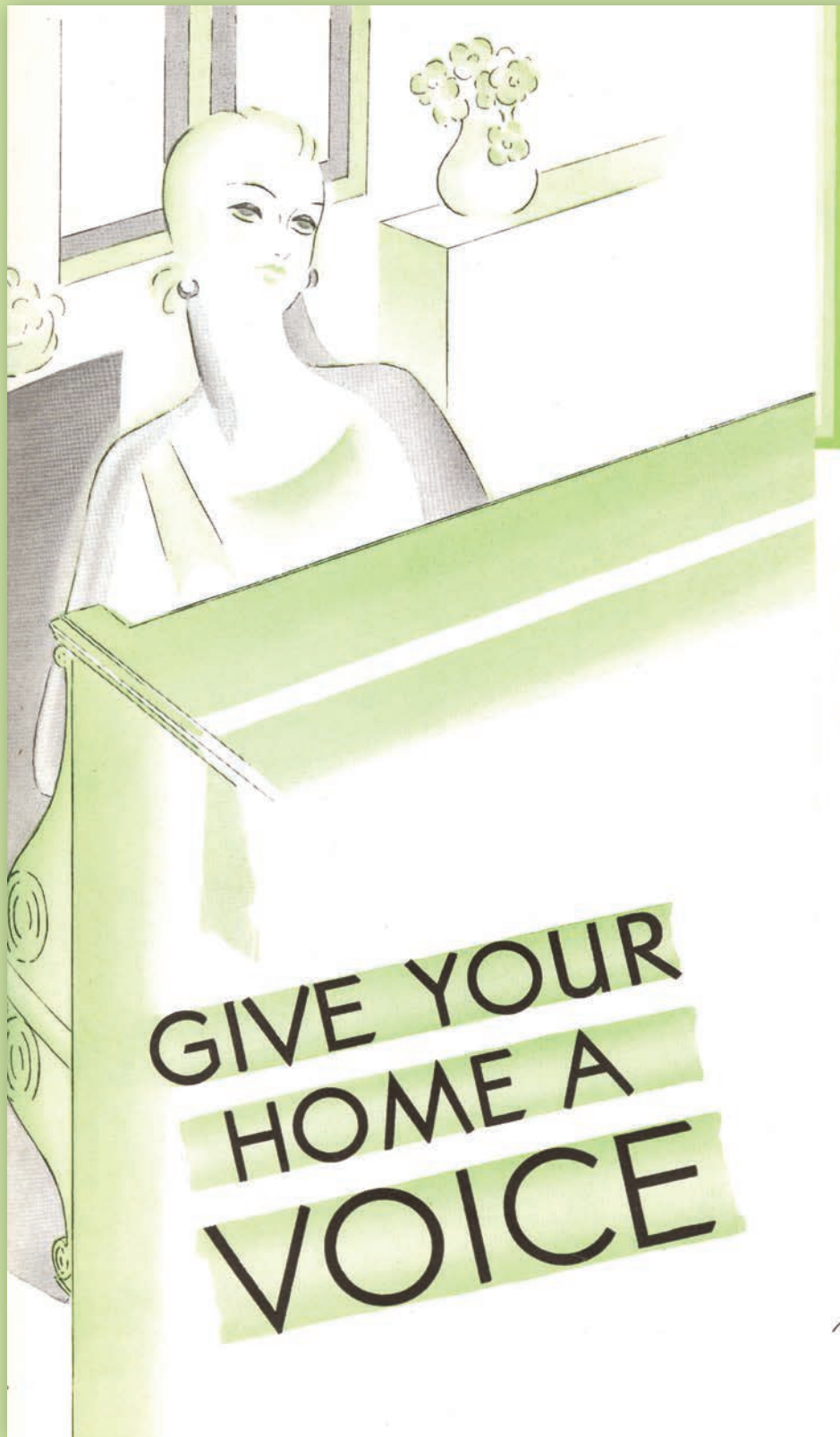


JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Theatre Organ

JULY | AUGUST 2009



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ASSOCIATED always with grandeur, with the most sublime and exquisite tonal effects ever created and mastered by human hand, the organ is the acknowledged king of musical instruments. Always in cultured homes, where music is naturally considered a necessary complement of happiness, there has slumbered the desire to own a pipe-organ, a desire until now often difficult of fulfillment because of the size, and perhaps the expense, of the peer of all instruments.

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On the Cover: Despite some exuberant advertising and engaging prose, the Great Depression took its toll on theatre, residence, and church organbuilders alike. Luckily, James D. Crank has done extensive work to preserve the music contained on player organ rolls including those produced by Wurlitzer. We learn additional details of this fascinating endeavor as Mr. Crank presents the second and final part of his article beginning on page 22.

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Vox Humana

This is the time of year when ATOS board and staff members are called upon to generate annual reports of activities.

A flurry of paper flies from point to point as achievements are documented, plans made, and frustrations noted. Accomplishments and concerns may be shared in the boardroom, but often the general membership doesn't get a chance to hear all the good news.

I'm pleased to report that the production of THEATRE ORGAN proceeds smoothly and on budget. For the first time in recent memory we have a backlog of articles awaiting publication, thanks to a dedicated and gifted group of regular contributors. While we endeavor to include a little something for everyone in each issue, our main goal is to expand horizons and present your news and articles accurately. As some readers may recall, there was a time a few years ago when our journal contained over 400 errors in a single issue. Although we continue to strive for perfection, we typically find three or four mistakes glaring up at us from the printed page. Somehow they seem glaringly obvious only after the mail carrier has made the rounds.

What you now hold in your hands is the product of a dedicated team including some of the most talented and creative people I have had the pleasure of knowing. Joanne assists with all manner of administrative detail, and we've developed our own competition to see who can identify the most errors in the proofing stage. Dannielle, our graphic designer, turns files of photos, captions, and Word documents into works of art. Johnson Press of America provides excellent printing, binding, and mailing services in a timely and cost-effective manner. The peculiarities of our US Postal System notwithstanding, we've never been late. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Thanks for reading THEATRE ORGAN!

—Jeff Weiler, Editor

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Headquarters

If it's supposed to be "summer vacation," why are we so busy?

Greetings to all in ATOS.

The question that titles this column might be misinterpreted as being somewhat negative. Anything but!

The ATOS world has been alive with activity that grows on a weekly basis. While many of you are reading this, we are just concluding our annual convention in Cleveland, hosted by ATOS board member Doug Powers and the members of the Western Reserve chapter. Doug has pulled off an unbelievable trifecta in that he has continued his service on the board, run a convention, and spent countless hours working on a Wurlitzer installation at the Masonic Auditorium, all while still running his business, Guide Publishing. He deserves our most sincere appreciation, and some time to rest! There will be a full review of the convention in an upcoming issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

Meanwhile, congratulations are in order to our newly elected members of the ATOS board of directors: Col. Jack Moelmann is once again serving on the ATOS board, and the membership has re-elected both Donna Parker and Doug Powers for another term. We look forward to continuing the effort that has signified this era of growth for ATOS. Also, we offer a sincere thanks to Don Near for his stellar service to ATOS, and the same gratitude to those who ran for election. Your enthusiasm for ATOS and willingness to give of your time and talent is most appreciated.

ATOS is now into its fourth month of operation of the new web-radio venture titled *ATOS Theatre Organ Radio*. It's just like a radio station broadcasting theatre organ music all day long, but it's available on your computer. For those who have not discovered it, simply go to the ATOS website, click on the ATOS Radio icon, and *voilà!*

The initial reaction when our "soft launch" commenced back in late April was overwhelming and most positive. Without the expertise of Tom Blackwell and the partnership with Steve Worthington, ATOS would still be dreaming of having a webcast. Instead of dreaming, we are up and running, and it's just wonderful.

In our first few days of operation, listeners in nearly 20 countries around the world spent thousands of hours listening to our programming and hearing about ATOS. We look forward to growing this venture with live concert events, interviews with artists and personalities, an all-request program, and more.

Other items keeping us busy include the upcoming *Summer Youth Camp* (our third) in Phoenix; the *Adult Getaway* (the second) in the Berkley/San Francisco area; and plans for the upcoming regional convention this fall in Birmingham. That will be a wonderful event centered on "Big Bertha," the Alabama Theatre's glorious Wurlitzer pipe organ. Gary Jones, Larry Donaldson, and a host of wonderful people in Birmingham are getting set to give ATOS a good dose of their version of southern hospitality, and this will be an event not to be missed. Grits, anyone?

As you turn the pages of this issue, you will find wonderful reading on a wide variety of subjects, including Joe Hollman's article on Cincinnati's Albee Theatre Wurlitzer and its new home at the Music Hall; the conclusion of Jim Crank's interesting piece on his residence reproducing player organ roll project; the wonderful news on the Atlanta Fox and how the Möller is heard at almost every show; and John DeMajo's interesting list of radio studio pipe organs.

One final note: I know the announcement of the new policy that bans recording at convention events has upset some.



Believe me, we have heard the reaction. ATOS leadership does not apologize for doing what legally had to be done, but we most certainly understand the disappointment felt by many who have enjoyed recording at conventions.

In an attempt to take a positive step for the future, ATOS is recording the entire Cleveland convention and will produce a "highlights" double-CD recording with nearly 40 selections, and this will be available at a nominal price. For future conventions, those who attend the full convention will be provided a highlights CD as part of their registration package; for those who cannot attend the convention, the CD may be purchased for later enjoyment. That is one way ATOS can provide great long-lasting memories of convention events.

I hope you are enjoying your summer, and I look forward to our next visit. As the song title says, "See you in September"!

—Ken Double, President and CEO

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The Adult Getaway is open to everyone over the age of 21. Registration for the event is \$495, and accommodations in a nearby hotel are being arranged by ATOS. For additional information, please visit us online at www.atos.org or contact Donna Parker at d.parker@atos.org.

Director's Corner

John Apple

I am serving in my second term as a director on the ATOS board, and once again I am involved in, and deeply committed to, raising our membership numbers.

There are many ways to accomplish this, and most members can participate in some aspect of the effort. If you think that increasing our membership must be expressed as a rather tired and mostly ignored litany of well-meant suggestions, please read on!

First, an organization needs unity of purpose and cohesion in effort. Pushmi-pullyu (from *Doctor Dolittle*) was a wonderful creature invented to express exactly this. ATOS should decide to agree on a number of principles and loudly express and vigorously defend them among ourselves and to others as potential members. As an example, police officers differ on many aspects of their job but they all agree on several main points. What you hear as an outsider is usually the strong points of agreement. The disagreements which inevitably make it into the press (taser use, for example) are distracting and don't really apply to most of the departments or officers. It is, sadly, what most people remember instead of all the good things police do. ATOS is similiar in that respect. Our society is responsible for so much good, but it is the "other" that is remembered by our members and observed disdainfully by potential members.

Second, we should understand our place in the world of organ lovers. We are not the 600 (or is 900?) pound gorilla in this tent. Our membership fee is below

that of the Organ Historical Society and significantly lower than that of the American Guild of Organists. In the past several years, we have attracted more crossover members, and this is excellent! It's not the complete solution, but it is important. ATOS should be seen as a professional organization, equal in purpose and quality to the other organ associations. In this way, we will earn respect from the members of the many other organ groups throughout the world. After respect, there often comes cooperation. An example is the February, 2009, *Pipedreams Live* concert, a collaboration between the Rochester Theatre Organ Society and the organ department of the Eastman School of Music (reported in the May/June 2009 issue of THEATRE ORGAN). I will do everything I can to encourage this kind of good will among all organizations which promote organs and organ music.

And third, our membership should know where it stands in the world as a whole. We thrill when a program such as Jack Moelmann's Radio City Music Hall appearance makes the mainstream media news. We are filled with pride when a local newspaper covers an organ installation or concert. Naturally, we pay attention to this, and it makes us feel fulfilled—but it shouldn't. (I told you that this would be different!) We are a part of such a small group—a tiny number of

people who enjoy the organ—that we should know the comparative size of our numbers to the rest of the world of entertainment. For example, the live audience at the World/Coke 600 NASCAR race at our local track is greater than the members of all the organ associations, societies, groups, and fan clubs, worldwide. That's the live, in-person, audience at one race versus the membership of all the organ groups, worldwide. The thought is sobering, and it emphasizes the importance of creating good, strong, positive attitudes in our members and their interactions with members of all other organ societies, and by extension the rest of the world to whom we refer as potential members.

Today, attitude is everything. If you are happy about the organ and ATOS, your friends will sense this, and it may well influence them. Write a positive essay about a concert or convention and send it to your local paper, put it on your blog, e-mail your friends, Twitter it if you want. All of the budget in our endowment cannot buy that kind of publicity. Think of it as a contribution—your contribution—to membership growth.

—John Apple, Chair
Membership Committee

Have you remembered the **ATOS Endowment Fund** in your will or trust?

Letters

Thank You

Thank you for publishing Edward Stout's article, "Oklahoma, Where the Corn Grows Tall, But Balabans Become Short" in the May/June, 2009, issue of THEATRE ORGAN, concerning the Oklahoma University organ project. It was distressing to learn that various components from the Möller and Wurlitzer instruments were selectively used to create a "Whitman's Sampler" instrument. Surely the donors of the rare and complete Balaban Wurlitzer never envisioned that their instrument would be used in this manner. As there are very few original models of the Wurlitzer product line left, the breaking up of these examples of musical instrument manufacturing needs to stop. The actions of the University will, hopefully, serve as lesson number one to students on how not to treat donors; they should not show disrespect to the instruments which have been entrusted to them.

—Chris Elliott

University of Oklahoma

As an educational institution, the University of Oklahoma (OU) strives to provide its students a varied palette of educational resources from which to study. While Mr. Stout is to be applauded for stirring diverse opinion within the theatre organ community and opening up conversations covering a range of issues, his research and commentary about OU and the American Organ Institute (AOI) is undocumented and looms perilously close to pure gossip ["Professional Perspectives," May/June issue of THEATRE ORGAN].

Constructive criticism is a key element in how AOI students and staff provide feedback. We encourage and require AOI students, faculty, staff, and consultants to provide authoritative proof of information and claims, whether presented in a University meeting, newsletter article, or other submissions to media publications. This falls under the category of academic integrity by which every department within the University is held responsible. We also take very seriously our charge to teach the whole person. We are not merely training

organ players, but making efforts to shape healthy personalities for compassionate and professional interactions in the church, the academy, and on the stage. We believe that such persons of integrity will be positive contributors to the world of the organ, its music, and beyond. Self-indulgent cynicism, character assault, deconstructive criticism, and idle gossip are not tolerated. Such things do not serve the good of the organ world in any fashion whatsoever. For example, each week in performance studio class, students are encouraged to offer constructive criticism of their peers following a performance, whether it is a hymn, a piece of organ literature, or an improvisation. This is followed by summarizing comments by the instructor. The students are taught to make positive affirmations as well as defensible and articulated observations with informed criticism. Another example is the open process of evaluation and dialogue between the professional staff and student workers each semester in the AOI shop. We have found such openness to be a catalyst for positive growth both for the students as well as their instructors.

As a public institution, the AOI's accomplishments are celebrated on our website (<http://aoi.ou.edu>). The website is an ongoing public record told in photographs and words of everything we do; our daily activities displayed for public interest. It is with dismay that we report that the foundation of Mr. Stout's article rests on second and third-hand stories that were misrepresented, exaggerated, or simply untrue. No one at the AOI was contacted to corroborate the contents of Mr. Stout's article. It is difficult to understand how facts connected with the "Mini-Möller," that have been well documented as a matter of public record on our website, could be transformed into the story as printed in "Professional Perspectives." THEATRE ORGAN readers are encouraged to visit the AOI website to review the public record regarding our work, including this instrument.

The care with which AOI removed the G. H. Hille Memorial Balaban 2 Wurlitzer and placed it in storage in our campus facility is also well documented on our website. We are extremely grateful to ATOS for the grant enabling us to properly remove

and store this historic instrument. In the acceptance letter to the Hille family, the University of Oklahoma pledged, "We are pleased to accept the instrument and are looking forward to its future installation fully intact and all-original in a suitable location that will offer students the opportunity to practice and perform on it regularly." This promise is emphatically unchanged. We were clear to the Hille family and the ATOS board of directors that, in all likelihood, the Wurlitzer restoration would commence after the completion of the multi-year renovation and installation of Möller Opus 5819.

The University was very generous in providing unprecedented start-up funds for the formation of the AOI. These funds were allocated prior to my arrival in 2006. Once Möller Opus 5819 was donated to OU in October, 2006, the University spent a considerable amount of time and money on a thorough feasibility study to ascertain the timeframe and budget to enable not only the organ's proper renovation but also a first-class chamber structure. We feel very fortunate and inspired to be part of a university that desires to truly do things the proper way, not the cheapest or easiest way. How many university organ departments in the United States can boast such whole-hearted and enthusiastic support of a pipe organ project such as this? During the fundraising campaign for this project, it was considered important to the administration and the staff of the university to install a temporary instrument demonstrating (in miniature) what Möller Opus 5819 could do. This organ has a particular capacity to perform music in a variety of styles ranging from classical, sacred, and theatrical, to silent film accompaniment. Mr. Stout opines that we should have installed the Balaban 2 Wurlitzer in Sharp Concert Hall. This was not an option for us given the available space, the musical demands, and keeping our long-term commitment to the Hille family. Further, this decision was made by the AOI to avoid the danger of losing sight of our future showcase instrument for this concert hall. Another goal of this temporary installation was to produce a prototype in process and quality of the work that could be accomplished by a team of professionals, students, and volunteers at the AOI, along

with serving as a demonstration piece to potential donors.

As for the technical issues raised in Mr. Stout's article, given the present limited space for a blower and multiple windlines, it was decided that this temporary organ would be on 10" wind pressure except for some pedal basses on 15". The organ uses 14 ranks of unit chests, including four ranks of chests originally on 20" of wind pressure. The feasibility of using 20" chests on 10" of wind was determined following careful study of these chests. In the course of examination, it was revealed that the 10" and 20" chests were identical in specification, right down to the springs and magnets. As we did not wish to alter the Möller Opus 5819 pipework, height and wind pressure limitations forced us to utilize other resources to fulfill important tonal elements as specified by our professional consultants. Only the Spencer blower, 61-note *Orchestral Oboe*, and 16' octaves of the *Diaphone and Tuba* were borrowed from the G. H. Hille Memorial Wurlitzer. The blower has been professionally restored, and the Wurlitzer ranks are unaltered, waiting to be reunited with the Balaban 2 in the near future as funds permit.

Anyone who has spent time in the AOI shop ends up with a much better understanding of how the pipe organ works. Some non-organists have expressed interest in becoming organbuilders after graduation. Other students have received scholarships to attend conventions of the Organ Historical Society and the American Institute of Organbuilders. With the highest number of merit scholarship students per capita in the United States, the OU student body is representative of the finest students in this country. The AOI workforce is composed of students on scholarship, students being paid for their services, and a half dozen community volunteers in addition to the paid staff, including visiting experts. Most graduate scholarships at OU and other institutions require 10 to 20 hours of work per week for the program in which they are enrolled. At OU these students are called "graduate assistants." In his column, Mr. Stout refers to our graduate assistants as "indentured servants." His term is not only insulting to all who work in our shop,

but exposes a profound misunderstanding of academia, the University of Oklahoma, and our hard-working students. Our shop management takes safety very seriously and has devised a careful process of safety training and graded tool usage for the students. In fact, OU's Environmental Health and Safety Office commended the AOI for the high level of commitment to workplace safety and desired to use the AOI Shop as a model for other University departments. Students work on projects according to their demonstrated talent, interest, and experience. If the students truly felt as if they were indentured to the AOI, it is difficult to imagine how the AOI has grown to include more than two dozen students in less than three years! With the reality of shrinking organ departments across the country, this rate of unprecedented growth and interest in all types of pipe organs should be celebrated, not maligning.

With regard to fundraising, we have created a detailed and thorough development report. In order to fully realize the vision of AOI, including the complete installation of Möller Opus 5819 as well as the G. H. Hille Memorial Balaban 2 Wurlitzer, we are charged with a multi-million dollar fundraising campaign. Every contribution is important, whether large or small. History has proven the efficacy of new ideas and new concepts becoming realized with the shared belief and generosity of many individuals from every walk of life. We understand the daunting nature of the journey on which we have embarked. We also have the confidence to fully realize our vision as we forge ahead to protect our past, embrace the present, and foster the future for the instruments we love so much. Alone we can accomplish nothing; together anything is possible. We call upon everyone to consider making a lasting gift in support of this important program.

We are grateful that Mr. Stout affirms and recognizes the unique nature of the AOI, whose scope of mission and facilities are heretofore unknown in the academic community. I, along with those who have followed me to OU, believed it was high time that something more than talk was accomplished. Talk is cheap, work is difficult, and good work is expensive. We

believe in the notion that "we don't do what is easy, but what is necessary." The seemingly impossible task of convincing a major research university administration (from the School of Music Director, College of Fine Arts Dean, Board of Regents, all the way to its visionary President, David Boren) of the great value of this vision has been accomplished. An organ program that was non-existent upon my arrival has grown to number more than 20 students in less than three years. Simply put, we have put action behind the words; the stage is set and the proverbial train has left the station. Everything is in place except for the full funding.

We continue to be privileged to host a number of visiting guests to the AOI, including many from the ATOS. Norman, Oklahoma and the OU community are very warm and inviting. Contrary to popular opinion, Norman has not experienced a tornado in over 50 years. There are many theories about this, ranging from meteorological to divine intervention. Just last year, Norman was ranked by *Money Magazine* as the sixth best small city in which to live in the United States. What better place to put perhaps the greatest hope for the future of the American pipe organ than right in the middle of America's heartland, blessed with good fortune, sunny skies, and clean air?

In good heartland tradition, we view ourselves as welcoming and encouraging of ongoing dialogue about the pipe organ. Therefore, we invite Mr. Stout, along with pipe organ lovers everywhere, to visit the OU campus and judge for themselves the quality of our accomplishments. We especially want to extend an invitation to the AOI and the School of Music as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the installation of CB Fisk Opus 111 along with the commissioning of the 3/14 temporary organ from Opus 5819. There will be a formal announcement of the fall, 2009, events in the upcoming AOI newsletter. (Sign up to receive the newsletter by e-mailing aoi@ou.edu.)

I am continually thrilled with the students' commitment to excellence in all they do, and I am impressed that a pipe organ of this size has been restored and installed by a team of students under

Letters

professional guidance within one year's time. It is both a tremendous responsibility and life-changing privilege to be the leader of this new and innovative organ program. We fervently believe in our vision and hope that readers of THEATRE ORGAN will join us as partners in our goal of honoring the past, embracing the present, and fostering the future!

—John D. Schwandt, D Mus
Associate Professor of Organ & Director
The American Organ Institute
University of Oklahoma School of Music

Mr. Stout Replies

John Schwandt is an old acquaintance, so perhaps he can be forgiven for how he personalizes his rebuttal to the questions I raised about the restoration of the

composite organ recently installed at the University of Oklahoma. Or perhaps I should recognize that my attempts at humor don't echo well when the sounding board is someone other than me. Let it be conceded that far more reliable than my long-distance commentary on certain decisions that have been made in the course of the restoration would be either a site visit to the organ itself or another visit to the American Organ Institute website for a description of the organ (which is what Mr. Schwandt's letter provides).

Cutting to the chase, I still want the best for Mr. Schwandt's project, the best for his students, and the best organ that the University of Oklahoma can assemble. I have heard first-hand, not second-hand, things that make me think it's not quite the

best yet, and I have reported my anxieties to the readership of THEATRE ORGAN. This should be an incentive to investigate, not an occasion to repudiate. In fact, I'd love to be shown that I'm wrong.

A fair-minded reading of my original article on the organ and Mr. Schwandt's reply will reveal that he is justifying decisions that I called into question, not refuting the reasons I did so.

Everyone knows I always use ludicrous and over-the-top humor to convey either questions or positions, as I believe humor is the true lubricant of life. It is also a fact that worthwhile and meaningful humor, just like the pearl, is built upon a grain of sobering truth. Clearly, my sense of humor does not speak to everyone.

—Edward Millington Stout III

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scholarships available!



ORGAN STOP PIZZA



PHILLIPS MUSIC STUDIO



ORPHEUM THEATRE

The ATOS Summer Camp offers a unique opportunity for young enthusiasts to learn the art of the theatre organ through lectures, master classes, and private study. This year's teaching staff will include Martin Ellis, Donna Parker, and Jelani Eddington. The majority of the coaching sessions will take place at the fabulous Adrian Phillips Music Studio symphonic-theatre organ. We will also take trips to visit many wonderful instruments in the area, including Organ Stop Pizza, the Orpheum Theatre, and many others!

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. Please also feel free to contact Jelani Eddington at 262/639.8788 (rj.eddington@atos.org) or Donna Parker at 503/642-7009 (d.parker@atos.org).

The official hotel is the Phoenix/Scottsdale Embassy Suites, located at 4415 East Paradise Village Parkway South, Phoenix, Arizona 85032; 602-765-5800. A block of rooms is held under "ATOS" with the special rate of \$69 per night plus tax.

Thanks for the Memories



*Claire Lawrence at the Emery Wurlitzer
(Lawrence Collection)*

With how many stars have you had your picture taken? Yes, the American Theatre Organ Society has organists who could qualify as stars, just like the film industry, sports, opera, ballet, and Broadway. No doubt you have your own favorites.

After 30 years of membership in ATOS, having attending 15 conventions and more theatre organ concerts than I can count or try to remember, I was looking at one of my many scrapbooks and began to ask myself the question that begins this article. Gaylord Carter, Lee Erwin, Rex Koury, Lyn Larsen, Bob Ralston, Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Chris Elliott, and Barry Baker all took time to pose with my husband Fred and me.

I have 17 scrapbooks devoted to the theatre organ, including conventions, but mostly of the 22 years Fred and I spent volunteering at the Emery Theatre in Cincinnati. We joined in June, 1978, just one month before the Ohio Valley chapter (OVCATOS) started a weekend movie series featuring the Wurlitzer from Cincinnati's Albee Theatre (the Albee had been torn down to make way for a hotel).

Having never played a theatre organ before joining OVCATOS, I remembered the organ from the Albee. When I heard Gaylord Carter play the dedication concert at the Emery Theatre, I sat there thrilled, wishing I could play that wonderful instrument. Later, I learned that the University of Cincinnati, owners of the Emery Theatre, offered lessons through their adult continuing education program. So I signed up. I had a piano background, having begun lessons at age 8, and Broadway musicals were a big part of my passion for music.

For five years I took lessons at the Mighty Wurlitzer. When Fred retired in 1982, having worked 35 years for General Motors, he joined me volunteering at the Emery, taking care of the concession stand, ordering candy and popcorn. Then, after volunteering as an usher and selling tickets at the box office, I became vice president of OVCATOS. After two years of lessons, I joined the organists who played before films, during intermission, and as the audience left.

For 12 years I was vice president, during which time I arranged the meetings and scheduled the organists who would play for the movies. That was followed by one year as president. Fred was treasurer for 13 years. So, we were both very involved with OVCATOS—all the while attending conventions and concerts.

But, as the saying goes, all things must come to an end; the Emery movie series was successful for quite a few years, but was closed by January, 2000. The organ was in storage until recently and is now being installed in the Music Hall Ballroom.

I have loved belonging to the American Theatre Organ Society and learning to play the theatre organ. Playing for movies at the Emery Theatre was the thrill of my life. Attending conventions and hearing the starts of the ATOS became a passion. Thank you to all the organists and volunteers who made it possible. Thanks for the memories.

—Claire Lawrence

News & Notes

ADDENDUM TO CONTRIBUTIONS TO ATOS IN 2008

The list of 2008 contributors to ATOS, as submitted to the THEATRE ORGAN for publication in the May/June issue was incomplete. Donors were omitted because of a processing error in creating the list of names, and we apologize for the error. Those members are listed here by donor category.

Contributors to the ATOS Annual Fund are not included on these lists and will be recognized at a later time.

* = Designated a portion for endowment

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

March 15 to May 11, 2009

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Larry Bell, Appleton, Wisconsin
Brian Blackwell, Wilmington, Delaware
Joyce Boblitz, Sparrows Point, Maryland
Noel Bryson, Glen Mills, Pennsylvania
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Joel Shapiro, Sparta, New Jersey
Ray Silvers, Jefferson, Georgia
Brian Stanley, Tacoma, Washington
John C. Trewolla, Prairie Village, Kansas
Gary Woodroof, Spokane, Washington

RENEWALS AND ADDRESS CHANGES

Renew your membership on time, and submit mailing address changes promptly, to avoid missing an issue of THEATRE ORGAN. Your renewal date appears on the mail cover of each issue.

Please contact me if you have questions or problems concerning your ATOS membership; I'm here to help.

—Jim Merry

Membership/Executive Secretary
American Theatre Organ Society
P.O. Box 5327
Fullerton, California 92838-0327
j.merry@atos.org
714-879-3621

RESULTS OF THE ATOS 2009 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

Total ballots received:	1,586
Total votes cast:	4,587
Elected Directors:	
Donna Parker	979 votes
Jack Moelmann	679 votes
Doug Powers	665 votes
Other totals:	
John Ledwon	652 votes
Don Phipps	462 votes
Don Near	414 votes
Susan Cole-Shaw	402 votes
William Mollema	334 votes

ATOS EDUCATORS' GUIDES ARE AVAILABLE

The ATOS *Educators' Guides* have been completely revised and are now in two editions. The chapter edition is for use by ATOS chapters; it gives chapter members step-by-step guidelines to help them prepare and present a successful theatre organ program to students in their area. The school edition is for the use of educators as they prepare their students to attend a theatre organ program. **Both guides must be used together when presenting a theatre organ program to students.**

The newly revised ATOS *Educators' Guides* may be downloaded from www.atos.org or purchased from the ATOS Marketplace.

ATTENTION ALL THEATRE ORGANISTS!

ATOS has added an expanded section to its website with information about all performing theatre organists. The information includes a biography, publicity photo, and contact information (name, address, phone, e-mail, website). Having this information available to concert promoters, program directors, and chapters will help them, and will give you added visibility. Please send all information to d.parker@atos.org or to Donna Parker, P.O. Box 6103, Aloha, Oregon 97007. E-mail or call with questions (503-642-7009).

FINDING A NEW AUDIENCE

How does a chapter find a new audience for concerts? If marketing research is part of the answer, how does a chapter fit that into an already tight budget? One possible answer comes from the Garden State chapter. At concerts and other events at the beautiful Loew's Jersey, now home to a Wonder Morton that is heard often, patrons can find young people working computers and conferring with staff and attendees. The Small Business Institute at Rider University organizes major marketing and research projects for seniors and soon-to-be-graduates, and the SBI has accepted the opportunity to work with GSTOS and Loew's Jersey Theatre. They will be doing serious market research into how best to draw a new audience for theatre organ events. A report was due in June.

There is no question that chapters across the country might find that marketing research is available at no cost by simply putting forth a proposal to a local college or university that offers a degree in business.

A CALL FOR DOCUMENTS

Theatre Organ Installation Document
Research Project

The ATOS Technical and Education Committees are jointly requesting the assistance of all ATOS members who have access to original factory organ chamber and contractor blueprints, drawings, contracts, photos, specifications and correspondence. The goal is to acquire historic documents to include in the ever-expanding ATOS Archive. This request for documentation includes all builders of theatre pipe organs.

Although a number of original Wurlitzer drawings are presently available through the Smithsonian Institution, they represent less than 10% of the total number generated by the firm. We are seeking originals, or high-quality copies, of prints and documents that do not exist in the Smithsonian Wurlitzer collection. Equally important is the acquisition of installation blueprints and technical drawings of Robert-Morton, Barton, Marr & Colton, Kimball, and other theatre organbuilders.

Please assist us with this important project, before any more of our history is lost.

Contact Jeff Weiler, Archival Liaison, at j.weiler@atos.org or 312-842-7475.

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

Attention All ATOS Chapter Officers

Please visit the ATOS website, 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.

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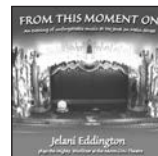
The Art Of Theatre Organ Arranging

The Art Of Theatre Organ Arranging is the first volume in a series of books designed to provide interesting fully written-out arrangements for theatre organists of all skill levels. In addition, the book provides in-depth discussion of the core concepts of theatre organ playing, including an overview of **registration, phrasing, harmony, and constructing your arrangement**. The book also contains an extensive appendix with indispensable reference material, including a catalog of theatre organ registrations, a chart of scales, a chart of chord harmonizations, and a glossary of terms.

The arrangements in this book are *Give My Regards To Broadway*, *Indian Summer*, *Play A Simple Melody*, *A Kiss In The Dark*, and *When The Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves For Alabam'*

From This Moment On

From This Moment On is the first recording of the 3-manual 19-rank Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ at the Akron Civic Theatre since the organ was rebuilt and tonally expanded in 2000. Installed in a spacious atmospheric theatre in downtown Akron, Ohio, the instrument gives the listener the rare chance to experience the sounds of a mighty Wurlitzer in its original home.



From This Moment On, *Hopelessly Devoted To You*, *That's How Young I Feel*, *Ribbons Down My Back*, *Celebrating The Music Of Bette Midler*, *Chicken Reel*, *Lullaby Of The Drums*, *Youth Of Britain March*, *Song On The Sand*, *Medley From Chicago*, *I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart*, *Hoe-down (from "Rodeo")*

To see our complete line of products, visit us online at
www.rjeproductions.com • www.theatreorganarrangements.com

Ordering Information: The book is available for \$34.95 plus \$6.00 shipping (\$13.00 shipping outside the US & Canada). The CD is available for \$18.00 plus \$3.00 shipping (\$5.00 shipping outside the US & Canada) Please send check, money order, or credit card details (Visa/MC/Amex/Discover) to:

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The Art of Theatre Organ Arranging

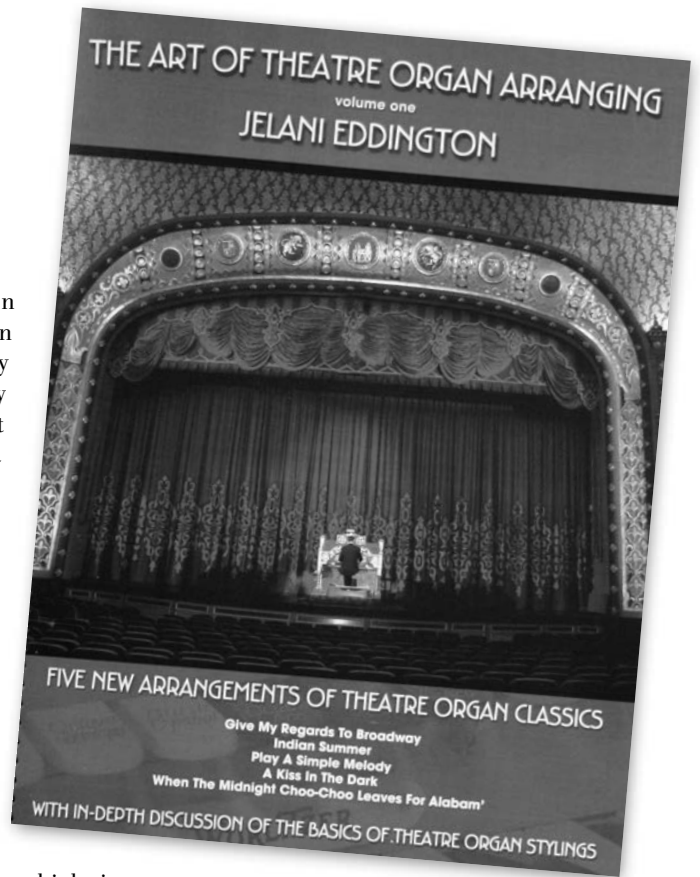
Jelani Eddington

Over the years there have been many “how to” theatre organ books that were published, but it has been a long time since a new one has been available. Jelani Eddington’s book, *The Art of Theatre Organ Arranging*, is without a doubt a well thought out and exceptional manual in many respects; and, as noted on Jelani’s website, this is volume one, with expectations of more in the series.

The book is divided into three major sections. “Part One—An Overview of Essentials” includes extensive notes on registration, phrasing, harmony, and structure. “Part Two—Five Theatre Organ Arrangements” includes the songs “Give My Regards to Broadway”; “Indian Summer”; “Play a Simple Melody”; “A Kiss in the Dark”; and “When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabam’.” Each song is dissected and presented with the basic road map of each tune that includes specific ideas for an introduction and segue, key changes, special techniques, and a full and complete printed arrangement. Additionally, the author has provided sound files of each song on his website as a study guide. My only criticism of this entire project is that the sound quality of these recordings is as if they were made on Captain Nemo’s harmonium rather than the fine digitally sampled instrument on which they were actually created. Although assuredly presented to showcase the technical aspects of the arrangements and not really meant to be professional recordings, the sonic quality distracts from Jelani’s well-crafted examples of the arrangements. “Part Three—Appendices” includes “Scales and Harmonizations,” a “Catalog of Essential Theatre Organ Registrations,” and a “Glossary” of theatre organ and musical terms. Over the years, I personally have acquired many organ and musical workbooks. I have never found one with a theatre organ focus as complete and

as simple to follow in a step-by-step fashion for organists at any skill level as this one by Mr. Eddington. Don’t get me wrong; it will take a great deal of work and practice to perfect the concepts and arrangements presented in this volume, but when mastered, you’ll have a more than adequate degree of proficiency in playing and creating professional sounding theatre organ arrangements.

Aside from the content of this book, which is extraordinary, it is obvious that Jelani put a great deal of thought into its final presentation. Who has not had a manual or song book that has been bound with saddle stitching or, worse yet, perfect binding, where you just can’t keep the darned thing open on the music rack and it flips onto the pedals or the manuals? I personally have ripped bindings apart in utter frustration on many occasions. This book is spiral bound with plastic wire and stays flat and open on every easy-to-turn page. Additionally, Mr. Eddington has bound the “Catalog of Essential Theatre Organ Registrations” head to head so that it’s easy to use right on the music rack of your organ. This section is in table form with plenty of room for you to make your own annotations right in the columns. The typeface throughout the book is very readable, and the thick-coated card stock front and back covers of the book have beautiful color plates of the Alabama Theatre that will certainly grace any music rack without looking tattered for a long time to come.



I highly recommend this workbook for anyone who is serious about playing theatre organ arrangements. You would have to buy many books to get all of the information that Jelani has packed into the 125 pages of this intelligent volume. It is, without any reservations, a genuine bargain at \$34.95, and is available at www.theatreorganarrangements.com.

—Andy Antonczyk

An Almost Spectacular Day at the Riv

BY RUSS SHANER

On Sunday, April 19, the “Theatre Organ Extravaganza Express” that is tooting its way across America rolled into downtown North Tonawanda, New York for a whistle stop at the venerable Riviera Theatre, just a hop, skip and jump from ye olde Wurlitzer factory.

When asked if I would jot down my thoughts of the afternoon’s performance, I at first hesitated. Ours is an endangered and fragile hobby that encompasses a large circle of friends, all with diverse likes, dislikes, and levels of involvement. While for some of us it is a hobby, for many others it is a business. I am always concerned that reviews, good and bad alike, are subject to the whim of the reviewer, can easily confuse or mislead the reader, and may falsely embolden or impugn producers, artists, and others. With that thought in mind, I will offer up my impressions of the Tonawanda extravaganza. I urge you to interpret them as you may.

First are some thoughts regarding the structure of the *Extravaganza*. Everyone involved in the production of theatre organ events these days is racking their brains to find innovative ways to increase audience size and attract new followers. These are brave souls fighting an increasingly steep uphill battle. The extravaganza programs are a collaboration between ATOS and a private producer, and they follow a formula based on the very successful *Rialtofest* held annually in Joliet, Illinois. The plan is to market the “package” to local ATOS chapters and other theatre organ groups and to provide production assistance and possibly some financial assistance to help defray costs. In general, the formula stipulates the inclusion of a band, orchestra, or some other musical group, usually non-professional, drawn from local civic groups—an American Legion post, volunteer fire department, etc.—along with three theatre organists playing the house organ, a grand piano, and a second electronic organ obtained locally for the

occasion. The sponsoring organization is counseled to expand its advertising and promotion efforts beyond the usual theatre organ crowd and to emphasize the attraction of three theatre organists playing separately, together in various combinations, and with the local performers. It is hoped that the local musical talent will be a major drawing card and that when those “new” folks get there they will be awed by the organ and become instant enthusiasts.

A show of this type is expensive and can easily be a logistical nightmare to produce. Right off the top, there are three organists who must be paid, flown in, housed, chauffeured, fed, and watered. Having been involved in the booking of artists for over 30 years for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, I have a pretty good idea of the ballpark cost for just this part of the ante. The local band, orchestra, etc., is most likely comprised of volunteers, but I’m sure they are paid something for their efforts. To this must be added the overhead costs for the venue, staff, advertising, and the rest. We know that in today’s world none of these things come cheap. Other headaches can include arranging sufficient rehearsal time and the procurement and tuning of an appropriate piano and a plug-in organ with proper speaker arrays.

While this formula has been proven successful in Joliet, one must take into consideration the pitfalls of making it a one-size-fits-all package. Joliet is a relatively large suburb of Chicago and is within easy driving range of a number of other large population centers with active theatre organ groups; North Tonawanda is a small town located near Buffalo. The Rialto is a luxurious movie palace; the Riviera is a

nicely restored neighborhood theatre. *Rialtofest* offers out-of-towners the opportunity to visit two fabulous home installations in the area the same weekend; no added attractions in the North Tonawanda area were promoted as part of the event. While perhaps not sky-high in today’s market, the admission fee of \$30 was still a lot for local residents accustomed to paying \$10 for a regular concert. Unfortunately, given the overhead, I’m sure \$30 was absolutely necessary.

I certainly do not mean to rain on this parade, and I don’t pretend to have a whole lot of suggestions. However, given the current economic climate, I hope that the producers will carefully consider ways to contain the costs and complexity of the extravaganza formula, do some “right-sizing,” and provide the production assistance needed to ensure success for first-time and/or smaller venues.

The great news is that the three organists chosen for the Riv program are all spectacular performers. Who could fail to love the combination of Jelani Eddington, Chris Gorsuch, and Donna Parker? Similarly, the American Legion Band of the Tonawandas was fantastic. It blended well with the Wurlitzer and gave high-spirited renditions of a wide range of traditional brass band repertoire.

Installed in 1926, the original 3/11 (now 3/15) Wurlitzer Opus 1524, a three-manual Special, was a showpiece installation that Wurlitzer utilized extensively to woo prospective customers when they visited the nearby factory. The Wurlitzer had suffered badly from a long era of “bigger and louder must be better” misguided additions and changes and, sadly, had

acquired a bit of a seedy reputation in past years. It was mercifully given new life in a Herculean six-week rescue effort in early 2008 by Clark Wilson and associates. While still having a very prominent presence in the 1,140-seat neighborhood theatre, it now is a fine-sounding Wurlitzer that in capable hands is a joy to hear. The Riviera Theatre itself has undergone extensive restoration over the past few years and is the pride of the Tonawandas. The manager, Frank Cannata, and his staff of mostly volunteers book a steady stream of attractions and are working hard to keep this gem profitable.

The not-so-good news is that the success of a show of this type demands that all of the elements be individually superior to make the end result spectacular. In larger cities I'm sure that there would be little problem in obtaining a suitable three- or four-manual electronic organ. Apparently in North Tonawanda, that just wasn't happening. Unfortunately, and I'm sure beyond the control of those involved, what was brought in was woefully inadequate. From my seat in the loge, the "2/1 Magnus"

I am always concerned that reviews, good and bad alike, are subject to the whim of the reviewer, can easily confuse or mislead the reader, and may falsely embolden or impugn producers, artists, and others.

provided was mostly inaudible. Frankly, other than providing a seat on stage for one of the performers, it could have been left on the delivery truck. The piano fared little better. Its output was apparently fortified by a small speaker at the edge of the stage. When played alone, it sounded okay, but in combination with the Wurlitzer or the band, one could see the keys move but that was about all. The space occupied by the organ and piano on the stage also made for extremely close quarters for the band. Ideally, the piano and electronic instrument should have been on risers or a thrust stage over the pit to enhance their presence and provide more space for the band.

All in all, it was a very pleasant afternoon. Having attended many concerts at the Riv over the past nearly 40 years, it is a pleasure to again hear a fine Wurlitzer in a nicely restored theatre being played by three terrific artists in one afternoon. The band was a great added attraction. Unfortunately, I'm not sure that I could classify the experience as being an extravaganza.

Journal of American Organbuilding

Quarterly Publication
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This publication is devoted to the dissemination of knowledge regarding the design, construction and maintenance of pipe organs in North America. Although primarily a technical journal for the benefit of organbuilding professionals, it is also a valuable resource for architects and project consultants, church musicians, building committees, seminary and university libraries, and anyone involved with the design or renovation of contemporary worship space.

Far from being the "lost art" that the average person believes it to be, organbuilding in the United States and Canada is maturing and thriving in hundreds of small and large shops throughout the continent. At the same time, serious challenges lie ahead for those promoting the pipe organ in an era of limited budgets and competing options. Readers of the *Journal of American Organbuilding* will benefit from the thoughtful exchange of information and ideas intended to advance this time-honored craft.

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CHRIS ELLIOTT, SIMON GLEDHILL, LYN LARSEN, RICH LEWIS, FR. JIM MILLER, RON RHODE, ROB RICHARDS, SCOTT SMITH, LEW WILLIAMS

Magnifico

Magnifico is a collection of 18 unique performances by some of the world's finest artists on the 4/60 Vince Aveni residence theatre pipe organ. The instrument's core is Wurlitzer Opus 2171, a Balaban 1A that shipped April 12, 1931, to the Paramount Theatre in Glen Falls, New York. After several moves, it was acquired by Vince and Pat Aveni in 1985 and installed in their home. There were many professionals who re-designed and added to the instrument over the next 15 years or so until the instrument, maintained by Doug Powers, grew to 40 ranks. In 1995, Ken Crome of Reno, Nevada, built a spectacular new console for the instrument—a white and gold replica of the historic Brooklyn Paramount Wurlitzer. The lavish decorations on the console were executed by Carlton Smith of Indianapolis, Indiana.

In 2000, it was decided that the organ should be moved into larger quarters, and Mr. and Mrs. Aveni built a new home in Gates Mills, Ohio, to accommodate it. Ed Zollman was retained to move the organ into its new home and to do some further modifications; Doug Powers worked on the winding for the project. The organ was re-specified by Walt Strony, and the tonal finishing was done by both Ed and Walt. The organ as it is today is one of the largest theatre organs in the world and represents the diligence and hard work of many individuals; but is really the creation of its visionary owner, Vincent T. Aveni. It speaks into an opulent acoustically live music room that can seat over 200. Sadly, Vince passed away only a few months after it was completed. At this time, it appears that the instrument's future is secure, since the Aveni home was recently purchased by another music aficionado who intends to preserve the gargantuan theatre organ in its present location. I'd hope that Vince would be very pleased.

This album is of "spotlight solo" performances of many of the planet's most acclaimed theatre organists who graced the Aveni console: Chris Elliott, Simon Gledhill, Lyn Larsen, Rich Lewis, Fr. Jim Miller, Ron Rhode, Rob Richards, Scott Smith, and Lew Williams. They were produced from tracks stored in the digital player of the instrument and were recorded, *in situ*, by Robert Ridgeway. The track list is as follows: "From This Moment On"; "Remember Me"; "Love Walked In"; "Mister Sandman"; "Something's Gotta Give"; "Exactly Like You"; "Basin Street Blues"; "White Cliffs of Dover—We'll Meet Again"; "I've Got the World on a String"; "Little Girl Blue"; "Hooray for Hollywood"; "Anyone Can Whistle"; "Chicago"; "I Know Why"; "This is All I Ask"; "Light Cavalry Overture"; "Since I Fell for You"; and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue." I found every track to be

spontaneously entertaining, and the tonal diversity of the instrument to be tremendous. The hard surfaces in the Aveni music room give the organ reverberant and full-bodied audio vivacity as each artist imparts his own unique signature on this instrument. The jewel box graphics, created by Dennis Scott, are sumptuously breathtaking.

This disc was produced by the Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society, and its sales will help support the chapter's own 4/28 theatre organ refurbishment project. It is available for \$20, plus \$3 shipping and handling within the United States and \$5 for foreign orders. Please make check or money order payable to W.R.T.O.S, Inc. and send it to WRTOS CD, 3323 Belvoir Boulevard, Beachwood, Ohio 44122.

—Andy Antonczyk

KEN DOUBLE, SKIP STINE

Tribute

Tribute—Salute to Harry James, Montovani, Bobby Hackett, and More, is a landmark theatre organ recording. The synergy of Ken Double at the noted 3/66 Kimball theatre organ at Dickenson High School, together with trumpet master Skip Stine, is spectacular. Ken's playing is the best I have ever heard from him. In talking with Ken, he's had plenty of experience and opportunity to re-invent himself, since he has played 41 concerts in the last year. His musical style has evolved, adding new excitement and spontaneity that I have not heard before. Now, add the artistry of trumpet player extraordinaire Skip Stine to the "new" Ken, and the result is absolutely magical.

Should you not be familiar with Skip Stine, he has played with numerous bands throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe including Buddy Morrow and the Sammy Spear Orchestra for *The Jackie Gleason Show*. Also, during that time he worked for such artists as Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Peggy Lee, and Johnny Mathis. Skip joined the Harry James Orchestra in the 1960s, appeared on numerous television shows, and was a



TRIBUTE

A salute to Harry James, Bobby Hackett, Mantovani and more...

KEN DOUBLE
pipe organ

SKIP STINE
trumpet

Recorded
on the 3m/6c
**Dickinson
Kimball
Theatre
Pipe
Organ**
Wilmington, DE



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.

undoubtedly will want to have a copy to enjoy for years to come. It is available for \$20 postpaid (United States only) from the DTOS Music Shop, c/o Bob and Jean Noel, 113 Megan Drive, Mansion Farms, Bear, Delaware 19701-8048, phone 302-836-8048. A PDF order form can be downloaded at www.dtoskimball.org/dtosmusicshop-page.htm.

—Andy Antonczyk

popular studio musician. You'll find his articulation and musical sensitivity to be breathtaking and his styling to be a perfect augmentation to Ken at the Dickenson Kimball.

The music on this disc just flows like clarified butter, and this recording of the Kimball, engineered by Robert Ridgeway, is crisper and more defined than many other recordings previously released of this particular instrument. The track list is as follows, the bold titles indicating that Skip Stine is featured along with Ken: **"You Made Me Love You"**; **"Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White"**; "Undecided"; "Begin the Beguine"; "Once Upon a Time"; **"Charmaine"**; **"Around the World"**; "Besame Mucho"; "Some Sweet Sugar Medley"; **"Don't Blame Me"**; **"That Old Feeling"**; **"The Very Thought of You"**; **"Pennies from Heaven"**; "70s Medley"; "More"; "Londonderry Air" and **"It Had to Be You,"** which also features an energetic and most enjoyable vocal by Mr. Double himself.

This CD is a marvelous masterpiece of entertainment. Everything about it is pure showmanship and musical exuberance. I predict that it won't be very long before selections from this CD will be popular in other markets beyond theatre organ interests, just like the historic Seng/Hackett recordings. To mention a few highlights on this album, in the song "Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White," the trumpet melody line seems to sensuously curl itself around the rich organ tones, and Ken's rendition of "Londonderry Air" sets the benchmark for any other version I've ever experienced of this song. This CD is a veritable watershed in theatre organ recordings, and you

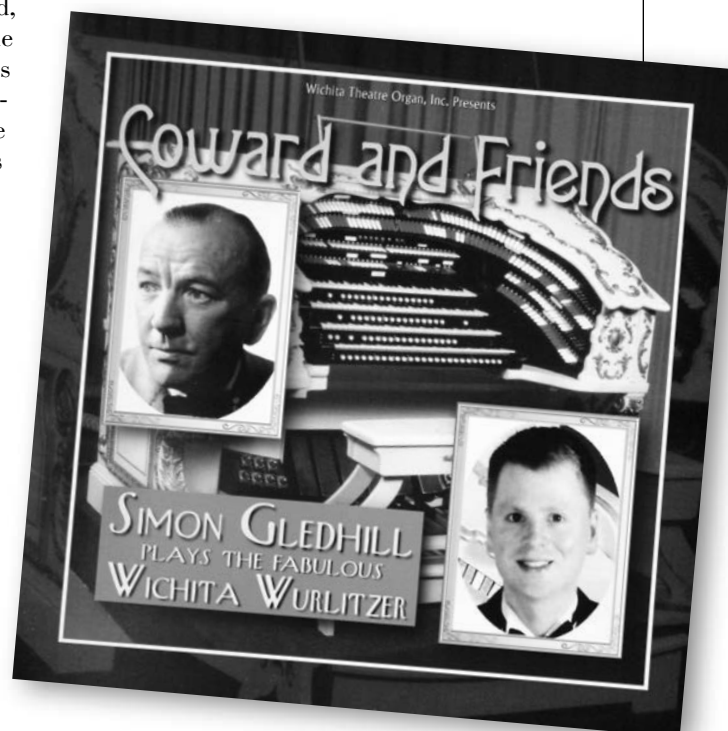
SIMON GLEDHILL Coward and Friends

Passionate, dramatic, emotional, and sensitive are just a few of the adjectives that are brought to mind upon playing Simon Gledhill's new CD, *Coward and Friends*. This is it—a traditional theatre organ recording on the historic and refined Wurlitzer originally installed in the New York Paramount Theatre, featuring a consummate, thoughtful musician who is, above all, a tremendously talented artist. The recording is very good, but I must admit that I miss the razor-sharp definition that was captured in those amazing Pro-Arte recordings of this same installation made over 20 years ago.

The console rises to a "Coward Cabaret Overture," and the melody cavorts and frolics to strains of genuine Noël Coward favorites: "I'll See You Again"; "Dance, Little Lady"; "Poor Little Rich Girl"; "A Room with a View"; "Some Day I'll Find You"; "I'll Follow My Secret Heart"; "If Love Were All"; and "Play, Orchestra Play." The musical illusion is perfectly blended with sparkling reeds, throbbing tibias, and rich and sensuous strings. After hearing this very first medley, and my anticipation

level being high, the next set of selections, *A Fred Astaire Medley*, is pure musical illusion. I could just visualize Fred tapping and waltzing across the stage in "Let's Face the Music and Dance"; "Flying Down to Rio"; "The Way You Look Tonight"; "Pick Yourself Up"; and a sensitive reprise back to the theme of "The Way You Look Tonight." If the songs were like paints on a brush, Simon adroitly creates a beautiful kinetic painting with this amazing rhythmic arrangement. The jazz chord augmentation in Simon's segues are especially unique, and they effectively underscore the emotional impact of the songs that follow.

The next track, "Get Happy" is jazzy, cleverly cadenced, and features a crystalline dancing glock that just makes you smile and emotionally glow when you listen to it. The remarkable range of this famous Wurlitzer is alternatively harnessed and featured in a way that builds tremendous excitement as this song progresses. In Cole Porter's "I Concentrate on You," Mr. Gledhill reveals the more delicate side of the instrument. The Tibias are hauntingly beautiful, and his addition of mutations to the Tibia chorus adds a perfect edge of mystery to this number. What is especially nice about this arrangement is Simon's sensitive phrasing and delicate, articulate,



and contrasting registrations. This song seems like a natural break in the overall presentation, as if the console was ever-so-slowly descending for an auditory intermission.

With “Selections from *Star!*” the console rises again to “*Star!*” and moves on to “Dear Little Boy,” a Buddy Cole-like “Someone to Watch Over Me,” and then the tempo picks up with “Limehouse Blues” and moves into a very intricate rhythm in “Parisian Pierrot.”

The next selections in this medley are “N’ Everything”; “My Ship”; “Jenny”; and finally around again to the main theme of this medley, “*Star!*” When you listen to this arrangement, you can’t help but appreciate Simon’s enormous musical ability as demonstrated by the way he puts it all together. It’s an absolutely seamless synthesis that is very much like a theatre orchestra. His registration just flows between soft passages and fuller passages. The interesting and constantly changing sonic amplitude makes one listen and pay careful attention to every note in the selection.

The next track on this album, “This Is All I Ask,” again features some of the more subtle and delicate sounds of the former New York Paramount organ. The Tibia/Vox combinations are especially beautiful and sensitive. *Coward Medley* consists of the snappy “Mad Dogs and Englishmen” and progresses to the more lush sounds of this instrument in “Bright Was the Day.” Rounding out this medley are “Sail Away” and “I’ll Follow My Secret Heart.” Most interesting are the rich counter melodies woven behind the main themes in Simon’s arrangements.

I especially enjoyed Simon’s interpretation of the selections from *The King and I*. Once again, I felt that I was listening to the orchestral overture before the theater performance. You can just tell how much Simon himself loves this music as he moves from “We Kiss in the Shadows” to “Hello Young Lovers”; “March of the Siamese Children”; “I Have Dreamed”; “I Whistle a Happy Tune”; “Getting to Know You”; “Shall We Dance?”; and “Something Wonderful.” Again, his phrasing is amazing, and if you are familiar with the story line of *The King and I*, you can almost see it visually unfold as you listen to the music.

Coming full circle, the CD concludes as it began with an expanded musical arrangement of Noël Coward’s “I’ll See You Again” from the operetta *Bitter Sweet*. Theatre organ just does not get any better than this. Simon Gledhill is one of the all-time great artists in the genre. Even though this is a recording, his performance has a spontaneous quality to it. The instrument featured on this CD is legendary, and it has immense tonal dimension as well as historical significance. We are so fortunate that it has been preserved in the Century II Center and cared for by Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc. Simon Gledhill’s *Coward and Friends* is most certainly a recording that everyone will savor and enjoy. It is available at www.nyparamountwurlitzer.com.

—Andy Antonczyk

MARK HERMAN A Kid in the Candy Store

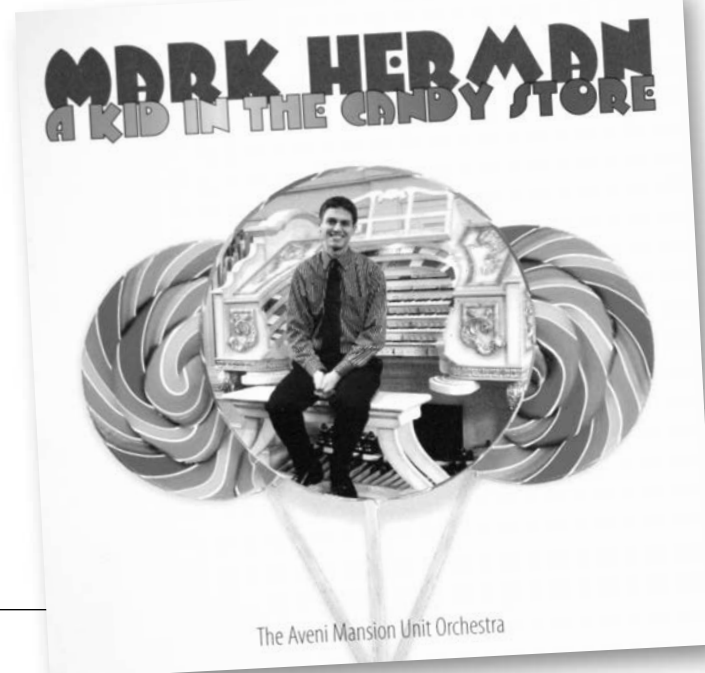
The song selections and their artistic interpretation in Mark Herman’s new recording are certainly much more sophisticated than my preconceptions from the title of this disc, *A Kid in the Candy Store*. Perhaps the title reflects Mark’s affection in making the first solo commercial release on this organ—commandeering the huge four-manual, 60-rank composite theatre organ located in the grandiose home once owned by Vince Aveni. One can certainly appreciate feeling pretty opulent sitting at that white and gold replicated Brooklyn Paramount Wurlitzer console located in the formal and austere setting of the residence’s great music room.

The CD immediately comes to life with the snappy up-tempo tune “Comes Love” and proceeds to a beautiful and romantic “Alone Together.” Then Mark presents a very nice tribute medley of Jule Styne songs including “Some People”; “Saturday Night is the Loneliest Night of

the Week”; “People”; “Never Never Land”; and “Everything’s Coming Up Roses.” I especially like the structure and mysterious and grand registration Mark confers on the next number, “On a Little Street in Singapore.” It is followed by the sensitive Purvis composition “Romanza” that is beautifully performed. The next track, “Atlanta G.A.,” exhibits an almost acerbically edged glock, but Mark’s calculatingly thinned registration is notably effective in the first part of the shuffle-like tune, before he builds to an effectively climactic full-organ finish.

The registration and arrangement of “Feniculi, Fenicula” is extremely orchestral and a lot of fun, and Mark’s snazzy salacious segue is especially nice. His interpretation of the Rodgers and Hart song “My Romance” is both theatrically sensual and features some of the quieter ranks of this enormous instrument. The selections from *Willy Wonka* are very nicely crafted, and Mr. Herman’s rendition of “Pure Imagination” and the reprise of this set convey his keenly developing sense of drama in unison with the resources of the instrument. The powerful rhythmic jazz styling of “I’m Beginning to See the Light” makes a contrast to the quieter and more sublime “I’ve Got It Bad (and That Ain’t God).”

The tricked-out rhythm combined with knuckle-busting dexterity is remarkable in “Power House.” The final number on this CD is this artist’s original composition



entitled “Rhapsody,” and it is a fitting finale to this recording in that it combines Mark’s multiple sensitivities at both theatre and classical genres, and it summarizes and underscores the vast tonal resources of this remarkable organ.

I enjoyed this CD on many different levels; but, most significantly, it is exciting to watch and hear Mark’s continual emergence from that kid in the candy store of the theatre organ to a more multi-faceted musician who is also a unique artist, arranger, and composer. I’m sure it will be exciting to watch this metamorphosis progress even more in the years to come. Mark Herman’s new CD is available for \$20 (postpaid for the United States and Canada) at www.markhermanproductions.com.

—Andy Antonczyk

BOB VAN CAMP Here With the Wind (Re-issue)

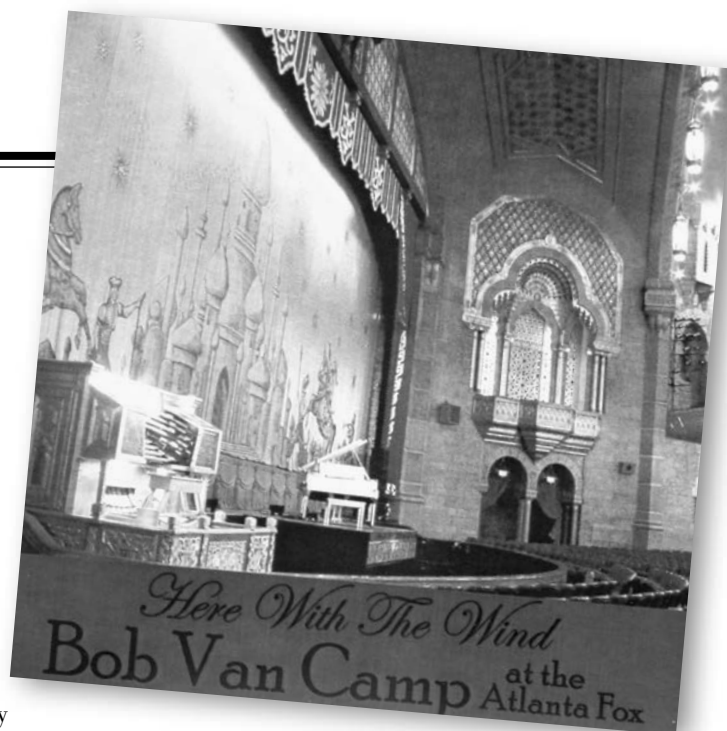
What a thrilling experience it is to hear historic recordings played by legendary organists on equally legendary organs in the venues for which they were intended. Listening to these Bob Van Camp recordings is certainly one of those experiences. The extant 4/42 magnificent M.P. Möller, Opus 5566, in Atlanta’s 5,000-seat Fox Theatre was one of two truly landmark instruments from this builder. The other close cousin, the 39-rank Opus 5315 originally installed in Philadelphia’s Metropolitan Opera House, literally crashed and burned in a very unfortunate accident while it was being moved to another city.

Although theatre organ buffs may find the sound of Opus 5566 to be a bit tubbier than a comparable Wurlitzer, it is extremely orchestral, and it is suitable for playing many types of organ literature. The Atlanta Fox acoustics are ideal for an organ. Anyone who has ever been in attendance at the Fox for an organ concert with a competent theatre organist has undoubtedly had an indelible experience etched into their memory. The “phantom golden piano” rising out of the pit that is now part of the Atlanta Fox instrument was once a part of the Chicago Piccadilly’s Kilgen; it sounds

glorious, and it’s a sight to behold. The Fox Möller is a complicated instrument and has 376 stopkeys that control everything from basic organ sounds, percussions, and traps, to trick couplers. Its mechanical tripper combination system, although bulky, is unique and reliable. The instrument has been in an ongoing state of systematic restoration since 1963.

Bob Van Camp was one of the best organists in Atlanta. He was known not only for his skills at the organ; he was, for many years, the senior announcer, music director, and the “Voice of the South” on Atlanta’s WSB morning drive radio. In 2007 he was honored, posthumously, by being made a legacy inductee of the Georgia Radio Hall of Fame. Van Camp was a versatile musician who could play for hours from memory. He crafted gorgeous harmonies, his phrasing was impeccable, and his melody line always sang through his lush registrations. He played everything from the popular melodies of the day to accurate transcriptions of operettas and Broadway musicals. His music was exacting, and his transitions were inventive; but, most of all, he was entertaining, and the audiences loved him for it. Bob Van Camp was the Atlanta Fox’s house organist from 1963 to 1987. It can surely be said that he graces every performance in the theatre even today: after he died in 1990, his ashes were sprinkled in the attic over the organ chambers.

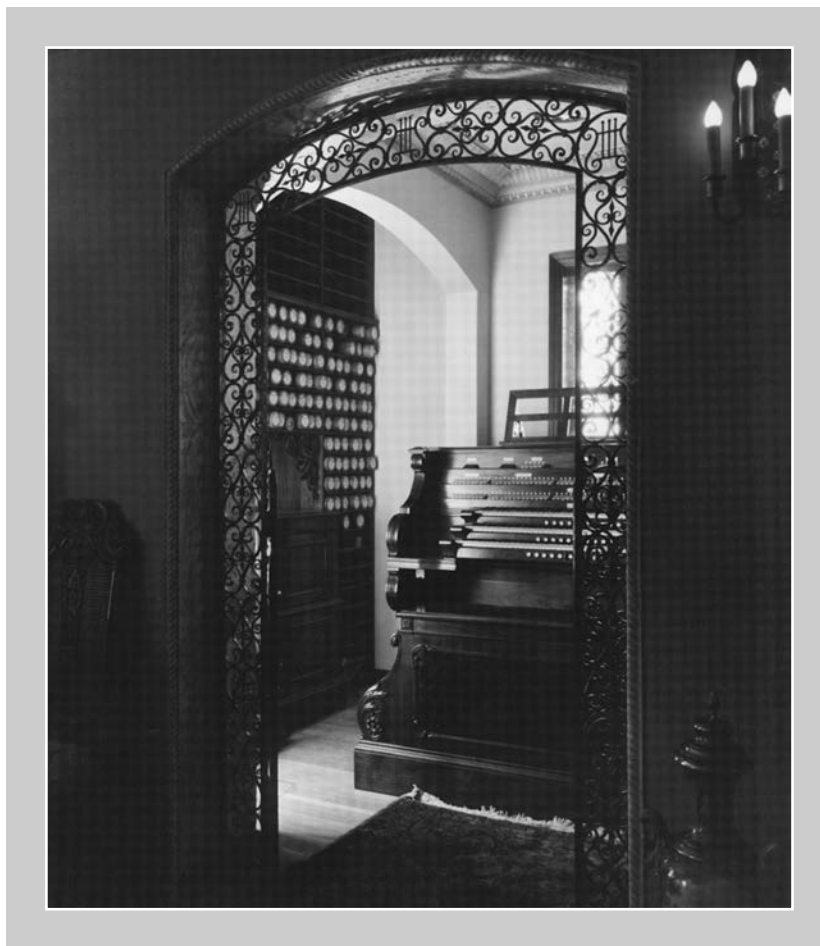
The tracks on this disc were originally recorded in 1967 by Joseph Patton, the visionary behind the Fox’s resurrection, just as the theatrical rerelease of the movie *Gone With the Wind* was being introduced all over the world. It is fitting that the main theme from the soundtrack of that great MGM motion picture, “Tara’s Theme,” is the first cut on this disc, followed by “Summer Samba”; “Summertime”; “Winchester Cathedral”; “Georgy Girl”; “On the Trail”; “Strangers in the Night”; “Rhapsody in Blue”; “Spanish Flea”; “Alley Cat”; “Michelle”; “Baubles, Bangles and Beads”;



“Lady Be Good”; “Don’t Sleep in the Subway”; “Chapel in the Moonlight”; and “Deep Purple.” These historic tracks are the first recordings ever made on the Fabulous Fox’s Möller. They are remarkably special and should be included in every serious collection of theatre organ recordings.

We are fortunate, once again, that Don Thompson’s Pipe Organ Presentations has acquired the master recordings for this disc from the old Concert Recording Company, as well as Ben Hall’s liner notes from the 1968 release of the original LP, and made copies accessible to us again. You can order this notable album, now on compact disc, for \$17 plus \$3 shipping/handling to the United States, Canada, and Mexico (\$6 shipping/handling to other countries) at www.pipeorganpresentations.com/hwtw.htm.

—Andy Antonczyk



Preserving a Great Musical Heritage

Part II BY JAMES D. CRANK (Images Weiler Collection)

CORRECTION

The author apologizes for having mixed up two Skinner residence organs in Part I of this article. The organ at *Elm Court* (mistakenly referred to as *Elm Tree* on page 49 of the May/June issue of THEATRE ORGAN) was a standard Skinner Full Automatic player. It's sad that only one Skinner Orchestrator player organ (Opus 263, 3/24, 1916) seems to exist today in its original home in Toledo, Ohio at the Ernest Tiedtke residence. While the organ was skillfully restored, the Orchestrator player was not, so it can only play semi-automatic rolls.

THE UNIVERSAL SCANNER

A major decision had to be made regarding the universal scanner. Just how would rolls of differing widths, with their various hole spacings, be read? Some changes were incorporated in the transport design based on experience with the Duo-Art scanner. The use of automatic tracking was one of them. With the exception of the change to the actual tracker bar design, both transports are basically identical—only the electronics are different.

There are many ways to scan organ rolls, but most did not seem to be very satisfactory in the long run, especially after building a few feasibility models to test out various possibilities. After the dust had settled, we arrived at three feasible approaches. The first was to go back to the

original phototransistor in each hole in the new tracker bar method. This would have resulted in five bars having to be made that would be interchangeable on the same transport. As it turned out, the 10 and 12 hole-per-inch spacing meant that tiny phototransistors would have to be used, and the walls between each hole were now perilously thin. Then, we considered mounting larger phototransistors on a separate board fed by fiber optic wires inserted in the tracker bar—one such assembly for each tracker bar. The main problem with this idea was not only the construction difficulties, but there still was no centering mechanism.

The second approach was to use a commercial high-resolution Charge Coupled Device line scanning camera with a high-quality Nikon copy lens. This system and the Contact Image Scanner version are able

to provide electronic centering and compensation for an expanded roll. CIS scanners are commonly used in computer scanners. However, now even minute vibrations moved the tiny image line off the pixel array line in the camera, making it necessary to use a massive granite surface plate to hold the camera steady. The camera mount itself looked like a section from a bridge girder. The vibration problem was very serious and would have made it impossible to take the scanner to offsite locations. Also, these cameras do not have any focusing or alignment viewfinders, so a customized video display system had to also be incorporated to see what was going on as a roll was scanned and to be able to focus and align the camera.

At least this concept sidesteps the humidity problem, as expanding paper just shifts the hole-to-pixel locations to the next pixel location. The pixels are scanned in serial progression from left to right, so expansion isn't a problem. This approach didn't work well at all and it, too, had to be put aside, resulting in two boxes of expensive hardware being put on a shelf.

Finally we went back to the third concept of CIS arrays. All of the other schemes we investigated were loaded with

so many problems that they could have ended the entire project. While no single arrays were commercially available that would take a 17" wide roll, the use of microprocessors allowed three staggered arrays to be used, with the electronics combining them in memory to appear to be one long array. Needless to say, a very deep and careful analysis of this idea was done before committing to the approach, and a reliable source of these arrays had to be found. A firm was located and materials were purchased.

The three arrays are used in a staggered mounting, again with adjustments for the basic tilt and side-to-side initial centering. The arrangement has two of the arrays in line, with one above covering the gap between the other two. Then, with each array reading one third of the width, the microprocessors are programmed to simply ignore the pixels that are not used for each of the various roll formats. Now we had what was functionally one long CIS array. The automatic electronic centering of roll holes was regained and paper expansion would be taken care of—both issues of great importance. As is usual with such projects, while long arrays were not available when the second scanner was first being

designed, a company now makes 12" CIS arrays, so a supply was purchased. A second tracker bar has been constructed using two of these arrays, so initially the two array system will be used, with the other triple array tracker bar as a backup.

We have recently learned that a CIS array manufacturing company in Germany has just announced the availability of long arrays ranging from 20" on up to 122". Investigation is now under way. If the results are successful, we will make one more tracker bar using only one array—the preferred arrangement.

Arrays are mounted such that the surface of the cover glass is 2mm below the running surface of the tracker bar as specified by the manufacturer. These arrays do not have precise optics, so the actual focus point has some leeway. The new tracker bar is flat where the paper crosses the two arrays to ensure accurate focus. Also with this type of tracker bar, insufficient tension can introduce paper fluttering, so the correct tension was employed to ensure constant flatness. A flat black background plate comes almost in contact with the paper. This can be delicately adjusted to just contact the paper if any lifting is seen.

In HOMES which FRIENDS REMEMBER..



Gay HOMES in a SUNNY LAND

The Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ is the choice of the discriminating. It gives fresh, final beauty to homes where life is richly lived.

Your home is kin to such homes—in charm—in warm, friendly hospitality—in the happiness which dwells there.

You need not be a musician to enjoy the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ. For at your will this instrument summons great organists, who play in brilliant reproduction the music you enjoy.

Play the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ at your nearest Studio . . . or listen only, if you prefer. Studios in New York, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Pittsburgh.



The great Railway in the home of Mr. and Mrs. City Building of Cincinnati, Ohio showing the location of the Wurlitzer Organ.

¶Many a home in the far West contains a Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ. ¶Dwellers in this pleasant land cherish the better things. They are a cordial people, living in friendly homes. ¶The Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ helps them to entertain. It brings to intimate evenings the unforgettable beauty given well-loved melodies whenever true artists play them. It sets dancing feet lightly gliding over polished floors. ¶The touch of a button does it all, reproducing from music



A cheerful cove in a California home showing the compact, aristocratic organ console.

WURLITZER
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Residence Pipe Organ

rolls each interpretation as the organist originally played it. The large library of recorded rolls includes symphonies, operas, ballads, and the songs today is singing. ¶See the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ at the studio nearest your home. Come and discover for yourself just why this remarkable instrument appeals so greatly to home owners who value distinction. ¶Studios in Los Angeles, New York, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, and Pittsburgh.



An exterior view of this interesting home.

A beautiful brochure, with photographs of installations, may be obtained from any Wurlitzer store.

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Both the initial line scanning camera and the CIS array system required a means of triggering the devices to start scanning a line. To accomplish this, a separate high-resolution optical encoder was added to the take-up spool shaft drive. This gives a positively interlocked number of pulses for each inch of travel of the roll being recorded and is adjustable for various scan rates as desired.

Also incorporated in the second scanner was a means of controlling the varying reflective brightness of the roll paper. This is sophisticated circuitry that dynamically determines the brightness of the paper, automatically varying the threshold level to maintain the desired contrast ratio between the paper and the holes. This is initially set via a separate adjustment. The dull black background strip is used to enhance the contrast ratio.

Welte rolls have a unique way of playing Pedal notes that caused some problems. The Welte system had a complex and troublesome interlocked pedal relay device in which the Pedal note "on" timing to the manual notes "on" timing had to also have a separate delay adjustment. This ensured that the notes played at the same time. Pedal notes are punched a tiny bit in

advance of the manual notes on Welte rolls to give this relay time to act. This needed to be delayed ever so slightly when using a fast optical scanner. This was also included in the new scanning system design. Welte rolls can play notes of the Pedal and Great in the same octaves and not mix them up. Just how they kept them separated was one big investigation. But how Welte did this is simple when you understand the technology.

When the Pedal "on" hole comes along, the relay goes into action, and it has a separate contact that now is activated. Then when the note hole is seen, it is played by this relay contact and not by the hole in the roll. That hole now tells the relay how long to hold the note on. Then, when that note hole ends, the relay drops out. The Welte system depends on the Pedal "on" control hole always coming along right before the actual Pedal note itself and the Pedal notes being slightly in advance of the Great notes, so the relay can identify and capture them. Then the Great notes play as usual on the Great manual. The player is shifting the Pedal notes to this relay and leaving the Great notes alone as played by the organ key relays.

Welte used only two control holes ("Pedal On" and "Manual Off") in roll players. By altering the sequence of these two control holes, the player can operate just Pedal notes, accompaniment notes, or both together—but separated as to where they are played on the Pedal or Great as the music dictates. It is the slight advance placement of the Pedal notes that signals the player as to which are Pedal notes, and the two control holes tell it which way to play them. The "Pedal On" hole always comes along just ahead of the actual Pedal note to set up this separation. The Welte Philharmonic organ roll player is a very ingenious and extremely well engineered system, and all this was in place by 1910.

One other adjustment was required. In original pneumatic players, suction-operated electric relay contacts have pouch bleeds which cause a slight delay before the relay contact is actually made. Ignoring this in an optical scanner can cause notes to sound at inopportune times, ruining the music. Roll editors corrected for this delay in draft board arrangements—another example of their skill. We provided an adjustment to compensate for this delay in the new scanner.



Entertaining
is a rare delight with a
WURLITZER REPRODUCING ORGAN

THERE'S a lull in the conversation. Then, an expectant hush, as you touch an electric button; and instantly, your guests are listening enraptured to the glorious harmonies with which your Wurlitzer Reproducing Residence Organ floods your home. Symphonies, ballads, classical or popular selections as you will, all are rendered with that

brilliant blending of countless tone colors, that soul-stirring grandeur which make the pipe organ the acknowledged "King of Musical Instruments." For entertainment on all occasions, the Wurlitzer residence pipe organ, played either by hand or by reproducing music rolls, and requiring surprisingly small space, brings you the world's best in music. There is no

measuring the value of the pleasure it gives your guests and your family, the cultural development it affords your children, the distinction it adds to your home. Yet the cost is only about half what you would expect to pay for so wondrous an instrument. You are invited to hear and play it at the nearest Wurlitzer Studio—New York, Buffalo, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Detroit, Los Angeles, Chicago.



WURLITZER
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**A REPRODUCING PIPE ORGAN
OF THE FINEST QUALITY**
At a Surprisingly moderate price

If YOU ARE among those who have always thought the grandeur of pipe organ music beyond the reach of individual ownership, this brochure will come as a welcome surprise.

Today the House of Wurlitzer, a family whose musical traditions date back more than 200 years, brings the pipe organ into the American home where it can most effectively inspire new enthusiasm and appreciation for the best in music.

The Wurlitzer Reproducing Residence Organ is designed primarily for the average home of culture and refinement. It is *not* a luxury limited to those of extreme wealth, yet nothing that unlimited resources will buy can yield such constant, year-in-and-year-out entertainment and pleasure. Nor does this amazing instrument take up valuable space. The beautiful console occupies no more room than a grand piano. The organ chamber may easily be installed in the attic, basement or other convenient location.

You are invited to hear and play the Wurlitzer Organ. Until then you cannot realize how much more than any other instrument, it contributes to the art of gracious, modern living. You will be entranced by the flood of exquisite music, alive with the tonal blendings of the artist whose genius is yours to command.

WURLITZER
RESIDENCE PIPE ORGAN

THE RUDOLPH WURLITZER MANUFACTURING COMPANY
NORTH TONAWANDA, NEW YORK
NEW YORK CITY STUDIOS—120 W. 42ND STREET



So, the new scanner system now provides automatic tracking of warped rolls, correction for expansion from humidity, dynamic control of hole vs. paper reflection ratio, adjustable timing for the Welte pedal to manual notes "on" timing, and the bleed offset correction. Did we miss anything?

CONTROL PANEL AND TRACKER BAR ELECTRONICS

Larry Chace of Etna Instruments took on the task of designing and constructing the Duo-Art electronics and the micro-processor-based system for the multi-format roll scanner as well as the two control panels. His expertise and sound designs resulted in superb systems that are very easy to use. The control panels have illuminated pushbutton switches for stop, play, and rewind. All are interlocked so that it is impossible to select play and rewind at the same time. The buttons also operate the electric clutches; during play the feed clutch is disengaged while the take-up spool clutch is engaged. During rewind this is reversed. The idea is to reduce the drag on the roll being scanned to the absolute

minimum while maintaining constant paper contact across the tracker bar.

Automatic rewind was not used; one watches the roll and engages "stop" then "rewind" at the end of the music. But the scanning process should be closely monitored at all times so this is no detriment.

The take-up motors have an optical shaft encoder that operates a digital tachometer. This is set to directly read out the tempo in tenths of a foot per minute. Organ rolls all had the desired tempi printed on them which directly equates to feet per minute. Precise control over roll speed is obtained from a tempo of 0 to 110. Tempo 80 means eight feet per minute, etc.

The second control panel is basically identical to the one used with the Duo-Art scanner, except for one critical function; this panel has a roll selection control so that it can tell the microprocessors how many holes to look for with each roll system. This basic roll format information is also sent to the recording computer.

An unanticipated feature of using a CIS array tracker bar emerged: the scanner itself can be used to measure and calibrate various roll formats. We can use the scanner to run test scans of sample rolls and then it calculates the total number of holes in the roll and where the center pixel numbers are

for each type of roll. That information is then stored for future use in scanning that particular roll type.

COMPUTER TRANSLATIONS AND RECORDING

Now we had to solve the complex problem of reading various roll formats and putting them into a common format. Only the use of computers would make this scheme work.

The microprocessors in the scanner transport only tell the recording computer when holes are open or closed; it is up to the playback computer system to know what the hole assignment is and translate it into a single format. Fortunately, a solution was readily at hand. There are several custom computer programs that are able to take the MIDI data stream from the tracker bar, analyze it, and put it into the desired universal format.

The first decision was to use two computers. The recording computer has more than sufficient memory to hold all rolls in storage. This computer stores only the MIDI data coming from the tracker bar. It is first recorded into RAM, then onto the



You sit at ease in your own home, with family and friends. You touch a button! Immediately, magically, the atmosphere is vibrant with the stirring strains of a magnificent opera, rendered with the inspiring tonal blendings of a pipe-organ. Again, a favorite ballad or popular air may be your choice. Whatever your selections, you thrill to the matchless playing of world-acclaimed organists, superbly reproduced on the Wurlitzer Residence Organ.

Requiring surprisingly small space and only a modest investment—played by hand as well as by reproducing music roll—the new Wurlitzer Residence Organ offers you and your family the supreme entertainment, the cultural and social advantages so inseparably associated with the ownership of a fine pipe-organ. This instrument can be installed in any home. Hear it, play it, at your nearest Wurlitzer Studio—Buffalo, Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, New York, Detroit.



Requires little more space than a piano

WURLITZER
Reproducing Residence
ORGAN



If SEBASTIAN BACH could play for you

BACH, Gullmunt, Wagner, and other great masters live only in memory—and in the enduring charm of their immortal compositions. Yet today through the new Wurlitzer Reproducing Residence Organ you can enjoy at will in your home, the full brilliance of their artistry.

At the touch of a button, the superb Wurlitzer pipe organ responds with operatic arias, popular melodies or even the latest dance hits—selections to suit any mood or occasion—all played with that emotional sweep, that soul-stirring appeal possible only on the pipe organ, the "King of Musical Instruments."

There is no measuring the value to you and your family of the entertainment, the pleasure, the cultural development afforded by the Wurlitzer Residence Organ—played by hand or by reproducing music rolls. Its compact proportions permit installation in a home of moderate size—and it costs far less than you would expect to pay for so prized a possession. You are invited to hear and play the Wurlitzer Organ at the nearest Wurlitzer Studio—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Cincinnati, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit.



WURLITZER
Reproducing Residence
ORGAN

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internal hard drive, and now it may be re-recorded onto CD-ROM disks, flash card, or stick memory. The musical selections are stored as individual files organized by the maker of the roll, avoiding the need to wade through hundreds of titles to select which ones you wish to play. These are also indexed by roll number and alphabetically by title.

The playback computer has all the translation programs for all roll formats. The disk or memory device is inserted and the computer does all the hole translations for that system. The final output is a MIDI data stream appropriate to play a particular digital organ, or a pipe organ outfitted with a digital relay-switch system via a MIDI input.

We had the option of doing the format translations either in the recording computer or in the playback computer. We chose to do the translations in the playback computer and not the recording computer. We wanted to be able to provide playback systems. Should the user wish to have the ability to play several roll formats, the translation functions are better served by being in the playback computer. No matter how fiendishly complicated the player, the end result of all this pneumatic trickery was

to play two or three manuals, the pedal keys, a number of stops, and usually six stages of expression per division of the organ.

Here's how it works: The scanner looks at the roll's holes and translates them into digital on or off MIDI signals which are then sent to the recording computer. The MIDI data includes an indication of the roll type so that the playback computer can correctly interpret the holes, including whatever multiplexing was originally used. During the initial setup of the playback computer, the translation between the stops as called for by the rolls and the stops that are present on the playback organ must be programmed. After that initial setup procedure, just telling the unit what roll you will play automatically supplies the correct stop information for playback. The roll's notes, stop commands, and expression signals now function just like they did in original, pneumatic players. The computer will also display the stops and the stop changes as the roll plays. It can even show the notes being played as virtual keyboards on the computer screen.

The two annoying concerns in this grand scheme have to do with Möller Artiste and Æolian 116-note rolls. The problem with

Möller Artiste rolls has to do with the matter of interchangeability. The Artiste master rolls did not have stop control holes punched in them—only the notes. When a customer ordered a roll from the factory, the stoplist for the particular organ was consulted. Then, appropriate stops would be punched into the roll by hand matching the stops of the customer's organ—as closely as possible—to those of the recording organ. This meant that no swapping of rolls with other Möller organs could occur. Only the mortuary organ rolls could sometimes be interchanged.

Another registration problem appeared. Möller's stop system required the use of 12 "Fundamentals"—basic stop groupings for each manual, along with individual stops. Some organs may not use all these Fundamentals, further complicating the situation. If a collector is lucky enough to have an Artiste player, rolls he might find may or may not play, have gaps in the music, or use incorrect registrations and expression. The music is a total disaster unless the roll is re-punched for the organ on which it is to be played. Möller just as easily could have used a basic organ specification and punched in stop and expression control holes in the master roll



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... a charming Victor Herbert waltz ... an overture with dash and life ... some lovely Schubert song you like ... a swift new fox trot ...

In the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ, the many voices of the complete symphony orchestra and the dance orchestra are united with the vibrant tonal splendor of the great pipe organ.

You have merely to touch a button ... and your concert begins ... as if famous organists were there in your home, playing only for you ... every melody you love ... with all the blended beauty of many perfect instruments ... again and still again ...

The console of the Wurlitzer Residence Organ is not as large as a grand piano ... the price of this distinguished instrument has never before been equalled ... the charm of its presence adds new richness to your home.

Hear this pipe organ, and play it yourself, at your nearest Wurlitzer Studio ... New York, Buffalo, Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Los Angeles, or Pittsburgh.

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The price — \$6500 and upward



HOUSE BEAUTIFUL
October, 1931

All you need is SOME COZY CORNER...

That is space a-plenty for the compact console of the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ. It fits where a grand piano fits. An alcove is large enough, or an entrance hallway—any charming, cheerful place. Your home has such a spot.

The Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ makes pleasant home-hours. No other music equals the varied loveliness of the music this organ creates. It gives the simplest songs and the grandest symphonies thrilling, full expression. It dashingly interprets the sparkling rhythms of current dance melodies.

Actual inspection alone can show you all the wonders of the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ. Come to the studio nearest you. Play the organ yourself—note its instant response to your mood. Select a music-roll and listen to the perfect re-creation, which makes the great artist playing seem actually there at the console. Studios in New York, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Pittsburgh.

The price—
\$6500 and upward

An interesting brochure, with photographs of installations, may be obtained from any Wurlitzer store.

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WURLITZER
Residence Pipe Organ

like everyone else did. This would have allowed for roll interchangeability while minimizing cost and time. The story of the amazing Möller Artiste player is told by James Weisenborne, *AMICA Bulletin*, vol. 29, #4, 1992.

Once these two roll types are scanned, an accomplished organist will preview the roll, selecting the stops that fit the music and then adding them via the combination action as the roll plays. Both come together in the finished recording. The Welte, Wurlitzer, Duo-Art, and Skinner rolls have standard stoplists.

THE ORGAN

Now came the second most challenging part of the project—coming up with an instrument that would correctly play back the original rolls without tonal compromise. It looked like a large custom digital organ would have to be commissioned. This unpleasant decision was put off until the scanners were constructed. Dozens of organ specifications were drawn up, only to be rejected as the stoplist was being constantly refined.

While it is certainly possible to build a pipe organ capable of accurately reproducing the music on all of the rolls, such an organ would have to be quite large. After all the desired rolls were listed and a table of their original tracker bar stoplists made up, something like a 68-rank organ would be required if no duplexing or unification is done—even when deleting duplicate stops. This is generally too large for a modern home. Trying to build a small pipe organ capable of musically reproducing all the roll formats results in far too many tonal compromises, and the music suffers greatly.

Residence organbuilders specified precise stops for their residence organs that not only supplied the correct tone colors, but were also of specific loudness. The crescendo—the tonal buildup—was not only controlled by the expression shutters, but also by the addition or subtraction of stops. One sees terraced strings, for example, not only of different tone color but also of different loudness from *piano* to *forte*. Large residence organs also had similarly graded flutes and reeds. Such gradation would be required in a new digital organ.

As if this tonal gradation and color were not enough of a problem, rolls were

arranged to make use of exact stops for an intended effect. Unfortunately, stoplists varied drastically from builder to builder. If a player was connected to a different organ, the end result would not be the same. One must be extremely careful when considering stop substitutions. One can sometimes play a Welte roll on an Æolian organ—if it is big enough. But a Wurlitzer R roll played back on an Æolian organ is not at all the same as it is when being played back on a Wurlitzer organ. It just does not work.

We also wanted the stops called for by the rolls to be independent in each division of the digital organ. Most residence organbuilders used duplexing, in which all the stops of the Great are also available on the Swell. Æolian, Estey, and Skinner made great use of this feature in their smaller instruments. Larger organs had independent divisions, although some builders like Æolian used duplexing to a limited extent—even in their largest installations where money and space were no object. Duplexed Choir divisions were common. Skinner often duplexed the entire Great and Swell divisions to make up a Solo division. Double magnets and primary valves, or two separate windchest actions for each pipe, were how they accomplished the task.

Sun floods this cheerful alcove . . . perhaps you would place your Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ in some such charming place in your home.



Wherever you want it—there is room for
Your WURLITZER

RESIDENCE PIPE ORGAN..

and this really superb instrument is very moderately priced! Ask any Wurlitzer branch for a descriptive brochure . . . without obligation, of course. Better yet, visit a Wurlitzer studio. Play this organ yourself. Listen to its astonishing music-roll re-creation of the music you love. Wouldn't the Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ be a sheer joy in your home!



More than ever, your living room becomes truly the heart of your home, with the addition of your Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ.



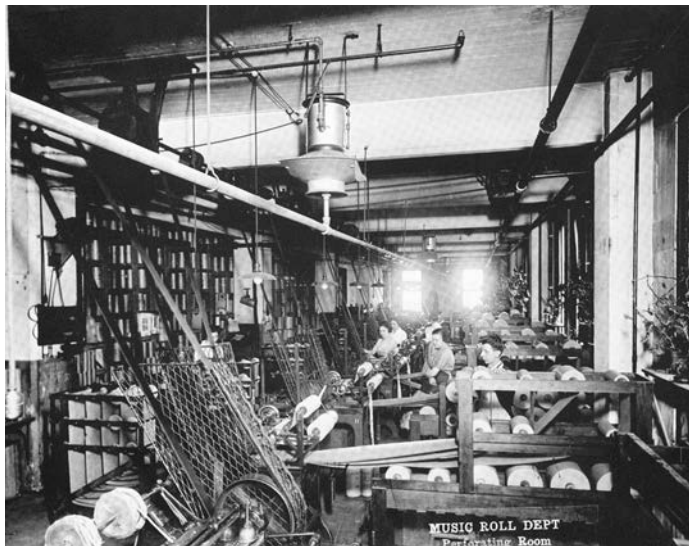
A favored corner, cheerful and cozy, might be the chosen spot in your home for your Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ.

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Your Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ would enhance the semi-formal grace of a room like this . . . and add to its intimacy.

To greet your friends as they enter, you, too, might want your Wurlitzer Residence Pipe Organ in your hallway.



Wurlitzer maintained a large roll perforating department at its plant in North Tonawanda, New York

While duplexing allows for the maximum use of the stops available, it is also a source of note dropouts and a lack of tonal variety. Independent stops are much preferred to get the fullest and richest ensembles. If the organ is large, the dropped notes found in a small duplexed organ are not heard. Skinner made use of duplexing even in large instruments to get the effects he wanted. Considering the complexity of the Skinner duplex chest, one wonders why he did use unit chests. But Skinner despised unit organs although he did include “augmentation” and “extension” to a limited degree. His vitriol-loaded comments regarding unit organs in theatres are simply priceless.

Another bothersome problem emerged early on as the new digital organ was being designed. Just what stops are needed? Most residence organs did not have the full complement of ranks the roll players needed, so factories custom-wired stops to at least give some gradation in volume and tonal individuality. Data from some who were initially assumed to be experts proved to be false. The solution was to go back to the original tracker bar stoplists (which mercifully stayed constant) and provide every voice specified. Junction boards provided a good education as to how original builders fudged when the organ did not have all the stops the player wanted, however.

The musical requirements of Duo-Art organ rolls were completely satisfied with a 26-rank specification. Skinner needed 26 ranks, Welte needed 23, and Wurlitzer, since they employed the unit system, needed 15 ranks. When roll players can draw upon all required stops, the music is simply wonderful.

The digital organ would need to contain all the right voices for each of the most important roll formats. So what can one do today to solve this problem without commissioning a custom-built digital organ and seeing one’s bank balance expertly vacuumed in the process? Fortunately, the Allen Organ Company has introduced a new system that has the capability needed to make the playing of organ rolls musically correct. This feature is now available as standard equipment on all organs. Allen took a feature they have had for years in their church organs and greatly expanded its usefulness. Originally named “Alternate Voicing,” it is now called “Quad Suite.” The reduced cost of memory chips now makes this commercially feasible. In the new Quad

Suite, one has the ability to select from four suites that completely change the stoplist. The original stoplist can be reprogrammed to be completely different organs.

Allen includes all their sample voices in the instrument’s software, so making changes is a matter of reprogramming—taking one voice out and putting another in, provided you use only basic stops. In a unit theatre organ for instance, you cannot use the Trumpet 8’ and put another voice on the Trumpet 4’. Only basic unison ranks at 8’ pitch can be changed. This feature was intended by Allen to give owners of new Quantum organs four separate voicing concepts, so that four organists can alter the original voicing and regulation as they wish. The latest large Allen theatre models now provide two separate organs—theatre and romantic/classic—making it even easier to play the rolls correctly.

The Allen TO-5Q, the STR-4, or the LL-324Q theatre-type organs have enough independent 8’ stops (including the otherwise unused tuned percussions) to completely provide every voice required by residence organ rolls, as well as a few voices for additional color. Harp and chimes are the only percussions that player organs typically included, plus the occasional piano. You can have: (1) theatre organ (the original version from Allen); (2) Æolian Duo-Art; (3) Welte Philharmonic; (4) Skinner Automatic—the main player roll formats. These organs will fit in a modern home easily, and the new Allen “Acoustic Portrait” and “Reflections Package” reverberation systems are astonishing in their effectiveness. The author purchased the new LL-324Q for his home, and then we completely reprogrammed three of the suites to play rolls. It is more than just pleasing to hear Jesse Crawford play his Wurlitzer R rolls directly on the organ, and not have to hear his artistry via a worn and scratchy 78rpm record.

While the time and funds originally budgeted for this project were exceeded by a factor of seven (so what’s new about that!), it has been a most satisfactory experience. Thanks to help from Messrs. Doering, Barden, Weisenborne, Rickman, Chace, and several fine computer consultants, we overcame all the problems. Without their constant encouragement and assistance, the whole effort would never have succeeded.

To review, there were four steps in this project:

1) To gather and digitally record with the highest accuracy as much residence organ player roll music as possible. The task remains to locate and scan the Estey, Roesler-Hunholz Concert, Æolian 116-note, and Kimball Soloist libraries.

2) To unravel the various highly complex multiplexing schemes used by some player systems and make MIDI files of this music in a common format for future historians and lovers of player organ music to easily use. This has been accomplished.

3) To provide digital players and recordings of the music, arranged in suites, for owners of Allen or other digital or pipe organs with MIDI inputs. This step is somewhat problematic, as the playback organ has to have basic required stops, and many do not.

4) To make audio CD recordings of this music, using the specially reprogrammed Allen organ.

A concern that remains has to do with the lifespan of the recording medium. There is some question about how long computer-recorded CD-ROM disks will last. The current information is that flash card memories and memory sticks are best for archival records, and they can store a huge amount of music. This is by no means a settled question, since both can be damaged under certain circumstances. However, digital files can be re-recorded every 25 or 50 years without the loss of data.

The effort was well worth the cost and time, although embarking on this massive project was at first frightening to contemplate. Could it be done correctly, and was it honestly worth the time and cost? The answer is yes indeed!

Rollin Smith has done a masterful job of telling the Æolian story in his book, *The Æolian Organ and Its Music*. A companion book is needed that explores the work of other residence organbuilders with a description of the technology and cleverness used in roll player design. Some had extraordinary capability. History demands that this be done.

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"Bob Ralston took our concert venue up three levels (good, better, best!) with his recent concert visit to The Kirk of Dunedin (Jan. 18-19, 2008). Mr. Ralston made our theatre organ "the Duchess" sing like she was new. Both concerts were entirely sold out. People even bought tickets in seats that are behind archways, and we never sell those tickets. Bob's mastery and showmanship with the organ and piano captured our crowds. Add to this his energy, tremendous humor and personal connection. It was the best event ever! We could have easily sold out a third show"

-Rev. Jerry Rittenhouse, senior pastor
The Kirk of Dunedin, Dunedin, Florida



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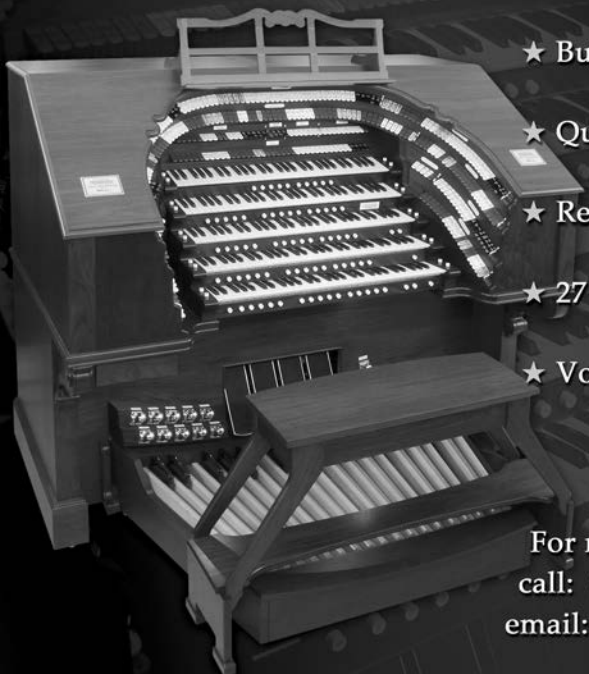
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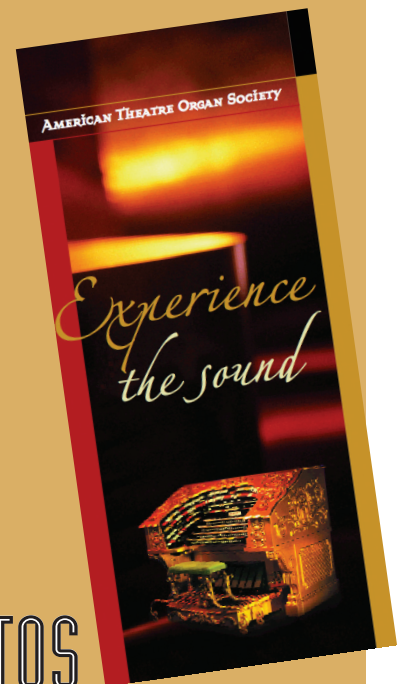
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The Mighty Mo



Larry-Douglas Embury's Emergence as a Star in Atlanta

BY KEN DOUBLE

Radio City Music Hall might be known as the “Showplace of the Nation,” but there is no theatre in the country that is busier, draws more ticket buyers, or enjoys a greater place in the hearts of its constituents and supporters than Atlanta’s beloved and magnificent Fox Theatre.

For those of us in ATOS who firmly believe that the “musical soul” of every great movie palace is its theatre pipe organ, the story of Mighty Mo, the great Möller behemoth now heard before almost every performance at the Fox, is truly remarkable, and clearly creates the proper platform for the best use of pipe organ in theatre.

For those who do not know the full story, in the 1970s the Fabulous Fox was slated for demolition until a group of concerned citizens formed Atlanta Landmarks, Inc. and worked diligently to save the venue. Mighty Mo played an integral part in those early fundraising days; concert performances and film presentations that featured the great organ were a highlight of many of those efforts.

A land-swap deal that involved the Fox, Southern Bell, and the City of Atlanta saved the building and allowed Southern Bell to construct its new headquarters tower directly behind the theatre.

As the Fox made its gradual change from movie house to landmark performing arts center, the Möller organ, lovingly cared for by Joe Patten and others, played its part. Those in attendance heard the instrument presented as preshow and intermission entertainment during the summer annual film series...but then it was buried beneath the orchestra pit from mid-September until May.

That all changed in 2002 when a talented musician with a tremendous knack for showmanship, public relations, and a sense

at Every Show!

of what the public wants was brought in to try out the Möller. It was love at first touch for Mighty Mo and Larry-Douglas Embury. It did not take long for officials at the Fox to realize something special was in the works, and Embury was offered the position as organist in residence.

Fox officials took the post one step farther after the powers-that-be witnessed Embury's greatest strength in action—Larry's uncanny capacity for connecting with an audience. And Fox patrons fell in love with the triple-threat talent of wonderful music, great showmanship, and a personal touch that made every person in the house believe Larry was playing just for him or her.

So, starting in 2002, Larry-Douglas Embury has been the featured opening performer for more than 1,800 major events, his own specials, and tour groups who thrill to his music as they explore the cavernous Fox Theatre. Whether it is a Broadway musical, featured star entertainer, ballet, or movie, if you are headed to the Fox for an eight o'clock curtain, you want to plan your arrival early enough to enjoy Larry-Douglas Embury at the Mighty Möller organ.

When asked recently about how the change in policy for use of the organ came about and who was the person responsible, attorney Bob Foreman, a longtime supporter of Atlanta Landmarks, Inc., its first vice president, and head of the organ committee, had a simple answer. "Larry-Douglas Embury was the impetus for the decision," said Foreman. "He charmed our audiences so, and the reaction from our patrons was so strong, it was really an easy decision. Larry must play for every show."

You can imagine the delight expressed by "Mr. Fox Theatre," Joe Patten. Joe turned a most serious avocation—his love of everything about the Fox, particularly the

organ—into a full-time effort that included saving the theatre, fixing just about everything in the enormous building right down to light bulbs in the restrooms, and witnessing—and in some cases directing—the transformation from deteriorating movie palace to entertainment toast of the town for Atlantans of all ages.

Patten also credits Embury for helping make the Möller organ an integral part of every show. And in so doing, Embury has made himself as popular as the organist previously most often associated with the instrument, the legendary Bob Van Camp.

That sentiment is also expressed by the current general manager of the Fox, a diminutive dynamo named Allan Vella who has been the majordomo at the Fox since 2006 and inherited Larry as house organist. "He's amazing," says Vella. "Our audiences love him, our staff loves him, [and] he has almost taken on the role of the public face of the Fox because now if he's not playing for whatever reason, we hear about it." Vella adds, "Having Larry and the Möller play for every show is as important to the Fox as having the best sound system or the best lighting system we can have for the presentation of a show. It's part of who we are. It is something special that audiences can only get here, and so it becomes a memorable part of their overall experience at the Fox."

For Larry, his popularity is amazing and growing. He has been featured on radio and TV, his north side bungalow has been the subject of a special article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and his Christmas special, *Larry, Carols, and Mo*, took all of one year to become an instant tradition in Atlanta. The show always features a holiday film (for its inaugural year it was the famous James Stewart movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*); around the film, however, Larry has created a stage spectacular with choirs, soloists,

staging effects, and, of course, Mighty Mo. The show was designed to be the Fox's thank you to Atlanta, with tickets free to the public. When first announced and tickets became available in November, 2005, the nearly 5,000 seats were snapped up in a few short hours, with people standing in line around the block as if a combination of Al Jolson, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, and Madonna was headlining the Fox. Nope; it was Larry-Douglas Embury and the great Möller organ at Christmas time.

For all of us at ATOS, especially those involved at theatres, what better story to tell in terms of how best to use one of the theatre's great assets—its pipe organ. If it is good enough for the number one box office in the nation—Atlanta's Fox Theatre—it ought to be good enough for just about any theatre, big or small. Properly conceived, professionally presented, with a little PR and pizzazz, Larry-Douglas Embury, the Atlanta Fox, and Mighty Mo shine the spotlight on how to present the theatre organ in today's entertainment environment.

This story also sheds a grand spotlight on the hope of the future for the theatre organ. We at ATOS know how difficult it is to draw big crowds for our standard two-hour concert presentations. It is difficult to "sell" that concept and format to the general public. But we also know that when presented in pre-show, intermission, and post-show performances, the theatre organ is a tremendous hit with the public who is fascinated by the magical music that only the theatre organ can create.

That magical music happens at almost every show with Larry-Douglas Embury at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta. That's a big success for the theatre organ and ATOS as much as for the Fabulous Fox itself.

It was love at first touch for Mighty Mo and Larry-Douglas Embury.

The Albee Mighty Wurlitzer

BY JOSEPH L. HOLLMANN

(Photos Hollmann Collection)



Opus 1680 was shipped from the Wurlitzer factory in North Tonawanda on July 5, 1927, destined for the Fountain Square Theatre to Cincinnati. This was a prestigious house, seating 3,069 and situated on Fountain Square in the center of downtown. The name of the theatre was later changed to the RKO Albee. The organ, a 3/19 Style 260 Special, was one of approximately 62 of this type with varied specifications. The Albee organ, since it had four additional stops in addition to the usual 15, was equipped with a 15-hp blower. (Most Style 260s were supplied with a 10-hp blower.) The Albee Wurlitzer made its debut on Christmas Eve in 1927, together with the silent film *Get Your Man!* starring Clara Bow.

The Albee Wurlitzer, like many theatre pipe organs, had limited use. When talking movies became popular, there was no longer the need for organ accompaniment. The organ was played by such notables as Lee Erwin, Hy C. Geis, Johanna Gross, Fats Waller, and Gaylord Carter, among others. But the instrument became dormant and was rarely used. It suffered from wind leaks, blown Zephyr skin pneumatics, stiff tremulant cloth, and leaky reservoirs. With a steadily declining patronage, the Albee Theatre became a prime candidate for demolition. Following the policy of the RKO chain, a suitable recipient was sought for the donation of the Wurlitzer. In 1968, the organ was given to the Ohio Mechanics Institute which owned the Emery Auditorium, an ideal setting acoustically. However, OMI did not know what to do with the organ. In 1969, the Ohio Valley chapter acquired the organ, removed it from the Albee Theatre, and moved it to the Emery Auditorium, seven blocks from the Albee Theatre. During the next eight years, dedicated OVC volunteers refurbished the instrument and installed it in the Emery Auditorium, now called the Emery Theatre. The Albee Wurlitzer debuted in its new home in 1977. A classic movie series featured the organ in mini concerts before the films, during intermissions, and playing out the house. OVC also presented silent movies to demonstrate how the Wurlitzer was used in years past. In addition, OVC provided at least two organ concerts per year with popular artists. All this was

tended to by a large group of volunteers with a love of the theatre organ. In 1998, the University of Cincinnati, owners of Emery, decided to renovate the OMI building. The OVC had to remove the Wurlitzer in December, 1999. For the last concert, the chapter invited organist Barry Baker; Barry performed at this organ as a youth, and it seemed fitting that he should play the last program. It was a great concert, but a sad day.

With the organ removed and relocated to a storage facility, a suitable new home for the instrument was sought. Years ago downtown Cincinnati had many theatres, but all had been razed in the name of revitalization. It was difficult to locate a structure large enough to house the organ. Many venues were investigated; high schools did not have room, and most colleges were not receptive. The chapter did not have enough funds to purchase its own building, but we wanted to keep this organ in Cincinnati. Years passed, and then in 2004 it happened: an anonymous donor offered to fund the organ renovation and installation. We then looked at the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom as a possible home for the Wurlitzer.

Cincinnati Music Hall is located in downtown Cincinnati, only five blocks from where the Albee Wurlitzer was originally installed. The ballroom is on the second floor and seats about 1,000 on one level. During a 1998 renovation, the Music Hall received appointments from the old Albee Theatre, including bronze doors, the walnut and brass ticket booth, pilasters, columns, and other architectural elements, all donated by collectors. The Albee organ would become the centerpiece, enhancing the enjoyment of all who attend events. After two years of negotiations, eight contracts were executed, kicking off the start of the organ renovation and installation project. Those signing the contracts include the Ohio Valley chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, Ronald F. Wehmeier Pipe Organ Service, the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, Cincinnati Arts Association, City of Cincinnati, Frank Messer Construction, Glazerworks Architects, and the anonymous donor. Norma Peterson, president of the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, was instrumental in getting everything in order so the final contracts could be executed. In addition, Ron Wehmeier hosted many visits

to his home so those unfamiliar with theatre pipe organs could better understand the type of instrument that would be installed in the ballroom.

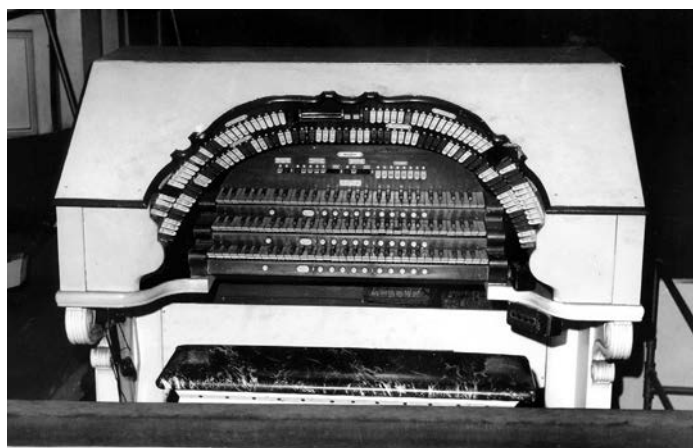
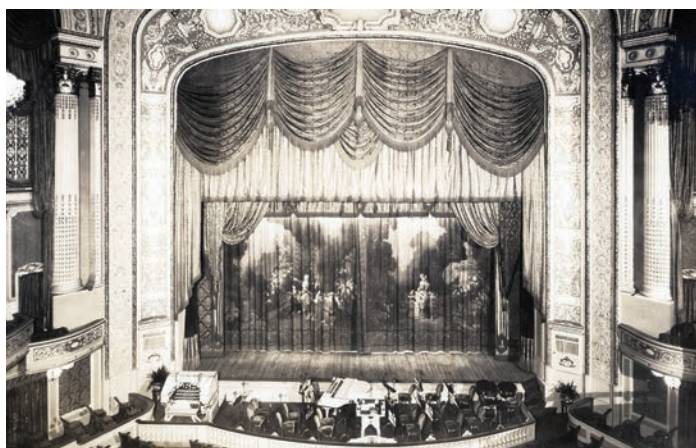
Ron Wehmeier has undertaken the renovation and installation of the instrument. According to specifications supplied by Wehmeier, Glazerworks developed construction plans for the organ chambers, console storage room, two movable platforms for the console and the piano, and for the blower room which is located on the level above the ballroom. The ballroom is not climate controlled during periods of nonuse, so a dedicated HVAC unit was installed to control the temperature and humidity of the Main and Solo chambers as well as the console/piano storage. During construction, Ron kept an eye on things to assure all design criteria were met. Meanwhile, the organ renovation was under way. A 1925 Steinway 6'-6" Duo-Art reproducing grand was purchased and restored; it will be playable from the console. An A.R. Schopp's Sons Post Horn on 10" wind was retained from the previous installation. A Salicional, Voix Celeste, Solo String Celeste and Flute Celeste were added. In honoring a request of the donor, a Principal



Lee Erwin



Gaylord Carter



chorus capped with a four-rank Mixture was added. These additions bring the organ to 31 ranks.

The console and other components were shipped to the Crome Organ Company for complete reconditioning. When the old black console finish was stripped, a mahogany veneer was discovered. At that point it was decided to refinish the console in dark mahogany and to add ornamentation. Carlton Smith applied the decorative trim which Rose Crome finished in 24K gold leaf. Ron enlisted the assistance of Lyn Larsen for console layout and the stoplist. The manuals were rebuilt and keys were recovered. The original pedalboard was replaced with one supplied by Organ Supply Industries. With the unfortunate passing of Tim Rickman, Dick Wilcox stepped in and was very helpful in engineering the electronic control system. The maximum number of combination pistons were added with additional stopkeys. The refinished console is simply beautiful!

The swell shutters were modified to fit the new chamber openings. Shutter bearings were renewed and motors re-leathered. There will be ornamental grilles covering the tone openings matching a fragment salvaged from the Albee Theatre. The chestwork was completely stripped and cleaned, valves replaced, and pneumatic leather and gaskets renewed. Percussions were thoroughly rebuilt, including new drum heads and cymbals. The blower was rebuilt and, as a result, it operates very quietly and smoothly. The pipes were inspected and cleaned; any needed repairs were made. Each pipe was tested in Ron's shop for proper speech and *timbre*. When the construction modifications of the ballroom were completed, Ron began installing the offset chests, followed by other components as they were completed. A Uniflex 3000 control system has been installed. The Wurlitzer console was returned from the Crome shop in January. The Steinway has been moved from Ron's shop to the ballroom, and the console and Steinway are now placed on individual movable platforms and reside

in the climate-controlled storage room. This room has glass doors, and soft spotlights illuminate the Wurlitzer console and the Steinway. A plaque informs patrons as to the significance of each.

The installation of the organ continues. This is a massive project for Ron Wehmeier and represents a nine-year wait for our chapter. The completion date is scheduled for this August, and plans are being developed for the dedication concert with Ron Rhode later in the year. The inaugural concert promises to be a large event on a grand scale.

There have been many dedicated and talented people involved with this project, and we're very grateful for the generous anonymous financial contribution of \$1,410,000 that made the project possible. The results to date promise that the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom installation will be among the best theatre organs in the United States!



Emery Theatre



Console/piano storage at the Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom



New organ chambers taking shape



The new console platform

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The Red, White and Blue Ragtime Revue is a collaboration of two incredible musicians. It all started during an informal jam session in Wichita, KS. Organist Dave Wickerham was the featured artist at the concert. Ragtime pianist, Dick Kroeckel was in the audience. By pure coincidence, Dick was seated at the grand piano and Dave sat down at the Little River Studio Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ. Within a very few moments they had melded their talents. This resulted in the booking of the concert in McKinney, Texas. Inside the DVD case, you'll find a booklet with biographies on the pair, information about the MPAC Mighty Wurlitzer as well as other trivia about the performance.

TRACKS INCLUDE:

Repasz Band March, The Entertainer, Memphis Blues, Kiss of Fire (Tango), Temptation Rag, 12th Street Rag, Medley: Easy Rider / Yellow Dog Blues, Original Rags, Maple Leaf Rag, Frankie & Johnny, Scandal Walk, "Chicago" Medley: Overture / All That Jazz / Mama, Pineapple Rag, Medley: Dallas Blues / Houston Blues, Tiger Rag, Missouri Waltz, The Sheik of Araby, The Chrysanthemum Rag, "Red, White & Blue" Medley: Yankee Doodle / Grand Ole Flag / Yankee Doodle Dandy / Stars & Stripes Forever, Medley: Charleston / Doin' The Raccoon

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The Restorer's Workshop:

The Plug System of Repairing Damaged Wood

BY RANDY A. BERGUM
(Photos Bergum Collection)

(Disclaimer: Using power tools is dangerous as they can maim or kill you. Continue at your own risk.)

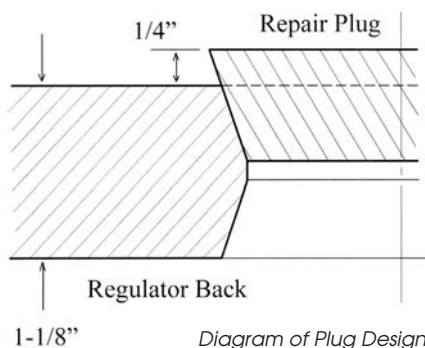
When reconfiguring a theatre organ for installation at a new venue, it is common to encounter components that have suffered damage from earlier use. Today's restorer must draw from modern techniques to repair previous damage in a way that produces usable parts and preserves the historical integrity of the original components. This article will show one method of cleanly and easily replacing wood that has been damaged or removed.

During a restoration of a reservoir or windchest, you may find that holes have been made for windlines and trunks. These holes are sometimes roughly cut, leaving a jagged edge which is unattractive, unprofessional, and, if the reservoir is to be used in a new location, the holes never seem to be placed where needed. Some holes are so poorly placed that they compromise mechanical integrity, such as overly large rectangular holes for windtrunks leaving precious little structure to carry the stress of the springs. An ideal repair would replace the missing wood, restore the original strength of the part, and be visually unintrusive. One such way to do this is to use a router with a series of templates sized to create matching parts.

Back in the 1980s while building foot-launched sailplanes, we looked for faster ways to mass produce parts, such as trailing ribs in the wing. The ribs were fashioned by placing a template onto a foam blank, then using a router with a bearing bit to quickly cut it out. This method proved to be fast and accurate (close tolerances were necessary), and all 24 ribs for a complete wing could be made in one session. This technique has value for all sorts of other applications where precision is needed.

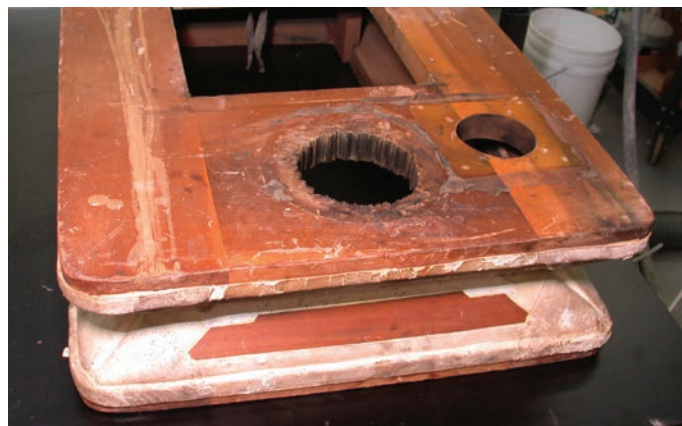
Two types of templates are used in this process: the first is used with a router to produce an accurate cylindrical hole in the part to be repaired, and the second is used to produce a tapered oversize plug for that hole.

When preparing the hole for plugging, a small amount of material from the existing hole is carved away, and the resulting bore is used later as a guide to make a tapered edge that accepts the matching plug. A plug $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick is fashioned of similar wood and glued in, with the top $\frac{1}{4}$ " of the plug protruding above the work. This portion of the wood is later planed off flush with the work. A sketch of the concept is illustrated below.



The Repair Process

We start with the reservoir as shown below. Evidence of silicone caulk can be seen, as well as two holes that need repairing. The silicone needs to be removed completely, since it will interfere with any future stains or shellac finish, so this will be done later.



Reservoir to be repaired

Strip the folds from the back of the reservoir by cutting the leather off with a knife, and then dip in hot water to soak off the stubborn remnants—you don't need to remove all of the hide glue, just make the surface smooth—application of new hide glue will reactivate the old and bond well to it. Avoid getting water on the existing glue lines to preserve the original joints. The back is now shown below.



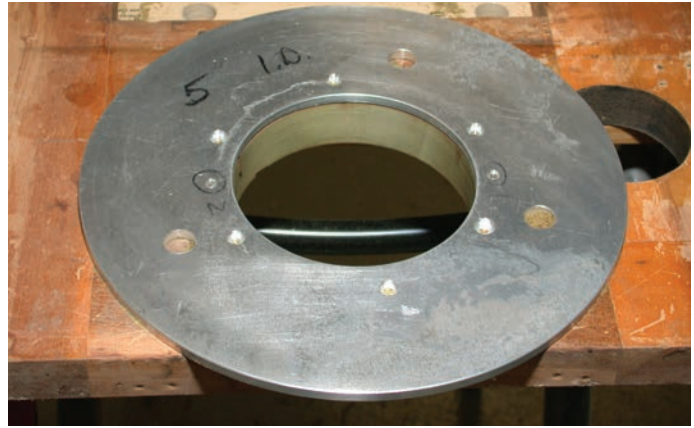
Stripped reservoir back

The next step is to make an accurate cylindrical hole in the part to be repaired. We will use the middle third of the new hole as a guide for another pilot bit later, so the this hole must be smooth and void free. A metal template is used to guide a router bit with a pilot bearing as shown.



Router template set

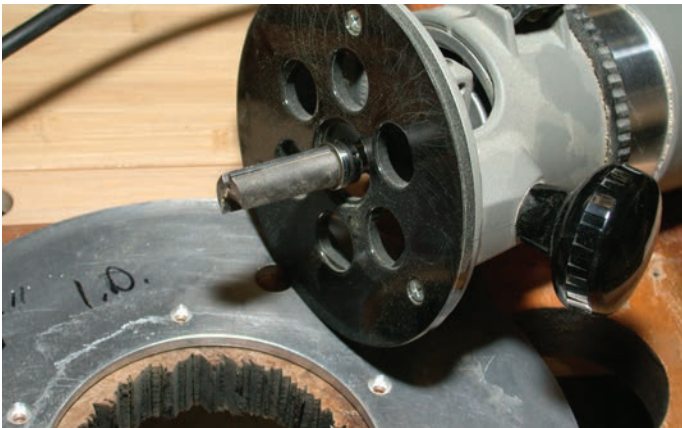
The template is made of 1/4" aluminum plate, which has been selected to match the typical pilot bearing thickness on router bits. The guide surface on each template has been turned on a lathe to ensure accuracy. There are countersunk holes in it to accept tiny flathead wood screws (#2 x 1/2"); this allows the router base to ride on the template with no interference. The router is adjusted to place the pilot bearing on the template with the cutting edge at the work piece below it. The process can be seen in following photos.



Finished hole with template



Finished cylinder bore



Router bit with pilot bearing

After routing, inspect the bore of the new hole. If it is not void free, fill the voids in the bore with catalyzed wood filler and route the hole again after the filler has cured.

Next, change the router bit to a 22 1/2 degree beveled pilot bit and adjust the router to cut 1/2" into the work. Note that the pilot bearing rides on the middle third of the cylinder bore. Cut a new bevel into the work as shown below.



Template installed



Bevel bit in router



Finished bevel

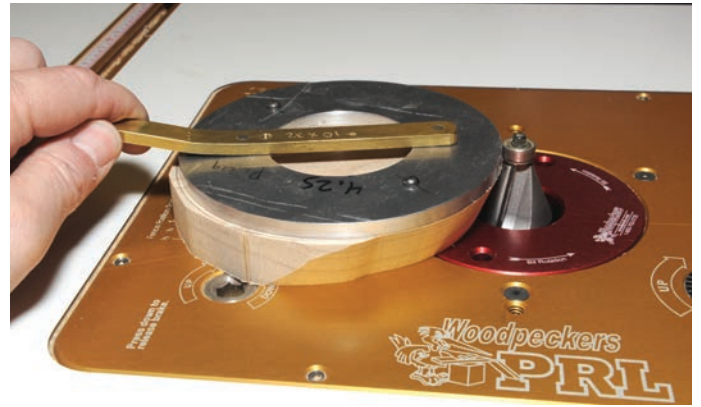
If you have access to the underside of the work, such as an unassembled reservoir back, flip the piece over and bevel the other side for a second plug. The back is now prepared to accept repair plugs.

To make the plugs, we use a template that is 0.621 inches larger than the cylinder diameter. The reason for the extra thickness of the plug is to give purchase to the screws that hold the template down—this wood is planed away, and there are no screw holes left to plug later. Select a piece of 3/4" thick wood that is close to the same species and color that you are repairing, and trace the plug template on it. You will want to remove the excess wood with a band saw (photo on following page), as the router is much slower but also much more dangerous and exciting. Note: This photo is staged—use two hands and watch out for the saw kerf!



Removing excess wood from the plug blank

Attach the plug template to the plug with wood screws. Using a router table equipped with the same 22½ degree bevel pilot bit as used before, shave the plug by trimming away the excess wood as shown below. Note the handle used on the template for safety—routers are dangerous and can grab the plug and hurl it across room with great speed.



Making the plug on the router table

To install the plug, apply water to the upper beveled surface of the hole, and apply glue to the plug bevel. Urethane glue (Gorilla Glue) is preferred because it foams up and seals any small gaps, and does not interfere with future staining and finishing. Place the plug in the hole with the grain placed in the best direction, parallel with the majority of wood around it (following photos). Clamp and let dry for 24 hours.

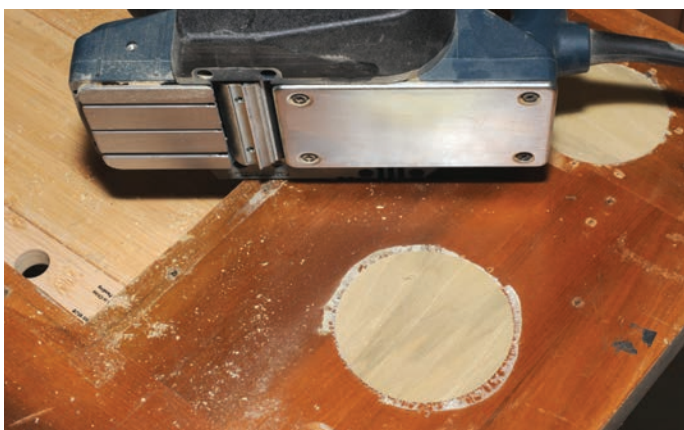


The glued plugs before clamping



The glued plugs after clamping

After the glue dries, remove any clamps and, using a power hand planer, slowly remove the 1/4" of wood that protrudes above the part (see below). As you approach the final surface, reduce the cut thickness to 1/64" or less to avoid accidentally hogging out the final surface. When no more can be safely removed, it's time to sand the surface with 100-grit paper, working up to 220 grit.



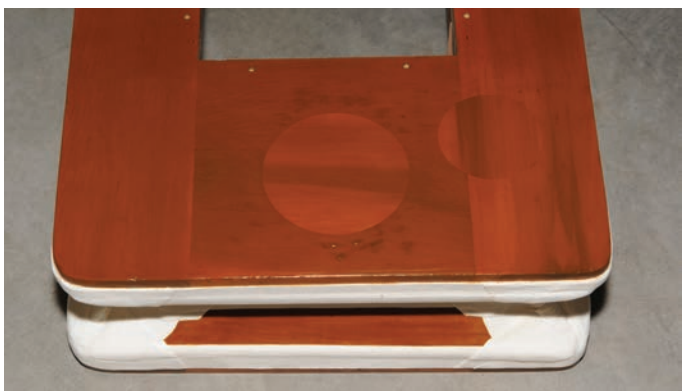
Planing the plug

Be sure to remove any planer marks. Fill the holes in the back made by the hole template screws, then sand to suit as shown below. Seal the inside surfaces with hide glue sizing to slow moisture migration and dirt accumulation.



The finished repair

Assemble the reservoir using new leather, and apply shellac to the exterior surfaces. The result is seen below.



Completed reservoir with shellac finish

The plug method can also be used to repair rectangular holes by using a straight edge and careful measuring. Square up the hole in the work using a straight edge and the straight bit router. Bevel the edges to 22½ degrees and prepare a rectangular plug of the matching dimension. Round the plug corners to nest correctly in the work, using a corner template or by hand, then glue, plane and sand to suit.



The completed rectangular repair

In conclusion, these repairs are easy to perform and restore the appearance and most of the strength of the part in question. The modern organ technician should strive to preserve and protect original components using high quality techniques to ensure that future generations will continue to enjoy the theatre pipe organ as we do today.

Special thanks to Don Near and Al Sefl for their assistance in this article.

Appendix

1. To determine the diameter of the plug, we use the diagram in below. With a 22.5 degree router bit, the formula is:

Given:

D = Diameter of Plug

$$D = d + 2(x)$$

d = Diameter of Hole

$$D = d + 2(0.3106)$$

t = Thickness of Plug = 0.75"

$$D = d + 0.621"$$

Theta = 22.5 degrees

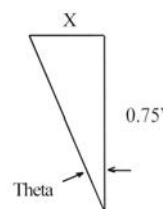
Thus:

$$\tan(\text{Theta}) = X / t$$

$$X = t \times \tan(22.5 \text{ deg})$$

$$X = 0.75" \times 0.41421$$

$$X = 0.3106"$$



Calculation of plug diameter

2. Here is a chart listing popular hole sizes and the matching template diameters:

Size of Hole to Repair	Hole Template Inner Diameter	Plug Template Outer Diameter
2.00"	2.25"	2.871"
2.50"	2.75"	3.371"
3.00"	3.25"	3.871"
3.50"	3.75"	4.371"
4.00"	4.25"	4.871"
4.50"	4.75"	5.371"
5.00"	5.25"	5.871"
5.50"	5.75"	6.371"
6.00"	6.25"	6.871"
7.00"	7.25"	7.871"
8.00"	8.25"	8.871"

Randy Bergum of Fullerton, California looks forward to the future, when everybody will have personal helicopters as seen in *Popular Mechanics* magazine.

Orlando's Focus on Youth

BY PHYLLIS NARDY

Since 1985 Lake Brantley High School in Altamonte Springs, Florida, has been home to the Don Baker Memorial Wurlitzer Organ. In those early years the organ was featured during school productions of *Gypsy* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. Perhaps the most memorable event was Brian Bogdanovich's accompaniment to a showing of the silent movie *The Phantom of the Opera* to celebrate Halloween. The Orlando chapter of ATOS (OATOS) encouraged students to dress in costume and, for their efforts, the best received special prizes courtesy of local merchants.

To advertise the event, the in-house school television station interviewed Brian on their morning show and also captured him on the organ. Since then, OATOS has continued to maintain the organ, but with much less technical and financial support. In fact, from 2005 to 2007, the organ sat quietly in its garage behind the stage. For the past two years, OATOS has experienced the joy that comes from a partnership between the youth of the community and the senior members of our organization. Thanks to an Eagle Scout service project and two organ clinics, the Don Baker Memorial Organ is

now up and playing at Lake Brantley High School.

During his senior year (2007–2008) Boy Scout Steve Dunn decided to bring the organ to a “working and respectable condition” as his Eagle Scout project, with the help of OATOS. Aided by several scouts from his troop who are involved in band, musicians from the school, and chapter members, Steve embarked on a project that involved patching air leaks in the wind lines and cleaning up the organ garage and the chambers. Most importantly, Steve referred us to his neighbor, Billy Gouty, the



Above, below and top right: Chris Walsh acquaints students with the organ



(Photos by David Watford unless noted)

Scouts Steve Dunn (l), Jaron Sperling, and Mark Harman (prone)

owner of an air conditioning company, who installed a new air intake duct free of charge. No longer would dirty air from the baseball field be imported into the windlines! Fortunately, our crew chief Don Jeerings and one of the two technicians who originally installed the DOS computer relay system on the organ devoted countless hours to its repair. Don resurrected all of the computer files, made backups, which we did not previously have, and enlisted the tuning aid of friends from the Polk Theatre in Winter Haven, Florida. Thanks also to Phil Dubois who drove Don Jeerings to and from Plant City and assisted him during these repairs. Because of these wonderful volunteers and the generosity of Billy Gouty, the organ is now playing.

Recently, the chapter experienced another first: on January 15 and 16, over 300 Lake Brantley band and keyboard students came to the auditorium to enjoy a clinic put on by OATOS. Our newest board member and Tallahassee resident, David Watford, suggested that the chapter conduct six 90-minute clinics during the two days of *All State*, an event which brings to Tampa Florida's top band and choral students, along with their instructors. OATOS president John Nardy opened the clinic by providing background information on the Don Baker Memorial Organ. Then David Watford and Chris Walsh, assistant vice president, each played several numbers; after which the students were invited on stage to view the console up close and to play the organ. Finally, Don Jeerings and Phil Dubois supervised small groups as they climbed the stairs and looked into the organ chambers.



OATOS president John Nardy



Assistant vice president Chris Walsh



Talented keyboard student



John Nardy addresses one of six clinics
(Photo by Don Jeerings)

Because of the interest generated by the Eagle Scout project and the clinics, a Wurlitzer Enthusiasts Club comprised of high school students has been formed. Although this club was originally the idea of Steve Dunn, the clinic participants were overwhelmingly enthused and excited. Half of the students were unaware that Lake Brantley High School is the only high school in Florida that has a theatre pipe

organ. Clearly, these endeavors demonstrate the commitment of OATOS to the youth of Lake Brantley High School and to the mission statement of ATOS: "pursuing a positive difference in conserving and promoting the theatre pipe organ and its music."

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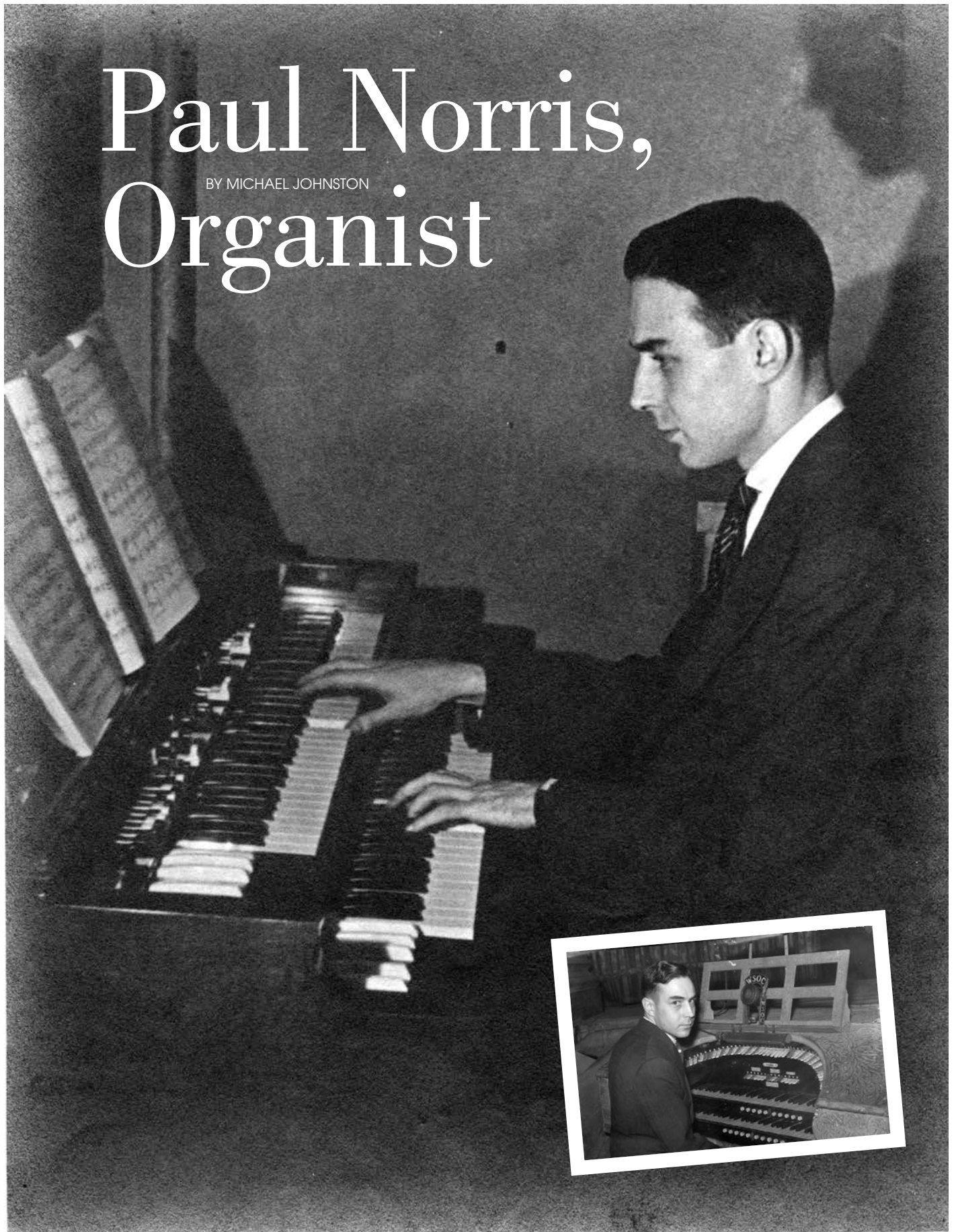
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Paul Norris, BY MICHAEL JOHNSTON Organist



(Photos Johnston Collection)

The Carolina Theatre was for many years Charlotte's premier venue for live and movie entertainment. It opened in 1927, presenting silent films accompanied by organ and orchestra. On the same bill, audiences saw vaudeville acts and heard musical productions from organ solos and sing-alongs on the Mighty Wurlitzer to jazz bands to the full sound of the Carolina Grande Orchestra. Fae Wilcox was the Carolina's first organist. Paramount sent her to study with Jesse Crawford in New York City before accepting the job as organist to play opening night at the Carolina. All seats were 50¢ on that evening, March 7, 1927, in "The South's Newest, Most Beautiful Theatre: The Only Theatre Between New York and Atlanta that Manufactures Its Own Weather."¹

On January 17, 1912, in Oelwein, Iowa, Paul Westcott Norris was born. Paul's mother died when he was four years old, but his father, William Henry Norris, lived until 1937. Paul's father was born in Canada, studied music in Leipzig, Germany, and emigrated to the United States to teach music in Iowa, where he represented the Wurlitzer Company as a salesman and consultant. Paul's earliest exposure to the organ was from his father, a classically trained organist who sold theatre organs; no wonder he had an open mind! During his study at the University of Iowa, he took a class in radio production and worked at KSUI, the school's radio station, announcing football games. This earliest taste of broadcasting was to be a sign of things to come.

Paul joined his father in selling Wurlitzer organs from 1927 to 1933; he was listed as a traveling representative and demonstrator. From 1931 to 1933, Paul worked for WENR, a radio station in Chicago, as organist/pianist and announcer, an unusual combination position that he would repeat in Charlotte. Later in 1933, he and his father moved to Charlotte where Paul was to begin work as a charter member of the WSOC staff. The existing station, WBT, the first commercial radio station in the entire Southeast, had been Charlotte's only choice since 1922 and was part of the CBS network. WSOC began broadcasting NBC programs on Saturday, October 14, 1933, the second station in the Charlotte area. They were located for several years on the first floor of the Mecklenburg Hotel on West Trade Street (demolished in 1978). The many live broadcasts by Paul from the Carolina Theatre were an early form of what

today is used by every local media outlet, the "live remote."

During his nine years with WSOC, Paul held positions as announcer, traffic manager, chief announcer, play-by-play sports announcer, publicity director, program director, salesman, sales promotion manager, and assistant manager, but through them all he served as organist presenting the only live program from the Carolina



Theatre Wurlitzer. Such diversity was quite valuable in a radio station just formed, and WSOC used Paul's talents in many areas. In a personals section in a local newspaper from 1937: "Paul Norris, WSOC program director, is seldom seen, even at meal time, without his camera, and will upon the slightest provocation snap your picture—unless of course you are quicker than his very speedy shutter-finger."² His photos, which he developed and tinted himself before color film was available, won awards in the local camera club. One of them on early color film is of the vertical sign of the Carolina, taken in 1938. Another is a portrait of Ann Leaf from 1932, tinted on glass.

In 1936, Paul married Ernestine Dorsey Hedden on Christmas Day, and this garnered the couple much attention from the local newspapers. In each notice, Paul was listed as the organist for WSOC, among his other abilities. His daughter, Angeline Hedden Norris, was born in 1938 and has provided exceptional information and resources towards completion of this article.

Also in 1936, Paul and Bo Norris (unrelated) began a radio program playing piano duets with a singer on Monday and

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Examples of Paul's hand tinted photos:
Ann Leaf at the console
and the Carolina Theatre marquee

Wednesday afternoons. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Paul was announcer and organist for a program of popular theatre organ music performed on the Wurlitzer in the Carolina Theatre. On Mondays he produced *Musical Moods*, sponsored by the Sanitary Laundry, Inc.

Here are samples from Paul's typed log of the 15-minute Carolina Theatre programs.³

- Tues Dec 22 [1936]: "Winter Wonderland," "Home on the Range," "Chapel in the Moonlight"

- Thur Dec 24 [the day before his wedding]: "Time On My Hands," "Here's Love in Your Eye," "A Thousand Love Songs," "Paradise"

- Tues Dec 29: no record

- Thur Dec 31: "These Foolish Things," "Auld Lang Syne," "On the Beach at Bali Bali," "Rendezvous With a Dream," "Me and the Moon" (4 best of 1936)

- Tues Jan 5 [1937]: "Moonlight and Roses," "Two Guitars," "Make Believe"

- Thur Jan 7: "Trees," "I Love You Truly," "World Is Waiting for Sunrise"

These samples are from his logs of the 15-minute *Musical Moods*, sponsored by the Sanitary Laundry.⁴

- Dec 21 [1936]: "Joy to the World," "Holy Night," "Sentimental," "Pennies from Heaven"

- Dec 28: "Rigamarole," "Desert Song" and "One Alone," "Chapel in the Moonlight," "Voice in the Village Choir"

- Jan 4 [1937]: "I'm In a Dancing Mood," "June in January," "Until the Real Thing Comes Along"

Paul's musical resource for these programs was the Wurlitzer pipe organ, Opus 1495, located in Charlotte's Carolina Theatre. It was a two-manual, eight-rank Style F installed in two opposing chambers. The organ also included five tuned percussions and assorted sound effects such as doorbell, horse hoofs, cymbals, and drums. After much investigation to find the organ, we have sadly determined that no part of the Wurlitzer survives. When WSOC bought a Hammond organ for studio use, Paul played it on the air. Angie Norris Bean, Paul's daughter, offered Metrolina Theatre Organ Society the only recording of a radio program that her father had, and it was a studio transcription of the Carolina Theatre Program from 1938. Because it was played so often, the sound is badly distorted, but it is priceless to us because it remains the only recording of

the largest Wurlitzer in Charlotte. The reader is invited to listen to the program at www.mtos.org.

- Feb 10 (1938): "Talk of the Town," "Don't Let Your Love Grow Old," "Moon-glow," "Blue Prelude"

From *The Mecklenburg Times*, October 29, 1936: "Paul Norris, WSOC's program director, may be heard on the air each Tuesday and Thursday morning at 11:00 o'clock as he presides at the console of the pipe organ in the Carolina Theatre in Charlotte. Paul, who began his radio career as an organist in Chicago, has quite captivated Charlotte radio fans with his sympathetic interpretations of their favorite musical numbers—classics as well as the ballads and the popular hits of the day. Staff members are wondering if he won't have to engage the services of a secretary to handle his fan mail if it continues to increase."

From *The Mecklenburg Times*, December 10, 1936: "The versatility of WSOC staff members is demonstrated by Program Director Paul Norris when he seats himself at the console of the Carolina Theatre organ each Tuesday and Thursday morning at 11:00. Besides presenting many of his own arrangements for pipe organ, he gives some very interesting informal commentary about the current and coming cinema attractions. Incidentally, it was this same young man who presented such a fine description of the grid-iron classic between Davidson and Wake Forest on Thanksgiving Day. One scarcely sees Norris without his trusty camera, as he pursues diligently his hobby of photography."

At this time, Charlotte was privileged to hear the Jesse Crawford program and *Organ Melodies* twice per week on WSOC and weekly organ programs from Eddie Dunstedter, Fred Feibel, and Ann Leaf on WBT, the CBS affiliate. Organ music has been gone from Charlotte's commercial radio stations for a very long time, and we gratefully depend on WDAV, our public radio station from Davidson College, to bring us *Pipedreams* with Michael Barone.

In addition to radio programs, movies, and concerts, the Wurlitzer was used for "The Charlotte News-Carolina Theatre Pop Eye and Mickey Mouse Club," a children's club that met on Saturday mornings and was sponsored by *The Charlotte News*. Admission was a dime and included local children in an amateur stage show, a movie, and entertainment by

Big Chief Wimpy (played by Paul), Big Chief Pop Eye, and Olive Oyl. Of course, Paul played the organ for them; what lucky children they were!

Paul left Charlotte in December of 1941 to help start one of the earliest FM stations, WMIT, an affiliate of WSJS in Winston-Salem. He was a pioneer in both AM and FM and set up research and promotion techniques still being used in FM today. On May 25, 1942, Paul enlisted in the Navy and served in technical positions of sonar, radar, and Chief Radioman while, naturally, volunteering to be squadron photographer.

He left the Navy after the war and on June 12, 1946, he was employed as program director and production manager by radio station WTIK in Durham which was soon to begin broadcasting on July 4, 1946. He was, by virtue of his experience, the perfect man for the job. Later, he became their sales manager and assistant manager. While he was at WTIK, he produced a Saturday morning radio program of theatre organ music from the Center Theatre in Durham utilizing their 2/8 Robert-Morton (first installed in Greensboro's National Theatre in 1922 and moved to the Center Theatre in 1939).

He left WTIK in 1948 and worked for a short while at WCAV in Norfolk, Virginia. He moved in 1949 to Iowa and sought long and multiple treatments from Veterans Administration hospitals for filariasis, a parasitic and infectious tropical disease that he contracted during his service in the Navy. He died on June 30, 1953, and was buried in Odebolt, Iowa. Of the several theatre organs located in Charlotte, all of them are gone today. We in Charlotte were lucky to have someone such as Paul who played the organ regularly and often to present and maintain the Carolina Theatre's Wurlitzer pipe organ as an integral part of our community. From 1933 to 1942, he was Charlotte's best known organist.

Appreciation for materials and research assistance: Angeline Norris Bean, Carolina Room of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library, and John Apple.

¹"Gala Premiere Performance," advertisement from *The Charlotte Observer*, March 6, 1927

²*The Charlotte News*, January 3, 1937

³Organ Programs—Carolina Theatre—Tuesdays and Thursdays, Paul Norris

⁴Organ Programs—Sanitary Laundry—Mondays, Paul Norris

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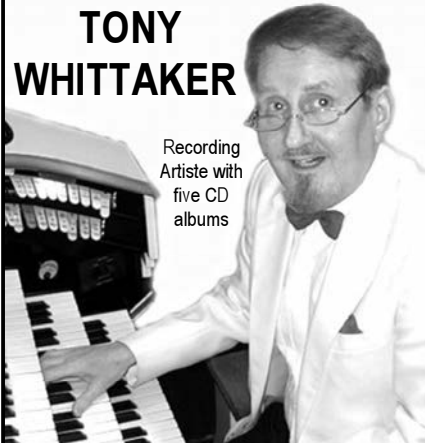
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Radio Organs

Theatre Organs in North American Radio Stations

COMPILED BY JOHN DeMAJO

A significant number of AM radio stations from the 1920s–1950s installed theatre organs for use in providing studio music for local and network productions. Some of these were original installations; others were transplanted theatre instruments that found their way, along with veteran silent-era organists, into the broadcasting realm. As one who was fortunate enough to have been alive during the very end of the golden radio era, this author can still remember *One Man's Family*, *Kay Fairchild*, and a number of old radio broadcasts that featured theatre organs. Over the years, I have researched some of these instruments and have found that the list is substantial. I would like to thank all those who helped me update this information, including: John Alford; Bert Atwood; Larry Davis; Tom Delay; Barry Henry, MD; Harry Heth; Les Hickory; Terry Hochmuth; Tim Jones; David Knudtson; Ray Thursby, and Jeff Weiler. I welcome any corrections or additional information that may be available; please e-mail me at j.demajo@atos.org.

Radio Stations with Pipe Organs.



WLAW	Wurl. Style H (1927)	(Crosley Radio Station)
	Wurl. Spec. (1925)	
WMAA	Wurl. Style E (1931)	
WTAM	Wurl. (1928)	(3men. Former Victor studio organ in Chicago)
WGR	Wurl. Style H (1943)	(3man. Special)
WSPD	Wurl. Style B (1931)	(with Tibia)
CKLW	Wurl. Style B (1935)	(with Tibia)
WCAU	Wurl. Style B (1935)	(Special)
	Wurl. Style B (1931)	
WKRC	Wurl. (1930)	(150)
CFRB	Wurl. Style B (1933)	(Spec.)
WSMK	Wurl. Style R (1933)	(with Tibia Special)
WDEK	Wurl. Style B (1934)	(Special 3man.)
WNBC	Wurl. Style - (1932)	
WLEC	Wurl. Reb. 235 (1934)	
WVVA	Wurl. Style B (1934)	(3man.)
WHIO	Wurl. Reb. (1934)	
WOR	Wurl. Style B (1935)	
KDKA?	Wurl. Reb. (1939)	
WMAA	Wurl. Style H (1931)	(Second organ or added to)
WCBS	Kimb.	(Lew White's old organ)
WHK	Aust.	(Originally two man. Gottfried)
WNBC	Skinner	(Straight organ console though unified)
WHAS	Kilgen	(4man. Unit orchestra)
WFIL	Kilgen	(4man. Unit Orchestra up for sale)
WHDI	Kilgen	(5 ranks, 2manuels, Ken Wilson)
WEEI	Estey	(3man. Doris Tiril organist)
WNAO	Skinner	(4man. Straight Concert organ, Francis Crámin was organist, John Kiley recorded on it)
CEL	Franklin Legge	(3man. with Gottfried Pipes (Maclean, Todd) and occasionally Bollington organists)
WBER		(Watchtower station, Edith White organist)
WNEW		(Kay Reed used to play here, and I last heard a Felix Mendelssohn on this organ)(It could be a small Kimball)
WJJD (Wurl. (1935)?		3man. Spec. Albert H. Brown organist and Howard Peterson recorded this organ for Col. (Geneva Organ Co. (Geneva, Ill. had an add of this organ with Brown at the 3man, Console)
WEHM Wurl. (1932)		(Rebuilt)
WENR Wurl. (1927)		(Spec. 3man.)
WHD Wurl. Style R-5 (1927)		Rebuilt and added to by Kimball 1935
WEN Wurl. Style 165 (1930)		3man. Special
WDCO Wurl. (1929)		3man.
WBAQ Wurl. (1935)		3man. Al Carney (Formerly a 2man. Kilgen)
WHT Page.		4man Unit Orchestra, (Formerly a 2man. Kilgen)
KMOX Kilgen		2man. 4 stops, Eddie Hansen organist
WAFL Barton		(Ralph Waldo Emerson recorded on this organ, I have no other info.)
WLS		3man. Howard Kly was organist, no info avail.

(Eric Reeve Collection)

(Photos Weiler Collection, except as noted)

Radio Stations by State and in Canada

ALABAMA

WAPI, Birmingham
Kimball 3/8

ARIZONA

WTAR, Phoenix
Estey 2/3, Opus 2831
Organ was later moved to radio station KELW in Burbank

ARKANSAS

KFPW, Ft. Smith
Kilgen 2/6, Opus 5616

CALIFORNIA

KFWB, Los Angeles
Wurlitzer

(This organ is believed to have been the Wurlitzer Opus 2022 from Warner Bros. Studio. According to George Wright, Buddy Cole's Robert-Morton organ came from KMTR in Hollywood. If anyone has additional information on this, we would appreciate any update or correction.)

KFI, Los Angeles
Maas 2/4

KFOX, Long Beach

On December 28, 1928, a 3/7 Robert-Morton organ, Opus 2471, left the factory to be installed in the California Theatre in Glendale. In 1932, the organ was moved to the KFOX studio in Long Beach. It is uncertain when it was again moved from the KFOX location, but it later went to the Church of Latter Day Saints in Porterville, California.

In 1980, Jim Spohn purchased the organ and installed it in a studio in Bakersfield. Jim later purchased the Granada Theatre and installed the organ there, where it is still playing. Jim also has part of the KNX Columbia Square Hollywood organ at the Granada.

According to the Junchen database, KFOX also had a Maas 2/4. (Information provided by Jim Spohn.)

KFRC, San Francisco
Robert-Morton, two manual

KFVD, Culver City
Kilgen 3/5, Opus 4444

KGER, Long Beach

Wurlitzer three-manual Special, Opus 2047, was sold from the factory to radio station KGER in Long Beach, California in 1929. Sometime in the 1950s it was sold to Bill Coffman and Bill Field, who kept it in storage for many years. It was later sold to an unknown individual. (Information provided by Ray Thursby.)

KHJ, Los Angeles
Estey 2/16, Opus 1699

*Bob Carter, Mary Martha Briney,
Bernie Armstrong, and Paul Shannon at KDKA Radio,
circa 1940-1950*



WMAQ, Chicago



*WLW,
Cincinnati*



KMJ, Fresno

The KMJ organ was sold, intact, to the late Bob Kates in Berkeley, California. Bob added four ranks to the organ when it was in his home, now comprising 13 ranks. Bob made a few recordings on the instrument. In 1962, it was sold to the late Carsten Henningsen and installed in his Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward/San Leandro, California. In the late 1960s a three-manual Style 235 console was added to the Fresno State/KMJ organ. The original console passed through a series of owners. From Carsten Henningsen, it was sold to Warren Blankenship in Pacific Grove, California. The console remained the property of Blankenship until his death in the late 1990s. The hybrid instrument owned by Blankenship (including the Fresno State/KMJ console) was donated to Nor Cal Theatre Organ Society. The Fresno console was sold to local enthusiast Bob Coffin. He then sold the console to Dick Taylor who will use the console as parts. (Information contributed by Tom Delay.)

KMTR, Los Angeles

In 1928, the Capitol Theatre in Marshalltown, Iowa installed a 3/9 Robert-Morton. This was later moved to radio station KMTR in Los Angeles, California. According to Dave Junchen's *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ*, it was either later moved to TV station KTLA in Burbank or else it was listed as KTLA, which was the parent station of KMTR. It was purchased by Buddy Cole, who installed it in his North Hollywood home. There it was expanded to 12 ranks. When Cole built a new studio to house the former United Artists Theatre Wurlitzer (a 17-rank Style 260 Special), nine of the Robert-Morton ranks and their chests plus the Chrysoglott were added to the Wurlitzer. The remainder was dispersed. (Information provided by Ray Thursby.)

KNBC, San Francisco

Wurlitzer 3/19 Special, Opus 2035

Installed in 1942. (Original 1929 installation from Famous Players Studio in Los Angeles.)

KNX, Los Angeles

Wurlitzer 3/11 Style F, Opus 1516

Originally installed in the Capitol (Legion) Theatre in Walla Walla, Washington. The organ was installed in KNX by Balcom and Vaughan in 1937.

RADIO CITY STUDIOS (NBC), San Francisco

Wurlitzer 3/19 Special, Opus 464

Original 1921 installation from the Paramount Studios in Los Angeles.

COLORADO

KPOF, Denver

Robert-Morton, two manual

FLORIDA

WIOD, Miami

Wurlitzer 2/7, Opus 1466

Installed 1934

WSUN, St. Petersburg

Estey 2/3, Opus 2830

From Alcazar Hotel

GEORGIA

WTOC, Savannah

Wurlitzer 2/4 Style B, Opus 1578

ILLINOIS

WBBM, Chicago

Wurlitzer three-manual Special, Opus 1563

Also had 1929 three-manual Barton with Spencer blower serial #22890 and a two-manual Barton with Spencer blower serial #18653.

WCFL, Chicago

Barton 3/10, 1923

Spencer blower serial #14240. Eddie Hansen was staff organist and Ralph Waldo Emerson recorded this instrument.

WENR, Chicago

Wurlitzer 3/10 Special, Opus 1659

Installed 1927. It is said to have been regularly played by Jesse and Helen Crawford. This console had 72 stopkeys on each of two stop rails. The console has undergone modifications by Chuck Blair and later by Ken Crome. Some of the pipework from this instrument was reportedly in the possession of Ron Rhode. Doug Powers converted the console to operate a Walker digital organ. (Contributed by Doug Powers.)

WGBN, Chicago

Page, three manual

WGN, Chicago

Wurlitzer 2/7 Special

This instrument started out in the Bismarck Hotel and was repossessed from bandleader Jean Goldkette who had defaulted on payments; it was resold to WGN. When WGN built their studio in the Tribune Tower, Kimball rebuilt the organ as a 3/10, adding an Open Diapason with 16' flue extension, a Cor Anglais, and a Clarinet. The organ had two consoles, one in the studio where the chambers were located and one in a remote studio on the first floor.

When the organ was removed from WGN, the Kimball portions, including the console, were sold to a private individual, and the Wurlitzer portion was installed at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois. The Kimball console and the 16' Open Diapason were destroyed in a house fire in Wisconsin.

Both the WGN and WLS organs were heard into the late 1950s with staff organist Harold Turner providing a half-hour program each Sunday morning during which newspaper comics were read to children. WLS had a 3/12 Barton with a straight console. It lasted into the 1950s when ABC bought WLS and eliminated the original studios. After Harold Turner retired, the organ was used infrequently.

WHT, Chicago (Studios in Wrigley Building)

Page 4/15

Spencer blower serial #21042, organ voiced on 15" pressure. Organ is now in Stephenson High School, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Previous to the Page organ, a Kilgen organ was installed. William Wrigley liked the sound of Page organs and replaced the Kilgen with the Page. He also installed a Page organ in his Catalina Island theatre off the coast of California. In 1929, the WHT Page organ was relocated to the Michigan Theatre in Flint, Michigan. (Contributed by Larry Davis.)

WJJD , Chicago

Geneva (no other information)

Howard L. Peterson also did broadcasts from the Arcada Theatre in St. Charles, Illinois over WJJD. (Contributed by Les Hickory.)

WLS, Chicago

Barton 3/12

A straight console. It lasted into the 1950s when ABC bought WLS and eliminated the original studios. WLS also had a 1928 Link 2/3 with Spencer blower serial #21959.

WMAQ, Chicago

Wurlitzer 3/13 Special, Opus 309

NBC Merchandise Mart, Chicago

Wurlitzer, three manual

This organ went to Colorado Springs where it was eventually broken up.

KENTUCKY

WHAS, Louisville

Kilgen, Opus 5009

The instrument was installed in 1933 as a 3/11. Over the years, additions were made by Kilgen, bringing it up to a 4/17. At some point, the organ was sold and reinstalled in a local arena, Memorial Gardens, where it remains. It plays but is rarely used. Herbie Koch used to play the instrument when it was in the radio station. (Information supplied by Timothy Jones.)

Additions were as follows:

5124—Replace Saxophone with Clarinet, \$212

5198—Replaced Post Horn with trumpet

5212—Electrify Player piano owned by WHAS, add mandolin and make playable from organ, \$300

5769—Enlarge existing organ, Opus 5009; see also Opus 7179. New console for Opus 5769.

LOUISIANA

WWL, New Orleans

Two-manual pipe organ of undetermined manufacture.

Staff organists were Beverly Brown and Ray McNamara. There is a photo of this instrument to verify its existence.

MASSACHUSETTS

WEIL, Boston

Estey 3/7, Opus 2618

From Lloyd Del Castillo's studio.

WLAW, Lawrence

Wurlitzer 3/10 Style H, Opus 1348

WMEX, Boston

1934 Wurlitzer Style B Special, Opus 1795

WNAC , Boston

Wurlitzer 2/8 Style 190, Opus 1742

MICHIGAN

WWJ, Detroit

Estey 2/3, Opus 2909

Grand Minuette



From top: WENR, Chicago; Leonard Leigh at KFTP, Minneapolis; KFWB, Hollywood

MINNESOTA

WCCO, Minneapolis/St. Paul

This longtime CBS affiliate had a Wurlitzer three-manual Style 260 (Opus 2080) built in 1929. It was installed in the Nicollet Island Hotel studios near downtown Minneapolis. It was then moved to the station's new facilities on Second Avenue and South 7th Street. Staff organists were Eddie Dunstedter and Ramona Gerhard. After an absence of nearly five decades, the WCCO Wurlitzer is being rebuilt for installation in the historic Heights Theatre located in Columbia Heights, Minnesota.

KSTP-TV, St. Paul

Wurlitzer 3/16, Opus 1404
Installed 1957.

KSTP, Minneapolis/St. Paul

This station had two organs: A 1928 three-manual Robert-Morton (Spencer blower serial #21291) and Wurlitzer Opus 1404, a 260 Special which came from the Paramount Theatre in St. Paul. The organ was donated to the Phipps Center in Hudson, Wisconsin by the Hubbard family. Staff organists were Leonard Leigh, Joan Beverly, and Mrs. Ray Kroc.

MISSOURI

KMBC, Kansas City

Wurlitzer, three manual
Howard Ely was the organist.

KMOX, St. Louis

KMOX had a 2/5 Kilgen, Opus 3502, that was installed in 1926. Between 1926 and 1937, the instrument was enlarged to a 4/16 under a succession of jobs that were assigned Opus numbers: 4443, 4577, 4816, 5225, 5302 and 5869.

NEW JERSEY

WCDA, Parsippany

Estey 2/3, Opus 2829
Grand Minuette

NEW YORK

WBBR, Brooklyn

Edith White was the staff organist, but there is no record of what organ was at this location.

WCBS, New York

Kimball
Lew White's organ.

WGR, Buffalo

Wurlitzer 3/10, Opus 1118, started as a Style F
(Contributed by Terry Hochmuth.)

WHEC, Rochester

Wurlitzer 3/11 Style 235, Opus 411

Installed in WHEC's auditorium studio in 1934. Opus 411 was originally in the Palace Theatre in Dallas, Texas, and was moved to the Coconut Grove at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, before reinstallation by Wurlitzer at WHEC. The dedication at WHEC was by Ann Leaf on October 10, 1934. The first regular WHEC staff organist was Dick Hull, and the last staff WHEC organist was Jerry Vogt. It was used in conjunction with several live variety organ solo programs originating from its studio until WHEC moved to new studios. It was then purchased by Dick Hull and moved to Denver, Colorado. (Information provided by Kenneth Evans.)

WKBW, Buffalo

Wurlitzer 3/10, Opus 2238 (last factory installation)

This organ originally shipped to the Rialto Theatre in Lockport, New York. It was then repossessed by Wurlitzer and installed in WKBW. In 1947, it was removed from the radio station and purchased by Transfiguration Catholic Church in Cheektowaga, New York, a suburb of Buffalo. Terry Hockmuth reports that he purchased it in 1992 and removed it for installation in his office supply store. After an accident and fire in 1995, he sold it to Jerry Critser in Joliet, Illinois; Terry believes Jerry still has it in storage. The organ has a single stoprail console. The organ included Main: Open Diapason, Flute, Solo String, Celeste, and Kinura swapped out with a church Quintadena; Solo: Tibia Clausa, Tuba, Vox Humana, Orchestral Oboe, and Kinura, but the percussions were gone. The trap assembly was with the instrument, but all of the traps had been removed and the holes stuffed with rags.

WMCA, New York

Wurlitzer 2/7 Style E, Opus 748, and Wurlitzer 3/11, Opus 1066, installed in 1941

WNBC, New York

Æolian-Skinner 3/15, Opus 923, 1934

This organ is now in the Post Chapel of the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York. WNBC also had a Wurlitzer three-manual Special.

WNEW, New York

Marr & Colton 1928
Spencer blower serial #22362.

WOR, New York

Wurlitzer 2/7 Style E, Opus 1818

This was the flagship station of the Mutual Broadcasting Network. The organ was installed in 1935. The Wurlitzer was transplanted from the Terrace Theatre where it had been installed in 1927.

NBC STUDIOS, New York

Æolian-Skinner

Community (Post) Chapel, West Point. Æolian-Skinner organ from NBC Studios, New York, 1957. (Information provided by Wm. G. Chapman, Curator of Organs, USMA, West Point, New York.)

NORTH CAROLINA

WTPG, Raleigh

Möller 2/6, Opus 5792

NORTH DAKOTA

WDAY, Fargo

Barton 2/3

Played by Hildegard Usselman Krauss, who also played in theatres well into her 90s. The Barton was later moved to a roller rink. The station continued to utilize live organ music into the 1980s, first with a Hammond and later with a Conn. (Contributed by Dave Knudtson.)

OHIO

WHIO, Dayton

Wurlitzer three-manual Special, Opus 394

Installed in 1934, this instrument was originally installed in the Warwick Theatre of Kansas City in 1921.

WHK, Cleveland

Gottfried two-manual of undetermined size

This station also had a 3/15 Austin, Opus 1788, that appears to have been built for this station in 1931.

WKRC, Cincinnati

Wurlitzer 2/4 Style B Special, Opus 2643

WLW, Cincinnati

This station, owned by Powell Crosley, actually had three pipe organs, including a Style B. The main organ, Wurlitzer Opus 1001, began as a Style H Special and was enlarged, including the addition of a three-manual console in 1929.

The organ was removed and relocated in the Shady Nook restaurant in Cincinnati. At some point, the restaurant closed and the owners had the power to the building cut, thus disabling sump pumps and allowing the organ chambers to flood. The crew removing the organ had to wear masks because of the mold that had formed. There was some question about how much of this organ was actually the WLW organ because of the various additions that had been made in 1929. John Alford obtained some of the pipework at that time on the chance that they were actually the pipes used at WLW and played by Lee Erwin. During the time at the restaurant, however, the owner swapped out some of the ranks, which clouded the whole matter as to what parts were from the original organ. (Contributed by John Alford.)

WLW also had a Wurlitzer 3/10, Opus 681.

WSMK, Dayton

1933 Wurlitzer Style R Special, Opus 1750

WSPD, Toledo

Wurlitzer 2/5 Style B Special, Opus 1425

WTAM/WEAR, Cleveland

Wurlitzer 3/15 Special, Opus 1099

OKLAHOMA

WKY, Oklahoma City

Kilgen 4/10 (expanded to 14 ranks), Opus 5281

Built for this installation in 1935. Played by Ken Wright.

OREGON

KEX/KGW, Portland

Wood, two manual

Wurlitzer 3/9, Opus 957, installed 1936.

From top: KDKA, Pittsburgh;
KGER, Long Beach



KGW/KEX, Portland

Wurlitzer 3/9

This instrument was originally a divided Style D (Opus 957, 1924) which was installed in the Multnomah (Venetian) Theatre in the St. Johns District of Portland. In 1936, Balcom and Vaughn moved it to KGW/KEX Radio's studio (NBC) located in the old Oregonian Building. Later that year, the console was modified to three manuals, and a Gottfried English Horn and French Horn Clarinet were added.

According to Bob Rickett, this was a very good broadcast organ, and it was played for many years by Glen Shelly. In 1946, a fire damaged the console but not the pipework. The insurance company sold the organ to Jerry Gilmore, and two of the reservoirs were installed in Bob Rickett's organ in Portland.

KOIN, Portland

Robert-Morton 3/6

Originally from the Astoria People's Theatre and later in Seattle's Olympic (Town and Country) Theatre. The KOIN installation by Balcom and Vaughan included a three-manual console that was enlarged from a two-manual Wurlitzer console. At that time, a Style D Trumpet and a Wurlitzer Tibia were added.

KOIN radio started in 1926 in the basement of the original Heathman Hotel in Portland. The new Heathman Hotel was constructed in 1927, and KOIN eventually moved its studios to the new building. Between 1933 and 1939, several modifications were made to the mezzanine level to accommodate the expanding needs of the radio station. In 1935, the 3/6 Robert-Morton organ was installed by Balcom and Vaughan in the new Heathman building studios. At that time, KOIN had a larger staff of musicians and entertainers than all other Portland stations combined.

In 1955, the organ was again moved, to St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Oregon City. It was eventually broken up for parts by Mike Dillon, with the Trumpet going to Dale Haskin and the Tibia to Bert Hedderly.

KXL, Portland

Wood 2/9

This instrument was removed from the Oregon Theatre in Portland by the original manufacturer, William Wood, and reinstalled in the studios of KXL in the Multnomah Hotel in Portland. According to sources, the Wood Company repossessed the organ during the Depression and sold it to KXL. After KXL moved, the hotel reportedly cut the main cable with an axe. In 1940, the instrument was purchased by Bob Rickett and Jerry Gilmore of Portland for \$250. Bob used the Tibia, Tuba and Viole d'Orchestre Celeste (made by Gottfried) as additions to his 2/5 Wicks residence organ, and the remainder of the instrument was sold to Milton Hunt in 1940. Those parts were resold to Randall Olsen (Thompson?) in 1966 for \$750.

PENNSYLVANIA

WCAU, Philadelphia

Wurlitzer 2/5 Style B Special, Opus 1544

KDKA, Pittsburgh

Wurlitzer 3/9 Special, Opus 2231
(Contributed by Dr. Barry Henry.)

WFIL, Philadelphia

Kilgen 4/14, Opus 5931

Installed in 1937. This appears to be an original installation and not a transplant from a theatre.

SOUTH CAROLINA

WSPA, Spartanburg

Möller 2/6, Opus 6184

TENNESSEE

WDOD, Chattanooga

Wurlitzer 2/5 Style 150, Opus 1981

Disposition of this organ is being investigated. (Contributed by Larry Davis.)

WLAC, Nashville

Kilgen 4/12, Opus 6013-A-B

The owners of the station were Life and Casualty Insurance of Nashville. John Alford owns the Post Horn, which is voiced on 15". The disposition of the remainder of the instrument is unknown. (Contributed by John Alford.)

WISCONSIN

WCLO, Green Bay

Kimball, two manual

WASHINGTON

KFPY, Spokane

Wurlitzer 3/10, Opus 977

This is a 1939 Balcom and Vaughan installation. The organ was originally installed in 1924 in the Scheuster's Theatre in Long Beach and then was relocated to the Arcade Theatre in Los Angeles in 1933.

In 1953, the organ was removed, and Balcom and Vaughan installed it in Seattle's Rolladium Skating Rink.

KHQ, Spokane

Wurlitzer 2/10, Opus 792

Installed 1939, the KHQ organ was another 1939 Balcom and Vaughan installation based around a 2/6 Wurlitzer originally installed in Seattle's Venetian (Olympic) Theatre. In 1963, the instrument found its way back to Seattle and was installed in the Kirkland residence of Ernie Manly.

KIT, Yakima

Wurlitzer 2/5, Opus 835

KIT Radio first broadcast on April 8, 1929 and was the first commercial station in Central Washington. In 1939, Balcom and Vaughan installed a 2/5 Wurlitzer at the station that was based around a 2/4 Style B Wurlitzer (Opus 835) originally from Portland's Victoria Theatre. The organ was lost in a fire in 1961.

KJR, Seattle

Estey 2/3, Opus 2945

Grand Minuette 1930

The organ was removed in 1939 and was transferred to the Bethany Lutheran Church in Warren, Oregon. Two ranks were added at that time. In 1947, it was enlarged to 12 ranks and went to the home of William Hubley in Seattle.

KMO, Tacoma

Robert-Morton 2/8

A 1931 installation by Balcom and Vaughan based around a 2/4 Wicks-manufactured Robert-Morton from Tacoma's Park Theatre. In 1953 the organ was moved to Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Tacoma. In 1956 it was removed from the church, and the current disposition is unknown.

KOL, Seattle

Hybrid 3/12

KOL studios were located in the Northern Life Tower in downtown Seattle. A 3/12 organ was installed by Balcom and Vaughan in 1931 and was a combination of two organs—a 2/5 Kimball from the Strand Theatre and a 2/10 Wurlitzer from the Colonial Theatre. The organ was controlled by a Wurlitzer console that had been modified by Balcom to three manuals.

According to Eugene Nye, the organ was purchased by Don Myers in 1960 for \$2,000. It was stored but never installed. It was later sold to Dr. Gordon Potter of Portland, Oregon.

Professional Perspectives

“Dear Dead Daze, the Avenue Story” Reel One

BY EDWARD MILLINGTON STOUT III

With the untimely passing of Steve Levin, whose family owned the Avenue Theatre building, there is much reflection taking place since the Avenue's closing 25 years ago. The “Avenue Photoplay Society” began its long run as “The Lyric Photoplay Society,” and its original home in 1962 was the “New Potrero Theatre” in San Francisco, a rag-tag Nickelodeon built in 1914.

The cast of characters that made the historic silent film operation a possibility was something out of a Damon Runyon play, including the likes of Vern Gregory, Steve Levin, Tom Hazleton, Jim Roseveare, Lyn Larsen, Paul and Phil Messner, Don Micholetti, Jon Johnston, Al Sefl, Dorian Clair, Ed Stout, and many other half-crazed organ buffs.

It all started on a semi-sane basis when Vern Gregory purchased and removed the Style 240 Wurlitzer organ from Chicago's State-Lake Theatre in 1961. Vern was an inventive genius and was the co-owner of Gregory & Falk, a successful lithographic plate manufacturing company, when San Francisco was the third largest printing center in the United States. The Gregory & Falk building, located near the waterfront and adjacent to the Bay Bridge, was also the home of a young and promising pipe organ restoration firm that was established in 1958.

In the mid 1950s, Greg and his son Bob assembled a combination 12-rank theatre organ on the third floor of the G&F warehouse building, where he hosted several concerts and festive dinners at which Larry Vannucci offered recognizable melody lines at the console of the Wurlitzer/Smith conglomerate. Just prior to purchasing the State-Lake organ, the first organ was sold to a clever telephone engineer, Fred Beeks, who removed the instrument and installed it in a series of homes.

In his late teens, Vern “Greg” Gregory played for the not-so-silent photoplays on the Atascadero Theatre's exciting three-rank Smith. Greg said there was no combination action, and the lone switchboard was fed wind by the single reservoir, thereby causing the stop switches to re-it when the tremulant was on.

Greg's plan was to erect the State-Lake Wurlitzer on the third floor, after it was re-leathered. That work was contracted to the EMSIII firm, which was already taking care of many of the still-active downtown houses. There was some concern about the organ's installation interfering with the expanding plate-making operations, and that concern led Greg to say to Ed, “Maybe we should just find some old theatre and install the organ there.” Now, that was not the right thing to say to anyone with dual carburetors under the hood.

The light-hearted suggestion by Greg became a fevered mandate, and the search was on. That very evening, while attending a music lesson at the Lost Weekend, Don Micholetti told Ed he knew of an old closed theatre on Potrero Hill, an old district surrounded by light industry. The two lads, now fortified with the proper amount of Lost Weekend antifreeze, headed for the New Potrero. There she sat like an aging old dance girl with sagging jowls and torn stockings, forgotten and unwanted. The little theatre served the largely immigrant community for nearly 50 years and was known on the hill as the “flea-pit.”

The potential was great, and the idea of shoring up and putting new make-up on the old doll was most exciting. It was just the right size for a silent film society with the State-Lake organ. The following Monday the owner of the property was contacted, and he was only too delighted to lease the crumbling old theatre to what he perceived to be The New Potrero Theatre Company. With funding provided by the generous

Messner brothers, Phil and Paul, a two-year lease was secured, with Greg being only aware of saying, “Go out and find a theatre!” Upon hearing of the new adventure and obligation, Greg replied, “Good grief, what will my wife say?”

The New Potrero was a very typical “shooting gallery” theatre with a plain auditorium 25 feet wide by nearly 60 feet in length. There was a tiny orchestra pit with a few remains of an old Photoplayer that was buried under layers of popcorn and coke. The proscenium arch was framed with a modest decorative rounded plaster design, with a door on each side leading to the simple platform stage. Part of the original “picture sheet” was still painted on the plaster back wall of the building. The tin-clad projection room was located above the tiny lobby, which had a phone booth-sized squatreato and an institutional-type drinking fountain.

Now, where to put the organ? It finally jumped off the paper napkin, on which the installation was being planned, that the chambers must be located beneath the raked wooden floor of the auditorium. By the way, many magnificent pipe organ installations were conceived on coffee house napkins! The New Potrero was built on a very steep hill with the façade of the building being about 20 feet high and the rear brick wall being about 45 feet from the ground. There was about 20 feet of space from the bottom of the orchestra pit to the dirt “basement” below. There was plenty of space for constructing two narrow chambers in a “V” formation pointing towards the back wall of the building. The sound of the organ would need to reach the auditorium by the creation of a huge tone opening where the stage floor was now located. The entire stage floor just had to go.

This was a clear-cut job for a friend who loved pipe organs and vintage steam cars. An engineer by trade, Jim Crank was

(Photos Stout Collection)

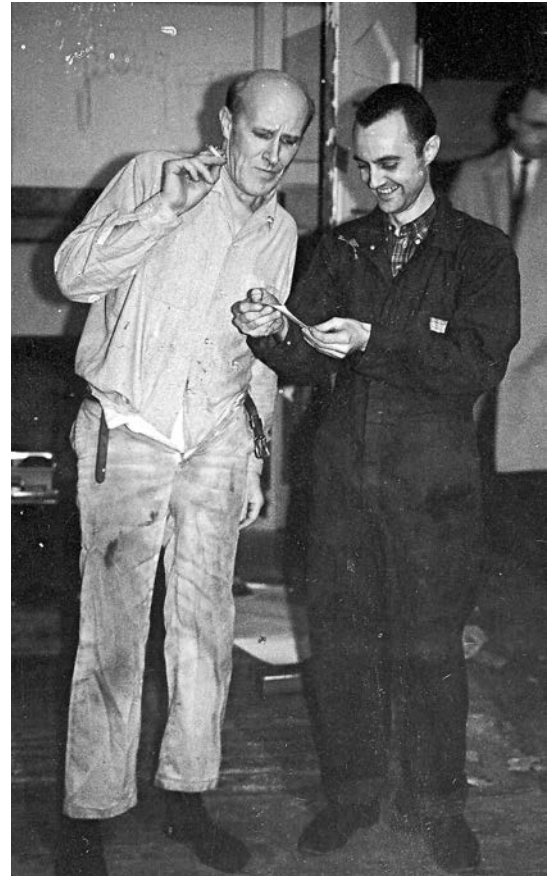
fearless, had the strength of 10, and thought getting rid of the stage floor and orchestra pit sounded like good fun. He began pounding away at the massive timbers that spanned the 25 foot width of the musty old basement. The whole gang was down there in the late afternoon while Jim kept knocking away at the creaky structure; suddenly there was heard the ear-splitting sound of the entire structure giving up to the unholy invasion. The stage floor and orchestra pit came crashing down en masse to the dry and dusty dirt floor. Billowing clouds of dust traveled throughout the building, looking like the New Mexico test site. The terrified and choking crew ran to the only basement exit. Nearby neighbors had to be assured we had not ignited an old Johnny Mac Brown western. It took little time to clear out the rubble in anticipation of the next phase, which was finding and installing a console elevator that could travel 16 feet.

The Cleveland Wrecking Company had the answer for us in the form of a complete passenger elevator from a demolished apartment building. The entire machine cost \$60, and the crew was busy digging out the deep hole for the cylinder. An engineer from the Columbia Elevator Company gave us free advice throughout the installation process. Clever Jim Crank welded up the platform and the guide-rail connections. Within two weeks that elevator traveled smoothly from the basement level to the auditorium floor,

and it was silent. Of course, OSHA had no idea of our having installed an arm and leg removal device within the City limits.

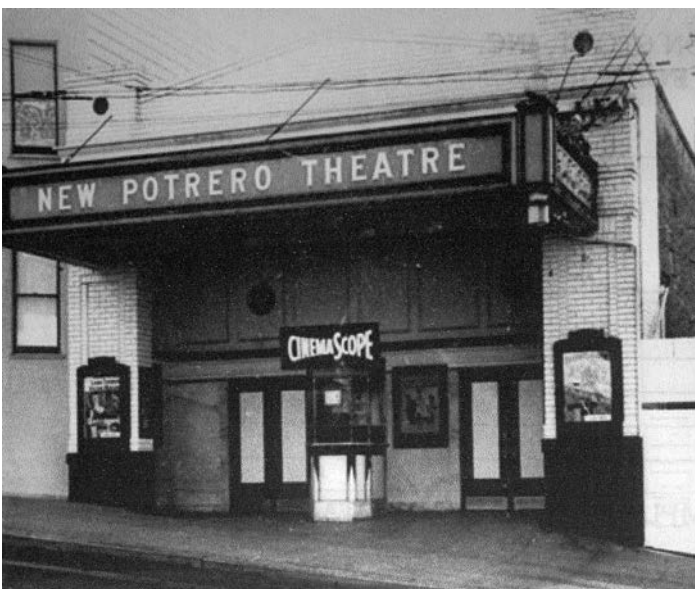
With Greg's financial support and the crew's drive, the pipe chamber levels were constructed in record time, and the components of the organ were moved from the G&F building to the awaiting theatre, where it shared the auditorium floor with the top half of the original 1914 box office. We were sailing at hull speed when we hit an unforeseen sandbar in the form of a building inspector with a well-oiled rubber ruler.

"Well now, what are you boys up to here? Have the auditorium floor and fire escape been brought up to code?" Oops! By this time we were nearing the end of our two-year lease, and the expense of meeting the new code requirements made the little theatre company hit the down button on the New Potrero. What to do and where to go? Stay in your seat for Reel Two, when Steve Levin pulls the Lyric Photoplay Society off the sandbar.



Above: Vern Gregory (l) and Ed Stout

Below: Interior of the New Potrero where the State-Lake Wurlitzer awaits re-leathering and installation. Note the octagonal top of the box office also awaiting installation.



Chapter News

ATLANTA CHAPTER

Atlanta, Georgia—We returned on Sunday, March 22, to the residence of chapter president Bucky Reddish and his famous Walker digital organ for a program presented by Christian Elliott. This was Chris' first visit, and he is a new honorary Southerner!

Chris has a very easy-going and relaxed presence that lets the audience be a part of his presentation. After a rousing start to the program, the selections presented were broad in style, the arrangements were well thought, and the technique was seamless. He makes it look entirely too easy. We hope Chris will return soon. Our thanks to Bucky for his generosity and to those who provided the post-meeting treats.

Sunday, April 19, found us at Roswell United Methodist Church. The meeting was to have been in the main Sanctuary, featuring the five-manual Möller installed there. Since the local electric company had other ideas and decided to only let us use two of the necessary three phases the blower needed, the program was moved to the chapel and its three-manual custom Allen.

Phillip Allen, our vice president, offered chapter-related news items and then introduced our artist, Mr. Tom Alderman. Tom is resident organist at the church, and he showed his professional flexibility by being able to transfer his program to a decidedly different instrument than the one for which it was originally planned. All of this work was invisible to the audience, and Tom took us on a musical journey that spanned time and geography.

Thanks to Tom and Roswell United Methodist Church for a great afternoon of music. Can we come back for more?

Please note: Our new chapter mailing address is P.O. Box 426, Marietta, Georgia 30061-0426.

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



Chris Elliott at the Reddish Walker
(Photo by Elbert Fields)



Tom Alderman at the Roswell United
Methodist Church Chapel Allen
(Photo by Elbert Fields)

BINGHAMTON

Binghamton, New York—Dr. Steven Ball conferred with enthralled audience members at the post-show reception held March 28 at the Forum Theatre, presented by the Binghamton Theatre Organ Society. Dr. Ball, a faculty member of the University of Michigan, performed at the (mostly) Robert-Morton 4/24 instrument. The program was opened by chapter president Professor William Metzlar; his down-to-earth humor was designed to keep the audience wondering what was to be next!

Steven Ball played and spoke in a passionate, intimate, and educationally entertaining style, stressing the importance of maintaining the theatre organ in a world increasingly all too unaware of the glories of the instrument. The second half of his program included accompanying a silent film; the audience was brought to their feet in roaring approval. This was the first time the Binghamton chapter has programmed a feature-length silent film.

During his trip to New York, Dr. Ball visited other theatre organs in Binghamton, including the Edwin Link 3/24. It currently awaits funding for restoration in the Roberson Museum and Science Center. An installation in glass-walled chambers is planned.

A student videography team from Ithaca College spent the better part of two days with Dr. Ball preparing a video about the future of the theatre organ. When complete, this video is expected to be made available to ATOS.

—Paul F. Stapel
Bill Metzlar, President
607-648-8571, billmetzar@mac.com



Dr. Steven Ball greets his admirers
(Photo by Bill Metzlar)

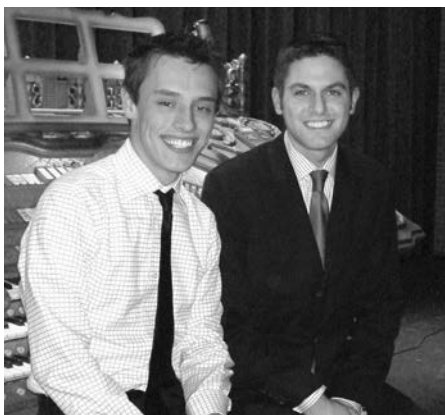
CENTRAL INDIANA

Indianapolis, Indiana—Organ concertgoers have been deprived of the grandeur of the Anderson, Indiana Paramount Theatre and its Grande Page organ; this instrument has not been used in very many performances during the past two years. In March, Central Indiana chapter members had the opportunity to attend a brief meeting and then be treated to a short performance by CIC president, Tim Needler. Mr. Needler did a fine job indeed! Unfortunately, the threat of severe weather in the area deterred many members from attending.

Our guest artist for the April meeting at Warren Center for the Performing Arts was young organist Mark Herman from Chicago. Mark performed brilliantly at the 3/18 Barton and, as an additional treat, he brought along his friend and colleague Anthony Snitker who sang a few numbers to Mark's accompaniment. Both of these gentlemen are very talented and put on an excellent show.

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

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.



Anthony Sniitker (l) and Mark Herman at the Warren Center (Photo by Justin Nimmo)

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Thomaston, Connecticut—Brett Valliant was the artist for the concert held on April 18 featuring the 3/15 Marr & Colton in the Thomaston Opera House auditorium. Brett played a very enjoyable program of show tunes from the 1920–1940 era, along with several contemporary pieces. Brett's arrangements were excellent and his registrations superb, bringing out the best of the resources of the organ. John Angevine heads up the organ crew that maintains the organ in top condition.

The console rebuilding project of the 3/12 Austin (Opus 1512), originally installed at the Allyn Theatre, Hartford, and now at the Shelton High School, is headed towards anticipated completion in early 2010. Recently concluded work includes the fine regulation of the rebuilt manuals, portions of the console woodwork, and testing of the Syndyne stopkey actions. Work yet to be finished includes rewiring the console components, replacing worn pedal keys, and professional finishing of the console case. The rebuilt console will feature a new horseshoe stoprail, a Z-tronics combination action, and a MIDI interface, while retaining details unique to Austin consoles. As far as is known, Opus 1512 is the only remaining Austin theatre organ of the 100 or so that were installed in movie theatres during the days of silent films. The console project is being led by Allen Miller, with Connecticut Valley chapter member George Bell assisting.

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

DAIRYLAND

Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin—The Dairyland chapter had a mini-Valentine social on Wednesday, February 18, at the New Berlin home of Dave and Diana Prentice. The evening began with popular love songs from

the last 90 years played by Ralph Kohn, who alternated between the Baldwin and Hammond organs. This was topped off by a sing-along of old favorites. Candy was given as door prizes, and a potluck meal followed.

Saturday, March 7, we had a joint social with the Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts, and over 70 people came to Fred Hermes' basement Bijou in Racine to hear his five-manual Wurlitzer played by Jim Kozak. Jim, a full-time pianist and organist, gave us an exciting program. Mark Demmin, a baritone, sang with great gusto. Open console followed. Thanks to all who ventured out on what was such a rainy day.

Another rainy-day social was held at John and Sandy Knuth's Cedar Grove home on Sunday, April 26. The organ is a 2/11 Wangerin originally in the church where Sandy is the organist. She played a varied program of classical and popular music, and even played a number from Dairyland Theatre Organ Society member Jelani Eddington's new book, *The Art of Theatre Organ Arranging*. Many talented organists followed at open console; among them were John Cornue and his wife, Laurie, on violin. They amazed everyone with their beautiful music, took requests, and were joined by others to form impromptu trios.

—Sandy Knuth
Dean Rosko, President
262-886-1739, Organsk8er@aol.com

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Wellesley, Massachusetts—The Eastern Massachusetts chapter crew has been busy.

On March 1, 15 of our talented members shared their talents in our first annual *Members' Day Playoff*. A large and enthusiastic audience enjoyed the musical offerings of Dick Handverger, Bob Evans, Charlie Briggs, Bob Legon, Dorothy and Dick Hill, Roger Austin, Linda and Jim Duncan, Marge and Ray Deshaies, Bruce Netten, Tom Snow, Ed Wawrzynowicz, and Len Beyersdorfer. The audience readily offered support for each performer by responding with generous applause.

On April 5, many members and friends gathered at the Shanklin Music Hall to hear Jonathan Ortloff, 2008 ATOS Young Organist Competition winner. Jonathan performed a well-played program with a variety of musical offerings. Jon impressed the audience with his musical prowess and maturity. This young man will go places. We're sure that Jon will be invited back again.

Phil Kelsall created EMCATOS history on the weekend of April 18–19. For the first time in the 54-year history of EMCATOS concert presentations, we added a second concert at the Shanklin Music Hall. The first Shanklin concert was sold out seven weeks in

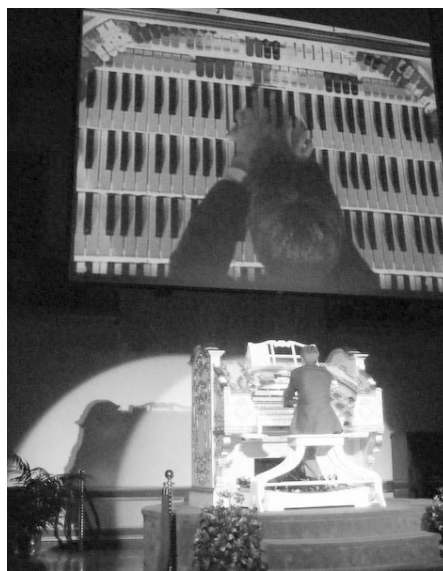
advance—almost before the flyers advertising the event were mailed out. As a consequence, we added a second concert on the evening of April 19. This second concert came within 10 seats of a sellout. Phil Kelsall has a large and loyal following in the Massachusetts area. His performances did not disappoint, and he was rewarded with standing ovations.

As our concert season winds down for another year, we hope that you and yours have a happy and safe summer season.

—Bob Evans, President
508-674-0276, bob@organloft.org



Cast of the Members' Day Playoff
(Photo by Bob Evans)



Jonathan Ortloff at the Shanklin Music Hall
(Photo by Bob Evans)

Chapter News

GARDEN STATE

Little Falls, New Jersey—The Garden State Theatre Organ Society had two double-headers in a row in March and April. The first theatre organ/piano concert was at the Loew's Theatre, Jersey City. Tom Hoehn of Florida beautifully registered the 4/24 Bob Balfour Memorial Wonder Morton while Avery Tunningley of New York alternately accompanied the organ and soloed with remarkable skill on the chapter's baby grand piano. With a mix of the old and the new, the enthusiastic and the mellow, the two artists created an afternoon of musical pleasure for all who attended.

Then, just about one month later, GSTOS produced a second theatre organ/piano concert, this time at the Patriots Theatre in the Trenton War Memorial. Dave Wickerham was at the 3/16 Möller with Dick Kroeckel nearby at the Steinway grand piano. They titled their program *Red, White, and Blue Ragtime Revue*. Though it might be hard to believe, the concert was even more rousing than the title promised. The pair has performed together frequently, and our president and emcee, Michael Cipolletti, remarked to the audience that it seemed as if we had two musicians playing with one mind. There was a heartfelt and enthusiastic response from the members of the audience; they were energized by the fantastic music that surrounded them throughout the afternoon. Crew chief Jay Taylor must have been delighted at how well the organ performed for this event.

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



Tom Hoehn and Avery Tunningley at Loew's Jersey City (Photo by Tom Noonan)



Dave Wickerham and Dick Kroeckel at the Trenton War Memorial (Photo by Tony Rustako)

JOLIET

Joliet, Illinois—We had our business meeting on March 1, including nomination and election of officers: president, Jim Patak; vice president, Don Walker; secretary, Barb Petry; treasurer, Dolores Patak; and board members Tom Day, Jim Bradley, and Mike Cierski.

Glen Taller, one of our younger members, was recently on television for a guest spot on *The Paula Sands Show*. Glen plays at the Pizza Parlor in Lansing, Illinois.

We heard Joel Gary from Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the Rialto organ on March 1. He has been studying organ since he was nine years old, and from 1989–1991 he played at Good Time Charley's in Grand Rapids. He did a wonderful job for us in spite of our old organ acting up. I still think the Rialto ghost had something to do with this mishap! Our socials are very well attended, and our members enjoy having open console time at the Rialto organ after our guest plays. We have a lot of talent in our chapter.

Several Joliet Area Theatre Organ Society members who also belong to the Chicagoland chapter were treated to a concert at the Allen organ studio in Lombard by Frank Pellico. Pellico formerly played for the Cubs and the Chicago Blackhawks as well as at Nicco's and the Matterhorn restaurants. A surprise guest at the Steinway grand piano was Johnny Gabor; he currently plays at the Flame restaurant. We were also treated to a vocalist, Connie Marshall. There was standing room only.

Here's what happened at this year's *Rialtofest*: Friday evening we went to the Van Der Molen home in Wheaton to hear Donna Parker, Martin Ellis, and Jonas Nordwall. Our ears were filled with fantastic music, and many good memories were created.

Saturday morning we went to the Krughoff home in Downers Grove to hear Jelani Eddington and Jonas Nordwall play that wonderful Wurlitzer organ. Donna Parker, Jonas Nordwall, and Martin Ellis were manning the food bar and selling CDs.

Saturday evening was the big event at the Rialto Theatre. We had six artists: Jelani Eddington, Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Martin Ellis, Rob Richards, and Alex Zsolt, who played the Steinway grand piano. The artists took turns at the pipe organ, an Allen theatre organ, and an Allen classical model. The Allen Organ Company furnished the two Allen organs, the Steinway concert grand, and a Roland keyboard. Thank you, Lee Maloney. The event also included the Joliet American Legion Band. The music was mind-boggling.

On Sunday we journeyed to the Sanfilippo residence in Barrington for the grand finale, followed by a dessert buffet. What a wonderful ending to a full weekend of music, music, music! Hopefully, next year will be even better.

—Barb Petry
Jim Patak, President
708-562-8538

LAND O'LAKES

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota—The Fitzgerald Theatre, in collaboration with Minnesota Public Radio, presented a movie party on March 7. Hosted by MPR movie maven Stephanie Curtis, the party featured an evening of Buster Keaton silent comedy shorts accompanied by Mike Grandchamp at the Mighty Wurlitzer organ. A *Prairie Home Companion*'s Tom Keith added sound effects. During intermission, an early 1900s-inspired tap dance segment was featured as part of the entertainment offerings.

The Phipps Center 2008–09 organ series continued with Dave Wickerham on March 14. His concert of medleys, standards, and ragtime selections was a huge hit with the near-capacity audience, resulting in a standing ovation and an encore.

Our chapter meeting took place on March 21 at the Heights Theatre in Columbia Heights. Chapter secretary Dave Kearns was the featured artist for the day at the former WCCO organ, followed by open console. The organ currently has 14 ranks playing; a digital 32' Diaphone has been added to the Pedal division. The Vibraharp and drums are also playing from their perch on the catwalk behind the screen. The combination action on the four-manual Barton console is now operational.

About 20 chapter members and guests gathered at Paul and Yvonne Kenworthy's home on April 19. The artist for the afternoon was Mike Grandchamp, who presided at the

console of Paul's Allen theatre organ. His program of selections from the 1920s and beyond was well received. Refreshments and open console followed, along with some recorded performances by Lyn Larsen and Walt Strony via the Allen playback system. Thanks to Paul and Yvonne for their hospitality and for hosting our April meeting!

—Kim Crisler

Terry Kleven, President
651-489-2074, nlttak@comcast.net



Mike Grandchamp announces his next selection (Photo by Kim Crisler)

LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Woking, Surrey—Michael Wooldridge returned from the South Coast on Saturday 14th March, taking a break from producing summer shows and touring seasons. Members with long memories fondly recall Mike winning our UK Young Theatre Organist of the Year Competition in 1980, and there can be no doubt that he has been delighting audiences ever since with his talents on pipes and electronics as well as being a producer.

Our technical team made a visit to Barry during March to assess the condition of our famous Christie 4/16 which has been sadly mothballed for some years. This iconic instrument was made famous by Sidney Torch in the 1930s at the Regal Edmonton with events, broadcasts and many 78rpm recordings. A report on the situation at Barry was presented to the AGM, and discussions are still in progress with the trustees of the Barry Memorial Hall.

Our annual general meeting took place at Woking Leisure Centre on 14th April, and we were pleased to welcome a larger than normal number of members. We were also delighted to receive a significantly higher number of proxy votes from members unable to be with us on the day, since for the first time we had sent postage-paid envelopes with our AGM documents. The meeting was followed by open console until 10:00pm.

Sadly—due to insufficient entrants—our Young Organist Competition will not take place this year. Instead, we are teaming up with the Old Windsor Theatre organ trust to organize a joint open day and theatre organ workshop at the Old Windsor Memorial Hall on Sunday 18th October. The workshop will be led by our musical advisor and technical team leader, Len Rawle.

With fewer venues in which to host events, currently our concert secretary is looking to book more events at Woking. Details will be posted on our chapter website as soon as possible.

—David Coles

Ian Ridley, President

+44 1494 674944,

ianridley@atos-london.co.uk



Michael Wooldridge at Woking (Photo by David Coles)



Our most recent Young Organist Competition at Woking: Philip Allsop (l), Mary Anne Wootton, Adam Zaire, and Anthony Meads (Photo by Mike Clemence)

MANASOTA

Sarasota Florida—Jim Riggs did a great job of kicking off our 2009 season by bringing his innovative *Phantom Duets* to our audience on January 11. We had an appreciative and good-sized crowd. While the Wurlitzer adapts to many styles of music, most will agree that it is at its best when playing popular music of the 1920s and '30s. Thanks to all who attended

the concert and those who helped with concert-related activities.

Next, we saw the third return of Dave Wickerham. An audience favorite, Dave brought his musical skills to our Wurlitzer on Sunday, February 15. On March 15, Jelani Eddington was our guest artist. Jelani is always a favorite of our audiences and members.

For the balance of the year's meetings, vice president Chaz Bender has lined up an array of first-time musical guests—even reaching outside of the state of Florida.

Thanks to all who participate by doing everything from serving refreshments to taking tickets. Special thanks to Chuck Pierson who serves not only as past president but as liaison to Grace Baptist Church, and to Norman Arnold who keeps our Wurlitzer in tiptop shape at all times.

The Manasota Theatre Organ Society is one of six chapters selected by ATOS to develop a program that will encourage members who are currently in our non-voting "Friends" category to learn more about the benefits of membership in ATOS. We look forward to working with ATOS leadership on that project.

—Chaz Bender

John Fischer, President

941-927-6852

NEW YORK

New York, New York—We had a great turnout on April 4 for our spring open console session at the Paramount Theatre in Middletown, New York. A dozen members and guests, including several young organ students, took turns playing the New York chapter's 3/12 Mighty Wurlitzer, while about 40 others came by just to enjoy the music. The highlight of the afternoon was an outstanding mini-concert played by John Baratta that concluded the day's activities. Thanks to the efforts of our NYTOS Paramount crew, Tom Stehle, Lowell Sanders, and Jack Stone, the organ was in top form; thanks also to Paramount director Maria Bruni and her staff for all their support in making the day a big success.

Our next event took place on March 1 at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York. Bernie Anderson, Jr. on the Austin/Morton organ accompanied one of the all-time classical greats, and the most expensive silent film ever made, *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*. Our pre-Easter turnout was beyond our expectations due not only to the subject matter of the film but also to the gifted talents of Bernie Anderson.

On March 22, we returned to Chaminade to experience one of today's most popular and talented young theatre organists, Mark Herman, in concert at the 3/15 Austin/Morton.

Chapter News

Mark's popularity on the concert scene was evidenced by the number of ATOS members in the audience who came to Mineola from out of the area, including several from out of state. Mark performed at both the organ and the piano. He was joined by the talented young vocalist Anthony Snitker, a student majoring in musical theatre. Both performers were indeed a class act. Since Mark had won the ATOS Young Organist's Competition in 2004, it was very fitting for NYTOS chairman John Valentino to introduce to the audience two of our own talented young NYTOS members: Dan Minervini and Andrew VanVarick. NYTOS will be sponsoring them both with scholarships to attend the ATOS Summer Camp for Young Organ Students in Phoenix, Arizona this coming July.

Many thanks to Br. Rob Lahey and crew members Dr. Bob Atkins, Alan Lush, Russ Fallor, and Dan Minervini for all of their work. Finally, thanks to John Valentino, Tom Stehle and Allan France for the production of two of these great events.

—Allan France
John Valentino, Chairman
646-469-5049,
valentinofrance@earthlink.net



Andrew VanVarick and John Matters at the Middletown Paramount
(Photo by Allan France)



Anthony Snitker and Mark Herman at Chaminade (Photo by Allan France)

NORTH TEXAS

Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas—March and April were very busy months for the chapter. March was spent in making preparations for our next traveling organ presentation.

The chapter held another theatre organ demonstration at the McGowen Elementary School in McKinney, Texas on April 6 using the traveling organ. There were approximately 100 students and their teachers in the audience. With Mike Tarzis and Al Cavitt sharing hosting and organ playing duties, they put on quite an interactive program with the students. They showed a "talkie" cartoon that was about seven minutes long, but they turned off the sound. Then Mike accompanied the film to demonstrate how silent films were shown with the organ providing the music. The students' faces, as well as those of their teachers, were very attentive. After the film, additional information was presented on how to accompany films. Some of the students then came up to play the organ. As all were piano students, they were very hesitant with organ stops registered, so we started them off with just the piano stop. That sound was familiar to them, and they had no hesitation. As the students played, we gradually added in various organ voices. You could see their eyes widen as they got the idea. All in all, it was a very successful program for both the school and the chapter. We have been invited back next year.

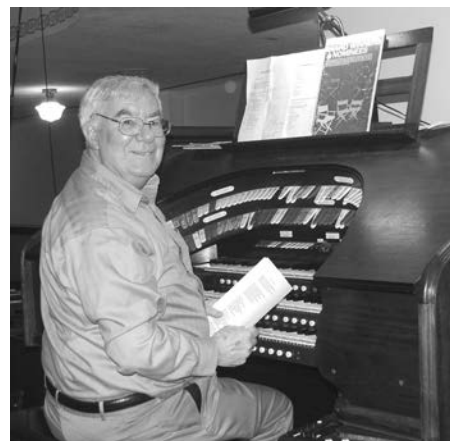
On April 19 the chapter held its regularly scheduled meeting. After business was completed, a very nice program was presented by fellow member Reginald Peake at our 3/17 Wurlitzer. He had quite a varied program and presented music to satisfy everyone—a pleasant ending to a good meeting.

I have an observation to add: As I was standing there in the McGowen School gym, the students' rapt attention and involvement in the program demonstrated to me that this is where part of the future of the theatre organ lies. The more we can expose our children to the beauty and fun of the theatre organ, the more interest we can generate. Hopefully, with our encouragement, a few students each year will become interested enough to find out more about this curious American instrument: the theatre organ!

—Kenneth Brown
Don Peterson, President
972-422-7757, dpete.tx@verizon.net



McGowen Elementary School student
(Photo by Kenneth Brown)



Reginald Peake at the Wurlitzer
(Photo by Kenneth Brown)

ORANGE COUNTY

Fullerton, California—A mixed but enthusiastic audience received an unusual treat April 19 with the appearance of the 27-year-old virtuoso organist Cameron Carpenter at the four-manual Wurlitzer organ in Plummer Auditorium. Mr. Carpenter's training is primarily in classical organ, and his program drew many members of the American Guild of Organists along with our usual theatre organ patrons. However, his performances defy any rigid classification. With a rather wry and self-analytical style of conversation, Cameron alternately deprecated and praised theatre organs, calling their usual musical level "vulgar" but admitting his fascination with their unmatched variety of tonal resources.

In the end we were treated to a program by someone who is perhaps destined to become best known as a virtuoso composer and improviser in the mold of a Franz Liszt or Nicolo Paganini. Mr. Carpenter apparently rarely plays standard scores or arrangements, which he dismisses as "boring." Instead, he reinvents music from many genres, displaying an extremely quick mind and musical sense

demonstrated in the form of a jaw-dropping, seemingly super-human technical facility.

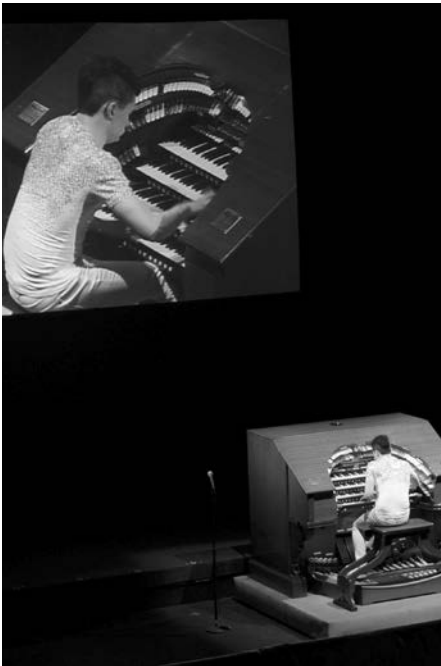
For the first time, the Orange County Theatre Organ Society used cameras and a screen to display images of the artist at work. This was well received by the audience and will probably become a regular feature of our presentations.

Preparation of the organ included some regulating of the reeds and careful tuning. Technicians were Lynne Bishop, Ed Bridgeford, Stuart Goodwin, and Bob Trousdale.

—Stuart Goodwin

Ed Bridgeford, President

714-529-5594, ebridgeford@sbcglobal.net



Cameron Carpenter at Plummer Auditorium
(Photo by Randy Bergum)

PUGET SOUND

Seattle, Washington—The beautifully upgraded Mt. Baker Theatre in Bellingham was a perfect setting for Nathan Avakian's fine theatre organ presentation on a sunny Sunday afternoon in April.

The PSTOS day-long coach tour departed from Seattle early, and included a morning visit to the Everett Theatre where organist and organ technician Greg Smith demonstrated the features of the 3/16 Kimball. Several past performers of note were then featured in a "virtual program" via digital recordings. Thanks to Randy Mather for paving the way for this visit and to Greg for his presentation. Randy was the driving force behind the installation of the Kimball that began in 1997.

The coach continued its journey northward, stopping for lunch at a local buffet eatery.

Upon arrival in Bellingham, there was time to roam about the renovated Mt. Baker Theatre. It's a stunning venue, one that will be featured in the 2010 convention. How fortunate that Bellingham has retained this community treasure!

Nathan Avakian, a student of Donna Parker and past beneficiary of Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society scholarship aid, did everyone proud. His program on the excellent original-installation Mt. Baker Theatre 2/12 Wurlitzer included something for everyone. Although just 17 years old, he presents himself on stage as professionally as a much more mature performer. Congratulations on a great program, Nathan!

It was an enjoyable day for 46 PSTOS members and friends.

—Jo Ann Evans

Dave Luttinen, President

206-963-3283, dave@pstos.org



Emcee Russ Gran congratulates Nathan Avakian following his performance
(Photo by Dottie Pattee)



PSTOS members board the coach for Bellingham (Photo by Jo Ann Evans)

RIVER CITY

Omaha, Nebraska—The March 15 chapter meeting was held at the Crossroads Mall food court in Omaha, with performing artist Greg Johnson. Greg, past president of the River City chapter, played a Con 653 console provided by Keyboard Kastle. Gary has had a long association with the company. The selections performed by Greg reminded us that spring was in the air. Greg sings with the Pathfinder's

Chorus and is an accomplished choir director and church organist. Thanks, Greg, for providing a wonderful afternoon.

The April 19 chapter meeting was held at the Jerry Pawlak residence in Lincoln, Nebraska. Although most of the chapter members reside in the Omaha area, a chapter meeting has not been held in Lincoln in the past five years. More than 50 members attended. Jerry Pawlak was the guest artist for the afternoon. Jerry is the owner of a vintage Hammond with Leslie and Yamaha keyboard enhancement. About six years ago Jerry started performing on pipes, so many of the selections were in the theatre organ style. As a tribute to Dan Bellomy, a very accomplished Hammond jazz organist as well as a fabulous theatre organist, Jerry included selections from Dan's last CD that emulated Dan's style and his jazz Hammond sound.

The annual River City public concert will be held at the Rose Theatre in Omaha on Sunday, July 12 at 3:00pm. Performing will be Patti Simon at the Mighty Wurlitzer, accompanied by Dick Kroeckel at the grand piano. As a special added attraction, an 18-piece big band, the Swingtones, has been added to the concert. The entertainment will continue into the evening with a reception and concert by Patti and Dick at the Markworth residence. 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



Greg Johnson at Crossroads Mall
(Photo by Jerry Pawlak)

Chapter News



Jerry Pawlak (Photo by Janet Domeier)



Jud Murphy demonstrates the operation of a pipe organ (Photo by Bill Kwinn)



Jerry Brash at his Allen organ (Photo by Gary Broyles)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver, Colorado—The Rocky Mountain chapter was busy cutting a rug *Dancing Without the Stars* at our club social in March. Bev Bucci at the Allen organ led a variety of dance music; she was assisted by Lee Traster, Don Rea, Roger Topliff, Jerry Bucci, and Jim Calm. Around 160 club members and friends danced the afternoon away to polkas, foxtrots, and even the chicken dance.

The doors to Denver's historic Paramount Theatre swung wide during April's *Doors Open Denver* event. Organists Bob Castle, Doug Thompson, DeLoy Goeglein, and Jim Calm kept the twin console 4/20 Wurlitzer singing all day with nonstop organ music, while Owanah Wick and Lee Shaw led tour groups through the theatre.

—Jim Calm, President
jimcalm32@yahoo.com



Jim Wagoner, Paramount projectionist in the 1970s, explains the workings of a carbon arc lamp (Photo by Bill Kwinn)

ST. LOUIS

St. Louis, Missouri—Some people just know how to do things right. Such is the case with St. Louis Theatre Organ Society member Jerry Brasch, who built a large music room around his three-manual Allen organ. It is the perfect setting to host the large group that always makes it to Jerry and his wife Rosalie's home. The space readily accommodates the various traps and tuned percussions that have been added to the organ, not to mention the dizzying array of digital voices that are operated from a customized control panel accessible from the bench. Jerry has an extensive music collection and pulled out a variety of tunes from standards to rarities.

The weather occasionally threatened, but it was still accommodating for the annual *Party on the Pipes* convention. The featured artists included Ken Double, Kay McAbee, Jack Doll, and Mark Gifford. Additionally, a variety of the SLTOS chapter members provided concerts at home installations and entertained with dinner music during the evening banquets. The chapter organizers of this event must be doing something right, since a number of the guests return year after year. Perhaps word has gotten around that this affordable convention even includes all meals. Everyone will long remember that final day at the Fox Theatre where they heard the 4/36 Wurlitzer, followed by a gourmet meal at the exclusive Fox Club. And just wait until next year!

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



Kay McAbee provided a classical organ program (Photo by Howard Pfeifer)

SOONER STATE

Tulsa, Oklahoma—On a very cold and rainy March evening, 128 folks came to hear Larry Mitchell and Bill Rowland present a very entertaining program, *Rev. Larry Meets Ragtime Bill*. Larry is the music director and organist at Broken Arrow's First Methodist Church, and Bill is the Sooner State chapter's past president and a current board member. They also invited a friend, Joel Burkhart, to join them with his banjo and guitar.

The program was an interesting mixture of sacred music, blues, bluegrass, country, ragtime, and folk tunes all arranged by Bill. It included the first performance of a ragtime suite composed of original music written by Bill with Larry playing the piano, Joel, the banjo, and Bill, the tuba. Larry and Joel took turns playing piano/organ duets and also sang some solos.

On April 17 we joined the Tulsa chapter of the American Guild of Organists for a special program by Dr. Christoph Bull, Professor of Organ and University Organist at UCLA. The program was held at Tulsa's First Baptist Church and featured their four-manual, 64-rank 1964 Æolian-Skinner organ. The

instrument includes an antiphonal division made up of E. M. Skinner pipework.

Dr. Bull covered quite a range of music, including his accompaniment of the silent movie *Cops*, starring Buster Keaton. The audience participated in an improvisation by submitting names of favorite songs which Christoph creatively performed. Collaborating was Norton Wisdom, a painter who produced original art throughout the program. He works with all types of music ensembles and creates images that capture the musical moment. He has performed at a variety of venues from the Salt Lake Winter Olympics to Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas.

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



Rev. Larry Mitchell, Joel Burkhart, and
"Ragtime Bill" Rowland (Photo by Alisa Hall)



Dr. Christoph Bull (Photo by Angela Seefeldt)

TOLEDO AREA

Toledo, Ohio—On October 12, 2008, the Toledo Area Theatre Organ Society hosted Donnie Rankin at the Ohio Theatre's 4/11 hybrid. Despite the light turnout, the concert was an unquestionable artistic success.

On the first weekend of December, TATOS members did yeoman service manning the telephone lines at the WGTE-FM fundraising drive in downtown Toledo. WGTE-FM has always been a friend of TATOS, helping us promote our programs.

The following weekend we presented our annual Christmas Showcase. This event featured TATOS artists Eric Hite, Darel Brainard, and Bill Yaney at the Ohio Theatre, along with the choir of Community of Christ Lutheran Church of Whitehouse, Ohio, the Sweet Harmony women's barbershop chorus, and ethnic dancers from the Echoes of Poland troupe.

On January 31 and February 1, 2009, TATOS members, along with members of the Toledo chapter of the American Guild of Organists, presented a demonstration workshop at Toledo's Westfield Franklin Park Mall. This was a part of the AGO's *International Year of the Organ* celebration.

Sunday, February 8, TATOS members were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Wasserman to see Paul's model railroad and collection of Hammond items, including a rare Hammond self-dealing bridge table. Darel Brainard and Bob Gosling, as well as other TATOS members, took turns at the various Hammond organs in the Wasserman home.

—Dave Vincent
Nelda Reno, President
419-478-5959

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Phoenix, Arizona—Our March 8 chapter meeting was held at the First Christian Church fellowship hall. Chapter member Johnny Sharp entertained us at the 2/11 Wurlitzer that we have maintained there for many years. He told us that he had some experience with the organ, having played 36 years in ice-skating rinks. Johnny played a few ballads, but most of his numbers were toe-tappers, reminiscent of his skating rink days. It was a fun way to spend a spring afternoon.

We had a record turnout for our March 22 silent film at the Orpheum Theatre. Ron Rhode provided accompaniment on the Wurlitzer for a Laurel and Hardy short and Harold Lloyd's *Grandma's Boy*. Some of our audience members enjoyed riding the new light rail from the East Valley to downtown Phoenix. After several years of having our silent film series on Sunday afternoons, next fall we are changing to Saturday nights. Downtown Phoenix is very active on the

weekends, and we hope to catch some of that enthusiasm.

April 5 found us back at Organ Stop Pizza for their buffet of pizza and organ music. This time the featured artist was staff organist Charlie Balogh. Charlie's program consisted of some of his own favorites as well as requests from the audience.

We are looking forward to the ATOS Summer Youth Camp to be held in the Valley of the Sun in July. Most of the coaching sessions will make use of the five-manual Adrian Phillips studio organ. Participants will also have the opportunity to hear the Orpheum's 3/30 Wurlitzer, Organ Stop's 4/75 Wurlitzer, and others.

—Madeline LiVolsi
Bill Carr, President
623-694-1746, Billcarr3.atos@cox.net



Johnny Sharp (Photo by Fred Watson)

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

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

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

CALIFORNIA (NORTH)

Berkeley Community Theatre—1930 Alston Way, Berkeley, 510-632-9177 (4/42W). All shows 2:30pm. September 20, John Giacchi; November 1, Scott Harrison (organ) and Mark Page (piano). 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

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

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

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

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

California Theatre—562 West 4th Street, San Bernardino, 909-885-5152 (2/10W). October 17, 8:00pm, Bob Salisbury accompanies *Nosferatu* as well as Laurel and Hardy's *Habeus Corpus*. www.californiawurlitzer.com

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

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

Plummer Auditorium—201 East Chapman Avenue, Fullerton, 714-870-2813 (4/28W). August 15, 11:00am to 2:30pm, Orange County Theatre Organ Society membership meeting and open console; September 13, 2:30pm, John Giacchi; October 9, 8:00pm, Bob Salisbury accompanies *Nosferatu* as well as Laurel and Hardy's *Habeus Corpus*; January 10, 2010, 2:30pm, organist and band leader Dean Mora brings *Mora's Men of Music*, a program of swing era music performed by band and organ; April 18, 2010, 2:30pm, Donnie Rankin, 2006 ATOS Young Theatre Organist, performs an afternoon of music with a youthful flair; June 20, 2010, 2:30pm, Robert Israel accompanies a new restoration of Buster Keaton's *The General*. www.octos.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

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

Holiday Hills Ballroom—2000 West 92nd Avenue, Federal Heights, 303-466-3330 (GW4Q). July 12, 2:00pm, *Adventure on the High C's*. www.rmcatos.org

DELAWARE

Dickinson High School—1801 Milltown Road, Wilmington, 302-995-2603 (3/66K). July 18, 7:00pm, Michael Xavier Lundy. 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 Hobbs, 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

Tampa Theatre—711 Franklin Street, Tampa, 813-274-8981 (3/14W). Movie overtures: Bob Baker, Bill Brusick, Bob Courtney, Sandy Hobbs, Richard Frank, and Bob Logan. 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

HAWAII

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

ILLINOIS

Arcada Theatre—105 East Main Street, St. Charles, 630-845-8900 (3/16GMC). Organ interludes Friday and Saturday nights. www.stientertainment.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

Lincoln Theatre—103 East Main Street, Belleville, 618-233-0018 (3/15H). Movie overtures: Friday, David Stephens; Saturday, volunteers. 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

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

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, atc@atos.org. Listings may also be added, modified, or cancelled on the ATOS Calendar of Events web page (www.atos.org/calendar).

MICHIGAN

Crystal Theatre—304 Superior Avenue, Crystal Falls, 906-875-3208 (3/21M). August 22, 7:00pm, Steven Ball accompanies Buster Keaton's *The General*. www.thecrystaltheatre.org

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

Senate Theatre—6424 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, 313-894-0850 (4/34W). All concerts start at 3:00pm. September 20, Tom Fortier; October 18, Scott Smith; November 15, John Lauter; December 6, Lance Luce. www.dtos.org

Temple Theatre—203 North Washington, Saginaw, 989-754-7469 (3/11 Barton). Organ played before selected events. 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

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

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 and 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

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.nytos.org

Proctor's Theatre—432 State Street, Schenectady, 518-346-8204 (3/18W). Noon concert series, Tuesdays, unless stated otherwise. 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

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

OHIO

Collingwood Arts Center—2413 Collingwood Avenue, Toledo, 419-389-9334 (3/8H). Organ often featured for pre-show music. House organists: Paul Jacyk, Emily Seward, Brian Bogdanowitz, George Krejci, and Dick Lee. 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

Ohio Theatre—55 East State Street, Columbus, 614-469-1045 (4/34RM). Organ overtures and intermissions. 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

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

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

Palace Theatre—276 West Center Street, Marion, 740-383-2101 (3/10W). Occasional pre-show and special events. 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

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

OREGON

Bijou Theatre—1624 NE Highway 101, Lincoln City, 541-994-8255 (Electronic). Silent film series on Wednesdays at 1:00pm. 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

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

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

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.tennessee-theatre.com

Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs
and Performances

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.peeryegyptiantheater.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

WASHINGTON

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

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

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 +61-8-8272-1177 (4/29W). All concerts at 2:00pm. August 2, Brett Valiant; September 13, Neil Jensen (organ) and Bernard Watz (piano) bring music of the Gershwin brothers; October 18, Thomas Heywood; November 22, Ryan Heggie and John Giacchi, ATOS Young Theatre Organists, brought together to present *Beyond the Blues*. www.theatreorgansociety.capri.org.au

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

UNITED KINGDOM

The Assembly Hall—Stoke Abbott Road, Worthing, West Sussex, 44-1903-206206 (3/23W). All concerts at 3:00pm. 27 September, John Mann; 18 October, Phil Kelsall; 27 October, Phil Kelsall and Len Rawle. www.worthing-wurlitzer.org or 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

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

New Victoria Centre—High Street, Howden-le-Wear, Crook, County Durham, 44-1388-766243 (3/18W). Concerts on Saturdays at 7:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm. 15 August, Young Organists; 19 and 20 September, Simon Gledhill; 17 and 18 October, David Ivory; 14 and 15 November, Robert Suddall; 19 and 20 December, Iain Flitcroft. www.netoa.org.uk

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

Rye College—Love Lane, Rye, East Sussex, 44-0-1424-444058 (2/6W). All concerts on Sundays at 2:30pm. 27 September, *Wurlitzer Gala Day* with Len Rawle and Brighton and Hove City Brass; 18 October, John Mann; 15 November, David Warner and Robert Gurney; 6 December, David Ivory. 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

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

Victoria Hall—Victoria Road, Saltair, West Yorkshire, 44-1274-589939 (3/11W). All concerts at 2:30pm unless otherwise noted. 25 July, 7:30pm, Phil Kelsall plays for dancing; 9 August, David Lowe and Friends; 6 September, John Mann; 4 October, Morrison Orpheus Choir with Nigel Ogden at the Wurlitzer; 8 November, David Shepherd; 20 December, Richard Hills and school choir. www.cosnorth.co.uk and www.cinema-organs.org.uk

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Minutes

MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS TELEPHONE CONFERENCE TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009 8:00PM EST

Chairman of the Board Craig Peterson called the meeting to order at 8:02pm 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 DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Allen Miller, Don Near. Youth Representative to the Board: Tyler Morikin. Board Members Absent: John Apple, Donna Parker, Doug Powers, Bucky Reddish, Dennis Unks. Staff Present: Ken Double, President/CEO; Jim Merry, Executive Director; Jeff Weiler, Parliamentarian.

Guest: Whit Raynor, Attorney.

Chairman Peterson declared a quorum.

The minutes of the January 3, 2009, midyear meeting were approved. The minutes of the January 19 and 29 telephone conferences were approved.

New Business:

- Resignation of Dennis Unks as ATOS director

Dennis Unks has resigned his recently appointed ATOS board seat because of health reasons. Two names have been submitted for consideration. David Barnett and Bob Arndt have been proposed as possible candidates for appointment. The question was raised about whether to immediately appoint someone to fill the seat vacated by Dennis Unks. The board discussed this situation in detail.

Motion: (Van Der Molen) That the board fill the current vacancy with an appointment. (Carried: 5 Yes, 2 No)

Jelani Eddington suggested that each candidate send a statement of his qualifications to the board along with a biographical sketch. The board will consider each candidate's statement and biography and act in a timely manner to make the appointment.

- Financial Review committee

Mike Hartley was appointed chair of the Financial Review committee.

Motion: (Hartley) To allow up to \$2,500 for travel and lodging for two board members and two members at large to perform a financial review of ATOS accounts. (Carried: Unanimous)

Old Business:

- Update on the recording policy review

By the recommendation of Dolton McAlpin, attorney, the ATOS board asked Whit Raynor, noted copyright attorney, to examine our new recording policy. Note: The ATOS board announced at last year's annual membership meeting that recording would not be permitted at ATOS conventions after the upcoming Western Reserve chapter-sponsored event. The

board felt that to best protect ATOS from copyright infringement lawsuits a legal opinion from "the outside" was necessary. Whit Raynor explained to the board that recording at conventions without the specific legal consent from the composer and artist is illegal. He also noted that because the organization (ATOS) has knowledge of the recording activity at conventions, it is legally liable for any copyright infringement litigation that might be initiated. When asked under what conditions recording could legally be done at a convention, Whit replied that, in order for an individual to secure permission to record a performance, he or she would have to get written consent from the composer and publisher of each selection (covered by copyright) played during a convention program. Mr. Raynor explained that such a task was nearly impossible. Mr. Raynor's opinion was that allowing recording at conventions could potentially put ATOS at very heavy financial risk. The board will enact the prohibition of recording at ATOS-affiliated conventions immediately.

- Ken Double updated the board on the status of the Fox/TCM project

ATOS has initiated a bid to Turner Classic Movies to sponsor a showing of *The Phantom of the Opera* at the Atlanta Fox. The Fox Möller, with Clark Wilson at the console, will be used to accompany the classic silent film. Robert Osborne, official host on the Turner Classic Movie channel, will act as host for the event. Plans are under way to film the whole program for TCM to be presented on that channel at a later date. If this plan cannot be accomplished, then Osborne will host the live event and later host a program filmed in TCM's studio that focuses on the silent film and the theatre organ. Right now the Atlanta Fox and Turner Classic Movies are working on securing a date for the presentation.

- Membership

John Apple and his membership committee have contacted six chapters about recruiting new ATOS members from the chapters' associate membership. This is a logical first step in increasing our membership numbers.

- Web Radio Program

The web radio broadcasts are in the process of testing. When the station goes on the air, a listener will have access to theatre organ music 24 hours a day, seven days a week. President Double indicated that the ATOS web radio station might be ready to begin broadcasting by April 1, 2009.

Chairman of the Board Craig Peterson adjourned the meeting at 9:07pm EST.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

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

MINUTES OF THE ATOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS TELEPHONE CONFERENCE MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2009 8:00PM EDT

Chairman of the Board Craig Peterson called the meeting to order at 8:03pm EDT.

Officers Present: Craig Peterson, Chairman of the Board; Bob Evans, Secretary. Board Members Present: John Apple, John DeMajo, Jelani Eddington, Allen Miller, Don Near, Donna Parker, Doug Powers. Staff Members Present: Jim Merry; Jeff Weiler. Guest Present: Dolton McAlpin.

Chairman Peterson declared a quorum.

Old Business:

Nomination of David Barnett to the board.

Motion: (DeMajo) To appoint David Barnett to the ATOS board of directors to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Dennis Unks. (Carried: Unanimous)

David Barnett joined the conference call and was welcomed by the board.

The board considered conflict of interest additions to ATOS policy and bylaws as proposed by attorney Dolton McAlpin. Dolton was present to answer any questions from the board. The board discussed, at length, the pros and cons of enacting such measures. After much discussion, the board decided to table the subject of conflict of interest policy and bylaw changes until the next teleconference in April.

New Business:

The board noted that one of the candidate's biographies exceeded the limit of 150 words by one word. An acknowledgement will appear in THEATRE ORGAN. (See following notification.)

During board deliberations via teleconference 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.

/s/ Craig Peterson, Chairman of the Board
American Theatre Organ Society

Motion: (Near) To allow Susan Cole-Shaw's nomination to stand. (Carried: Unanimous)

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

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary, ATOS

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

Theatre Organ

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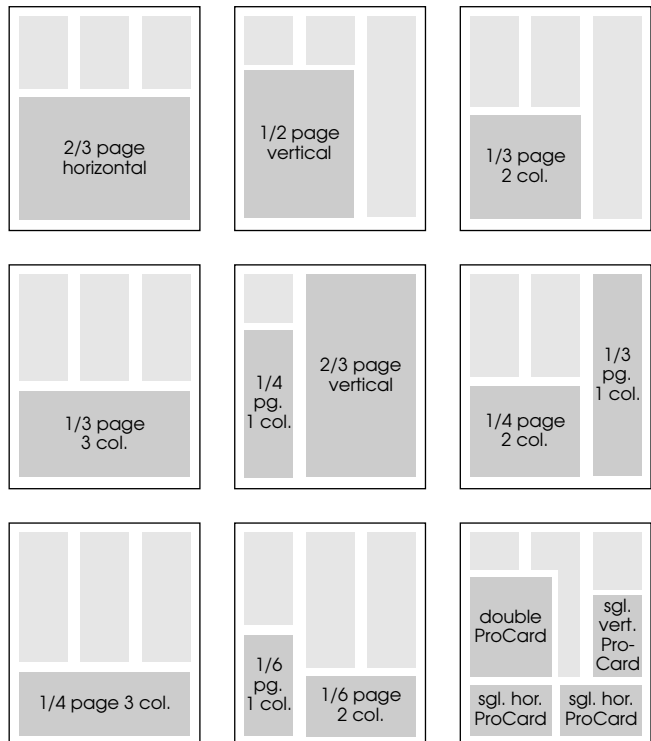
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A printed proof or a PDF proof MUST accompany ad. Media accepted includes CD or DVD mailed to the Editor. Files less than 5 megabytes can be submitted by e-mail to the Editor (with a copy to Joanne); larger files may be uploaded to an ATOS FTP site. E-mail Joanne at joanne@atos.org for FTP upload directions.

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Obituaries



Roger Grady

The theatre organ community lost a longstanding member on April 11, 2008 when Roger Grady of Kokomo, Indiana was killed instantly in an automobile accident. A lifelong Indiana resident, he was born on May 1, 1943. He knew from an early age that he wanted to be an Electrical Engineer. While pursuing his EE degree at Tri-State College in Angola, Indiana, he and two fellow students were introduced to the theatre pipe organ by Buddy Nolan, house organist at the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne. Roger joined the ATOE in 1965, and his interest was to last his lifetime. He pursued several other hobbies of interest as well: amateur radio (Extra Class K9OPO), piloting his own airplane, cave exploring, photography, and cooking. Roger retired in 1999 from Delco Electronics after more than 25 years of service. In retirement he worked part time for EDS until 2006. He spent countless hours volunteering at St. Joan of Arc Church and Saints Joan of Arc and Patrick School working on computers, sound engineering, and other technology-related projects.

Roger was never one to pursue something half-heartedly, and the theatre organ was no exception. He worked with the Central Indiana Chapter in the moving, rebuilding, and reinstalling of several area organs. He liked to recall that he was probably the last person to play the Indiana Barton organ before it was removed from the theatre. Whenever there was a chapter event or convention in Indianapolis, Roger was always there, without being asked, to help. He was never one to seek recognition and preferred to work behind the scenes. Roger was a very generous person with his time and knowledge.

Roger is survived by his wife Linda, daughters Elizabeth and Kathleen, and grandson Daniel. He will be sorely missed by those whose lives he touched.

—David Pratt



Thomas W. "Tom" Yannitell

1941-2009—

The theatre organ lost one of its stalwart supporters and workers with the passing of Tom Yannitell on March 31, 2009. Tom was born in Marion, Ohio, and graduated from Valparaiso Technical Institute. He worked at the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago, his adopted home town. While in Chicago, Tom made many life-long friends. He was a regular at sessions in Mundelein with his good friend Johnny Seng, and he produced an LP record of Tom Sheen playing a home installation Wurlitzer in suburban Chicago for the Concert Recording label. Most notably, he removed the 3/10 Wurlitzer from the Ohio Theatre in Lima and installed it in the auditorium of Downers Grove High School in a Chicago suburb.

Tom and his wife Becky returned to Marion, Ohio, in 1972 to take over the family taxicab business following his father's death. He remained in Marion the rest of his life, and he became vitally interested in saving the John Eberson-designed Palace Theatre in Marion, a trademark atmospheric in that architect's style. I met Tom in the spring of 1976 outside Betty Mason's home in Livonia, Michigan, where Tom was removing the 3/10 Wurlitzer (originally from the Mars Theatre, Lafayette, Indiana) from her home as she prepared to sell it. I was arriving for a lesson which usually took place on Betty's Hammond C-3.

Tom secured the Mars/Mason Wurlitzer for the Palace and was in charge of its installation and upkeep. As a member of the Palace Theatre's board, Tom made certain that the Wurlitzer was used for public shows, including many silent film events featuring Dennis James, another national artist counted by Tom as a friend.

Dennis and Tom shared a passion not only for theatre organ but also for motorcycles. The two men made several motorcycle trips together.

Perhaps Tom's dearest hobby was photography. He excelled at it; he took his camera everywhere and photographed everything. He recorded organ events throughout Chicago during the 1960s and early '70s, including many shots of Johnny Seng in Mundelein during his "glory years" there. Later, Tom embraced digital photography and 3-D photography, sending double-print pictures with a fold-out 3-D viewer for the recipient to enjoy. Avid travelers, Tom and Becky attended many ATOS conventions, always with a camera.

Tom was as gentle and good natured a soul as I have met in this social circle; he was quietly intelligent. You could see him thinking by the motions of his ever-present pipe. Several times a year I would get a phone call; rather than the customary "Hello" or "How are you," Tom would launch right into a question or clever statement. He had a very quick and constant wit; he loved to pull people into his yarns, and then drop the boom on them with the punch line. Tom was a dear friend and will be missed in our community. He faced the illness that took his life with grace and courage, never losing his sense of humor. Our sympathies go out to Becky and their sons, Mark and Scott, and their families.

—John Lauter

Robert M. Gilbert

We have just received notice that Robert M. Gilbert, editor of THEATRE ORGAN from August, 1981, to August, 1986, passed away on February 10, 2009 at the age of almost 92. He was a life member of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society, and he was of invaluable assistance in the NorCal-produced ATOS San Francisco conventions in 1983 and 1991. His wife, Beth, preceded him in death in 2006, just a month after their 65th wedding anniversary. ATOS extends condolences to Mr. Gilbert's family.

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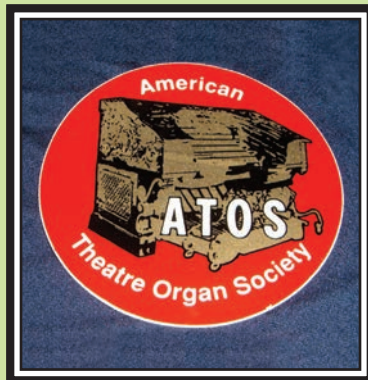
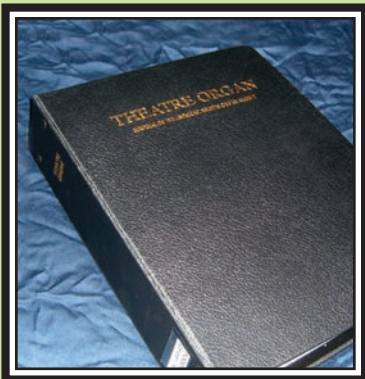
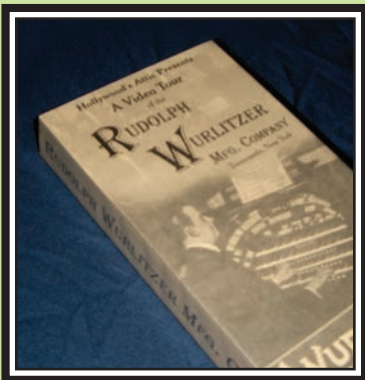
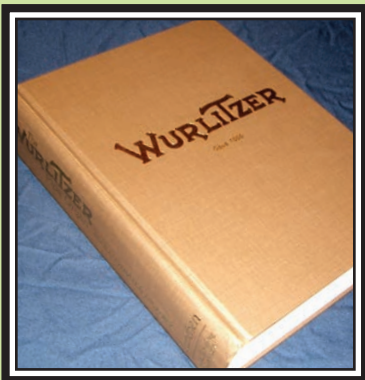
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