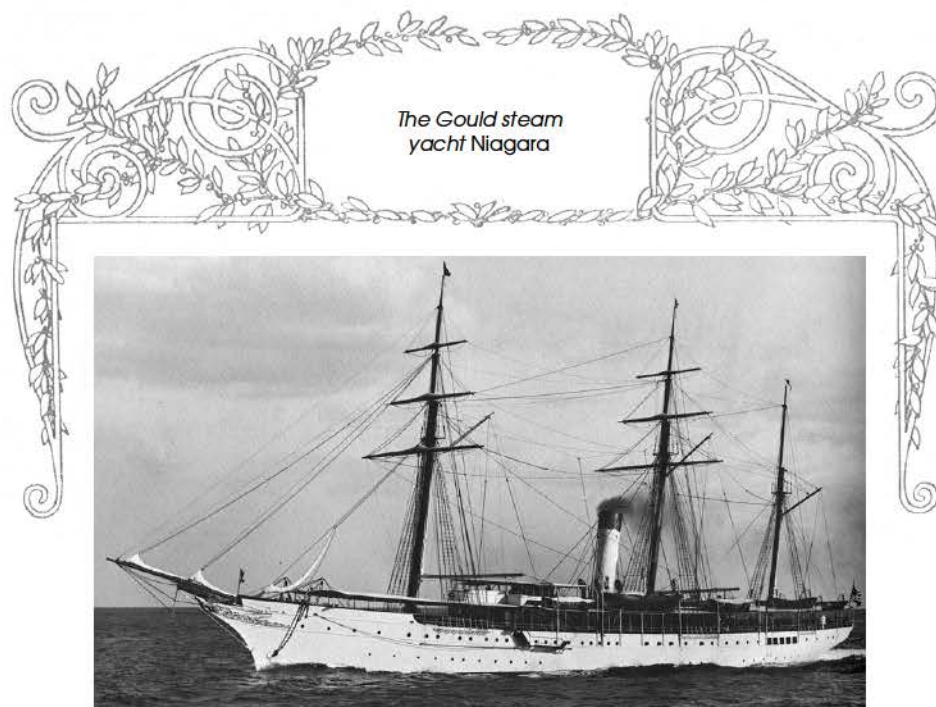
Æolian was the most skillful at cramming a pipe organ into any available space—upstairs bedrooms, closets, billiard rooms, basements, and attics, in addition to real organ chambers. If you had the money, Æolian certainly would get the organ installed. While most organs were rather modest in size, a few Æolian clients (the company referred to them as "Patrons"), purchased organs from 50 to over 80 ranks. Considering that the cost of an Æolian residence organ was about \$900 to \$1,300 per stop, this was a major investment. The larger Æolians ran well over \$50,000.

Pipe organs were occasionally installed on ocean-going yachts. Imagine, if you will, this delightful scene: congenial company, a fine summer evening, the yacht silently slipping along, a glass of cognac on the stern deck, uniformed stewards in hovering attendance, and the pipe organ chortling away in the main salon. Horace and Anna Dodge's 258-foot steam yacht, *Delphine*, led this aquatic musical parade with a two-manual, 16-rank Æolian, with piano and Duo-Art player in the walnut-paneled music salon, a room which also had a working marble fireplace! Æolian also installed a two-manual, 12-rank organ for

Capt. J. R. DeLamar in the yacht, *May*. Their first floating installation was in 1898 for B. M. Whitlock on the steam yacht *Hildegarde*. Owners were not to be denied their music even when at sea. Installing organs on yachts was not unique to Æolian. Welte had earlier installed a large Style 5 concert orchestrion aboard Howard Gould's 272-foot yacht, *Niagara*, and a Style 4 in the 262-foot *Noma* for W. B. Leeds. Estey had stuffed a two-manual, 15-rank organ aboard the 203-foot *Isis* for the Spaulding family. Even Ernest Skinner got into this floating music box business in 1929 with a small, nine-rank duplexed organ in the main salon of Col. Deeds' yacht, *Lotosland*. What an era!

A few residence organ owners hired a private organist. Archer Gibson led this lucrative profession and made a fortune in the process. He also recorded more rolls for the Æolian organ than any other organist. Organists sometimes recorded for multiple organbuilders using various *noms de console*. But if a private organist was unavailable, residence organbuilders devised very complex roll-playing attachments so music could be available at the touch of a button.

Engineers had two basic ways of approaching the design of their players. Narrow rolls, such as those used by Skinner, Roesler-Hunholz, Estey, and Möller, made great use of multiplexing. Wide rolls, such as the Duo-Art, were subject to paper expansion due to changes in humidity. This made an expanding



tracker bar necessary. But while Æolian, Austin, and Wurlitzer all had expanding tracker bars, Welte did not. They shifted the long, 150-hole bar back and forth for tracking. Some Welte experts have said that the heavily coated paper used by Welte was of superior quality. It did not expand nearly as much, making simple tracking adequate.

Some organbuilders went so far as to market multi-roll players that held some six or 10 rolls. You could insert your favorite rolls, push the button, and have an evening of fine music. A few installations even had more than one multi-roll player, allowing for a very long-playing organ—a sort of pneumatic Muzak. Wurlitzer had a Ferris wheel-type six-roll changer, and Welte used a fascinating six-foot high contraption that used bicycle chains to carry 10 rolls past the tracker bar which moved in and out for play and rewind. This device had 10 individual feed-spool holders and take-up spools—one for each roll. Although Welte made its own single-roll player, the 10-roll unit was purchased from the Automatic Musical Instrument Company in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which marketed it as the Multi-Control. Estey and Artcraft also used this changer. Skinner, Wurlitzer and Möller made their own roll players.

Æolian used the Ferris wheel design for 10 rolls, but loading it was a fussy chore. One had to put a slender bar on the eyelet

at the beginning of each roll and insert it into a holder. Then the machine would grab the bar and carry it down to the take-up spool as each roll was changed. According to Nelson Barden, Ernest Skinner told his engineer, Tolbert Cheek, to take the Æolian Concertola and change it after Skinner gained control of the Æolian organ division. As Skinner said, “None of our clients will want to put those bars on the rolls, so take this thing out back and make some kind of a lever that will pick up the tab and take it down to the take-up spool.” Tolbert said it took him weeks to grind the correct actuating arm cam. Two are known to exist. Given their mechanical complexity, these multi-roll players are spellbinding to watch in operation—especially the Æolian Concertola and the Welte Multi-Control.

Skinner loved symphonic music played on the organ, so an automatic player and comprehensive music library were high on his priority list. In 1915, Ernest Skinner invented the most complex and versatile player known, called the Orchestrator. It was capable of playing six independent lines of music at the same time from only 120 holes in the tracker bar. He first developed a two-manual, semi-automatic player as early as 1909 that played Pedal, Great, and Swell—you did the stop changing and expression yourself—just like the Æolian 116-note player.

Skinner recognized the serious problem of wide paper rolls expanding with humidity, so his rolls were only 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide—smaller than even a player piano roll. Æolian used 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ " rolls for their Duo-Art player, the Wurlitzer R used 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ " rolls, and Austin rolls measured 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide. Despite their width, Austin rolls did less than what Skinner rolls did with the narrowest player organ roll in the business. All of his semi-automatic and full automatic rolls used a narrow roll.

Skinner based the Orchestrator on a concept he observed in the symphony orchestra. Four-note chords would be played by four different instruments. Skinner wanted his player to do the same thing. His Orchestrator could play six lines of music, as well as four-note chords played on four different stops, and all at the same time. This was accomplished with the player operating the Pedal, a duplexed Great and Swell, and four separate 37-note chests for solo voices. These were contained in separate swell boxes inside the Solo chamber. The best information is that the Orchestrator could treat the organ as Pedal, Accompaniment, and four solo voices, or as Pedal, Great, and Swell using the solo voices individually. It all depended on what the roll editors wanted. The player was capable of switching individual notes of each of the organ's divisions on the tracker bar, depending on what was needed and when. Although Skinner said his player could perform seven lines of music at once, this version of the player was never produced.

Each hole in the tracker bar could handle four separate functions by using “Pilots” that switched 36-note channels up or down depending on where the music was to be played. Pilots were also used in the full-automatic player. The player had three Pilots per division: Pedal, Great, and Swell. Even with this formidable ability, using two Pilots at once could act as octave couplers. Firing one Pilot canceled the other two, and they operated so quickly they could function between notes in the music. If the notes were using all the holes on one division of the organ where stops were to be changed, the Orchestrator could instantly switch that part to the other division of the organ that wasn't using so many tracker bar channels. It could even add a hole that played the Tuba for *fortes* or accents. This player had an astonishing ability. Several well-qualified organ restorers have said that even with the later full-automatic player, when the organ was playing a very busy roll,



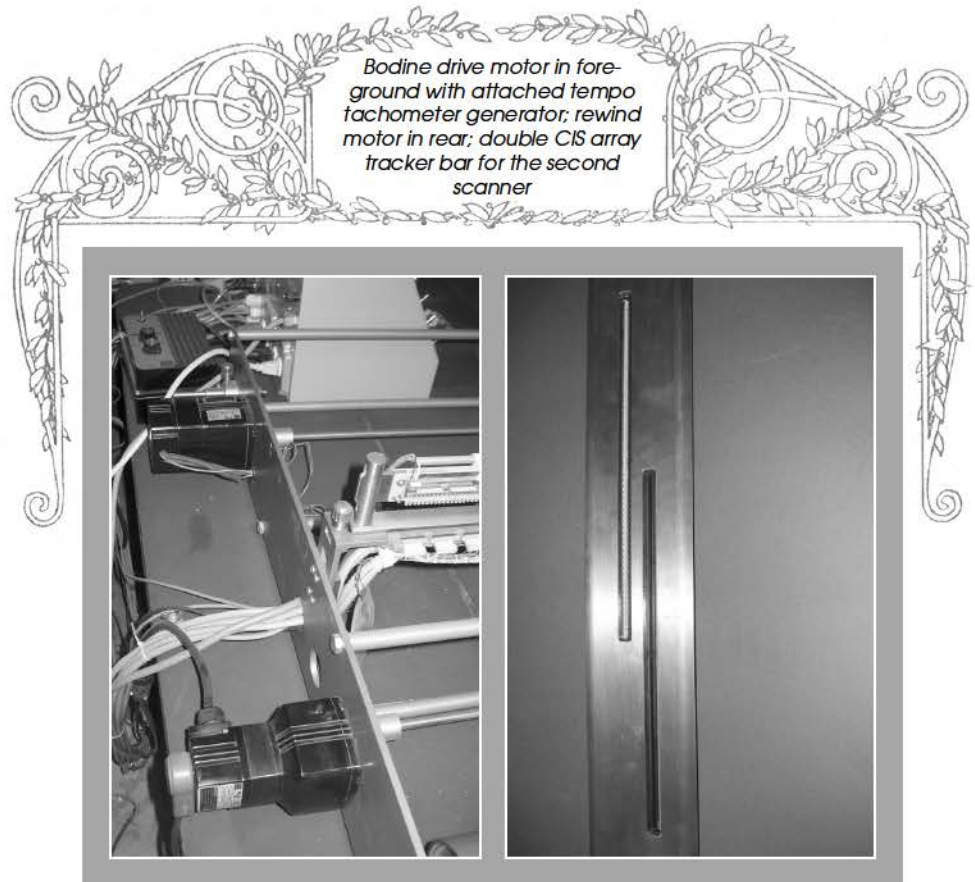
they wondered how the switches and relays could even stay on the boards—they were going that fast.

Skinner's player was actually a pneumatic binary computer and a major tour de force in engineering. But Orchestrators were too expensive and complicated; only six were built. The Orchestrator demanded constant and skilled maintenance which was not practical. The player's switch and relay boards were as big as the organ. Only with contemporary digital technology can we accomplish what Skinner did with holes in paper, rubber tubes, pneumatics, valves, switches, and air pressure some 94 years ago. Since the Orchestrator was so fiendishly complex, a somewhat simpler, full-automatic player was redesigned between 1919 and 1921—still with astonishing ability.

Only one Orchestrator player organ seems to remain in its original home at *Elm Tree* in Pennsylvania. While the organ was skillfully restored, the Orchestrator was not, so it can only play semi-automatic rolls. Apparently, only a couple of Orchestrator rolls exist. It would be wonderful to be able to hear one of these players working. After the Skinner Organ Company had absorbed the organ division of the Æolian Company in 1932, Skinner players and rolls were dropped, and they used the Duo-Art for the few residence organs sold after that point.

Later, the Möller Artiste (with five musical lines—a very complicated player in its own right), the Wurlitzer R (with four lines), and the Austin player (also with four lines) could provide multiple tonal lines over the usual three (as could the Roesler-Hunholz Concert model). But Skinner's was the first and, arguably, the best and the most sophisticated. It was most certainly the most complex.

Skinner's automatic players enjoyed one monumental advantage that was shared with only one other system—the Kimball Soloist. When a stop change was called for in Skinner's player, all the stops in a division were cancelled, and the registration was reset with lightning speed. If the player missed a stop change, the error was only continued until the next stop change. Thus, Skinner's player was self-correcting. In contrast, the Welte Philharmonic and Duo-Art players used a lock-and-cancel reversible system. If the player missed one of the holes, the error was continued to the end of the roll. This led to some funny musical consequences, such as chords on the chimes. After 1932, the Kimball-Welte player (Kimball bought the Welte assets in



mid-1931) was changed from a lock-and-cancel stop control to a latched relay and general cancel with instant stop-reset system—similar to the Skinner player and Kimball Soloist.

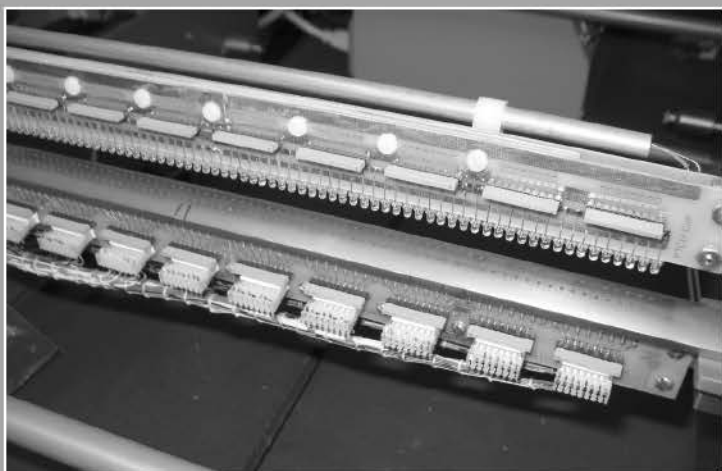
The first players by Æolian were of limited compass. They were for player reed organs of only 46 notes, and for 58 notes in 1892. Then, by using a two-row tracker bar with 116 notes, both manuals and some pedal notes could be played. By 1915 Æolian had added control holes for stops and expression to what was basically their old 116-note roll system. Now with 176 holes, Æolian finally had a fully automatic organ—the Duo-Art. This also enabled an organist to record his music live, and a great many did. It would be very interesting to know just who designed this player at Æolian.

Automatic stop selection was very desirable. Since the earlier Æolian 116-note roll played only the notes, the operator was responsible for changing stops, working both expressions, altering the tempo, and sometimes shifting the notes between the two manuals of the organ, as well as continuous use of the crescendo pedal. And if that were not enough, the operator also had to keep the roll centered on the tracker bar. One might as well have just learned to

play the notes and be done with it. While the music was sometimes grand, it was simply an antiquated system that required a skilled and practiced operator to obtain best results. Welte had introduced their fully automatic Philharmonic system in 1910, but it took Æolian another five years to respond with a fully automatic roll player.

While many Æolian Duo-Art rolls were hand played, many were draft board arrangements by the "Æolian Organ Guild," a pseudonym for whoever was on duty with the paper punch that day. These arrangements were well thought out by highly skilled musicians. Such arrangements often rendered music that no single human could duplicate. Some draft board arrangements were of such complexity that two organists would have had to record the music on a dual console organ—and this was actually done by several companies. Another trick was for the organist to record the music, then play back the roll manually, adding more notes. The combined results were recorded onto a second master roll. These rolls are simply stunning and have an amazing effect when played back on a large instrument.

A number of residence organs have survived, but unfortunately a great many have been scrapped. A depressing number



being made or not made by individual roll perforations, Welte used four holes and a timed expression method that are identified on the tracker bar list as “fast open-fast close” or “slow open-slow close.” This depended on Welte rolls running at a fixed speed—not variable speed as employed by others. When Kimball bought Welte, the system was changed to three holes; two holes ran two pneumatics that ratcheted a drum with an angled contact plate forward or backward, opening or closing the shutters in 12-step increments. Shutter speed depended on how fast the pneumatics were being pulsed which, in turn, was dependent on how closely the holes were perforated. The third hole operated a 12-contact relay that went across all the shutter contacts and opened or closed them all at once for accent or *forte*. The original fourth hole was now used for rewind. Regardless of the player, it seems that the expression of the two chambers were connected together; the tracker bar hole assignments do not show Great or Swell as being individually selectable. The Roesler-Hunholz Concert player also used this stepped contact arrangement but used two drums for separate Great and Swell expression. Æolian organs also made great use of separate expression.

It is still possible to locate Æolian Duo-Art and, to a more limited extent, Welte Philharmonic pneumatic players, and carefully restore them to playing condition. The rest are almost impossible to find.

Restoring old players to original condition is a difficult task; much of the technical information has long been lost, and one is left fumbling with a rat’s nest of unlabeled wiring and mysterious switches and relays. Another challenge is understanding the astonishingly complex system of multiplexing some utilized to get the most use out of each hole. Trying to unravel the system and find out what was connected to what, when, and why, becomes a daunting task without wiring and logic function diagrams, nearly all of which have ceased to exist.

Many old pneumatic players have a nasty predilection for tearing up rolls. The Æolian Duo-Art Concertola and the Welte Multi-Control are well known for being extremely temperamental and have been known to shred rolls, particularly when the players get out of adjustment, or are worn out from use. The most frustrating feature of Duo-Art players is their tracking mechanism and what happens with old rolls made from poor-quality paper that has torn

of large Æolian residence organs were left to rot and suffer fatal vandalism when families deserted their homes to escape ruinous taxes and maintenance costs. Some instruments fell to the wrecking ball. Page 108 of Monica Randall’s book, *The Mansions of Long Island’s Gold Coast*, shows the sad fate of the once grand Æolian organ (Opus 1306, 3/65) in Farnsworth, the C.K.G. Billings-Wallace Bird mansion—totally destroyed and scattered over the floor.

Surprisingly, Duo-Art music rolls have survived in considerable quantity. Some historically minded people have gone so far as to recut some of the Æolian Duo-Art and Wurlitzer rolls. Unfortunately, no one is

paying any attention to the splendid Welte and Skinner rolls.

The underlying premise of our roll preservation effort was to make digital copies of the paper rolls with complete accuracy. Even with the availability of some rolls, the problem of how to play them becomes a major issue.

Pipe organs are commonly actuated electrically by contacts under the keys, pedals, stop tablets, and expression pedals; a circuit is either on or off. Notes and stops are activated on command by means of the holes perforated in the music rolls.

There is an interesting variation in expression shutter control in the Welte Philharmonic system. In place of separate Great and Swell expression shutter contacts

edges. This player has two tracking mechanisms, powered by two large, double-acting pneumatics—one to shift the entire tracker bar back and forth, and the other one to expand the outer sections of the seven-section tracker bar using a clever differential parallelogram linkage. Only the center section was fixed; the three on either side of the center section moved. This device moved the outer sections more than the inner ones to compensate for expansion from humidity—the major curse of wide player rolls. One mechanism could often fight with the other; Æolian did not engineer the necessary feedback cross connections very well.

With the two systems fighting each other, the roll sometimes got pushed way off track, and musical chaos ensued, often accompanied by tearing noises. A plugged bleed hole or dirty valve could also cause problems. Æolian apparently tried several schemes to overcome this but never solved it. If a roll was badly damaged on the edges, the tracking ears could catch, resulting in a roll torn lengthwise before you could race to the player to shut it off. More advanced systems, such as those used by Welte and others, eliminated the ears entirely and used pneumatic systems to read the position of special tracking holes on the

sides or middle of the roll. Rewind on both players was done at lightning speed, and this is where many rolls (including some of the author's) were reduced to ribbons. You have to slow the rewind way down if you want any rolls left in one piece.

Do you want to hear the music, or do you want to constantly fuss with ancient roll players and fragile old rolls? We decided to design and construct a scanning system that will take old paper rolls and translate them into a common format, suitable to be used with digital organs via a MIDI input.

Residence organbuilders specified a rather good-sized instrument with sufficient tonal resources to play the music to good effect. Most homes today simply are not large enough to house a big pipe organ, giving it the proper acoustical setting it demands. But there is a satisfactory solution allowing for the enjoyment of residence organ music in the modern home. Digital electronic organs have advanced; the new Allen Quantum organ has MIDI capability and can, therefore, accept digital inputs from an external source.

The writer has a love of orchestral music played on the organ, so the first order of business was to select rolls of greatest interest. The author has a collection numbering over 300 recut Æolian Duo-Art

rolls, the complete Wurlitzer R roll library, and access to a large Welte library. These became the cornerstones of this project. Then, drawing on personal experience as a mechanical and optical instrumentation engineer, decisions were made as to how to design a scanner to transcribe these rolls, incorporating the most appropriate technology available. These decisions required many months of careful deliberation with many excursions down interesting and expensive side roads that came to nothing in the end. The roll formats to be scanned included Æolian 116-note, Æolian Duo-Art, Welte Philharmonic, Kimball-Welte, Möller Artiste, Wurlitzer RJ, Wurlitzer R, Roesler-Hunholz Concert, Estey Automatic, Kimball Soloist, Skinner Automatic, and various orchestrion rolls.

## The Transport Mechanism

The transport mechanism needed to have industrial-grade rigidity. No flexure was to be permitted, assuring the stability of any alignment adjustments. Then, more-than-adequate motor power would be used so that any variation in roll speed (common in old players with large long-playing rolls) would be eliminated. There are several websites devoted to the design and construction of transport systems, primarily for piano roll conversion, and all were studied in great detail. A list of DOs and DON'Ts was made up so that tracking problems and other opportunities for roll damage could be identified and then eliminated one by one in the design of new scanners.

Pinch rollers or rubber-covered drive wheels were rejected out of hand. They are seldom made with sufficient precision to eliminate weaving or slipping in long and wide rolls, some of which are almost 17" wide. Slippage can be a nasty problem with big rolls, causing errors in note timing. Roll damage can also occur. Accurate scanning is lost when any slipping occurs. The paper surface condition greatly influences this situation, as does the condition and age of the rubber on the drive wheels.

The same goes for stepper motor drives, especially when combined with rubber drive wheels. Some stepper motors can have the problem of dithering when they come to rest and may have rather abrupt acceleration, causing slipping and damage. Adding high tension to force the drive wheel against the roll paper may help avoid slippage, but it would be unsafe. It seemed best to not use such drive systems at all.



The delicate condition of the old paper was also a factor in rejecting such drive mechanisms. Many old rolls were made with high acid content paper (Duo-Art for one). Also, an unsupported short distance between the feed spool to the tracker bar, and then to the take-up spool, was not desired. The longest allowable distance was one of the first design decisions made. This minimized any weaving of the paper, as did employing the smallest angle between paper and tracker bar.

The drive motor requirements were investigated, and a Bodine variable speed motor with feedback control was chosen, along with a Bodine drive control unit. The separate rewind motor was also chosen from

the Bodine catalog. To minimize drag on the paper, electric clutches were used on both the take-up and feed spool drives. For use during rewind, a dog clutch was added to the take-up spool to totally disengage the drive system so that the least possible tension on the roll was used. This level of safety was constantly in mind. Fine pitch instrumentation timing belts were used throughout, so no belt slippage would occur and no cogging would be evident.

The feed spool shaft ends have adapters that accommodate any roll flange. The take-up drum was dimensioned to draw exactly one foot of paper per revolution. This was done so that a reliable tempo tachometer could be incorporated. The larger-sized

take-up drum also minimizes paper buildup over the usual, and much smaller, take-up spool.

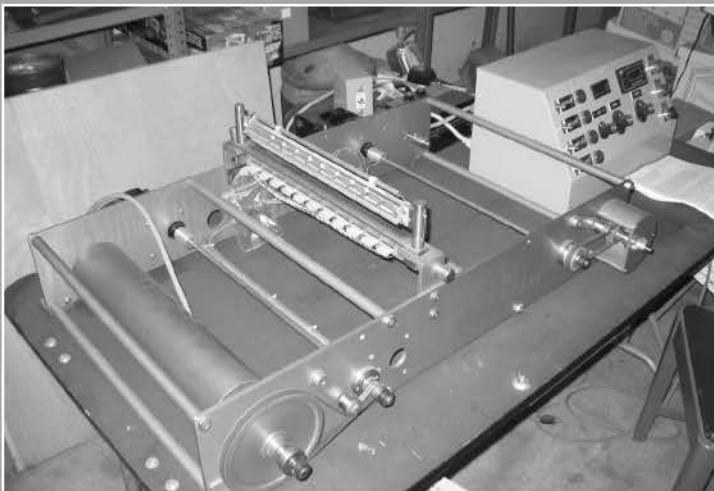
Existing player organ mechanisms, with the exception of the Austin Quadruplex, did not change the take-up spool speed to accommodate paper buildup. Note perforations were automatically stretched on identically sized take-up spools in both the original recording machine and the player. As the paper wound, no increase in tempo was heard. Good evidence says that drafting board-assembled rolls had paper buildup compensation done by roll editors, since the notes were marked for later punching.

With lots of personal experience to lend guidance, no rubbing fingers or other mechanical contact with the edge of the roll would be used with the centering mechanism. The automatic adjustment would be with the note holes in the paper being shifted electronically to compensate, should a really warped roll be scanned. Also, no flanges or guide rollers were used, except for original spool ends. Nothing was allowed to even remotely damage the rolls by physical contact.

## The Duo-Art Scanner

Since the writer has a collection of Æolian Duo-Art and Wurlitzer rolls, the next major decision was whether to make one universal scanner or to make one for just the Duo-Art rolls and another for the remainder. The two-scanner approach was selected. Russ Doering, who has vast experience with roll transport devices, skillfully accomplished the construction of the two transport mechanisms. Russ also contributed a great many helpful suggestions to the design. His precision construction resulted in roll movement that could be absolutely controlled.

The Duo-Art roll scanner used the initial design concept of a phototransistor in each of the tracker bar holes—an optical/electronic version of the original pneumatic system. A new 176-note Duo-Art two-row tracker bar was made, housing a tiny end-on phototransistor in each hole. Matching rows of light emitting diodes were aligned with the phototransistors and located over the tracker bar. Precision screw mechanisms were included for the initial adjustment of the tracker bar in both vertical tilt and side-to-side alignment. There was no provision made for automatic tracking and tracker bar expansion with



this scanner, although it certainly was considered and strongly advised. The thought was that the Duo-Art rolls are all new recuts, or in perfect condition, and automatic tracking and expansion compensation was not needed. Not the wisest course of action as it turned out. It is needed because of expansion due to humidity—even if the rolls run straight as an arrow in the transport. A test setup with a wide roll and a fixed magnifier with a ruled reticule showed that paper expansion over several days with varying humidity definitely would cause the holes to be shifted. This was not the only design goof made that had to be corrected later.

There was a mercifully brief interlude in which an optical version of the original Duo-Art expanding tracker bar was designed using long optical glass wedges that were adjustable in angle to the roll surface by sensing the location of the end holes. We also considered adding adjustable optical edge sensors on both sides of the roll above the tracker bar. This may keep the paper centered, but it does not do anything for paper expansion. Both wedge ideas would have to be used together. This approach simply got out of hand and was abandoned.

The intensity of the light emitting diodes is adjustable, to eliminate any accidental light feed through from various paper translucencies. Only perforations should trigger the sensing phototransistors. Threshold level and intensity-level triggering are both independently adjustable since, if the incorrect intensity was used, chain perforations sounded like machine guns and not sustained notes—the system is that responsive. This turned out to be a very delicate and irritating adjustment in practice.

The output is a standard MIDI signal going into the recording computer that simply registers if a hole is seen or not. A separate playback computer uses roll conversion programs to translate hole functions into notes, stop, and expression changes.

Now that the Duo-Art roll scanner was completed and working, the second phase of the project was begun. This threatened to be a much larger problem, and it certainly was!

# ATOS Membership Application

Please tell your musical, historical and preservationist-minded friends about the American Theatre Organ Society and its work. Encourage them to join the ranks!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Member of ATOS Chapter

- Help me contact local chapter  
 Renewal  Past Member

Payment by:  Check/Money Order  MasterCard  VISA

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code (back of card) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Levels

- Presidents Club.....\$1,000  
 Benefactor.....\$500  
 Patron.....\$200  
 Sustaining.....\$100  
 Contributing.....\$75  
 Regular.....\$40  
 (Outside U.S. \$15 additional surcharge)  
 Student.....\$25  
 (Age 23 and under with documentation)

## Optional Services

- First Class Mail U.S. only add.....\$15  
 Airmail Outside U.S.add.....\$35

Dues are for 12 months from the date entered and cover one household. Contributions in excess of regular membership are tax deductible.

Send the completed form and your remittance to:

ATOS Membership  
 P.O. Box 5327  
 Fullerton, California 92838

Contact: Jim Merry, Executive Secretary  
 714-773-4354, membership@atos.org

**Join or renew online at [www.atos.org/membership](http://www.atos.org/membership)**

# Chapter News

## ATLANTA

Atlanta, Georgia—The grand opening of the Earl Smith Stand Theatre in January was a much-awaited event. Although not an official chapter function, this served as our January meeting. The show was sold out, with a waiting list, which attested to the attention buzz it generated. A variety show format offered classic film clips, singing, dancing, the Lyric Orchestra, and chapter member Ron Carter at an Allen digital organ accompanying a silent comedy short. This show featured over 50 performers, much like the grand openings of movie palaces of the 1920s.

The Allen is temporary, provided by chapter member John McCall, while the rebuild and installation of a theatre pipe organ is in progress. Donations gladly accepted!

On Sunday, February 22, the Atlanta chapter hosted a meeting and orchestra pit party. Phillip Allen, our new program planner, put together an event that drew, I believe, over 300 attendees. The program, emceed by Larry Davis, featured four artists at the Allen. First up was John McCall, followed by Rick McGee, Phillip Allen accompanying a short silent comedy, and finally Ron Carter presenting a sing-along and accompanying vocalist Abigail Carter.

An open house was held, with self-guided tours of the new facility, concessions, open console, and even a record store. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Please note the change in Bucky's e-mail address.

—Rick McGee  
Bucky Reddish, President  
770-948-8424, buckyrph1@bellsouth.net



Rick McGee (l), Phillip Allen, John McCall and Ron Carter (Photo by Mandy Allen)



Ron and Donna Carter, recipients of an Atlanta chapter Lifetime Achievement Award (Photo by Mandy Allen)

## CENTRAL INDIANA

Indianapolis, Indiana—It's a new year and one of many changes—hopefully for the better. The Central Indiana chapter is aiming to earn a larger audience by trying new and exciting concepts. On June 14, Ken Double will perform at the 3/18 Barton at Warren Performing Arts Center. The Central Indiana chapter, in response to Ken Double's suggestion, plans to bring in a local band or vocal group to perform with him. This will hopefully be a way of cross-pollination, so to speak, between theatre organ concertgoers and the followers of the other groups that will be performing.

January 11 brought CIC members together to ring in the New Year at Manual High School. The business meeting was kept short so members could relax to the sounds of the Mighty Wurlitzer with Bill Tandy. Bill plays music in the style of 1920s dance bands. He enjoys listening to 78rpm records and even You Tube in order to create his clever arrangements. His repertoire includes both well-known and perhaps not-so-well-known pieces, which are all very enjoyable.

On February 8, the monthly business meeting was held at Warren. This was a special meeting. It's rare to award a certificate to an honorary member; in order to receive such a distinction, one would have to maintain membership for a very long time period. Dr. Edmund E. Taylor was presented with a certificate for maintaining his membership, uninterrupted, since the founding of CIC on August 9, 1964. For the occasion, Glen Tallar from the Chicago area performed a short program at the Grande Barton. Glen is a student of Jelani Eddington and is certainly no stranger to a Barton theatre organ. He is the resident organist at Beggar's Pizza in Lansing, Illinois where he performs at least twice a

week on the 3/17 Barton/hybrid. His parents also have a 3/14 Barton installed in their home. Glen did an excellent job, and young folks like him should be encouraged as much as possible to play and support the theatre organ.

—Justin Nimmo  
Tim Needler, President  
317-255-8056, tneedler@needlersales.com

## CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Thomaston, Connecticut—The 48th anniversary of Connecticut Valley Theatre Organ Society was celebrated at the Thomaston Opera House on February 22. Six past presidents of CVTOS were in attendance, including Allen Miller (founder), Jon Sibley, Richard Simko, John Angevine, Beth Boda, and Juan Cardona, Jr., along with current president Meredith Sibley.

We were also honored by the attendance of Ken Double, president of ATOS. Ken presented a review of ATOS programs aimed at assisting local chapters to increase interest and support of the theatre organ. CVTOS was pleased to have Ken visit and meet with our members.

Ken played a number of selections, from the 1920s to recent melodic music, all well suited to the theatre organ. John Angevine, organ crew chief, had the Thomaston Opera House 3/15 Marr & Colton sounding great for the performance.

Ken Double also had the opportunity to view the progress on rebuilding the Austin console for Opus 1512, built in 1927 for the Allen Theatre, Hartford, now installed at Shelton High School. The project is a ground-up conversion to a horseshoe-style configuration. Further information about the history of the Austin rebuilding project can be found at [www.cvtos.org](http://www.cvtos.org) by clicking on the Shelton High School (SHS) stopkey.

—Jon Sibley  
Meredith Sibley, President  
860-345-2518



CVTOS presidents, past and current (Photo by J. Sibley)



The deadline for receipt of Chapter News items by the Editor is the FIRST of the month TWO months prior to the THEATRE ORGAN publication date (that's the first of every odd-numbered month). Please note that ATOS policy prohibits inclusion of music titles played at programs or menu items served at chapter functions. Text may be edited for space and clarity. Due to space considerations, please submit a maximum of 250 words of text. Submission as a Microsoft Word file attached to an e-mail (to j.weiler@atos.org) is our first preference; second is text in an e-mail; finally, typewritten hard copy may be sent via postal mail to the Editor (address on masthead). Please submit a maximum of two photos (no less than 3 x 2 inches with resolution of at least 300 dpi), preferably sent as a .jpg file attached to an e-mail. Photos may be sent to the Editor via postal mail; they will not be returned. IMPORTANT: Please name your text file with your chapter name, and name your photos with your chapter name followed by the numerals one or two. Your text MUST include your chapter name and principal city/state of operation; your chapter correspondent's name; and the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of your chapter's president. A caption and appropriate credit to the photographer MUST be included with photos; please put this information at the end of your text document.



Ken Double (l) and Allen Miller inspecting the three-manual Austin console being rebuilt (Photo by J. Sibley)

## DELAWARE VALLEY

Telford, Pennsylvania—Theatre Organ Society of Delaware Valley chapter members met at “the Eagle” to hear the Wanamaker Organ at Macy’s in Center City, Philadelphia. We arrived for the noon concert on January 24 and, to our delight, the sounds we heard were breathtaking. Peter Richard Conte, Grand Court Organist, was at the console of the majestic pipe organ—the largest playable instrument in the world. Glorious sounds thundered and encompassed the Court. Rudolph A. Lucente, Friends of the Wanamaker Organ executive treasurer/music liaison and TOSDV board member, guided us through a tour of the facilities after the concert. TOSDV thanks Rudolph for his kindness in arranging our special day at the Wanamaker organ.

—Anna Bonelli Downey, President  
215-723 7716, annatodsv@comcast.net



Delaware Valley members at the Eagle in the Grand Court of Macy’s (Photo by Richard Auchincloss)

## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Wellesley, Massachusetts—The second half of our concert and social season has begun.

On Sunday, January 11, we welcomed Mark Herman and Anthony Snitker to Knight Auditorium. Mark was signed over a year ago to play our annual Young Organists’ Concert. When concert sponsor, Charlie Briggs, heard Mark and Anthony last summer at the annual convention, he decided to invite Anthony. The result was a wonderful afternoon of great music.

We have watched Mark progress and mature as a musician since his first appearance for us. His playing is precise and full of emotion. Anthony has gained an incredible amount of confidence and stage presence even since his convention appearance. We look forward to hosting these two young men again.

Once again, thanks to Charlie Briggs for generously sponsoring this event.

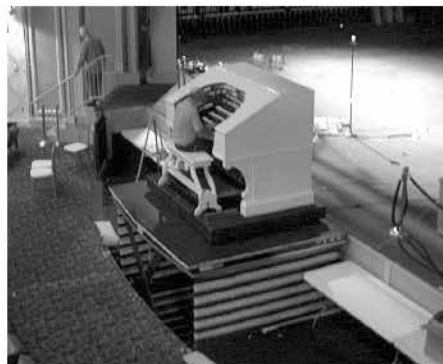
March will bring the members of Eastern Massachusetts chapter together for a *Gong Show*. Many members have agreed to play one or two selections at the Wurlitzer. Some members have labeled this event a “noble experiment.” EMCATOS boasts many talented members whose performances should make this an afternoon to remember.

We have formed the necessary committees to host the 2011 ATOS annual convention. Work is already under way to guarantee that this will be a convention to remember, featuring two brand-new organ equipped venues for the enjoyment of convention attendees. Stay tuned for further news.

While not strictly an EMCATOS project, all of the volunteers working on the 4/35 installation at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester, Massachusetts are active EMCATOS members. The crew, headed by Don Phipps who donated the instrument to the theatre, has worked diligently on the many facets of the project. The Main chamber is playing from the console, and work will begin shortly on the Solo.



Mark Herman at Babson (Photo by Dick Handverger)



Hanover console on lift (Photo by Bruce Hager)

## GARDEN STATE

Little Falls, New Jersey—The final months of 2008 held plenty of enjoyment for Garden State Theatre Organ Society chapter members. Don Kinnier performed an entertaining program at the Trenton Patriots Theatre. The crowd left in good spirits after Don Kinnier finished putting the marvelous 3/16 Möller theatre organ through its paces.

December was the time for our annual Christmas party at the Martins’ Little Falls home. Members took turns playing the 3/24 Griffith Beach organ and grand piano, in between sharing stories, laughter, and a bountiful buffet. Several member musicians added to the spontaneous entertainment by taking up violin, accordion, and a Hammond organ in concert with the pipe organ and piano.

Our annual two-part budget meeting began in January at Newark Symphony Hall. The consideration of income and expenses was lightened by a mini-concert played by Michael Xavier Lundy. The Sarah Vaughan Concert Hall here was formerly known as the Mosque Theatre and is the original home to a 3/15 Griffith Beach pipe organ which GSTOS crew members restored and continue to maintain. Part two of the budget meeting was held in Rahway and, once again, included a mini-concert. Bernie Anderson played the Hammond X-66 organ which is housed in the senior center where the meeting was held. He made the afternoon especially enjoyable. For Garden Staters, the highlight of the day was a brief moment when Bernie left the Hammond and went over to a single keyboard connected to one chamber of the Rainbow Room Wurlitzer pipe organ which sounded its very first notes after many years of dedicated restoration work. A tremendous rush of excitement touched the hearts of everyone present. This marks a milestone for GSTOS members who are committed to saving the theatre pipe organ both as instrument and art form. Mike Fox, crew chief of the Rainbow Room Wurlitzer project, and members of the Brook

# Chapter News

Theatre, who have spent the past year working on this project as well, deserve a warm round of applause as they bring this project towards a successful completion in the coming months.

—Catherine Martin

Michael Cipolletti, President  
732-899-1588, mic22@verizon.net



Don Kinnier at the Trenton War Memorial  
(Photo by Tony Rustako)



Michael Xavier Lundy at Newark  
Symphony Hall (Photo by Cal Bacon)

## HUDSON-MOHAWK

Schenectady, New York—Besides holiday festivities, the Hudson-Mohawk chapter kept a somewhat low profile during the very stormy winter months. Our November meeting was held on the 10th and featured a silent movie and open console. All of our winter meetings were held on the stage of Proctors Theatre, Schenectady, New York. Our holiday party was on December 22 and included a potluck dinner and Christmas music featuring our talented members at the Wurlitzer. February 23 saw another video-themed meeting with the showing of two Wurlitzer factory films, followed by open console.

From September to June, MVP Gold, Proctors Theatre, and the Hudson-Mohawk chapter sponsor free monthly organ concerts featuring club and guest organists at the Wurlitzer. Charles Jones was presented on November 11. December 23 was the always-popular holiday concert and featured Carl

Hackert, Ned Spain, and Greg Klingler at the organ and singers Charlie Peterson and Sam Media. Catherine Hackert and John Miller performed on cello. The noon concert on January 13 featured William Hubert and, on February 24, Claudia Bracaliello and Helen Maksymicz.

Hudson-Mohawk chapter members also used their artistic talents away from Proctors Theatre: Ned Spain played the organ at the Bardavon Opera House in Poughkeepsie at the theatre's Christmas parties and over the winter months at the Shell Point retirement community in Florida. Carl Hackert played the 2/11 Wurlitzer at the Bardavon Opera House for their classics movie program and an induction ceremony for 75 new US citizens now living in the mid-Hudson Valley. Avery Tunningley played a show in December at the Capitol Theatre in Rome, New York. Helen Maksymicz started a Dixieland Band last spring which performed in November and December.

—Norene Grose

Frank Hackert, Chair  
518-355-4523



Claudia Bracaliello (left) and Helen  
Maksymicz (Photo by Frank Hackert)

## JOLIET

Joliet, Illinois—The Joliet Area Theatre Organ Society really started off the year with a big bang. We were very lucky to have Ron Reseigh as our guest artist on February 2, with 95 in attendance. He played up a storm, and it's hard to believe that he just keeps getting better and better. Ron comes from Greenfield, Wisconsin, where he plays at Organ Piper Pizza. Ron tours around the world and his knowledge of the organ is amazing. He asked the audience for requests and filled up a whole page. Ron then played all the requests and he never uses sheet music.

The Rialto Theatre organ had been worked on all day Thursday and Friday by Jim Patak and Le Roy Petry prior to the social; however, it began to act up Sunday. We also experienced quite a change in temperature. Ron and a few JATOE members worked from

11:00am until 2:00pm the day of the program tuning and fixing things that had gotten out of hand. We have a female ghost in the theatre and, of course, we blamed the problems on her. The wonderful attendance just goes to prove that many people would rather hear a pipe organ than watch the Super Bowl.

We will hear Dave Calendine from Detroit on May 17.

JATOE has been very busy getting ready for the 13th annual *Rialto Keyboard Pops Concert* and the JATOE *Rialtofest* weekend. Quite a few tickets have already been sold. A fun weekend is in store!

Many thanks to all the people who devote their time and efforts to keeping the Rialto organ in shape. How lucky we are to be able to use the Rialto Theatre for our socials and business meetings. Thank you Randy Green, Rialto Theatre manager.

—Barbara Petry

Jim Patak, President  
708-562-8538

## LAND O' LAKES

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota and Hudson, Wisconsin—Our annual chapter holiday gathering planned for December 14 at Mike Erie and Roger Dalziel's home in Prescott, Wisconsin, was cancelled due to a massive snowstorm that assaulted southern Minnesota, including the Twin Cities and western Wisconsin. But the weather and sub-zero temperatures did not stop folks from heading out to the Phipps Center for the Arts on December 21 for a concert by Ron Reseigh, organist at the popular Organ Piper Music Restaurant in Milwaukee. The audience enjoyed his varied program of holiday and year-round seasonal favorites, plus a special treat during the second half of his concert: a medley of audience requests. Great fun was had by all; we hope Ron will come back for a return engagement.

Jelani Eddington played a wonderful, well-attended, concert at the Phipps' on January 31, a beautiful Saturday afternoon. The cold of January had finally relented, bringing temperatures well into the 40s with lots of sunshine. Attendees came from as far as Illinois and Fargo, North Dakota. Jelani played traditional favorites and classics, as well as several medleys, in addition to performing at the Baldwin concert grand.

The Phipps now utilizes the Wurlitzer console from Opus 2131, which features a one-of-a-kind Art Deco/Chinois case. It was once part of a Balaban 2 organ built for the Oriental Theatre in Mattapan, Massachusetts, and was donated to the center last year by Terry Hochmuth in memory of Dan Stanke. Changes in the chamber have added to the presence and tonal quality of the organ. The

Saxophone has been moved much closer to the swell shutters so that it can be heard more prominently. The Marimba Harp and trap assembly have been moved to a newly created platform above the stage.

—Kim Crisler  
Terry Kleven, President  
651-489-2074, nittak@comcast.net



The unique three-manual console of Wurlitzer Opus 2131 now plays Wurlitzer Opus 1404 (Photo by Kim Crisler)

## LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Woking Surrey—On 15 November, David Ivory was at our Woking console. In the absence of chairman Ian Ridley, Len Rawle introduced David who is well known for his work with the musical museum at Cotton. David demonstrated the organ's fabulous tone colour with his varied selections.

Our year's highlight at Woking came on 13 December, when we presented our two annual Christmas concerts. Notwithstanding winter weather, both performances played to full and enthusiastic houses, ensuring the continued success of these events.

2009 got off to an excellent start with a spectacular performance at Woking by Nigel Ogden—host for some 25 years of the weekly BBC Radio programme, *The Organist Entertains*. Equally at home at the theatre, concert, or cathedral organ Nigel thrilled our audience on the evening of 17 January.

Our good friends at nearby Old Windsor celebrated the 40th anniversary of the opening of their Compton theatre organ in the Memorial Hall on 25 January. Janet Dowsett performed a wide variety of music at both the Compton and her travelling Yamaha. Congratulations go to founder members Ian Stewart and Reg Cudworth.

With fewer venues in which to host our events, we had no concert in February, but by the time you read this we will have wel-

comed Michael Wooldridge back to Woking on March 14.

—David Coles  
Ian Ridley, President  
+44 1494 674944  
ianridley@atos-london.co.uk



Full House at Woking (Photo by David Coles)



Nigel Ogden at Woking (Photo by David Coles)

## MOTOR CITY

Detroit, Michigan—The Redford Theatre, home of the Motor City Theatre Organ Society, has recently installed multiple security cameras throughout the inside and outside of the facility.

We have welcomed many new members due in part to numbers of movie attendees and to the excellent job our volunteer house organists have been doing at the console.

We mourn the loss of local theatre organ supporters Loren Greenawalt and Elaine Mundt.

We welcomed Dr. Steven Ball back to the overture/intermission schedule after a long hiatus. Three local pros returned to our city after traveling to other organ clubs to perform: John Lauter at the Rochester Theatre Organ Society in December, Dr. Steven Ball played *Ben Hur* for the North Texas chapter in February, and Lance Luce enthralled the Pittsburgh Area Theatre Organ Society in February.

We are preparing for a unique silent film and concert during which John Lauter will play his original score for *My Best Girl* (Mary Pickford, 1927). This year is the centenary of Pickford on film, so we are also screening a rare 35mm short, *They Would Elope* (Pickford, 1909), her first year in the "flickers." Screenings of both 35mm prints will be hosted by Christel Schmidt from the Library of Congress, a renowned Pickford and silent era author and scholar.

The MCTOS/Redford Theatre is on Facebook.com as "Old Redford," and on the web at [www.redfordtheatre.com](http://www.redfordtheatre.com). Come visit us anytime. The theatre is now 81 years old, but she keeps up with her audience.

—Ed Seward  
Tom Hurst, President  
313-537-2560, edseward@ameritech.net



Marquee announcing the screening of *Anatomy of a Murder* on the 50th anniversary of the movie's release (Photo by Ed Seward)

## NEW YORK

New York, New York—On Saturday, January 24, organist John Baratta joined organist Drew Kreisler at St. John's Memorial Episcopal Church in Ramsey, New Jersey, for a *Pedals, Pipes and Pizza* program co-sponsored by the New York ATOS chapter and the North Jersey chapter of the American Guild of Organists. These programs are presented by many AGO chapters, and are aimed at young keyboard students as a way of introducing them to and hopefully interesting them in the organ. However, this time John Baratta used our Allen digital traveling organ to add a theatre organ orientation to the program, somewhat similar to the programs that he has been presenting in schools in the New York and New Jersey area. Our Allen was set up in the sanctuary next to the church's pipe organ console. John explained and demonstrated what a theatre organ is and does, and Drew did a similar presentation on

# Chapter News

the classical organ. They joined together for a finale using both instruments. The kids were very attentive and engaged, and many took turns trying out one or both of the instruments before heading off to the church hall for their pizza lunch. Among the approximately 80 people who attended the program, some two dozen were young keyboard students. Thanks to John Vanderlee and Barb Parnes for transporting and setting up the organ in the church, and also to Rob Kleinschmidt for helping to dismantle it and move it back into the trailer. The New York chapter purchased the trailer to transport the traveling Allen last year with a grant from our friends in the Garden State chapter as their way of helping to support our education program.

At its meeting in January the New York chapter board of directors elected the following officers for 2009: John Valentino, chairman; Anders Sterner, vice chairman; Tom Stehle, secretary; Br. Bob Lahey, treasurer. The board has two new members this year, Jesse Kohl and Rob Kleinschmidt.

—Tom Stehle  
John Valentino, Chairman  
646-469-5049,  
valentinofrance@earthlink.net



Organists John Baratta (left) and Drew Kreisler (right) flank a group of young organ enthusiasts at the Pedals, Pipes and Pizza program (Photo by Tom Stehle)



Organ student Andrew Van Varick takes his turn at the Allen as teacher John Baratta looks on (Photo by Tom Stehle)

## NORTH TEXAS

Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas—The chapter spent January working on its 3/17 Wurlitzer. Several major and minor problems had developed. Many air leaks in both chambers were traced down and sealed. The string reservoir decided to dump its guts and had to be removed for repair; it was so much fun getting it out. It turned out the leather was good but the glue joints had let loose. Then, the Chrysoglott, which was practically useless, needed tending to. Replacing all armatures and much adjusting brought the instrument back to life. Several other minor items were resolved along with at least three tuning sessions.

On February 7, Steven Ball accompanied the silent film *Ben Hur*. Steven managed to turn a lemon into lemonade: a few minutes into the second half, Steven stopped playing saying the Solo chamber shutters were inoperable. Turns out a small bracket on the swell shoe had broken. While this was being repaired, Steven gave a short talk about the movie and theatre organ history. He then opened an excellent question-and-answer session, which was very well received by the audience. The pedal was repaired and then it was “on with the show!” At the end of the program, Steven received two rousing standing ovations.

On February 15 our regular chapter meeting was held, with election of officers taking place. The current officers were re-elected by acclamation. All in all, it's been a busy two months.

—Kenneth Brown  
Don Peterson, President  
972.422.7757, dpete.tx@verizon.net



Steven Ball and treasurer Barbara Brown (Photo by Kenneth Brown)

## ORANGE COUNTY

Fullerton, California—January 16, 17, and 18 was the weekend that Orange County Theatre Organ Society and the Los Angeles chapter joined in presenting our annual *Wurlitzer Weekend*. OCTOS presented a concert on Saturday evening with Rob Richards at the organ and a special guest from Grand Rapids, Alex Zsolt, at the piano. We always get a bang-up presentation from Rob, and he introduced us to this up-and-coming young pianist in a number of solos and duets. Alex has released six CDs to date, and he is a frequent guest artist on the Total Christian Television network which broadcasts worldwide via satellite.

We were busy preparing the organ for our April concert, which featured the incredible 27-year-old Grammy Award nominee, Cameron Carpenter. We expected a packed house for this presentation, as his playing is shaking up the organ world like none other since Virgil Fox. Cameron is equally at home at both theatre and classical pipe organs.

Chris Elliott will follow in June with a feature length silent, *The Kid*, starring Charlie Chaplin.

—Bob Trousdale  
Ed Bridgeford, Chairman  
714-529-5594, ebridgeford@sbcglobal.net



Alex Zsolt (l), Don Near, Ken Double, and Rob Richards at Plummer (Photo by Ed Bridgeford)

## PUGET SOUND

Seattle, Washington—The Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society Christmas concert, postponed to January 11 thanks to Seattle's big December snowstorm, was worth the wait. A large and appreciative audience gave high marks and great reviews to the presentation.

The Calvary Christian Assembly Church combined Kimball/Wurlitzer organ was last heard by theatre organ enthusiasts in 1981 when it was featured during the ATOS convention. It was a treat to again hear this fine instrument, and doubly so at the hands of Mark Andersen, whose performance was much enjoyed by all. Additionally, Lynn Andersen with his handbells, Kelle Brown, vocalist, and Genevieve Picard, harpist, added much variety to the presentation. Many thanks to the folks at Calvary Church who made the church available for this outstanding performance.

A Valentine's Day pie fest and cameo concert featured the Puget Sound chapter's Wurlitzer installed in north Seattle's Haller Lake Community Club. Don Wallin, Tom Roughton, and the piano/organ duo of Ray Harris and Jo Ann Evans provided an afternoon of entertainment while folks enjoyed the all-you-can-eat buffet. Well over 100 folks turned out for the event on a sunny February 15.

Puget Sound Chapter is working full speed ahead on the 2010 convention. The hotel has been signed, and artists and venues are being finalized. It will be a great convention, and we hope to see everyone head for the Pacific Northwest in 2010 to enjoy the first convention here since 1981!

—Jo Ann Evans  
Dave Luttinen, President  
206-963-3283, dave@pstos.org



Lynn Andersen (hand bells), Kelle Brown (vocalist), Genevieve Picard (harpist), and Mark Andersen (organ and piano)  
(Photo by Jeff Snyder)

## RIVER CITY

Omaha, Nebraska—The January 20 River City Theatre Organ Society chapter meeting was held at Masonic Manor, a senior independent living complex in Omaha. Many residents of Masonic Manor also participated in the event, bringing the total attendance to 80. After a short business meeting, president Bob Markworth introduced Jeanne Sabatka. Jeanne's program was centered around a trip around the world as the program selections included the music of many different countries. The program was very interesting and entertaining. Jeanne Sabatka has been entertaining in Omaha for many years and is a local favorite. Greg Johnson accompanied Jeanne at the Manor's grand piano. The group continued the afternoon with dinner at a local restaurant.

The February 16 meeting's guest artist, Shirley Schainholz, was also our gracious host. Shirley has played the piano and organ for many years. Last year, she upgraded to the Lowery Palladium model. Shirley demonstrated the many capabilities of the instrument as she presented memorable selections to the delight of our members. Open console followed.

RCTOS is planning their annual public concert at the Rose Theatre in Omaha on Sunday, July 12, with Patti Simon at the Mighty Wurlitzer, accompanied by Dick Kroeckel at the grand piano.

For more information and tickets, please contact Jerry Pawlak at 402-421-1356 or gpawlak@neb.rr.com.

—Jerry Pawlak  
Bob Markworth, President  
402-573-9071, kimballorgan1@msn.com



Jeanne Sabatka and Greg Johnson at Masonic Manor (Photo by Jerry Pawlak)



Shirley Schainholz (Photo by Jerry Pawlak)

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver, Colorado—In January, Rocky Mountain chapter members assembled at Holiday Hills for *Everybody's a Musician*, a program that is always fun, and allows many of our members to perform. Participation is not limited to just organ or piano. We enjoyed a variety of performances, mostly on various keyboard instruments.

A surprise to everyone (including those who were playing) was the impromptu ensemble of Mike Schuh at the keyboard, Lee Traster at the piano, Bob Castle at the organ, and Lee Shaw on drums. The afternoon wrapped up (actually, zipped up) with everyone participating in our traditional "Concerto for Theatre Organ, Grand Piano, and Zipper." Our thanks to all who participated.

Bill Kwinn, our club photographer, played the digital camera quite well, and our website, [www.RMCATOS.org](http://www.RMCATOS.org), has his excellent photos of each event. Do check it out for other event photos, as well as our RMCATOS newsletter.

Our third annual *Pipes & Stripes* was held in February. Over 1,500 attended the afternoon program at the Denver Paramount Theatre to hear the Colorado National Guard's 101st Army Band Concert Ensemble and Dixieland Band together with the Paramount's Mighty Wurlitzer complete with its dual consoles. It was a spectacular musical afternoon. In

# Chapter News

addition to our club organists, Bob Castle and Jim Calm, a special guest appearance by ATOS president Ken Double completed the afternoon. Of special interest, Ken Double and Bob Castle have just produced the first commercial CD recording of the Denver Paramount Wurlitzer, and it is available now.

The event was co-sponsored by Kroenke Sports Charities, Live Nation and RMCATOS, and turned out to be a resounding success.

—Jim Burt, Past President  
970-385-9490, jimhurt1@frontier.net



The impromptu duo of Jim Calm and Lee Shaw (Photo by Bill Kwinn)



Jim Calm at the Paramount Wurlitzer console, along with the Colorado National Guard 101st Dixieland Band (Photo by Bill Kwinn)

## ST. LOUIS

St. Louis—Member Ralph Haury made his first appearance as a solo guest artist to a standing-room-only crowd in January at the home of Ken and Dawn Iborg. Ralph provided a wonderfully varied program that started with a game of musical trivia. Seated at a Kurzweil keyboard, he would ask the audience to answer questions based on a phrase from some tune. Despite the broad knowledge of those present, Ralph managed to stump everyone more than once. He also shared some interesting experiences from his years as a musician. That fun was followed by a selection of songs on the Baldwin played in Ralph's jazz-inspired style. The afternoon continued with plenty of open console and jamming on the collective keyboards. It just doesn't get any better.

The cold St. Louis winter doesn't keep us from bringing on the talent. The guest organist

for the February meeting was Mark Gifford of Springfield, Illinois. "Our" Mark has been presenting concerts on a 3/12 Barton at Springfield High School since 1993, in addition to his frequent duties at the 2/11 Wurlitzer in the lobby of the St. Louis Fox Theatre and the hybrid organ at the Lincoln Theatre in Belleville, Illinois. Mark is definitely a showman as reflected by his varied selection of songs, entertaining stories, and quips.

—Ken Iborg  
Jim Ryan, President  
314-416-0146, jim@stos.org



All-around keyboardist Ralph Haury (Photo by Gary Broyles)



Mark Gifford (Photo by Gary Broyles)

## SAN DIEGO

Spring Valley, California—The San Diego chapter held its annual business meeting on February 8 at Trinity Church. In accordance with our by-laws, president Jeff Johnson conducted the meeting, covering all of the business of the past year. The incoming officers were introduced by Frank Hinkle. After a unanimous vote by the membership, candidates were officially installed. The new president is Ms. Connie Reardon. Connie brings much experience to this position. During the 34 years that this chapter has been in existence, Ms. Reardon has served as president seven times. She understands the situation of dwindling membership and atten-

dance that is widespread in most chapters. She has surrounded herself with a staff of officers enthusiastic about solving these problems.

After the installation we got to the fun part; Frank Hinkle introduced our guest organist by making a comparison to the famous inspirational book, *Aces of Diamonds*. It's the story of a man who searched the earth looking for riches. After failing in his quest, he returned home only to find a wonderful gem right in his own back yard. This is exactly what happened when we found Ted Williamson, one of our members. Ted wowed the audience with his brilliance at our Mighty 4/24 Wurlitzer. Quiet and unassuming, Ted has kept his talent to himself. Having never played a pipe organ, he threw himself into long hours of practice. Every minute paid off; he wowed 'em! We know that you will be hearing more about Ted Williamson in the future. The program closed after open console and refreshments.

—Frank Hinkle  
Connie Reardon, President  
619-561-0136, conimusic@cox.net

## SOONER STATE

Tulsa, Oklahoma—The first program of 2009 was a screening of the 1921 silent film *The Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino, Agnes Ayers, and Adolph Menjou. Over 300 people attended, enjoying their popcorn and lemonade. Before the film, Bill Rowland gave us the highlights of Valentino's life and led a sing-along of songs from 1921. Bill did his usual great job of accompanying the movie.

In February we repeated the *Gospel Night* program we did last year, and it was a great success. Jeannette Maxfield, Paula Hackler, Lynda Ramsey, and Carolyn Craft played the organ. Carolyn brought her brother-in-law Buster, his wife Wanda, and their son and his wife, all of whom played and sang. Wayne Underwood sang to accompaniment by his wife, Myra. Paula and Lynda played some Fred Bock piano/organ duets. Bill Rowland, who is a Methodist PK (preacher's kid), held up a brown book and asked us to identify it. Right—the Cokesbury hymnal from the good old days! Open console followed the program. We had over 200 in attendance, including as guests 75 members of the TweenAgers, a senior group from Asbury United Methodist Church.

—Barbara Purtell  
Phil Judkins, President  
SoonerStateATOS@gmail.com



Gospel Night participants  
(Photo by Ayla Hughes)



Bill Rowland (Photo by Phil Judkins)

## SOUTHERN JERSEY

Franklinville, New Jersey—Our chapter president, Joe Rementer, is the proud owner of a living, breathing pipe organ. The entire family has come to feel that the organ is a part of their lives. In fact, Joe's granddaughter, Gabriella Rotella, made the instrument the subject of a presentation for her Social Studies class when she was 11 years old. Here is some text from her presentation:

### *My Family Pipe Organ*

My artifact is probably one of a kind. It is a 79-year-old pipe organ. The name of the company that built it is the Austin Organ Co. My grandfather had seen an ad in the 1962 *Philadelphia Bulletin* newspaper. St. Paul's Church on Aramingo Avenue in Philadelphia was planning to throw it away. My grandfather rushed down to the church to talk to the priest.

The organ was moved to my grandfather's house in Northeast Philadelphia in 1962. In 1977, the organ was moved to Washington Township. Then, finally, the organ was relocated to Franklinville, New Jersey in 1986. As of today, my grandfather has completed putting the pipe organ together, and he will play for anyone who would like to

hear classical music, opera, or show tunes!

One thing is certain, the pipe organ made a definite, positive impact on this young lady's life and we thank her for expressing it so well.

—Fred Oltmann

Joseph Rementer, President  
856-694-1471



Joe Rementer's 1927 Austin console,  
Opus 1536 (Photo by Gabriella Rotella)



Exposed pipes and vertical swell shutters front  
the chamber of the Rementer residence  
organ (Photo by Gabriella Rotella)

## VALLEY OF THE SUN

Phoenix, Arizona—Our first chapter meeting of the new year was held January 11 at Organ Stop Pizza. This type of event always brings out a large number of our chapter members and their guests. Even California friend Jerry Nagano stopped by. Our organist for the afternoon was Donna Parker, who was filling in at the pizza parlor for a couple of weeks while staff organists Charlie Balogh and Lew Williams were out of town. Donna's program was very upbeat. She spoke about our well-received *Desert Winds Weekend* and about the ATOS Summer Youth Camp, which will be held in the Phoenix area in July.

Storm clouds threatened, but it turned out to be a mild, sunny afternoon when we met at chapter member Bob Grommes' home in Fountain Hills on February 7. We were there for the dedication of his recently installed Allen organ. Walt Strony was there to put the instrument through its paces. This was a real treat because we don't get to hear Walt very often since he moved away from Arizona. Walt played a wide variety of music, including an encore made up of requests from the audience.

Returning our silent film series to the Orpheum Theatre, after a year at Phoenix College, February 22 featured Buster Keaton in *The Navigator*, with organ accompaniment by Ron Rhode. A question-and-answer session followed the film, with Ron and Gateway Community College film instructor Don Hall.

—Madeline LiVolsi  
Bill Carr, President

623-694-1746, Billcarr3.atos@cox.net



Donna Parker and Jerry Nagano  
(Photo by Madeline LiVolsi)



Walt Strony (Photo by Madeline LiVolsi)

# Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs  
and Performances

We strive for accuracy; however, the information contained in Around the Circuit is presented as submitted. ATOS is not responsible for errors resulting from unreported changes to schedules, venue, and contact information.

## ALASKA

**State Office Building**—333 Willoughby Avenue, Juneau, 907-465-5689 (2/8K). Organ concerts Friday at 12:00 noon. [www.pstos.org/instruments/ak/juneau/state-bldg.htm](http://www.pstos.org/instruments/ak/juneau/state-bldg.htm)

## ARIZONA

**Organ Stop Pizza**—1149 East Southern Avenue, Mesa, 480-813-5700 (4/74W). Winter organ hours: Sunday through Thursday, 4:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday and Saturday, 4:30pm to 10:00pm. Summer organ hours: Sunday through Thursday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday and Saturday, 5:30pm to 10:00pm. Charlie Balogh, Lew Williams. [www.organstoppizza.com](http://www.organstoppizza.com)

**Orpheum Theatre**—203 West Adams, Phoenix, 480-460-7699 (3/30W). *Silent Sundays* Film Series. Pre-show concerts 2:30–3:30pm. Concerts and film accompaniments are provided by Ron Rhode. [www.silentsundays.info](http://www.silentsundays.info)

## CALIFORNIA (NORTH)

**Berkeley Community Theatre**—1930 Alston Way, Berkeley, 510-632-9177 (4/41W). All shows 2:30pm. May 3, Lew Williams; September 20, John Giacchi; November 1, Scott Harrison (organ) and Mark Page (piano). [www.theatreorgans.com/norcal](http://www.theatreorgans.com/norcal)

**Bob Hope Theatre** (Former Fox California)—242 Main Street, Stockton, 209-337-4673 (4/21RM). Organ played monthly for classic and silent movies, special occasions, and public tours.

**Castro Theatre**—429 Castro, San Francisco, 415-621-6120 (4/21W). Intermissions played nightly by David Hegarty, Warren Lubich.

**Fox Theatre**—308 West Main Street, Visalia, 559-625-1369 (4/24W). Thirty-minute organ prelude, with guest organist, to frequent classic movies. [www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org)

**Grand Lake Theatre**—3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland, 510-452-3556 (3/18W). Intermissions: Friday, Warren Lubich; Saturday, Kevin King.

**Harmony Wynelands**—9291 East Harney Lane, Lodi, 209-369-4184 (3/15RM). Tasting room open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11:00am to 5:00pm, or by appointment. Bob Hartzell, live and recorded performances. [www.harmonywynelands.com](http://www.harmonywynelands.com)

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

**Paramount Theatre**—2025 Broadway, Oakland, 510-465-6400 (4/27W). Public tours on first and third Saturdays at 10:00am. Movie overtures, Thursdays at 6:30pm. [www.paramounttheatre.com](http://www.paramounttheatre.com)

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

**Towe Auto Museum**—2200 Front Street, Sacramento, 916-442-6802 (3/16W). Sunday concerts, 2:00pm; free with museum admission. [www.toweautomuseum.org](http://www.toweautomuseum.org)

## CALIFORNIA (SOUTH)

**Avalon Casino Theatre**—One Casino Way, Catalina Island, 310-510-2414 (4/16P). Friday and Saturday, 6:15pm, pre-show concert, John Tusak. [www.visitcatalina.org](http://www.visitcatalina.org)

**El Capitan Theatre**—6838 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, 800-DISNEY6 (4/37W). Organ played for weekend intermissions and special showings. House organist: Rob Richards; Staff organists: John Ledwon and Ed Vodicka. [www.elcapitantickets.com](http://www.elcapitantickets.com)

**Nethercutt Collection**—15200 Bledsoe Street, Sylmar, 818-367-2251 (4/74W). Guided tours twice a day, Tuesday through Saturday, at 10:00am and 1:30pm. Free admission by reservation. Organ is played at the end of each tour. Organ concerts on Fridays at 8:00pm, Saturdays at 2:00pm and 8:00pm. Reservations required in advance. [www.nethercuttcollection.org](http://www.nethercuttcollection.org)

**Orpheum Theatre**—842 South Broadway, Los Angeles, 310-329-1455 (3/14W). Saturday, 11:30am; organ is featured as part of the guided tour of theatre. [www.laorpheum.com](http://www.laorpheum.com)

## COLORADO

**Denver Paramount**—Glenarm and 16th Street Mall, Denver, 303-466-3330 (4/20W). August 9, 2:00pm, Rocky Mountain chapter members-only free day at the Paramount. [www.rmcatos.org](http://www.rmcatos.org)

**Holiday Hills Ballroom**—2000 West 92nd Avenue, Federal Heights, 303-466-3330 (GW4Q). All events are at 2:00pm. May 16, *Theatre Organ Workshop* with Jelani Eddington, \$15 per person; May 17 and 18, *Theatre Organ Spectacular* with Jelani Eddington at the organ and piano, \$10 per person; June 7, *Jammin' in June* with Dick Kroeckel, Jim Calm, Lance Christensen; July 12, *Adventure on the High C's*. [www.RMCATOS.org](http://www.RMCATOS.org)

## DELAWARE

**Dickinson High School**—1801 Milltown Road, Wilmington, 302-995-2603 (3/66K). June 14, 3:00pm, Hector Olivera; July 18, 7:00pm, Michael Xavier Lundy. [www.geocities.com/dtoskimball](http://www.geocities.com/dtoskimball) or [www.dtoskimball.org](http://www.dtoskimball.org)

## FLORIDA

**Polk Theatre**—127 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, 863-682-7553 (3/12RM). Movie overtures: Friday and Saturday, 7:15pm; Sunday, 1:45pm. Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbis, and Heidi Lenker.

**Roaring 20's Pizza and Pipes**—6750 US Highway 301, Ellenton, 941-723-1733 (4/41W). Sunday through Thursday evenings: open 4:30pm to 9:00pm; organ performance: 5:00pm to 9:00pm. Friday and Saturday evenings: open 4:30pm to 10:00pm; organ performance: 5:00pm to 10:00pm. Saturday and Sunday afternoons: open 12:00 noon to 2:30pm; organ performance: 12:30pm to 2:30pm. Wednesday, Friday, Saturday afternoons, Sunday evenings, and alternating Mondays: Dwight Thomas. Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday evenings, Sunday afternoons, and alternating Mondays: Bill Vlasak. [www.roaring20spizza.com](http://www.roaring20spizza.com)

**Tampa Theatre**—711 Franklin Street, Tampa, 813-274-8981 (3/14W). Movie overtures: Bob Baker, Bill Brusick, Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbis, Richard Frank, and Bob Logan. [www.tampatheatre.org](http://www.tampatheatre.org)

## GEORGIA

**Fox Theatre**—600 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, 404-881-2119 (4/42M). Larry Douglas Embury plays before each show. [www.foxtheatre.org](http://www.foxtheatre.org)

## HAWAII

**Palace Theatre**—38 Haili, Hilo, 808-934-7010 (4/13RM). Hawaiiiana show every Wednesday, occasional silent movies, concerts and special events featuring the organ. Bob Alder, Tommy Stark and Dwight Beacham. [www.palacehilo.org](http://www.palacehilo.org)

## ILLINOIS

**Arcada Theatre**—105 East Main Street, St. Charles, 630-845-8900 (3/16GMC). Organ interludes Friday and Saturday nights. [www.onestientertainment.com/arcada/arcada.htm](http://www.onestientertainment.com/arcada/arcada.htm)

**Beggar's Pizza**—3524 Ridge Road, Lansing, 708-418-3500 (3/17BH). Tuesday and Saturday 6:00pm to 9:00pm; Glenn Tallar. [www.beggarspizza.com/location-il-lansing.html](http://www.beggarspizza.com/location-il-lansing.html)

**Lincoln Theatre**—103 East Main Street, Belleville, 618-233-0018 (3/15H). Movie overtures: Friday, David Stephens; Saturday, volunteers. [www.lincolntheatre-belleville.com](http://www.lincolntheatre-belleville.com)

**Rialto Square Theatre**—102 North Chicago Street, Joliet, 815-726-6600 (4/27H). Organ pre-shows and intermissions: Jim Patak or Sam Yacono. Theatre tours with Jim Patak at the console.

**Tivoli Theatre**—5021 Highland Avenue, Downers Grove, 630-968-0219 (3/10W). Theatre organ interludes on Friday and Saturday, Freddy Arnish. [www.classiccinemas.com](http://www.classiccinemas.com)

**Virginia Theatre**—203 West Park Street, Champaign, 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. [www.thevirginia.org](http://www.thevirginia.org)

## MARYLAND

**Weinberg Center for the Arts**—20 West Patrick Street, Frederick (2/8W). All shows at 8:00pm. May 8, *An Evening of Charlie Chase Shorts*. Enjoy an evening of shorts by one of the forgotten stars of the silent screen. *Pass the Gravy* (1928): Feuding neighbors, pet chickens, true love, and plenty of laughs. Featuring the mighty Wurlitzer. [www.weinbergcenter.org](http://www.weinbergcenter.org)



Codes used in listing: A=Austin, B=Barton, C=Compton, CHR=Christie, E=Estey, GB=Griffith Beach, H=Hybrid, K=Kimball, M=Möller, MC=Marr and Colton, P=Page RM=Robert-Morton, W=Wurlitzer. Example: (4/19W) = 4-manual, 19-rank Wurlitzer

Schedules subject to change.

The deadline for receiving Around the Circuit listings is the 10th of every odd-numbered month. Send information for inclusion to: Dave Luttinen, 4710 225th Place SW, Mountlake Terrace, Washington 98043, 206-963-3283, calendar@atos.org. Listings may also be added, modified, or cancelled on the ATOS Calendar of Events web page ([www.atos.org/calendar](http://www.atos.org/calendar)).

## MASSACHUSETTS

**Stoneham Town Hall**—35 Central Street, on the common, Stoneham, 781-438-2466 (2/14W). May 31, 2:00pm, Jim and Linda Duncan at the organ and piano.

**The Zeiterion Theatre**—684 Purchase Street, New Bedford, 508-997-5664 (3/9W). May 3, 2:30pm, *An Afternoon with the Great American Songbook*. Jack Cook at the Zeiterion Mighty Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ, with four vocalists, in a program that offers something for every musical taste. [www.zeiterion.org](http://www.zeiterion.org)

## MICHIGAN

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

**Michigan Theatre**—603 East Liberty, Ann Arbor, 734-668-8394 (3/13B). Daily intermissions before evening films, plus silent films and special occasions. Dr. Henry Aldridge, Director; Dr. Steven Ball, Staff Organist; Stephen Warner, Newton Bates, and Loren Greenawalt.

**The Mole Hole**—150 West Michigan Avenue, Marshall, 616-781-5923 (2/6 B/K). Organ daily, Scott Smith, recorded artist.

**Public Museum of Grand Rapids Meijer Theatre**—272 Pearl Street NW, Grand Rapids, 616-459-4253 (3/30W). Tours by appointment, and ATOS guests welcome to hear organ weekly at noon on Thursdays. Story time slide program during school year. Organ played on Sundays, 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

**Redford Theatre**—17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, 313-537-2560 (3/10B). Movie overtures, Fridays at 7:30pm, Saturdays at 1:30pm and 7:30pm. Guest organists include Steve Ball, Newton Bates, Dave Calendine, Jennifer Candea, Brian Carmody, Gil Francis, John Lauter, Lance Luce, Tony O'Brien, Fr. Andrew Rogers, Emily Seward. [www.redfordtheatre.com](http://www.redfordtheatre.com)

**Senate Theatre**—6424 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, 313-894-0850 (4/34W). All concerts start at 3:00pm. May 17, Steve Warner; June 14, Jelani Eddington; September 20, Tom Fortier; October 18, Scott Smith; November 15, John Lauter; December 6, Lance Luce. [www.dfos.org](http://www.dfos.org)

**Temple Theatre**—203 North Washington, Saginaw, 989-754-7469 (3/11 Barton). Organ played before selected events. [www.templetheatre.com](http://www.templetheatre.com)

## MINNESOTA

**Heights Theatre**—3951 Central Avenue NE, Columbia Heights, 763-789-4992 (4/11W). Movie overtures every Friday and Saturday.

## MISSOURI

**City Museum**—701 North 15th Street, St. Louis, 314-231-2489 (3/17W). Organ heard every day the museum is open, via computerized relay or by organists from St. Louis Theatre Organ Society. [www.citymuseum.org](http://www.citymuseum.org)

**Fox Theatre**—527 Grand Boulevard North, St. Louis, 314-534-1678 (4/36W). Tours of the Fox Theatre conducted every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday (except holidays) at 10:30am. Tuesday tour: \$5 for adults and \$3 for children (12 and under). Thursday and Saturday tours: \$8 for adults and \$3 for children. For parties of less than 20, no reservations are needed. [www.fabulousfox.com](http://www.fabulousfox.com)

## NEBRASKA

**The Rose Theatre**—2001 Farnam Street, Omaha, 402-421-1356 (3/21W). July 12, 3:00pm, *An Afternoon of American Music* performed by Patti Simon (organ) and Dick Kroeckel (piano). Tickets \$15.

## NEW JERSEY

**Broadway Theatre**—43 South Broadway, Pitman, 856-589-7519 (3/8K). Organ played before most movies and all stage shows. Harold Ware, John Breslin, Nathan Figlio, Janet Norcross, Bob Nichols.

**Loew's Jersey Theatre**—54 Journal Square, Jersey City, 973-256-5480 (4/23RM). Organ played on a regular basis. [www.gstos.org](http://www.gstos.org) and [www.loewsjersey.org](http://www.loewsjersey.org)

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

**Newton Theatre**—234 Spring Street, Newton, 973-579-9993 (2/4E). Friday evening intermissions, John Baratta.

## NEW YORK

**Auditorium Theatre**—885 East Main Street, Rochester, 585-544-6595 (4/23W). May 12, 7:30pm, Martin Ellis. [www.theatreorgans.com/rochestr](http://www.theatreorgans.com/rochestr)

**Lafayette Theatre**—Lafayette Avenue, Suffern, 845-369-8234 (2/11W). Saturday, 11:00am, Earle Seeley. Saturday evenings and Sunday before matinee: John Baratta, Earle Seeley and Jeff Barker.

**Middletown Paramount Theatre**—19 South Street, Middletown, 845-346-4195 (3/12W). Pre-show music, concerts and silent films presented by the New York chapter of ATOS and the Middletown Paramount Theatre. [www.nyfos.org](http://www.nyfos.org)

**Proctor's Theatre**—432 State Street, Schenectady, 518-346-8204 (3/18W). Noon concert series, Tuesdays, unless stated otherwise. [www.proctors.org](http://www.proctors.org)

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Carolina Theatre**—310 South Green Street, Greensboro, 336-333-2600 (3/6H-Electronic). Organ played before and after the *Carolina Classic Film Series*. [www.carolinatheatre.com](http://www.carolinatheatre.com)

## NORTH DAKOTA

**Fargo Theatre**—314 North Broadway, Fargo, 701-239-8385 (4/21W). Organ plays Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings, before and between performances. Short organ concerts: Lance Johnson, Steve Eneboe and Tyler Engberg. [www.fargotheatre.org](http://www.fargotheatre.org)

## OHIO

**Collingwood Arts Center**—2413 Collingwood Avenue, Toledo, 419-389-9334 (3/8H). Pre-show music before monthly Classic Movie Series and periodically for silent films. May 10, 3:00pm, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, accompanied by Stephen Warner; June 7, 3:00pm, *Spring Short Silent Film Festival*, accompanied by Brian Bogdanowitz. Organ often featured for pre-show music by house organists Paul Jacyk, Emily Seward, Brian Bogdanowitz, George Krejci, and Dick Lee. Organ played before shows. [www.collingwoodartscenter.org](http://www.collingwoodartscenter.org)

**The Historic Ohio Theatre**—3114 Lagrange Street, Toledo, 419-241-6785 (4/11H). Organ pre-show for movies (6:30pm to 7:00pm).

**Masonic Auditorium and Performing Arts Center**—3615 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, 216-432-2370 (4/28W). Organ is currently being installed by WRTOS, Inc. [www.aasrcleveland.org/tour/aud1-ljpg.htm](http://www.aasrcleveland.org/tour/aud1-ljpg.htm)

**Ohio Theatre**—55 East State Street, Columbus, 614-469-1045 (4/34RM). Organ overtures and intermissions. [www.capa.com](http://www.capa.com)

**Palace Theatre**—605 Market Avenue North, Canton, 330-454-9181 (3/12Kilgen). Frequent pre-show and intermission use; occasional concerts. [www.cantonpalacetheatre.org](http://www.cantonpalacetheatre.org)

**Palace Theatre**—Cleveland's Playhouse Square, 1615 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, 216-771-1771 (3/15K). Organ pre-shows for summer film series and special events. [www.playhousesquare.org](http://www.playhousesquare.org)

**Palace Theatre**—617 Broadway, Lorain, 440-245-2323 (3/10W). Occasional pre-show and intermission use, and special events. [www.lorainpalace.org](http://www.lorainpalace.org)

**Palace Theatre**—276 West Center Street, Marion, 740-383-2101 (3/10W). Occasional pre-show and special events. [www.marionpalace.org](http://www.marionpalace.org)

**Renaissance Theatre**—138 Park Avenue, Mansfield, 419-522-2726 (3/20W). Frequent use, including free summer concert series. [www.culture.ohio.gov/project.asp?proj=renaissance](http://www.culture.ohio.gov/project.asp?proj=renaissance)

## OKLAHOMA

**Tulsa Technology Center**—129th E Avenue (Olive) and 111th Street, Tulsa, 918-355-1562 (3/13RM). Third Friday of each month, programs and open console. [www.theatreorgans.com/SoonerStateATOS](http://www.theatreorgans.com/SoonerStateATOS)

## OREGON

**Bijou Theatre**—1624 NE Highway 101, Lincoln City, 541-994-8255 (Electronic). Silent film series on Wednesdays at 1:00pm. [www.cinemalovers.com](http://www.cinemalovers.com)

**Elsinore Theatre**—170 High Street SE, Salem, 503-375-3574 (3/25W). Silent film programs Wednesdays at 7:00pm. Rick Parks, organist. [www.elsinoretheatre.com](http://www.elsinoretheatre.com)

# Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs  
and Performances

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Blackwood Estate**—Blackwood Lane, Harrisville, 724-735-2813 (3/20W-H). Private residence near Pittsburgh hosts several concerts; proceeds benefit charities and scholarship recipients. [www.blackwoodmusic.org](http://www.blackwoodmusic.org)

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

## TENNESSEE

**Tennessee Theatre**—604 South Gay Street, Knoxville, 865-684-1200 (3/16W). Organ played before movies throughout the year and at free *First Monday* concerts, the first Monday of every month at 12:00 noon. Subject to cancellation due to other scheduled events. [www.tennesseetheatre.com](http://www.tennesseetheatre.com)

## UTAH

**Peery's Egyptian Theatre**—2415 Washington Boulevard, Ogden, 801-395-3200 (3/24W). Silent films; entrance and exit music at some other programs. [www.peerysegypthiantheater.com](http://www.peerysegypthiantheater.com)

## VIRGINIA

**Byrd Theatre**—2908 West Carey, Richmond, 804-353-9911 (4/17W). Overtures Saturdays at 7:15pm and 9:30pm, Bob Gulledege. [www.byrdtheatre.com](http://www.byrdtheatre.com)

## WASHINGTON

**Lincoln Theatre Center**—712 South 1st Street, Mt. Vernon (2/6W). Organ played Friday through Tuesday before the film. [www.lincolntheater.org](http://www.lincolntheater.org)

**Mt. Baker Theatre**—106 North Commercial, Bellingham (2/14W). Second Sunday monthly, 2:00pm, open console.

**Paramount Theatre**—911 Pine Street, Seattle, 206-467-5510 (4/20W). *Silent Movie Mondays* at 7:00pm, accompanied by Dennis James: June 8, *Flesh and the Devil*; June 15, *Romola*; June 22, *The Godless Girl*; June 29, *Seventh Heaven*. [www.theparamount.com](http://www.theparamount.com)

## WISCONSIN

**Hermes Basement Bijou**—Racine, 262-639-1322 (5/35W). For tour information, contact Eileen at Racine County Convention Bureau, 262-884-6407, or Fred Hermes for appointment. Open console on weekends.

**Organ Piper Music Palace**—4353 South 108th Street, Greenfield (Milwaukee), 414-529-1177 (3/27H). Organ hours: Tuesday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Wednesday, 5:30pm to 10:00pm with live band; Thursday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday, 5:00pm to 9:45pm; Saturday, 12:30pm to 9:45pm; Sunday, 12:30pm to 8:45pm. Ron Reseigh, Ralph Conn, and Dean Rosko.

**Phipps Center for the Arts**—109 Locust Street, Hudson, 715-386-8409 (3/16W). All shows: adults \$22, students w/ID \$15. June 6, 7:30pm, Ron Rhode.

## AUSTRALIA

**Capri Theatre**—141 Goodwood Road, Goodwood, SA, (08) 8272 1177 (4/29H). Organ used Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings.

**Dendy Cinema**—26 Church Street, Brighton, VIC, (03) 9789 1455 (3/15W). Organ before films, Saturday evenings.

**Karrinyup Center**—Perth, WA (61) 9447-9837 (3/21W). All concerts on Sundays at 2:00pm.

**Orpheum Theatre**—380 Military Road, Cremorne, NSW, (02) 9908-4344 (3/15W). Saturday night, Sunday afternoon, intermissions, Neil Jensen.

## CANADA

**Casa Loma**—1 Austin Terrace, Toronto, 416-499-6262 (4/19W). May 4, 8:00pm, David Peckham. [www.theatreorgans.com/toronto](http://www.theatreorgans.com/toronto)

## UNITED KINGDOM

**The Assembly Hall**—Stoke Abbot Road, Worthing, West Sussex, 011-44-1903-206206 (3/23W). All concerts on Sundays at 3:00pm, unless otherwise noted. 31 May, 2:30pm, Carlo Curley, Simon Gledhill, Len Rawle; 28 June, Iain Flitcroft; 27 September, John Mann; 18 October, Phil Kelsall. Dances Saturday, 7:30pm. 17 October, Phil Kelsall and Len Rawle. [www.worthing-wurlitzer.org](http://www.worthing-wurlitzer.org) and [www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)

**Civic Hall**—North Street, Wolverhampton, West Midlands 011-44-0-1902-552121 (4/44C). Friday concerts 12:00 noon to 12:30pm before the tea dance. Steve Tovey or Cameron Lloyd. Concerts Saturdays at 2:00pm. [http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic\\_hall.html](http://geocities.com/comptonplus/civic_hall.html)

**Fentham Hall**—Marsh Lane, Hampton-in-Arden, Solihull, 011-44-0-1564-794778 (3/11C). All concerts on Sundays at 3:00pm. [www.cos-centralandwales.co.uk](http://www.cos-centralandwales.co.uk)

**New Victoria Centre**—High Street, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, County Durham, 011-44-1388-766243 (3/18W). Concerts on Saturdays at 7:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm. 16-17 May, John Mann; 6 June, Timothy Hone (recital); 15 August, Young Organists; 19-20 September, Simon Gledhill; 17-18 October, David Ivory; 14-15 November, Robert Sudall; 19-20 December, Iain Flitcroft. [www.netoa.org.uk](http://www.netoa.org.uk) and [www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)

**Ossett Town Hall**—Market Place, Ossett, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, 011-44-0-1132-705885 (3/13 Compton/Christie). All concerts on Sundays at 2:30pm. Doors open at 2:00pm. 7 June, David Ivory; 5 July, David Lowe; 4 October, Stephen Austin and John Nunn; 1 November, Willie Stephenson; 6 December, Keith Beckingham. [www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk)

**Rye College**—Love Lane, Rye, East Sussex, 011-44-0-1424-444058 (2/6W). All concerts on Sundays at 2:30pm; doors open at 1:30pm. 17 May, Chris Powell and Jean Martyn; 27 September, *Wurlitzer Gala Day* with Len Rawle and others; 18 October, John Mann; 15 November, David Warner and Robert Gurney; 6 December, Christmas Concert with David Ivory. [www.geocities.com/ryewurlitzer](http://www.geocities.com/ryewurlitzer)

**Stockport Town Hall**—On A6, Main Road thru Stockport, 011-44-0-1617-643979 (4/20W). Lunchtime concerts at 12:00 noon, first Monday of each month except August. [www.voxlancastrica.org.uk/concerts](http://www.voxlancastrica.org.uk/concerts)

**Theatre Organ Heritage Centre and Hope-Jones Museum**—Alexandra Road, Peel Green, Eccles, Manchester (2/6W). Lunchtime concerts Wednesday every week, 1:00pm. [www.voxlancastrica.org.uk/heritage](http://www.voxlancastrica.org.uk/heritage)

**Victoria Hall**—Victoria Road, Salfaire, West Yorkshire 011-44-1274-589939 (3/10W). All concerts at 2:30pm. 10 May, Robert Sudall and friends; 14 June, Nicholas Martin; 9 August, David Lowe and friends; 6 September, John Mann; 4 October, Morriston Orpheus Choir with Nigel Ogden at the Wurlitzer; 8 November, David Shepherd; 20 December, Richard Hills and school choir. [www.cosnorth.co.uk](http://www.cosnorth.co.uk) and [www.cinema-organs.org.uk/](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk/)

# Keep the music playing.

For the first time in our history, we are asking our membership to think very seriously about the future of ATOS. Annual gifts, substantial long-term commitments, memorials and potential challenge grants and gifts can sustain ATOS and help the organization reach new heights and meet its goals for the next 50 years and beyond.

The future of ATOS is in the hands of its members. It is up to each of us to do what we can to "keep the music playing."

## How You Can Invest in ATOS

Your gift may be designated for a specific program that is dear to your heart, or you may make an unrestricted gift, allowing ATOS management to put your gift to work where the need is the greatest. The choice is yours.

**Cash Gifts**—Outright cash gifts may be made by check or credit card.

**Will Provisions**—You may be provided for ATOS in your estate plans through a will, either with a specific amount or a percentage of your estate.

**Stocks and Securities**—Gifts of appreciated stocks and securities allow you to avoid taxes on the appreciation and at the same time to benefit ATOS with this appreciated amount.

**Gifts In Kind**—You may make a gift to ATOS of musical equipment (such as a pipe organ), musical collections, or other items which can be of benefit to the theatre organ society.

**Charitable Remainder Trusts**—You may wish to set up a trust agreement whereby you receive the income from a specified amount of money for the duration of your lifetime (and perhaps that of a spouse or partner), after which the remainder would go to ATOS. You should work with your attorney to set up such a trust arrangement.

**Life Insurance Policies**—You may wish to designate ATOS as a beneficiary on one or more of your life insurance policies.

**Real Estate**—You may also make a gift of real estate to ATOS.

The American Theatre Organ Society is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your non-revocable gifts to ATOS may qualify for deduction on your federal tax returns if you itemize deductions, subject to IRS regulations. Consult with your accounting professional.

**Contact: Ken Double, 281-798-6205, k.double@atos.org**

## NOTICE TO ALL RECORDING ARTISTS!

Want to get it sold?

Let us sell your CDs and other Media at the 2009 ATOS Convention

"Record Shop" at the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel  
Please contact Bob Moran,  
Record Shop Coordinator

216-401-1851

[moranbo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:moranbo@sbcglobal.net)

complete your collection of recordings by **Jelani Eddington**

### PHOENIX RENAISSANCE

*Phoenix Renaissance* is a true sonic *tour de force*. This album is the world premiere of the Adrian W. Phillips symphonic-theatre pipe organ. The 106-rank organ, originally the Midmer-Losh from the Atlantic City High School, combines the best of symphonic, classical, and theatre organ design to create a truly revolutionary musical powerhouse! Among the highlights is the first-ever organ/piano recording of the complete *Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2*. Other selections include *Put On A Happy Face*, *Music of Ella Fitzgerald*, *Rondo In G*, *Send In The Clowns*.



### INDIANA Revisited!

*Indiana Revisited!* features the Barton theatre pipe organ at the Warren Performing Arts Center in Indianapolis and is Jelani Eddington's first solo album on a Barton organ. The instrument, installed originally in 1927 in the 3,000-seat Indiana Theatre in downtown Indianapolis, fills the Warren Performing Arts Center with a lush, booming "in-theatre" sound. Highlights include *Comedy Tonight*, *Music From Les Misérables*, *Music From Annie*, *Yesterday*, *Radetsky March*, *Overture from Zampa*.

### A Festival of CHRISTMAS

Celebrate the music of the holiday season with *A Festival Of Christmas*, featuring Jelani Eddington at the incomparable Sanfilippo theatre pipe organ. This album contains some of the most beloved Christmas music of all times, including Leroy Anderson's complete *A Christmas Festival* as well as six works from his *Suite Of Carols*. Other highlights include *Sleigh Ride*, *The Christmas Song*, *Brazilian Sleigh Bells*, *Jingle Bell Rock*, *Away In A Manger*, *Hallelujah! Chorus*

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# Minutes

## MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MID-YEAR MEETING

JANUARY 3, 2009

### HILTON GARDEN INN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Chairman of the board Craig Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:06am.

Secretary Bob Evans called the roll: Officers Present: Craig Peterson, Chairman of the Board; Bob Evans, Secretary; Paul Van Der Molen, Treasurer. Board Members Present: John Apple, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Michael Fellenzer, Allen Miller, Don Near, Donna Parker, Doug Powers, Bucky Reddish. Staff Members Present: Ken Double, President/CEO; Mike Kinerk, Convention Planning Coordinator; Jim Merry, Executive Secretary; Jeff Weiler, Archive Liaison, Editor THEATRE ORGAN, Parliamentarian. Youth Representative to the Board: Tyler Morkin. Guests Present: Tom Blackwell, ATOS webmaster; John Ledwon; Col. Mike Hartley (ret); Nancy Burton.

Chairman Peterson and President/CEO Double made brief opening remarks.

The minutes of the November 18, 2008 telephone conference were declared approved.

Old Business:

OFFICER REPORTS:

Chairman of the Board: (Peterson)

- Chairman Peterson is chair of the ATOS Chapter Relations Committee.

- Several groups have indicated interest in either forming new chapters or reviving inactive chapters.

- Craig has been in contact with these groups and has supplied all necessary information/forms for the groups to begin the process.

Secretary: (Evans)

- Self-Dealing Transaction Statements and Code of Ethics forms were distributed where necessary.

- Bob Evans gave a brief update on the Wurlitzer installation in the Hanover Theater in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Treasurer: (Van Der Molen)

- Generally speaking, our investment accounts are down. This follows the general trend of the economy.

- ATOS assets are down.

- The journal is slightly over budget because of extra fees for a photographer and reviewer.

- The second half of the year should bring the expenses more in line with the budgeted amount.

- Additional expense in archives fund is because of the acquisition of the Eric Reeve collection.

- The appointment of a paid administrator was not anticipated when this budget was made. Over \$14,000 has been donated toward the paid position.

- The Adult Workshop was subsidized by ATOS in the amount of \$3,000. The intent of the board is to see this event totally self funded.

- The monies collected at the banquet for an emergency fund have been distributed to the Cedar Rapids chapter.

- The Endowment Fund has suffered much less than the investment accounts because of investments in money market funds.

- Smithsonian/Wanamaker Fund is fully dispersed. The current plan is to present the Wurlitzer to the public in October of 2009.

Craig Peterson accepted the Treasurer's report.

President/CEO Report: (Double)

President/CEO Double reported that he has been disappointed in the effort to secure sponsorships for ATOS.

He is scheduled for a three-day meeting in Indianapolis to finalize the sponsorship brochure. This will be presented to major potential sponsors.

Ken has submitted a payment/expenditure report. He has raised some money towards the payment of his contract.

Ken spoke at length at his efforts to raise funds, promote membership, and communicate with local chapters. He has visited at least 21 chapters since September.

(Jelani Eddington raised a procedural question about the confidentiality of donor names and amounts. The board discussed the sensitivity of donors and their identities. Any report of donations should be considered confidential.)

Jim Merry noted that the current procedure is to recognize donors by monetary categories.

The board discussed the funding of the President/CEO position. Currently the position is partially funded by donations. The rest probably will come from the ATOS general fund.

Ken Double was asked what we could expect about funding the position. Ken could not make a definite prediction as to who would donate what amounts, or for what these amounts will be designated.

Doug Powers remarked that Ken's efforts have generated much goodwill. This is not easily measured in numbers.

Bob Evans suggested that the money we normally spend on a mid-year meeting be applied toward the President/CEO contract. Bob noted that the application of funds in this manner would be the most beneficial use of our financial resources.

The board will review the President/CEO position at the annual board meeting

Executive Secretary's Report: (Merry)

ATOS received 3,281 membership renewals. Currently we have 3,610 from mailing lists. This is the best indication of our actual membership. We are on a downward track, but Jim is noticing some additional new memberships and a slight increase in renewals.

(Break)

THEATRE ORGAN: (Weiler)

All good news. Advertising revenue for the 2008 calendar year rose by \$5,000. The new printing company is working out well.

The United States Postal Service is changing requirements for mailings especially for groups. This is a constant work in progress. The printers have been most helpful in this regard. Fundraising: (Double)

Phase I has been completed. The mailing was sent to all ATOS members. We achieved about an 8% return, which is a very high number for a first attempt.

Phase II: Potential donors will be contacted on a one-to-one basis. The fundraising committee is developing a brochure to present to potential donors. This is a work in process.

Phase III: The time frame for distribution is to be determined. We must be sure to take our time and make sure that the campaign is run well. Phase III will be a full-membership campaign with the focus of long-term planning for estate bequests, etc.

Conventions: (Kinerk)

We are working on contingency plans for conventions because of the current economic conditions. We are trying to lower break-even costs. We are also working with hotels to prevent room-block losses. Given the current economy we must be proactive to insure financial success for the chapters sponsoring conventions.

2009 convention to be held in Cleveland, Ohio

2010 convention to be held in Seattle, Washington

2011 convention to be held in Massachusetts and Rhode Island

2012 convention to be held in Los Angeles/Orange County

Amateur Competition: (Hartley)

The committee is pleased to report that ATOS will give an honorary membership if one of the three winners is not a member of ATOS. If a winner is already a member, his or her membership will be renewed for a year.

The board discussed the possibility of a cash prize for the winner(s). The board tabled the subject of cash prizes.

Technical Committee: (Miller)

Allen Miller was pleased to report that a pristine copy of ATOS *Shop Notes* is available. Allen would like to reprint the edition and offer the book for sale in the ATOS Marketplace.

Tom Blackwell suggested that be offered on the web.

Allen also spoke about the planning of a technical weekend. This event would be designed to increase the technical expertise of chapter crew chiefs, interested hobbyists, and perhaps offer the special skills of theatre organ maintenance, preservation, and restoration to knowledgeable church organ technicians.

Motion: (Near) to grant up to \$4,000 to fund the reprinting of *ATOS Shop Notes*. (Carried, Unanimous) (Abstention Miller)

Motion: (Near) to make the *ATOS Shop Notes* available on the ATOS web site as a download at no charge. (Carried, Unanimous)

Awards and Recognition: See Don Near's report. The Awards and Recognition Committee is earnestly soliciting nominations for the annual awards. The more nominations received the better the choices that can be made.

Youth Representative: (Morkin)

Projects that are underway are continued. ATOS Facebook and YouTube entries are quite popular.

Archival Liaison: (Weiler)

We have a great many items that we do not need. Some of the surplus items could be handled in auction by a professional firm that handles all of the details. Could also sell some of the items at the Cleveland convention. A large number of recordings are in storage in Minot, North Dakota from the Reeve Collection. The board gave approval for Jeff Weiler to explore the feasibility of hiring a professional firm to auction our redundant materials.

Paul Van Der Molen suggested that we investigate moving our archive collection to the University of Oklahoma. They have excellent facilities and are heavily involved in organ restoration and instruction. Another suggested the American Organ Archive.

Michael Fellenzer has indicated that with his workload and schedule he could no longer give the attention necessary to his duties on the ATOS board of directors.

Motion: (Near) to accept (with regret) Michael Fellenzer's resignation from the ATOS board of directors effective immediately. (Carried, Unanimous)

President/CEO Double, speaking for the board, thanked Michael for his years of service to the organization.

Macy's (Wanamaker) Ayars Wurlitzer Report: (Mangel)

\$63,000 still needed for the installation. They will appreciate any financial help that ATOS could offer. The original estimate for installation was \$153,000 but will run over. The spreader strips have been burnt and will need to be replaced. The project will be put on hold if funding is not available. A donor has

offered to match a sum provided by ATOS for this project. The board has taken this under consideration.

Curt Mangel is consulting with the city of Philadelphia electrical inspector about the feasibility of retaining the original cotton-covered wire used in the organ.

ATOS Summer Youth Camp: (Nordwall, Parker, Eddington)

A preliminary budget and time line was presented to the board.

Martin Ellis will be the head instructor with Jelani Eddington and Donna Parker assisting. The board engaged in a lengthy discussion and made many suggestions about the Summer Youth Camp. Eventually, the board would like to see the program be self-supporting.

Adult Theatre Organ Getaway: (Nordwall)

This activity was designed to be self-supporting. The ideal number of attendees would be 15 students.

This year the Getaway will be held in the Bay Area. The primary teaching instrument will be the Wurlitzer located in Berkeley, California. Other instruments will be used as well.

Motion: (Evans) Chapter liaisons must solicit contributions for the Summer Youth Camp. (Carried, Unanimous)

Youth Initiatives: (Eddington)

The committee is soliciting applications for a new Youth Representative.

Applicants are sought for the George Wright Memorial Fellowship.

The Young Organist's Competition should draw many applicants this year.

Mentoring Program: (Parker)

Applicants are being sought for this program.

Public Relations: (Parker)

The Public Relations Committee would like to initiate a project that chronicles the lives of our remaining theatre organists. So many of the organists that have come before have been forgotten.

Reorganization Plan/Committee Assignment Review: (Double/Peterson)

Tabled until the committee has done a thorough review of the ATOS Strategic Planning Survey (membership survey).

Strategic Planning: (Powers)

Doug Powers shared a summary of the results of the member survey.

Overall the chapters are looking for more assistance from the national organization in the areas of marketing of local events and providing tools to increase membership at the local level.

The membership is also looking for more technicians, performers, and venues.

E-Tones: (Reddish)

The latest newsletter is just out.

The newsletters will be published on the website. Bucky Reddish has had little luck soliciting articles for the newsletter.

Membership Committee Report: (Apple/Double)

The Membership Committee is considering four main issues:

Identification of ATOS chapters that allow non-ATOS members to participate.

Public concerts at conventions that "sell" ATOS membership.

Contact with different places that feature the theatre organ in order to have membership materials present.

Contact performers to help publicize ATOS during concerts.

Web Site Update: (Blackwell)

Tom Blackwell offered two items for consideration:

Maintaining our present site (site has been expanded in the last few months).

Designing a new website. This will take much time and effort. The process of designing a new site has already begun.

Forward-looking items:

Interview six stakeholders in ATOS for website input.

Set up a framework for structure of the web page.

Ultimately 12 to 15 people will be in charge of the web site management.

Increase the youth section of the website.

The board discussed the creation of an ATOS webcast on our website. This webcast would be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Initial funding is needed to get this concept started.

Motion: (Van Der Molen) to spend up to \$3,000 to sponsor an ATOS webcast. (Carried, Unanimous)

Touring Show Update. The first performance of the ATOS touring show is scheduled for the Riviera Theater in North Tonawanda, New York on April 19, 2009. The event will feature Jelani Eddington, Donna Parker, Chris Gorsuch, and the American Legion Band of the Tonawandas.

The ATOS will continue the touring show concept without Steve LaManna's assistance.

Ken Double then shared the following information about the ATOS board schedule for the upcoming ATOS annual convention:

Travel Day: June 29, 2009

Board meeting: Tuesday, June 30, 2009. Those presenting themselves for officers should plan to do so at 1:00pm.

Membership forum: Thursday, July 2, 2009

Annual membership meeting: Saturday, July 4, 2009

Ken Double introduced Col. Mike Hartley (ref) to the board and indicated Mike's intent to present himself for the office of vice chairman of the ATOS board of directors.

# Minutes

The ATOS board (minus officers) then met in executive session to hear Col. Hartley's presentation.

The board then adjourned executive session and resumed the regular board meeting.

Motion: (Eddington) to appoint Col. Mike Hartley (ref) as vice chairman of the ATOS board of directors. (Carried, Unanimous)

President/CEO Double then recommended to the board that John DeMajo be appointed to the Endowment Committee to fill the vacancy created by Michael Fellenzer.

Motion: (Van Der Molen) to appoint John DeMajo to the Endowment Committee. (Carried, Unanimous) (Abstention: DeMajo)

Good of the Order:

A query was made as to whether ATOS would be interested in reproducing some of the older theatre organ publications. This was taken under advisement.

Chairman of the Board Peterson adjourned the meeting at 5:39pm.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Note: Business was conducted using *Robert's Rules of Order*. Jeff Weiler, Parliamentarian.

## MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

**MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2009  
8:00PM EST**

Chairman of the Board Craig Peterson called the meeting to order at 8:04pm EST.

Officers Present: Craig Peterson, Chairman of the Board; Mike Hartley, Vice Chairman of the Board; Bob Evans, Secretary; Paul Van Der Molen, Treasurer. Board Members Present: John Apple, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Allen Miller, Don Near, Donna Parker, Doug Powers, Bucky Reddish. Board Members Absent: Tyler Morkin, Youth Representative to the Board. Staff Present: Bill Carr, Jim Merry, Jeff Weiler.

Chairman Peterson declared a quorum.

Action Item: (Evans) to approve the addition of "carried" (Paul Van Der Molen's motion recorded in the minutes of the

telephone conference of November 19, 2008) to the vote by the board to accept Puget Sound chapter's bid for the 2010 ATOS annual convention with Tom Blackwell as convention chair. (Carried, Unanimous)

New Business:

Discussion of Election Procedure:

Michael Fellenzer has resigned his seat on the ATOS board of directors. The board will determine, in accordance with the bylaws, how to proceed with the election.

Jelani Eddington pointed out that we basically have two options according to the bylaws. We must be clear to the membership what bylaw option we are following.

1. Conduct a "normal" election. Elect three people and the board seats the fourth member.

2. Elect three board members; the fourth highest vote getter is seated on the board.

Bill Carr was concerned about possible confusion on the ballot with more than three names on the ballot.

The board discussed, at length, the possibilities of each option. All board members were in agreement that the membership be completely aware of the process.

Some members were concerned about the perception of the membership. Many board members voiced the opinion that we must follow the bylaws and be constantly aware that we should always act in the best interests of the organization.

Paul Van Der Molen asked about the possibility of holding a special election for the fourth board member. This might be another option to consider.

Motion: (Van Der Molen) that the board follow normal election procedures to elect three candidates and follow the bylaws to appoint the person to fill the fourth board seat vacated by Michael Fellenzer.

(Yes: Hartley, Evans, Van Der Molen, DeMajo, Eddington, Miller, Parker, Powers, Reddish.) (No: Apple, Near.)

Recording Policy: (Double) Dolton McAlpin suggested that copyright attorney Whit Raynor make an official recommendation regarding the ATOS recording policy. The board felt it best to solicit an outside opinion on this matter. Ken Double felt this prudent to go outside the board to seek a legal

opinion especially regarding the liabilities (copyright infringement) of ATOS. We are seeking this clarification to protect ATOS.

Motion: (Eddington) that the ATOS board approve the expenditure of up to \$2,500 to engage Whit Raynor for a legal opinion regarding the ATOS recording policy. (Carried, Unanimous)

Motion: (Van Der Molen) to appoint John De Majo as chair of the Endowment Fund committee. (Carried, Unanimous) (Abstention: De Majo)

Chairman Peterson adjourned the meeting at 8:48pm EST.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary, ATOS

Note: The meeting was conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*. Jeff Weiler, Parliamentarian

## MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 29,  
2009**

**8:00PM EST**

Chairman of the Board Craig Peterson called the meeting to order at 8:05pm EST.

Officers Present: Craig Peterson, Chairman of the Board; Mike Hartley, Vice Chairman of the Board; Bob Evans, Secretary; Paul Van Der Molen, Treasurer. Board Members Present: John Apple, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Allen Miller, Don Near, Bucky Reddish. Board Members Absent: Donna Parker; Doug Powers; Tyler Morkin, Youth Representative to the Board. Staff Present: Jeff Weiler, Parliamentarian.

Chairman Peterson declared a quorum.

Motion: (Near) to appoint Dennis Unks to fill the board seat vacated by the resignation of Michael Fellenzer on January 3, 2009. (Carried, Unanimous)

Chairman Peterson adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm EST.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Note: The meeting was conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*. Jeff Weiler, Parliamentarian.

## Attention All ATOS Chapter Officers

Please visit the ATOS website, [www.atos.org/front-desk/chapters.html](http://www.atos.org/front-desk/chapters.html), and verify that the information for your chapter is current. If there are any changes needed, please e-mail [webmaster@atos.org](mailto:webmaster@atos.org).

# Theatre Organ

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1/3 Page	\$400	\$200	\$190	\$180
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**CLASSIFIED ADS**—75¢ per word for ATOS members; \$1.00 per word for non-members. \$10.00 minimum. Not counted as words: *a, and, the, &*. Phone numbers are counted as one word, as are hyphenated words. All classified ads must be submitted PRE-PAID to avoid a \$10.00 handling/billing charge. PRE-PAID charge of \$15.00 to have a THEATRE ORGAN showing your ad sent to your mailing address. Deadline for placing ads is the 1st of each even month (February, April, June, August, October and December). Make check payable to ATOS and send to: Jeff Weiler, THEATRE ORGAN Editor, American Theatre Organ Society, 1845 South Michigan Avenue #1905, Chicago, Illinois 60616. Word counts may be verified in advance by e-mailing Joanne, the Editorial Office Administrative Assistant, at joanne@atos.org.

**DISPLAY AD SPECIFICATIONS**—Preferred format for ad submission is high-resolution PDF. All fonts MUST be embedded and original images MUST be at least 300 dpi. EPS files are accepted IF all graphics have been embedded and fonts converted to outlines. Native files from QuarkXPress, Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop are accepted IF all necessary linked graphics and fonts (screen and printer) are included.

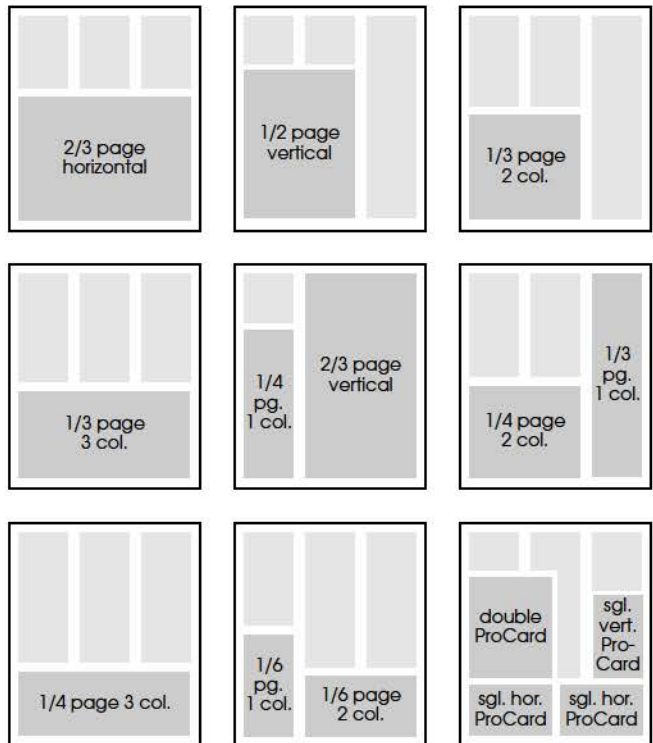
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A printed proof or a PDF proof MUST accompany ad. Media accepted includes CD or DVD mailed to the Editor. Files less than 5 megabytes can be submitted by e-mail to the Editor (with a copy to Joanne); larger files may be uploaded to an ATOS FTP site. E-mail Joanne at joanne@atos.org for FTP upload directions.

### SIZES

SIZE	WIDTH	HEIGHT
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1/3 Page (3 columns)	7 1/4"	3 1/4"
1/4 Page (1 column)	2 1/4"	7 1/4"
1/4 Page (2 columns)	4 3/4"	3 3/4"
1/4 Page (3 columns)	7 1/4"	2 1/2"
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# Obituary



## Richard H. (Dick) Peterson

Richard H. (Dick) Peterson passed away at age 83 on January 29, 2009, 14 years after suffering a debilitating stroke. Besides spending time with Carol, his devoted wife of 53 years, and with his other family members, Richard's greatest passion in life was applying modern technology to organbuilding. His goal was always to make organs better, more affordable, and consequently more available for people to enjoy. During his long and prolific career, he was awarded over 70 United States and foreign patents.

Dick Peterson was born on February 26, 1925 in Chicago. He served in the U.S.

Army as a radio engineer from 1943 until 1946 and studied electronics at the City College of New York. While stationed in New York City, he often visited Radio City Music Hall and loved the room-filling sound of the organ there while also being fascinated by the mechanics of pipe organs. It was during that time that he told his parents his goal in life was to "perfect the organ."

Mr. Peterson soon co-founded the Haygren Church Organ Company in Chicago, which built 50 electronic organs for churches all around the Midwest. Soon thereafter, he founded Peterson Electro-Musical Products, currently in Alsip, Illinois. In 1952, he presented a prototype spinet electronic organ to the Gulbransen Piano Company. Gulbransen's president was thrilled with the sound of the instrument, and they soon negotiated an arrangement where Richard would help the piano company get into the organ business and, as an independent contractor, he would develop and license technology to be used in building a line of classical and theatre-style home organs for Gulbransen to sell. One particularly notable accomplishment was Gulbransen's introduction of the world's first fully transistorized organ at a trade show in 1957. Gulbransen would ultimately sell well over 100,000 organs based on Peterson inventions.

Meanwhile, many of Peterson's developments for electronic organs evolved into applications for pipe organs. Especially

notable among over 50 of Dick's innovative products for the pipe organ are the first digital record/playback system; the first widely used modular solid state switching system; the DuoSet solid state combination action; a line of pedal extension 16' and 32' voices; and the first commercially available electronic swell shade operator. Many thousands of pipe organs worldwide utilize control equipment that is the direct result of Richard's pioneering efforts. Also carrying his name is a family of musical instrument tuners familiar to countless thousands of school band students and widely respected by professional musicians, recording artists, musical instrument manufacturers, and servicepersons.

In the 1950s, Dick Peterson enjoyed learning to fly a Piper Cub airplane and, in more recent times preceding his illness, enjoyed ham radio, boating, and restoring and driving his collection of vintage Volkswagens. He was a longtime member of Palos Park Presbyterian Community Church in his home town of Palos Park, Illinois.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Guild of Organists' New Organist Fund, where a scholarship is being established in Richard's name.

—Scott Peterson

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302-995-2603, [www.dtoskimball.org](http://www.dtoskimball.org)

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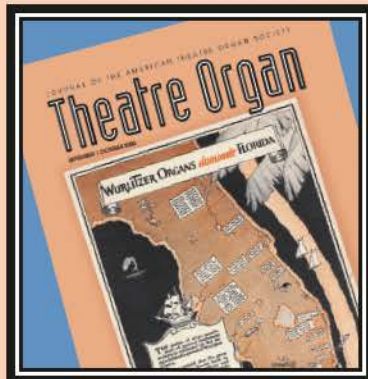
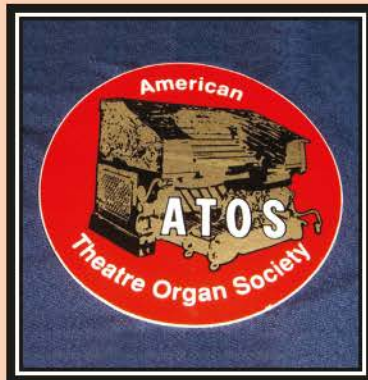
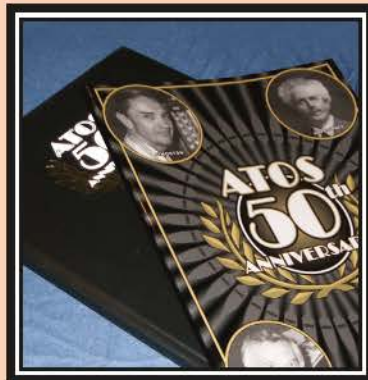
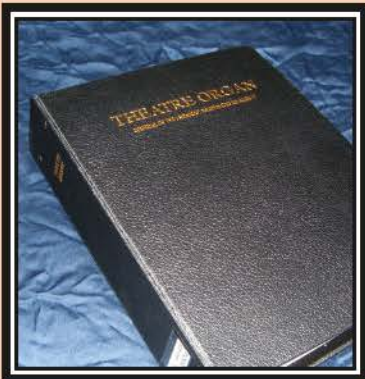
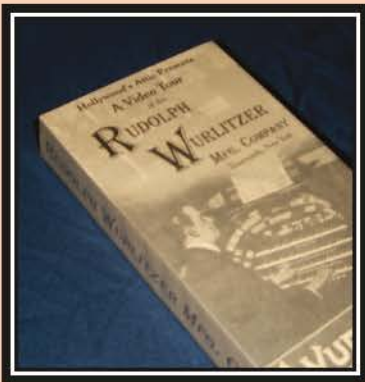
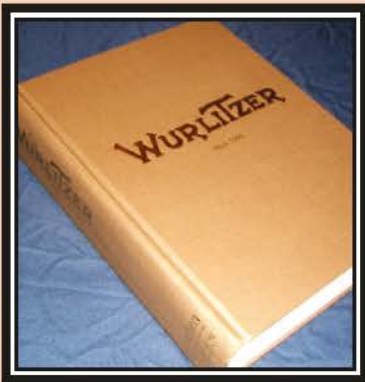
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