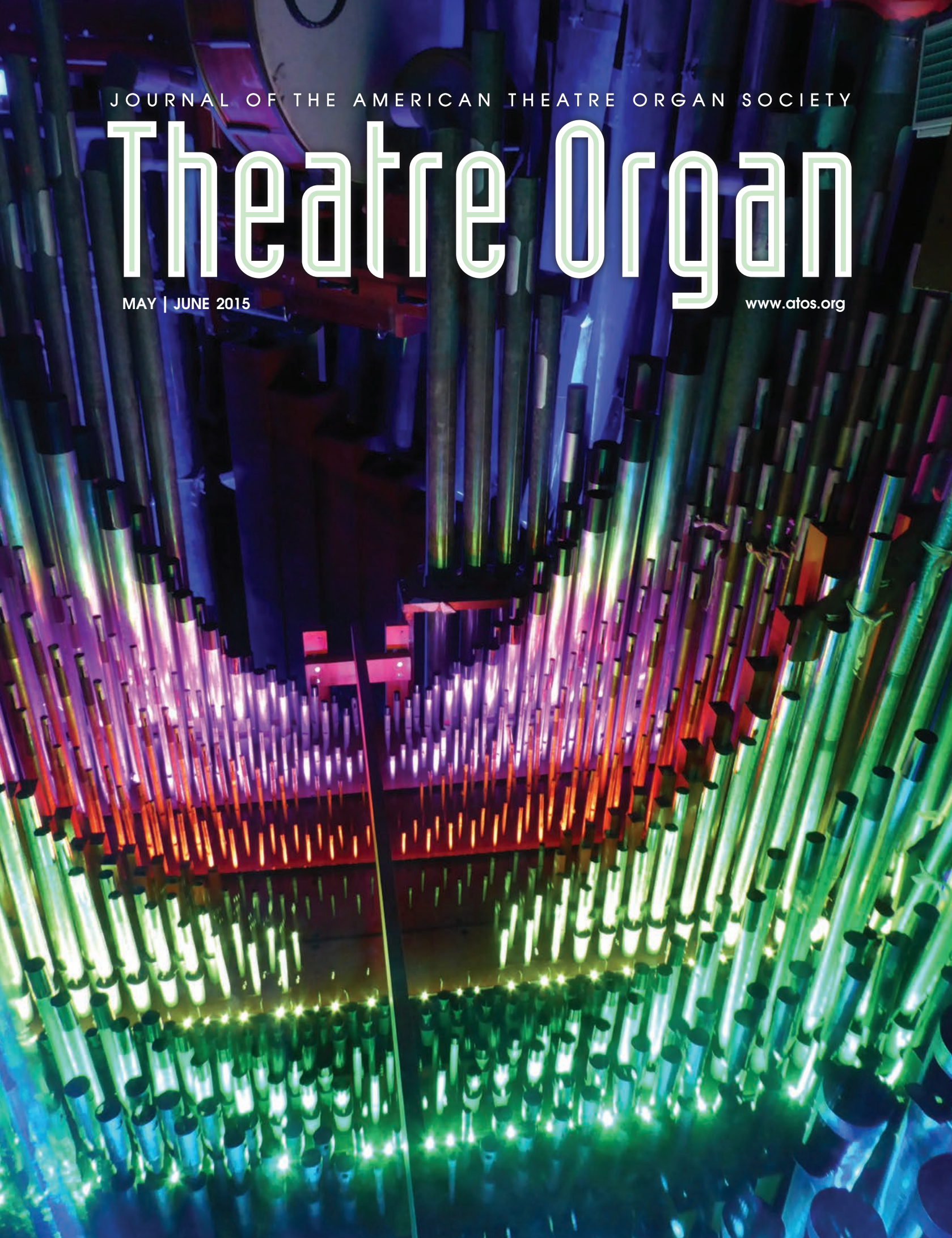


JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

# Theatre Organ

MAY | JUNE 2015

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# Contents

THEATRE ORGAN MAY | JUNE 2015 Volume 57 | Number 3



Young George Wright (holding cello) in the school orchestra (Coale collection)

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## FEATURES

- 12 John Ferguson Remembered
- 16 The Kukuk Wurlitzer at 50
- 26 The LEDwon Wurlitzer
- 34 The Dream — Grand Theater
- 40 2015 ATOS Annual Convention
- 42 On the Wright Track

## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Vox Humana
- 4 President's Message
- 6 Directors' Corner
- 8 News & Notes
- 10 Letter
- 24 Mystery Photo
- 46 Chapter News
- 55 Closing Chord
- 56 Around the Circuit
- 60 Meeting Minutes

*On the cover: The chamber of John Ledwon's residence organ (Photo by John Ledwon)*

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ATOS MISSION STATEMENT—To preserve, protect, promote, and present a truly American musical invention, the theatre pipe organ and its musical art form, worldwide;

To ensure that the few remaining instruments are played wherever possible to provide entertainment to the public as a solo instrument or part of an ensemble, and to accompany silent films;

To encourage industry-acceptance restoration, maintenance methods and techniques to ensure performance ability for future generations; and

To assist local chapters and our members by providing coordinated support in education, concert promotion and marketing to further our mission..

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# Vox Humana

My, how time flies! This issue marks five full years of Don Feely's and my tenure as co-editors of your Journal.

Next issue, we begin our sixth year, and this is a good time to reflect a bit on the past and look to the future.

Since the first issue, we have received more compliments and kudos on the quality of the Journal than we can count, and for that we are very grateful. But as always, we need to point out that Don and I really don't deserve all the credit. Our very talented graphic designer, Dannielle Stark, plays a huge role; she has an incredible 'eye' and a highly-developed sense of style (something I, for one, seriously lack—a glance at my wardrobe should leave no doubt about that...). Without her, you'd still have content, but it wouldn't be anywhere near as rewarding to page through. She's responsible for how great the Journal looks.

The authors who submit the articles you read, very few of whom are folks who regularly write for publication, are the life-blood of the Journal. Without them, there wouldn't be a Journal. I'm amazed at how well-written most of the articles are. There are, of course, others which require almost a complete re-write before they're suitable for publication, but nevertheless, the stories they tell are interesting, relevant, and usually well thought-out—the author knows what he or she wants to convey, and it's up to us to help bring that to the surface. All that's usually needed is to organize and clean up the copy. Sometimes, though, that can be a tall order, and it keeps us on our toes.

We've seen some spectacular run-on sentences; word-processor grammar- and spell-checkers don't always do a good job with contextual errors (such as the difference between "to" and "too") and they won't always pick up a misspelling which is itself a real word, just not the correct one. Consider "Needles to say...."

Nor will they pick up most punctuation errors, and one of the most frequently seen is the misplaced, missing, or extraneous comma—which can sometimes result in a complete change of meaning. My dear departed friend, Tom Hazleton, used to illustrate that when introducing a song by verbally sticking a comma in a title where it didn't belong. Consider "What Is This Thing Called, Love?" He did it humorously, but it's a real issue.

And if I'm completely honest, comas are my weak point as well. Okay, I meant "commas," but Word's error checking didn't catch it....

And that brings us to two people who are a couple of the best proofreaders I've ever worked with, Warren and Jane Tisdale. They pore over the content before it goes to Dannielle (they don't "pour over the content..."), and again when they wade through the proofs before they go to the printer.

There have been times I've been totally stuck on fixing some wording in a paragraph or sentence. I'm afraid I've taken advantage of their skills more times than I should, when I've just thrown up my hands and thought "I hope the Tisdales will fix it" and left it, sometimes without even a warning to them that I need help. Invariably, when it's come back they've worked out the perfect wording.

I've always been a pretty darned good speller, and I'm no slouch when it comes to punctuation and grammar, but I don't hold a candle to Warren and Jane! It's become a bit of a goal for me to send them all the content for an issue and have it come back with no corrections or changes. Hasn't happened yet, but I still have hopes.

Now, let's look forward.

To help us set the direction for the future of the Journal, we want your input. Won't you please take a few minutes and drop us a note (send it to [editor@atos.org](mailto:editor@atos.org)) to let us know what you like, what you don't, and what you'd like to see more of in future issues? We think we know pretty well, but we need a good measuring stick, so to speak.

Please put "INPUT" somewhere in the subject line; that way we won't treat it as a letter to the editor by mistake. We'll report back in a piece in an upcoming issue, then going forward you'll probably see further developments in the Retreat Forward updates.

We need to close on a sadder note. This issue was always destined to be fairly full, especially due to the volume of illustrations accompanying two of the feature articles (LEDwon and the Grand Theater). We didn't want to break things up into two-parters if we could avoid it, especially considering what's already planned for the remainder of this year's issues.

Then, legendary theatre organ teacher John Ferguson passed away at the end of February. We asked Donna Parker, who knew him well and would be attending his celebration of life, to give us some copy on the event and gather some remembrances from his former students and friends. She coordinated the submissions around which we built the article.

To fit it in, we had to push the Redford Barton article (part 2 of the Motor City feature) back to July/August. We apologize to John Lauter, who is the author, and the rest of the folks at MCTOS, but it's a call we felt we had to make. The remembrance of John Ferguson begins on page 12.

Keep in touch.

—Mike Bryant

—Don Feely

Theatre Organ Online

# ATOS 2015 Summer Youth Adventure



## Midsummer in the Mid West

**Sunday, July 19 – Friday, July 24  
Omaha, Nebraska**

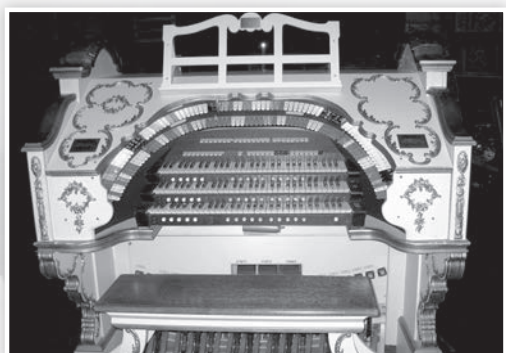
### **The Instructors**

Jonas Nordwall, Jelani Eddington, Donna Parker  
Martin Ellis, Christian Elliott plus special surprise guest.

### **The Organs**

Robert Markworth residence 3/24 Kimball  
The Rose Theater 3/24 Wurlitzer  
Omaha Orpheum Theater 3/13 Wurlitzer

The SYA teaching team will guide participants through a diverse range of topics. The event will feature discussions, private coaching, master classes, and plenty of “hands-on” time at each of the instruments.



### **Registration**

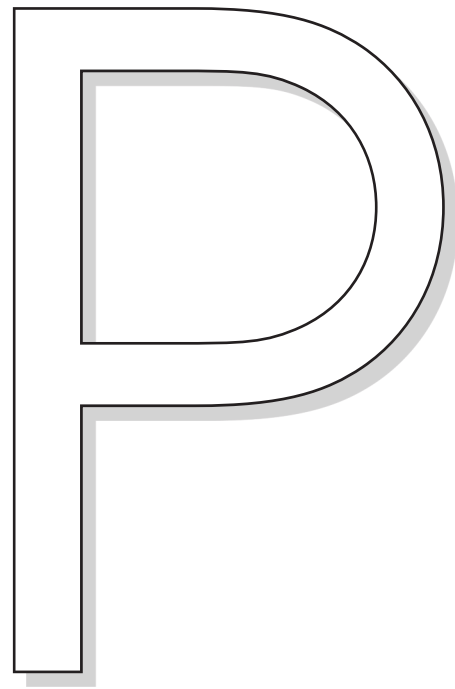
Register online at the ATOS website. \$295.00 per student (including all tuition, meals, and transportation to and from the venues during the event). Scholarship assistance is available upon request.

Official Hotel — The Marriott Courtyard at Askarben Village, 1717 South 67th Street, Omaha NE 68106, 402 952-4300. Special ATOS rate of \$99 plus tax per day. Reservations must be made by June 1, 2015.

Chapter Hosts — The River City Chapter

# President's Message

## THINKING ABOUT THE LETTER



President's Message is a good place to start. Sesame Street's got nothing on me!

### Push.

It's May, and traditionally, this month starts the final big "push" for convention attendees to sign up. June 1 marks the cutoff date for the discount registration fee, so we encourage you to make your plans for Philadelphia. (Wow, more "p's.")

What is truly exciting is the fact that the *Something Big* convention hosted by the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society and chapter is turning out to be big, indeed. Attendance numbers to date are amazing, indicating this could be the best-attended convention in many years. That is exciting for a lot of reasons, not the least of which is the indication that if a chapter has great musical attractions, ATOS members will want to go.

Meanwhile, the Western Reserve chapter is busy planning for the Cleveland-area convention event in 2016. The area has more pipe organs in movie palaces than one can imagine, a fact we learned and enjoyed during our last visit there. Finally, there are no fewer than three chapters raising questions about hosting future conventions. That's very exciting news.

### Passion.

Our passion for the music and instrument we love is evident in so many ways. This year's Annual Drive generated record-setting gift-giving and we are so appreciative. My recent travel schedule has taken me to the West Coast twice, to Florida twice, to Michigan, Chicago and points beyond, and I see chapter members involved in operations, maintenance, promotions of concerts, promoting young members, and on and on. This passion, and the positive results it generates, is the 60-year heart of the American Theatre Organ Society. It is the number-one factor in providing real hope for the future of the theatre pipe organ.

### Planning.

We continue to make progress on the many recommendations that came out of the retreat. Bylaws, Communications and Finances are the three main Retreat Forward committees actively working on helping ATOS move forward as an organization. There will be a full report and discussion on this subject at the convention, and later reported in these pages.

My thanks to all of you who have responded to the email messages that will continue to hit your computers once or twice a month as there is news to report.

Several of you have written about potential homes for pipe organs (in response to a recent President's Message) and that is most gratifying.

There is information on the Summer Youth Adventure in these pages, and more about the convention. Enjoy reading, and we will be in communication again soon.

—Ken Double

# Directors' Corner



## BOB EVANS

A little more than a year has passed since I last wrote to you. Since then much has happened within the American Theatre Organ Society. The most notable event was the retreat held in September. Most of your board and several from our membership participated in what turned out to be a most rewarding weekend of hard and intense work.

The board had realized for some time that changes had to be made to the structure of ATOS. We were not sure, however, exactly what changes were necessary or how to implement any necessary changes. The retreat exercise, very capably led by Dr. William Weary, helped us to identify problem areas and gave us the tools with which to begin a realistic and workable strategy for change.

Having lived through at least eleven “reform movements” in education during my career, I was doubtful that one corporate retreat could have a significant and useful impact on our organization. How wrong I was!

Both ATOS board members and ATOS members-at-large participated in the exercise. Groups rotated through various exercises examining the strengths and weaknesses of our organization and finally identifying areas in which change was needed. From there we developed a “plan of attack” and named the new initiative “Retreat Forward”—an ironic, yet meaningful phrase.

I have always been a champion for local ATOS chapters and have long preached that ATOS does not do enough for its chapters in terms of offering tangible guidance and services. Among other things, the retreat

exercises brought this fact to the forefront and the issue of more chapter services will be addressed in the near future. The board wants you to know that you are valued and appreciated.

Some of the ideas presented during the retreat were:

- Regional workshops for chapter leaders focusing on marketing, concert production, and organizing a successful chapter;

- A space on the ATOS web site where chapter leaders could ask questions of each other, the ATOS staff, and share ideas. This space would only be accessible by password;

- Actual materials to use in publicity;
- A method by which chapters could book artists who are touring in their area.

On another note...

When I was asked to submit my nomination for the office of ATOS secretary, I sent in my professional résumé to be considered by the ATOS board. I was stricken by the thought that the board needed to know more about me than that I could type fairly well and was a decent speller. So off went copies of my résumé. The then-members of the board seemed pleased to have the information and, for better or worse, they elected yours truly to the office of ATOS secretary. I've enjoyed my service and have learned much, along with making many new friends. I did, however, make it clear that I was interested in doing more than just clerical work, and have worked on many committees during my tenure.

The groups at the retreat examined one area that was particularly interesting to me...that is the ATOS election process. Examination of the election process during the retreat indicated that some changes must be made.

As in any non-profit organization, the board of directors consists of members from many walks of life. Most non-profits seek board members with specific skills that the board member can use to do the work of the board and to advance the cause of the organization. In many contemporary non-profit organizations the nominating committee is charged with seeking candidates that offer a skill-set that is currently needed. In addition, the

nominating committee proposes a slate of recommended candidates for the board.

While the nominating committee would propose a slate of candidates, no member would be prevented from running for the ATOS Board of Directors. All candidates would be listed on the ballot, but the recommended slate would be clearly defined and the other candidates listed.

In other words, the nominating committee would be charged with soliciting candidates who could fill the current needs of the ATOS board. The nominating committee would act as a “screening agent” to select those candidates that are the most qualified in the areas needed. If ATOS is to make progress and prepare for the future, we will need directors who can contribute in meaningful ways to the work of the board.

In addition, I would propose that each candidate be required to submit a professional quality résumé as part of the nominating process. A well-done résumé can give vital information about a candidate that will help the nominating committee in its endeavors. Along with a résumé, a piece of narrative writing of a realistically specified length, and a telephone interview with each candidate (with the same prescribed questions for each) should be part of the application process. The candidate should express his or her interest in the theatre organ and ATOS and offer concrete ways in which he or she would contribute to the overall welfare of the organization.

While some of the above suggestions may seem slightly elitist, they are really not intended to be so. Part of the lesson(s) learned during the retreat is that the ATOS board has to think like a modern non-profit corporation board of directors. While we still will have to rely on board members to work on task forces and committees, we must realize that certain expertise is necessary to run a successful organization. By rethinking and reorganizing our nominating process, we can make a meaningful and necessary change for the advancement of our beloved organization.

—Bob Evans





## DON PHIPPS

I am still energized by attending the ATOS retreat in September, 2014. The event provided much insight into what is good in ATOS and what needs improvement. I was particularly pleased with the general agreement among the participants that improvement in the organizational structure and the methods by which we do business was/is needed.

I have always been a strong proponent of separating governance and operations in the organization. The board is responsible for governance (budgetary and policy decisions) and the staff is responsible for the overall and everyday business of ATOS.

President/CE Ken Double has begun meeting regularly with ATOS staff. Staff job descriptions are being revisited with an eye to updating and fine-tuning as necessary.

I am a member of the "Retreat Forward Task Force." This group is charged with keeping the momentum generated by the

ATOS retreat going forward. Some of the subjects we have considered are:

- Working with the newly formed ATOS Finance Committee to develop strategies for sound fiscal management. The current fiscal practices of the organization will be examined.

- We will work in concert with the Transition Bylaws and Policies Committee to bring our bylaws and policies up to date in accordance with the Retreat Forward Initiative.

- The task force has also recommended the creation of a Communications and Marketing Committee. Still in its formative stage, this committee will create strategies to improve communication within ATOS and provide a means to get out the message to the world.

In the near future the task force will consider ideas that will generate value-added strategies that will help chapters in whatever ways needed. Examples might include:

- Offering web-hosting services,
- Creation of templates for advertising documents,
- Seminars in concert promotion,
- Seminars in membership recruitment,
- ATOS chapter roundtable discussions (either in person or web-hosted),
- Technical help where and when needed through web chats, DVD instructional series, or in-person consultation.

My role of Chapter Liaison has enabled me to meet many new and wonderful ATOS members. Three new chapters have been formed during my tenure and another is well on its way.

I have found that available and current chapter information is often outdated and inaccurate. Therefore a new chapter census will be conducted in the next few months. Chapter leaders and listed contacts should expect a phone call from one of the Chapter Liaison Committee asking for updated information, including a contact that is not likely to change yearly.

If you have any questions, wish to talk or offer suggestions, please feel free to contact me. I do read my e-mail but am admittedly typing-challenged. A phone call is the preferred method of contacting me. Both lines have voice mail, so please be sure to leave a message. I will return your call as soon as possible.

—Don Phipps  
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# News & Notes

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS OF ATOS OFFICERS

As provided in Section 5.2 of the ATOS bylaws, the board of directors appoints the ATOS officers (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer) each year at its annual board meeting. This year the board of directors will have that meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, July 1, 2015 beginning at 8:00am.

Any person at least 18 years of age who has had continuous ATOS membership for at least the last two years is eligible to seek appointment as an officer. Candidates for these offices are encouraged to submit written résumés to the ATOS chairman, Bob Dilworth, by **May 30, 2015**. It is strongly recommended that nominations be sent via "return receipt" or similar mail class if international. Nominations may also be sent digitally; however, the sender **MUST** verify receipt of the nomination by the ATOS chairman. Any written materials that are submitted to the ATOS chairman by the above date will be distributed to the board of directors prior to the board meeting. In addition, any ATOS member may attend the board meeting in person (at his or her own expense) and nominate at the meeting any eligible candidate for these offices.

Candidates are expected to present themselves at their own expense to the board for a personal interview on **July 1, 2015**, at a time and place to be posted at the convention registration desk. Appointment will immediately follow the interview process. Successful candidates must be ready to assume the duties of their office at the conclusion of the convention and must also be available to participate in the remainder of the board meeting following their appointment. Reimbursement of travel (economy airfare or equivalent) and hotel expenses will be made by ATOS for those appointed.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

January 16 – March 15, 2015

Bob Blackburn, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Anne Bothmann, Lewes, Delaware  
Tom and Mary Brakefield, Birmingham, Alabama  
Bill Cerutti, Surrey Hills, Victoria, Australia  
Dick Cuiper, Ouderkerk aan de Amstel, Netherlands  
Elaine de Saxe, Deception Bay, Queensland, Australia  
Noel Elliott, Silver Spring, Maryland  
Caitlin Fung, College Point, New York  
Steven Giovangelo, Indianapolis, Indiana  
Robert and Howard Green, Pittsford, New York  
Darlene Grenz, Nevada City, California  
Jerry Hughs, Gig Harbor, Washington  
Lorraine Johnson, Ephrata, Pennsylvania  
Phyllis Johnson, Massillon, Ohio  
Marvin Kirkland, Sevierville, Tennessee  
Charles Long, Fort Washington, Pennsylvania  
Benny McNair, Gadsen, Alabama  
Ryan Mueller, Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
Matt Oxender, Shipshewana, Michigan  
Denis Paufler, Cheektowaga, New York  
Roy Robinson, Yucaipa, California  
David Soelberg, South Sioux City, Nebraska  
Daniel Spencer, Sevenoaks, UK  
Joseph Steven, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin  
Robert Tapsfield, Sandwich, UK  
Ryan Thoryk, Brookfield, Illinois  
Lisa Walters, Mantua, New Jersey  
Phyllis Weber, Spring Valley, California  
John and Sharon Weismantel, Rhodes,  
New South Wales, Australia  
Jack Woodward, Berkley, Michigan

## ATOS MENTOR PROGRAM

The ATOS Mentor Program gives a selected qualifying member of ATOS the opportunity to participate in a private coaching session with an internationally-known theatre organ concert artist/educator, to be held during the 2015 ATOS Annual Convention in Philadelphia.

Please note that you must be planning to attend the ATOS Annual Convention as no expenses will be provided.

To qualify for this opportunity, you must be a member in good standing of ATOS. Please submit an e-mail to the ATOS Mentor Program, [m.fellenzer@atos.org](mailto:m.fellenzer@atos.org). Included should be a few things about yourself and your present playing skills and abilities. It is preferred that you are presently taking organ instruction in some form or have done so within the past few years. Please include why you would like to be selected and what you would expect to gain from

the session. Please include your age, type of instrument you normally play, and the number of years you have been playing/studying the organ. Also include your musical activities and any other information about yourself that you would like to have considered.

To be considered, please reply by **May 29, 2015**. If you are selected, you will be notified no later than June 5.

—Michael Fellenzer  
Mentor Program Chairman  
[m.fellenzer@atos.org](mailto:m.fellenzer@atos.org)

## 2015 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TO: Members of the American Theatre Organ Society

The Annual Meeting of the members of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) will be held on July 3, 2015 at 8:30am at the Doubletree Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania during the 2015 ATOS Annual Convention.

### Agenda:

- Approval of the 2014 Annual Membership Meeting minutes as printed in the May/June 2015 issue of Theatre Organ (See page 60) and posted on the ATOS website.
- Presentation and acceptance of the ATOS Treasurer's Report

### Old Business:

- Report of board actions during the last year.
- Other status reports as needed
- Announcement of the next ATOS Annual Membership Meeting
- Adjournment

—Bob Evans, Secretary

## ATTENTION, INTERNATIONAL MEMBERS!

Do you live (and bank) outside the United States? If so, this is important news.

United States banks have begun changing the manner in which foreign checks are handled, including substantial increases in costs for processing those checks. In some cases, the new fees exceed the amount of the check!

ATOS simply cannot afford to absorb these increased fees and, rather than increase the surcharge for all international members, has made the decision to stop accepting checks or financial instruments drawn on banks outside the United States. This new policy went into effect on February 1, 2015.

If you already renew your membership online, this change will not affect you. If you are among the few international members who continue to renew with a check, money order, or other financial instrument not drawn on a U.S. bank, you will need to begin using the online membership system.

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If you have any questions please contact us. And, as always, we thank you for your membership and continued support of ATOS and the music of the theatre organ.

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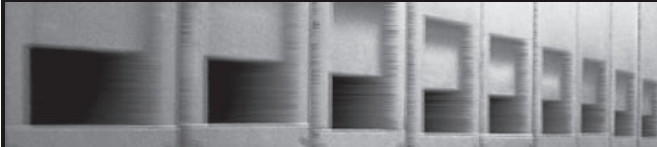
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# Letter

## SUBURBIAN MEMORIES

John Becica's article about the Suburban Wurlitzer in the January/February issue brought back many pleasant and nostalgic memories of dining and dancing at this special North Jersey restaurant. In fact this unique place, besides being the spot where the Garden State Theatre Organ Society was born, also played a role in romance. My husband Bob, who has been a long-time theatre pipe organ enthusiast, took me there on our very first date. At that time, as is true for many others, I had no idea what a theatre pipe organ was. I guess he wanted to show me what I was about to get myself into! Years later we both continue to be theatre pipe organ enthusiasts—we installed a 3/24 pipe organ in our home, with glass-fronted chambers similar to those in the Suburban where our 30-year-plus love affair began. The restaurant is gone but GSTOS goes on, as does our active involvement in the chapter.

—Cathy Martin  
President, Garden State Theatre Organ Society  
Little Falls, New Jersey



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# John Ferguson Remembered

## Charlie Balogh

I'm so pleased to be able to contribute some thoughts on the passing of such a dear soul. I first met John while working for Bill Brown at Organ Stop in Phoenix from 1973-76. We worked side by side during the initial rebuilding phase of the organ that would eventually be installed at the original location of the Mesa Organ Stop. However, I would like to focus on our time together in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where we built a longtime friendship.

John had moved there to help with the acquisition and redesign of the unique 3/27 Wurlitzer from the Jersey City Stanley Theater that was subsequently installed in the Roaring 20s Pizza restaurant, a dream project started by organist Ron Walls. Through John's urging, both Donna Parker and I were hired by Ron to be the staff organists. It was an ambitious project from the get go. John told the story of how he and Ron flew to New York with \$35,000 in cash to purchase the organ from Dick Loderhose. He was absolutely paranoid about getting on a plane with so much money! But everything went without a hitch and the rest is history.

When I first moved to Grand Rapids, John graciously allowed me and my soon-to-be wife, Carrie, to stay with him until we found a place of our own. During that time we got to know John pretty well, including his cat named "Hanukkah" whom he dearly loved.

The installation of the organ was fraught with problems, not the least of which was the fact that it started in the early spring of 1977, with no central heat or power in the building, a dirt floor, and a single mercury-vapor lamp hanging from the center roof truss. One of the more memorable tasks we took on was washing pipes in a makeshift trough, inside the walk-in refrigerator which, because of its insulation, was the warmest spot in the building! John and I stood there for hours and hours soaking all

the Jersey City soot and dust off the flue pipes.

At the same time, John was playing his Hammond B3 and grand piano at Sayfee's restaurant there in town. He had an intimate understanding of the B3 and its capabilities that few other organists were able to master. I greatly admired his talent and musicianship with that instrument.

The Roaring 20s organ was finally installed and the restaurant opened in June of 1997. There were many great moments at that time with John that I wish I could relate, but there is one unique event that happened just days before the doors opened for the first time.

John and I were alone in the building one night just after the organ had been tuned and voiced for the first time. I wanted to hear how the organ sound blended with its new environment and asked John to play a bit while I stood at the back of the room. The console was on a screw lift that rose from about 5' below the main floor to about 4' feet above. There was a wall built around the pit opening to conceal the console when it was down. John hit the UP button and started to play. About halfway up, one corner of the lift platform caught and jammed. The lift continued up, bending the screw and tilting the platform to the left! I shouted at John to stop the lift, but he couldn't find the button. I ran as fast as I could and jumped over the front wall to hit the button. By this time, the lift had tilted almost 25 degrees to the left, with John and the console sitting precariously on top! John was holding on to the side of the console to keep from slipping off and I hit the down button. Luckily, the screw went back down and the platform with it. Had it not been stopped in time, the console would have slid off, potentially pinning John against the pit wall. It might also have snapped the heavy screw, sending John and the console crashing into the pit. We looked at each other in horror at what had just happened, but sighed with great relief that a disaster had been averted just days before the grand

opening! There had been enough stress on the screw to put a kink in the metal. From that day forward, there was always a little bump in the travel as the kink went through the gears at the bottom!

John had a keen and ready wit, especially in relating stories from his past. One in particular always sticks in my mind from his tenure as organist along with Stan Kann at the St. Louis Fox. John and George Wright had been friends for a while. George told him that he would be in town doing some promo work for the Conn Organ Co. and was planning to come over to the Fox to hear the organ during one of John's performances.

As promised, George showed up at the theater one night to hear John play the big Wurlitzer. John said that he was nervous beyond belief, knowing who was going to be in the audience. At that time, the organ was not in the best of condition. While he was seated at the console waiting to take the lift up into the spotlight, John's right foot was shaking so badly on the master swell shoe that the noisy swell shades were rattling and clacking back and forth along with every movement of his foot, making a bizarre sound in the theater! George said afterward that he couldn't figure what that sound was, coming from the chambers!

Just one of a myriad of tales that John had stored away. He and I shared a great deal through the years. We began to lose touch with each other after he moved to Indianapolis to oversee the installation of the former Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer in the Paramount Music Palace, but we would always remain friends. His legacy will live on through the people whose lives he touched with his talent and humor, and especially through his organ students, many of whom have become great organists in their own right. I count myself among the lucky few who knew him as a close friend and will always cherish our time together.

—Charlie Balogh  
Phoenix, Arizona

## Jelani Eddington



*John Ferguson with 12-year old Jelani Eddington (Photo courtesy of Jelani Eddington)*

So much has been shared by so many about the life of John Ferguson in the months since his passing, that it is hard to think of a fitting epitaph for a man who has had such a profound impact on those who knew him. In August 1986, I had the chance to play my first theatre pipe organ at the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne (not too far from where I grew up in Muncie, Indiana) during an open console session at a meeting hosted by the Central Indiana chapter. At that meeting, several members urged me to make contact with John. Those who spoke of him did so with great reverence for his abilities as a theatre organ instructor.

The next year, I met John in person. Our first meeting was at a JoJo's restaurant in Indianapolis, not far from the fabled Paramount Music Palace where I had spent so much time as a young boy. When we met, John expressed his reservations about coaching someone who was only 12 years old (at the time, 12 didn't seem that young to me!). He very graciously agreed to work with me, on the stated condition that I must, in all events, continue piano studies.

Over the coming years, John taught me so many invaluable lessons—not just about how to play the organ, but how to listen to and appreciate a wide variety of music. Beyond our formal lessons, he was always available to lend a sympathetic and comforting ear about life in general and what it would be like to take my first baby steps as a performing musician.

John coached me formally until I left for college. But even after our formal lessons ended, our relationship continued to transform from teacher-student to that of good friends. John was always available to impart his wisdom, knowledge, and, above all else, his friendship and support.

I, and indeed so many others, will always think back to John's kind, soft-spoken, and warm personality. We will all treasure his friendship forever.

*—Jelani Eddington  
Racine, Wisconsin*

## Martin Ellis



*Martin Ellis, circa 1985  
(Photo courtesy of Martin Ellis)*

I believe I hold the distinction of having been the first “official” theatre organ student of John Ferguson back in Indianapolis, Indiana from 1984-1986. What an honor that was! The Central Indiana chapter of ATOS had centered itself around the extremely successful and dynamic Paramount Music Palace. Without its souped-up Wurlitzer Publix #1, so many of us might not have ever even thought to play this interesting instrument, and, more importantly, would not have had the chance to cross life paths with such an interesting person as John.

John and I met by accident when I had asked our local chapter “powers that be” for some help on an arrangement for an entry tape to go to the first-ever ATOS young artist competition. Larry MacPherson, a tuner and technician at Paramount, was enlisted to work with me on some musical ideas, and with him arrived a quiet friend and work-mate of his, John. After a long work session—mostly with Larry and with artistic input from John's many years as a professional pipe and Hammond organist, it was suggested that perhaps John and I would want to continue my “coaching” together. As a young 15-year-old, I was extremely excited, but selling my classical music parents on the strange idea of studying theatre organ, and convincing John to take on a time commitment such as teaching, was an interesting challenge.

Of course the outcome is history, and I enjoyed my 2½ years with John. He was a master coach and teacher, and has shaped my own teaching style with his simple approach to take my stylistic ideas and foster them with subtle guidance and suggestion. He never once sought to create a carbon-copy of himself, and in fact our two playing styles ended up being quite different from each other. Gentle, encouraging, supportive, and fair are all words to describe my teaching experience with John, and they are appreciated as fond

memories in my heart that will remain there forever.

As with all teacher/student situations, they are capsules in time. We brush shoulders and then let go, only to move on to what awaits in the real world of music. As I became not only a theatre-organ performer, but composer, arranger, and classical musician, I could always smile for those artists who became colleagues and friends and who also had the great fortune to brush shoulders with such a wonderful mentor, teacher, and friend. As I recently played an arrangement of George Gershwin's “Nice Work If You Can Get It,” I was reminded that there's a little of John left in all of us. I hope we can carry his musical legacy onward, with our own subtle musical suggestions, to the next generation of players.

*—Martin Ellis  
Portland, Oregon*

## Mark Herman



*John Ferguson and Mark Herman, 2004  
(Photo courtesy of Mark Herman)*

John Ferguson was our teacher, our colleague, and our friend.

John made a positive impact on thousands of lives through his music, his teaching, and through his always generous and unbelievably kind nature. He was certainly one of the most caring and thoughtful individuals I've ever met—always very sympathetic toward others. To use the hackneyed phrase, he was the type of guy who would quite literally give you the shirt off his back if you asked for it.

My introduction to John was through Jelani Eddington and his mother Louise, both of whom felt strongly that we meet. Eventually we did, and after—and only after—I resumed my piano studies, did John agree to give me theatre organ lessons.

Weekly round trips from Fort Wayne to Indianapolis ensued, and my parents should get a gold medal for all the Saturdays they gave up and all the miles put on the car. John coached me for 5 years, but even as I went off to college and moved away, he was always “teacher” to me, and I could

always trust his feedback on my playing—or occasionally on my behavior. John didn't let his students get away with very much.

John was a true mentor and an object lesson in decency and how to be a gentleman. He was much more than just a teacher and friend. He was family. I'll never forget hearing his inimitable character voices making an important point. His guidance and friendship will live on through his pupils and friends. I'm lucky to have known John, and I only wish that even more people could have had the opportunity, too.

To close, here are some tips from John to aspiring theatre organists. He was passionate about music and teaching, and all of his students heard John repeat himself a lot, for good reason, too. I've recalled some of John's wisdom here, and most of it should sound familiar to those who knew or worked with John.

- ALWAYS learn the words. The organist is the orchestra and, more importantly, the vocalist, too.

- The beauty in a few notes chosen carefully usually surpasses that of an overbuilt arrangement. "Less is more."

- Don't bore your audience. Offer contrast in your arrangements through single-note melodies versus chords, ad lib versus rhythmic playing, and interesting key changes. Likewise, offer contrast in the pacing of a program; and never start another song in the same key as the one you just finished.

- Keep arrangements to a listenable length. There is a good reason behind why most popular recordings are about 3 minutes or less in length.

There are two more pieces of advice passed down to John by his mother. They were repeated several times to me when I started to travel and perform around the country, often staying as a houseguest in a stranger's home:

- "Always make your bed, or you might not be invited back."

- "Mind your manners, never gossip, and always send a thank you note."

Who needed Emily Post?

Thank you, John. My life is better for having known you!

—Mark Herman  
Pasadena, California

## Ron Mitchell

I met John Ferguson back in about 1972.

John had moved to Southern California from St. Louis where he had been playing for many years at Stan Musial and Biggie's Restaurant. I met him through Dick

Schroeder and sometime later he was employed at Stark's Dinner House in West Covina, playing organ in a piano bar.

After a short engagement there, I introduced him to a friend of mine, Dennis Loy, who hired John to play the piano bar at the Caravan Inn in Riverside. John moved just a few blocks away from where I lived. A young man named Bob MacNeur came to visit John, and at that point we were introduced. Later, due to ownership changes at the Caravan, John's employment was terminated, and he moved in with me for almost a year. I was a single man in those days, with a big house and a Wurlitzer, and thus had plenty of room for John's Hammond organs and Leslie speakers that travelled with him. We had plenty of time to discuss technique and organ playing—John was of the highest caliber as a musical artist and a teacher.

John noticed me playing glissandos on the Wurlitzer, and asked if I would teach him this black art. He picked this skill up very quickly and made it look easy to the great unwashed.

After a year, John moved to Phoenix, where he got a job at the Conquistador Restaurant, again playing organ and piano, and also worked part time for Bill Brown of Organ Stop fame. I continued my friendship with John while working with Lyn Larsen on the Wurlitzer at Organ Stop.

John was there about two or three years, then moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan, joining Bob MacNeur and Donna Parker at the Roaring Twenties pizza restaurant in the suburb of Kentwood. John was the musical director and in charge of the organ, Donna was the organist, and Bob was general manager of the restaurant. Over the years, I sat in on some of the teaching sessions, which included Barry Baker, Jelani Eddington, and more.

Investors approached them wanting to know if they would be interested in moving to Indianapolis to build a new pizza restaurant, with an organ of course. John, Bob and Donna moved to Indianapolis and built the Paramount Music Palace, where they installed the much-expanded former Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer. John and Bob also had an organ installation business, and from time to time they would call me in to work on some of the jobs.

Over time, differences of opinion arose between management and owners, so John, Bob and Donna left to pursue other interests. John took on playing jobs in the area and serviced Hammond organs.

Some years later, a pizza restaurant was built in Ellenton, Florida, in which the

former Paramount Music Palace organ was installed. John moved to Florida with Bill Vlasak to be involved in that scene. After a few years, John moved back to Indianapolis and his health started to decline, forcing him to move into an assisted care facility. John and I communicated from time to time.

John was always there if you needed help, and was probably one of the most loving and caring persons I have ever known—he was honest and genuine, and truly believed that he was his brother's keeper.

—Ron Mitchell  
Hayden, Idaho

## Donna Parker and Bob MacNeur



Donna Parker, John Ferguson, and Bob MacNeur at the opening of Roaring 20s, 1977  
(Photo courtesy of Donna Parker)

It started with music, and ended up family. I met John in Los Angeles when I was about 13 at a Los Angeles chapter event. John was an excellent musician, always so kind and thoughtful—a true gentleman, and our friendship grew. He ended up introducing me to my future husband, Bob MacNeur, in a couple of years after Bob saw my photo in Theatre Organ.

Bob and John had become friends through their mutual friend, L.A. organ enthusiast Dick Schroeder. A few years later John was best man at our wedding, of course. John moved with us from Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix to the Midwest, serving as music director after we built and opened Roaring 20s in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Charlie and Carrie Balogh were there too, and it was such a great adventure together! Two years later, John served as music director at the new Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Now, John was adamant that no kids were going to play the organ. This may come as a surprise to many, since John is known for his teaching and the excellent young musicians he has worked with. "It is not a toy!" was his retort when asked



about these enthusiastic requests from the kids to study on the Wurlitzer. With some pretty strong direction from Bob MacNeur, who was Paramount's general manager, John agreed to teach Martin Ellis, and the rest is history...Martin won the first ATOS Young Organist Competition. Then came Dwight Thomas, Barry Baker, Jelani Eddington, Jim Wright and, later, Mark Herman. He was a marvelous teacher, and it was truly a highlight of his life!

John was woven tightly into the fabric of our immediate family. Every holiday or any significant event, John was there. He was godfather to our daughter, Bethany, played the Hammond at my dad's funeral, and served as his honorary pallbearer. Our lives were just a big part of one another's.

With the passing of time and moves to various parts of the country, we did not get to see John every day as we once had, but when we would talk on the phone, we picked right up where we left off. Occasional in-person visits were the same. It is a rare thing to have such a good friend who truly understands you, where you've been, and little explanation is ever needed about anything. John was a gifted musician, and loved to use the theatre pipe organ, the Hammond and piano to express his artistic self.

Our friendship started with the music, but he ended up as our family. We miss you very much, John.

—Donna Parker, Beaverton, Oregon

—Bob MacNeur, Oregon City, Oregon

## Dwight Thomas

Putting into words what an influence John has had on my life has been difficult for me since his passing. Like so many life-changing moments which are unexpected, yet that have continual reverberations, meeting John was one of those instances.

My initial contact with John was while he was music director at the Paramount Music Palace restaurant in Indianapolis. As a teenager in rural Indiana, with music more of a side interest as opposed to a serious career path, hearing my first theatre organ there at the Paramount was a true inspiration. I had the chance to have some casual conversations with John at the restaurant, which eventually turned toward more serious discussions about music and the theatre organ, and finally to the prospect of beginning theatre organ study with him. It was in those early months of study with John that I abruptly changed my career intentions (I was a junior in high school, determined to

go to college to study meteorology). From there he was instrumental in starting me in intensive classical organ and piano study with teachers in the Indianapolis area, who became very important and formative in my keyboard study.

Lessons with John were always fascinating because John was a natural storyteller. Techniques and approaches to playing were steeped in the context of various organists' approaches to playing, particularly George Wright, Jesse Crawford, and many others. I would see and hear Donna Parker and Bill Vlasak playing at the restaurant. John would often sit with me while Bill and Donna were playing, and point out things they were doing and explain why they were doing them. I soon began spending much of my free time there at the restaurant; it was almost like being in a conservatory for theatre organ study.

After-hours at the restaurant I would often get to practice, sometimes into the wee hours of the morning, with John either working on the organ or watching TV in the back organists' room. One evening when John abruptly interrupted my practicing to tell me there was something I needed to see immediately. What I saw on that TV was my first Ethel Smith movie, *Bathing Beauty*, complete with a running commentary from John about Ethel Smith. He simultaneously pointed out many of Ms. Smith's playing techniques and that the Hammond wasn't even plugged in for her playing sequences in the movie! I soon learned of John's love for the Hammond organ and his long experience playing the Hammond professionally. And it was he who very graciously loaned me my first Hammond organ to practice on at home.

His knowledge of the theatre organ was vast. Lessons would also include how and why a theatre organ works the way it does, and how the organist can show off the resources of any instrument to its best advantage. His knowledge of organ builders and vintages was almost encyclopedic, and his hand in assembling the Paramount restaurant organ is a testament to his keen ear and vast knowledge.

John very quickly became one of my most trusted and candid friends, and he would continue helping me professionally, managing my first concerts and recordings. Yet in spite of John's generous spirit, affable nature and kind heart, he had a tough life in many ways. But he remained the eternal optimist, even toward the end of his life. His love of the theatre organ, its music, and his keen interest in people made him one of the

best teachers and friends I've come to know. I consider myself so very fortunate to be a part of his legacy.

—Dwight Thomas  
Seminole, Florida



Dr. Jim Wright  
(Photo courtesy of  
Dr. Jim Wright)

## Dr. Jim Wright

John Ferguson was one of the most single-focused, kind men I have ever known. John lived, ate and breathed the organ. This truth became clear to me when I moved

to Indianapolis to study with John. Upon arrival at his place I was immediately immersed in theatre organs. He had organ memorabilia all over the apartment—he even had organ pipes in his oven! (John obviously did not do much cooking!)

Although John was well-known for his theatre organ students and the instruments he helped design, he was equally in love with the Hammond organ. He was a master at the Hammond organ. I remember hearing John play one of the two Hammonds in his apartment and I was dumbfounded, because I had never heard a Hammond played that way.

John was a storyteller. He loved to share personal stories of his interaction with theatre organ greats like George Wright. John's creativity came through, not only in his playing and teaching, but also in his storytelling. He also loved impersonating characters in whatever story he was telling. He also loved telling jokes—and he had plenty of them!

Perhaps one quality about John that stands above all others was his kindness. John would go out of his way to help others. Upon relocating to Indiana John allowed me to live with him until I could find my own place and he found me a job. Later, he helped me relocate to college and gave me a Hammond organ to use for practice. Years later, John gave me another of his Hammond organs as a gift.

A couple years ago, I asked John if he had any regrets. He looked at me and said, simply, "No." John left this world with many friends, a lifetime of interesting and entertaining stories, a legacy of students who have become great theatre organists, and no regrets. I will miss you, my friend!

—Dr. Jim Wright  
Carmel, Indiana



# The Kukuk Wurlitzer at 50

BY KEN KUKUK

(Photos by Tony Wilson except as noted)

1964 was a long time ago...or was it? Time seems to pass faster than we would like it to. My interest in organs was actually forced on me by my father. He liked the Hammond organ and, before I was a teenager, bought a Hammond chord organ. My mother had taught herself to play and could read music. We advanced from the chord organ to the spinet, then to the home model within a year's time. I took lessons from a few teachers, and had the ability to hear tunes and pick the melodies out and get them mostly right, as I still do today. This meant that I never learned to read music, something I kick myself for not doing to this day.

Enter the George Wright HiFi recordings. My father purchased a few of them and liked the sound of the Mighty Wurlitzer. I did too, as I was finding the Hammond a bit limited in tone colors. We joined ATOE and started showing up at the Wiltern Theater for the Saturday morning

maintenance sessions. At that time Bob Alder Sr. was crew chief, and Bob Alder Jr. would, on occasion, play before the first show of the day. I immediately took an interest in the mechanics of the instrument.

Crawling around in the chambers, keying the primary valves on the 32' Diaphones—and literally feeling that concrete floor move was a real thrill. I remember the organ had the biggest bass drum I had ever seen—I also remembered how slow in response it seemed. The club had some Sunday morning jam sessions where people could try their skills at playing real pipes. All who had never played one before had the same reaction. Playing an electronic instrument and having the sound come out by your knees—or a very close remote speaker—was definitely different from being 50 feet away from the sound in your left ear and 100 feet away in your right. As we know, in actuality the pipe organ is quite responsive, so you have to develop the ability to just

play the notes and not wait to hear the sound.

I have strayed from the story a bit, but thought it was necessary to show how my interest developed in the theatre pipe organ. My dad was interested enough that he thought maybe if a small instrument could be found, we could build an addition to the house for the pipe chamber. A 5-rank Wurlitzer was located at the First English Lutheran Church which, surprisingly, was located not far from the Wiltern. Justin Kramer was the Reuter pipe organ representative and he had sold the church a new instrument, so the old Wurlitzer was advertised in the newspaper.

We went and looked at it. We were new to the pipe organ hobby and really didn't know all that much about the instruments. Justin was putting the hard sell on us, saying if we wanted the instrument we should make up our minds as there would be other people after it. Dad bought it.

Justin's crew removed the organ in a day and stacked the components on the stage in the second floor recreation hall. As I remember, the chamber was accessed from a wing of the stage. Luckily, we were able to use some of the pipe boxes from the new Reuter organ. I remember my dad calling a friend of his who had a pickup truck (a Hudson!), and by 4 o'clock the following morning the organ was stashed in our garage. We both had this feeling of "what the heck did we just do?"

When we finally got some sort of a plan of action, we stripped the finish off the console as it had quite a few battle scars. The music rack had been cut in two right down the center and extended the full width of the console with plywood pieced into the middle. We stained the console a much lighter color than original, and Dad finished it off with several spray coats of bar-top lacquer.

It was a late-model, smooth-side, 2-manual console. In all honesty I think the organ was made up of parts from the Wurlitzer Company, maybe even a repossessed instrument, as you could see where there had been more stop tabs in the horseshoe at one time. The relay said 135-5 and was two separate units. The main unit was for two manuals (no pedal relay) and had some of the stop switches on it. The other unit just had switches on it. The one switch stack had primary valves for the switches and the other stack did not, making those stops slow to turn on. The only information we found in the console was "Youngstown" written on the lower inside back panel in blue chalk. The organ was definitely not a theatre organ. It had a 10" Tuba, (the chest said Trumpet), a Salicional, a Flute, a Wurlitzer "lifting lid" Vox Humana, which I didn't like—and have never seen another Wurlitzer Vox like it—and a Diapason on its own single-rank chest. The Vox was with the organ but someone had substituted an Oboe and put it in the Vox chest. The organ had only one 16' extension, a redwood Bourdon. As strange as this instrument seems, organ friend Tom DeLay has said he cares for an identical instrument in a church up in Salinas.

Enter the two Bills: Coffman and Field. Here again, my father found these two fellows and we paid a visit to the Woodcarver Shop where the Old Town Music Hall organ was first located. This was quite an experience as the place was three-quarters organ and one-quarter listening space. The Bills had a Tibia for sale, and we sorely needed a Tibia. It was a Robert-Morton, and someone had cut up

the upper lips of the mouths on the pipes to play on higher pressure. This was the Tibia off the 4-rank Morton that was in a skating rink. In an article in a past issue of THEATRE ORGAN [May/June 2014] Bill Field mentioned this organ, with its unusual specification. Dad bought the Tibia, along with a homemade windchest and a regulator and, I believe, a tremulant. I don't remember the exact price, but I don't think it was much over \$100 (remember, this was 50 years ago...).

My father and I built the chamber addition. It was 10' high, 10' deep, and 15' wide. That was absolutely all the room we had, as this was built on the back of a den that had been an addition to the house years before. After we had installed the major components, a friend we had met at the Wiltern, Roy Casavant, spent countless hours sorting and reattaching the hundreds of wires between the console and the relay and between the relay and the chests. Wires had been cut at the chests and there was a junction between the console and the chamber when in the church.

The junction blocks were split down their length by Justin's crew with the intention that the blocks could be glued back together and that most of the wiring would stay in order. An interesting note is that some of the wiring was plastic insulated, but it was not color coded, other than whole groups of wires would be one color, and the next group would be another. There was a tag on the harness that had a date of 1937.

The organ was fairly basic with so few ranks, and there were only two regulators on the original five ranks. We added the Tibia and its components to the mix, and had to be very creative in adding another relay and some switches for that rank—and a few others that were added later on. It was finally ready to go, with the exception that we had to find a way to run the blower—as its motor was three-phase and there wasn't any three-phase power in the neighborhood!

One of Dad's hobbies was old machinery, and while down at a scrap yard he found a three-horsepower single-phase motor. We rigged up a belt-drive to run the blower with it, and for over 40 years that was the way the blower was operated. Today I have a Phase-A-Matic unit running the original S.A. Woods three-phase motor. Surprisingly, the 3-hp Spencer blower, with the aid of a small booster blower that came out of a Xerox machine, is playing the fifteen ranks!

The organ began to grow. The original Salicional wasn't in very good condition, so I purchased a Wurlitzer VDO from Harvey

Heck. I don't know the history of that rank, but it was from 4' up, and I used the original 8' octave of the Salicional. I also acquired an Austin string that I used for the Celeste. Not having another string chest, I drilled a second set of holes in the existing string chest toe board and each note plays two pipes (you can get away with doing this on Wurlitzer chests because of long oval expansion chambers in the toe boards). Not ideal, as you can't turn the celeste off, and it is a bit harder to tune, but it works OK and, surprisingly, the occasional pipe "drawing," which is when one pipe will not celeste properly with its mate because of being too close, doesn't seem to be a problem. Just lucky, I guess.

The next addition was the 12 pipes for the 16' octave of the Tuba. Someone told us that there was a Wurlitzer 16' Tuba octave and chests at the Sullivan Organ Company. These were stored in a garage, which was no more than a mile from my home. At that time I had a '56 Chevy station wagon, so I drove over and purchased the items for \$65.00! Several trips later the pipes were in my garage. Even at that price, I'm not so sure it was much of a bargain, as the resonators were very badly deformed and some were smashed almost flat. I cut some of them apart, mandreled, beat on, soldered, and grumbled at these 12 big pipes for quite a while, but finally they resembled the shape they should be. I re-leathered the chest and installed them in the organ.

Things are a bit foggy and may be out of order, but I purchased a standard Wurlitzer Vox from Mike Ohman. At that time he lived out here and was running a pizza joint in Reseda which had a pipe organ in it. Mike had taken the time to really polish these pipes, as they were to be in the pizza organ which had glass viewing windows. For some reason they didn't get used, so I got them. To this day, they still sparkle! I asked Mike if he knew where they came from and he said the Elmwood Theater in Buffalo, New York.

In the mid '70s I worked with another friend I had met at the Wiltern Theater, Ross Farmer. He was a member of the West Culver City Baptist Church. They were building a new sanctuary and, thanks to Ross, organ chambers were part of the floor plan. That organ was purchased from Richard Simonton, and it comprised 12 ranks. It was a put-together instrument, with the nucleus being a Style E. For the most part, Ross and I installed the organ, with occasional help from a few church members.

By this time I had started messing around with pipework and had found out how to take Oboe Horns and make them squawk—in other words, tonally resemble Post Horns. In all honesty I would say I had about a 50% success rate, and in this case I had created a set that sounded more like a Serpent than a Post Horn. We tried it at the church in the chest where the Oboe Horn was. It definitely jazzed that organ up! I ended up with a Wurlitzer Oboe Horn in that deal. When added to my instrument, for a while I opened up the tops and it functioned as a mild Trumpet. I eventually was given a small-scale Trumpet from Bill Field, so I closed the tops up on the Oboe and it now functions as it should as a very useful tone color for accompaniment purposes.

You can see where this is going—the chamber is filling up. However, it has a ways to go. Of course, I had to have a Post Horn of my own, so another conversion happened. I believe I purchased this Oboe from Joe Koons. This set had thick reed tongues, so I had to run it on higher pressure (14 inches). However, it was not an ear splitter, but had just a bit of a Gottfried Post Horn character. It turned out to be a good set, staying in tune remarkably well.

Time marches on and I got involved with George Wright on his Hollywood organ project. I won't go into detail with that, but when that organ was installed, there were a few pieces left over that managed to follow me home. There was a two-rank manual chest that was for a small reed stop, as well as a Trumpet or Tuba. Into the chamber it went. Believe it or not, the larger reed chest has my Tibia sitting on it. The smaller chest is home to the small Trumpet. There was also a 24-note, 16'-8' Smith Bourdon that was on a very compact chest, yet the pipe scale was larger than the Wurlitzer Bourdon, so that replaced the 8'-16' Wurlitzer octaves.

The Bills (Coffman and Field) have given me so many things, the organ would not be nearly as complete if they hadn't. One of the ranks was a Welte Kinura; another was a Murray Harris Clarinet. Bill Field also gave me a nice rank of Morton flutes, a set of Maas-Rowe Chimes, complete with action, and a 37-note Marr and Colton Xylophone. I also managed to find all the pipes (from tenor C) of a solo-scale Marr and Colton Tibia at Bill's place.

Getting back to George Wright for a moment.... He was responsible for getting the 16' Wurlitzer Metal Diaphone in the organ, as well as the Chrysoglott. He also came up with a Morton Violin, so that

is now in the organ instead of the Austin string. When George died, Mike Ohman got the Hollywood organ and it went to Utah, with the intention of being installed in a BYU radio studio. Unfortunately these plans fell through, and with no place for it the instrument was broken up. Mike had moved back to Utah and, while talking to him one day, I asked about the 24 notes of the Möller Cor Anglais that were in George's instrument (these were the 16' and 8' octaves). Mike still had them so I purchased them. His mother was living in the Southern California area and he brought the pipes out on one of his visits to see her. These pipes are voiced beautifully, and they make up the 8' and 16' octaves of my Oboe Horn, as they are in the same tone family.

Another one of George's tricks in his later years of concerts was to swap several octaves of the Concert Flute with his Murray Harris redwood Stopped Diapason. Murray Harris made many of these ranks. They were all good, but some were better than others. The set that followed George around in the trunk of his car was especially nice. I didn't get those, but he had another set from middle C up which he gave me. I installed them in place of the flute. George also furnished an 8' octave of Austin Rohrflute pipes. I had the six stopped tenor octave pipes from a Wurlitzer Concert Flute, so I made an independent 8' pedal flute stop of 18 notes that is inside the listening room. This gives a bit more clarity to the other pedal stops.

I have a "poor man's marimba" which came about when George gave me a 30-note practice marimba. This consisted of wood bars mounted on a frame with cardboard resonators, and a convenient handle to carry the unit much like a suitcase. It also had pockets in the frame to insert four tubular legs. I had the Xylophone from the West Culver Church so I swapped bars and put felt hammers on it from a Wurlitzer Chrysoglott. I left the top seven bars in place from the Xylophone to make the unit 37 notes. It plays at 8' pitch (tenor C) and works surprisingly well for that nice wood harp "thunk."

I was never too happy with the original Tuba as it seemed buzzy and weak. Another rank I bought from Mike was a Style D Trumpet. Again, Mike knew the history: it had been installed in the Lyric Theatre in Ogden and was from a single-chamber Style D organ. The pipes were in excellent condition, so now they are in the former Tuba chest in my instrument. I had to spend a lot of time getting them to respond

to the rather heavy tremulant that became a trademark sound in the organs George was associated with. These pipes carry on quite well.

When Dr. Malin Dollinger had his home pipe organ, Ed Burnside and I would, on occasion, drive down to Malin's and help him with the organ. His organ had the same disease as mine: too much stuff in too little space. His instrument actually had a rank or two where the chests were on wheels so you could move them around to get at other things. There was an Orchestral Oboe that was in a chest but wasn't wired or winded (there was a Wurlitzer set in the organ that played, so this rank was redundant). I made a deal with Malin to "work for pipes." We agreed on how many hours I would work to buy these pipes, and that's how I acquired the Orchestral Oboe. Although originally they were thought to be Skinner, they are not, and I really haven't seen another set like them. One of the tricks I have done with good success is to rescale full-length Orchestral Oboe ranks to the length that Wurlitzer used. This means not using 5 or 6 of the longest pipe resonators and having to create an equal number of pipes at the treble end of the rank. This was done with Malin's rank with good success. The reason for doing this is that the shorter length gives them a more unique tone color than their full-length counterparts.

One of the percussions I haven't mentioned, and it was the first one purchased, is the Glockenspiel. This was a Wurlitzer 30-note set that was bought from Artisan Organs when they were located in, I believe, Newport Beach. The bars were there, and most of the action. I created or found the missing parts. Several years ago I decided I wanted the glock to have 37 notes, and I had acquired remnants of a Wurlitzer action from Bill Field. I had Bob Arndt make up the bars and I created the 7-note action to play them.

As you might guess, the two-manual console was maxed out, and with only five pistons per manual and no second touch, I wasn't getting the full potential of what the organ had to offer. A friend of mine, whom I had met in junior college taking the same printing class as I was, ended up being interested in pipe organ as well as piano. Around seven or eight years ago he had to move out of his apartment. He had acquired a piano, an ancient Schober organ, and more recently, a three-manual Devtronix organ. The Devtronix did not play due to electronic problems, and he happened to show me a photograph of the console.

I was surprised at how nicely the console was proportioned. With a few exceptions, it resembled a late-model, scaled-down three-manual Wurlitzer console with the same scrolls under the keydesk and the same “alcoves” for lights on the horseshoe top that my two-manual had. We worked a deal and the console was mine.

One of several problems I noticed was that the stops on the lower horseshoe rail were very close to the key cheeks on the top manual. I solved that problem by dropping the keyboards into the keydesk so the bottom manual was even with the bottom of the keydesk. This is hardly noticeable and corrected the problem as well as improved the appearance. I raised the whole console up the 1½" that the keys dropped. I was using AGO specifications when I was doing this and I also noticed that the pedal board needed to go towards the back of the console around 3½".

Making these changes created a very comfortable feel when playing the organ. As you can see by the photos, I settled on white, as the wood the console was made out of wasn't veneered. Some of the ornaments came from Rob Richards, as at one time he was going to decorate the big Walker he had, but didn't do it. I think my console could stand a few more doodads, but I will refrain until I find someone that has a good eye for decoration. By the way, the Wurlitzer inlaid name plates came from George. At one time they were on his Hollywood organ console, and I commented (more than once) on how I was really fascinated by inlaid wood. One Saturday morning when I arrived at his place, they were sitting on the coffee table, right next to my cup of “battery acid” coffee (George made it strong). For the balance of the time his organ was installed in the house, there were two chewed-up spots on the console horseshoe top where the plates had been.

With the new console, I could now come up with a specification that would allow a lot of flexibility. I needed a relay, and while the first system I used for several years played the organ OK, there were some things it wouldn't do. For the last year or so I have had a Uniflex system, and it does what I want. When designing the new specification, I allowed for what I thought would be, tonally, a fairly complete instrument, even though there are stop tabs for ranks that are not in the organ. I allowed for two Tibias, and, of course, the Tuba. Now I am thinking that another pair of strings, preferably Violins, would also be nice, as the strings now in the organ are plenty bright. Of course



*The two-manual Wurlitzer console (Photo by Ed Burnside)*



*Main Chests*



3-hp Spencer blower



Wurlitzer Vox Humana

I am dreaming, as in this installation it would not be possible. I have collected chests, regulators, tremis, etc. for filling the organ out if and when there might be another home for it.

There were two more additions that I managed to squeeze into the chamber. I like Saxophones and so, several years ago, I called Joe Clipp at Trivo and ordered a set from them. That is the only new rank of pipes I have ever bought. Joe did his usual great job and they sound wonderful! I had to make up a custom chest for the pipes to fit in the small space I had. The other rank is a Principal. I wanted something smaller and softer-sounding than the Open Diapason in the organ. Something like a Horn- or Violin Diapason that larger instruments have. I talked to Greg Rister, another fellow organ mechanic, and he had a set out of a church organ that he was just getting ready to melt down for regulator weights. Saved in the nick of time, I cleaned off the silver paint to expose a very attractive set of spotted metal pipes. I have cobbled up a “voicing chest” in the garage, so I spent time re-regulating these pipes to play on higher pressure. The effort was worth it, as now I have another subtle tone color for accompaniment purposes. By the way, I gave the 2-manual console to Greg, and he installed it temporarily in a church in Pomona while the big 4-manual Möller console was removed for rebuilding.

There was a Style 216 Wurlitzer installed in the auditorium at Monrovia High School at one time. Many, many years ago I worked with the organ club to get that organ to a point where we could have a concert on it. It was not in very good shape, even then. Time went by and I had almost forgotten about the instrument. Being that Ed and I do organ repair and maintenance these days, we were asked by the school if we would appraise the instrument as they would like to sell it. We went out and were shocked at the terrible condition of the organ. Pipes were strewn everywhere in the chamber and smashed. Even some of the wooden Tibias were split and broken, and the console sides were all carved up. Mind you, this is a high school. I could maybe accept this kind of vandalism from a grade school. It was quite disgusting. We told them it would be hard to estimate what they could get for it with all the damage.

On occasion I would drive out to the north valley and work on Ken Rosen’s home studio installation. One time I went out and he had removed the Clarinet from his organ and in its place was this beat up Wurlitzer Post Horn. It seems that Ken had purchased the remains of the Monrovia organ. Wheels started turning—as I had always wanted a Wurlitzer Post Horn. Even George had looked for one for me. Ken’s instrument had a Morton Post Horn that just needed a bit of regulation. I did quite a bit of maintenance on his installation, and even rebuilt the Monrovia toy counter and installed it. I talked Ken out of the Wurlitzer Post Horn and as part of the deal I took his Morton set home and regulated it. That rank is a real ear-splitter in his studio. I got the Post Horn I wanted.

When Ed and I looked at the Monrovia organ, the way things were thrown around, I didn’t think there was much of any of the metal ranks left. It turns out that I had to fabricate five of the reed pipes, as well as repair many others, and replace all of the flue treble pipes. I did not increase the wind pressure on the rank, and it is pretty much regulated as Wurlitzer would have had it. It may be a bit mild by today’s standards, but fine for the home. This is the second rank in my instrument that came from a Lyric Theatre, this time the Monrovia Lyric Theatre.

I have pretty well described the story of the Kukuk home installation. At present there is a nice Morton Open Flute in the organ, (again from Bill Field) and the redwood Stopped Diapason is stored in the garage, but on a whim I will change those two ranks

back and forth. They could both be in the organ if it is ever moved to someplace with more room.

As you can tell, I am a pipe guy. I feel that mixing digital and pipe together is only to be done when the pipe organ is sorely lacking in something. However, one thing I will agree on as being helpful is pedal stops. Especially in small instruments, it seems the manufacturers took shortcuts in that department. I have added the 32'-16' Tibia, and a "wood Diaphone" (the digital stuff I have is not that good, by today's standards) to basically give a bit more fundamental to the low end. The nice thing about digital 32s is that the frequency is real, not derived from using a resultant. Small shade openings and small rooms can definitely reduce the volume of the lower frequencies. The piano is also digital, and I have heard a lot better. I am waiting for the electronic manufacturers to offer small digital packages that one can pick and choose what they need, and then I will upgrade.

If it hadn't been for both of my parents having health problems, I would have probably been out of the house by the time I was 20 years old. However, I stuck around, giving financial and physical support through the years. I have no doubt that my doing this saved the organ from being disposed of.

After working 33 years for GTE/Verizon in their printing department, the company decided to move the printing department to Durham, North Carolina. I was pretty well burned out in the printing trade, so I took a buyout. Ed Burnside had also worked for the same company—only in the actual telephone part of it. He had retired earlier and was working with Larry Abbott and Pete Sieker of Abbott and Sieker Pipe Organs. Both Pete and Larry were thinking of retiring, so Ed and I started doing tuning and maintenance, servicing the organs they had manufactured, as well as others. We still do that today, and have many church accounts and a few theatre ones. Ed and his wife also share their home with a wind-powered beast.

In a past issue, Ken Double touched on the topic of the aging enthusiasts who actually bought and installed instruments in their homes. Like anything else, it was a fad, and yes, we are getting older. Lifestyles have changed so much that these days, many people can't even afford a house, much less one big enough for a real instrument. Advances in the digital world have allowed enthusiasts a good accurate recreation of pipe organ tone, so at least there is a much better representation of the theatre organ sound than the older electronic organs of 30 or 40 years ago. And they have advantages of being able to play them using earphones so as to not bother other people in the same room.

Not so with pipes. I have wondered what will happen to my instrument. One dreams of just the right home—you know, a small but acoustically-right auditorium where it could be used. Sadly, there have been several of these "ideal" installations that ended up being anything but ideal. I know of three just off the top of my head. Ed and I removed and reinstalled the 4/24 Wurlitzer that was in Ruth Dresser's Malibu home. It went to the Fox Theatre in Visalia. The chambers were already there, the installation went fine and the organ sounds good, but the console is hopelessly buried under stage floor extensions covering the orchestra pit that hardly ever get removed, making access to the console impossible.

Then there is Santa Monica High School. I helped Ken Crome finish up that installation. There again, the organ sounds good, and there are students interested in playing it. But over 90% of the time the console is buried in a locked room behind the stage—and the stage is usually in use so there is no place to put the console. The same is true for the California Theatre in San Jose. The main



*Orchestral Oboe*



*Pedal Flute offset (unenclosed, in music room)*

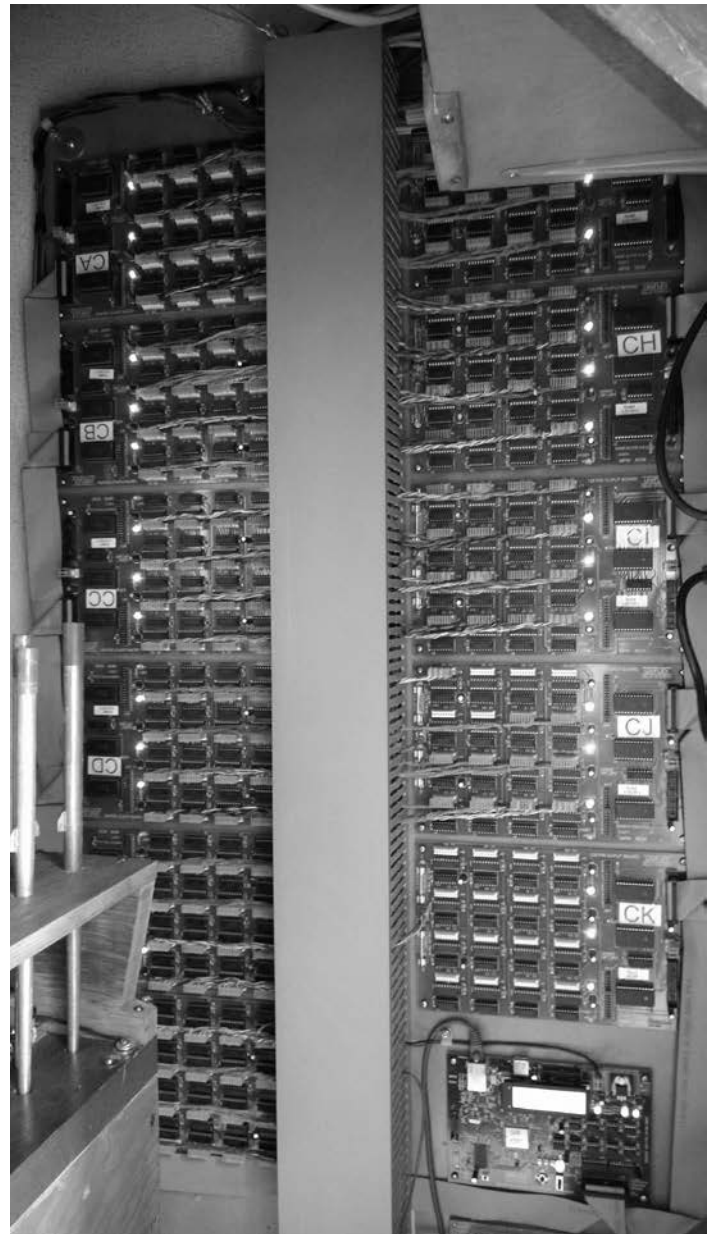


*Trivo Saxophone, Cor Anglais in rear*

auditorium organ is hardly ever used—because you can't get the console onto the orchestra pit lift since it is always full! Thankfully, they have a fine-sounding lobby organ that is quite accessible and gets used often. I don't mean to sound negative, but big auditoriums have to earn their keep, and that means there is not much free time to enjoy the instruments, especially if there is "some assembly required." My main suggestion to any group contemplating a pipe organ installation in a public venue is that an independent lift for the console should be a top priority.

So, in closing, my instrument doesn't really have a pedigree; it's a bit of a mutt, like the mechanic's car. But then again, I have always felt that all the major organ builders had strong points in their design and sound. If I liked the sound of a set of pipes, I really didn't care who made them. The organ here gets played three to four hours a week, and the leather is original on the five wind chests that came with the organ. That's a lot of flexing of organic material over the years.

I have been tinkering and caring for these wonderful mechanical beasts for over 50 years, and I enjoy them all.



*Uniflex output boards in chamber*

If you are in the Los Angeles area, and would like to stop by and see the installation, feel free to give me a call. My number is in the phone book.





The author in the chamber (Photo by Ed Burnside)



Ken Kukuk Residence  
 Los Angeles, California  
 3 Manuals, 15 Ranks Wurlitzer/Composite

Rank	Notes / Comment
8'	English Horn 61 Wurlitzer
16'	Trumpet 73 Wurlitzer Style D, bottom octave Ophicleide
8'	Trumpet 49 (Tenor C) Builder unknown, originally Pedal Clarion
16'	Oboe Horn 73 Möller Cor Anglais, 4' up Wurlitzer
8'	Clarinet 61 Murray Harris
8'	Vox Humana 61 Wurlitzer
8'	Saxophone 52 Trivo (starts at 8' A)
8'	Orchestral Oboe 61 Builder unknown
16'	Open Diapason 85 Wurlitzer
8'	Geigen Diapason 49 (Tenor C) Bottom octave (8') common with flute
8'	Viol d'Orchestre 85 Wurlitzer, bottom octave Wurlitzer Salicional
4'	Viol Celeste 49 Robert Morton, starts on Tenor C
16'	Flute 97 Smith/Morton
8'	Tibia 85 Robert Morton
8'	Kinura 61 Welte
	Chrysoglott 49 Wurlitzer
	Glockenspiel 37 Wurlitzer/Arndt
	Xylophone 37 Marr & Colton
	Marimba 37 Small Scale, Wurlitzer xylophone action

Assorted traps and toy counter  
 3-manual Devtronix theatre-style console  
 Uniflex control system  
 3-hp Spencer with 1/2-hp booster blower



Mark Herman at the Kukuk console

# Mystery Photo



Above is the console from the Wurlitzer boardroom, which now controls the organ in the residence of Ned and Jan Niemiec of Lakeville, Massachusetts. It was one of the featured instruments during the Overture day for the Providence, Rhode Island convention a few years back.

It's a very beautiful and unique console, as you may recall from an article in the Journal about a year ago.

So, there's no real mystery associated with the console, except the identity of the fellow on the bench.

Do you know our mystery organist?

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## Still a mystery

We got nuthin'.

In fact, we only had two responses, and they were both guesses.

Not bad guesses, mind you, but certainly not confident, definitive answers, either. Brian Larkin, of Providence, Rhode Island posited it might be a Chinese gong, based on what appears to be a well-padded striker and a sheet of bronze. And it is listed as "gong" on the organ spec.

As we noted when we first put this one out there, the theatre folks call it a gong, but as they said, that's because they don't have any idea what Wurlitzer actually called it or where it came from.

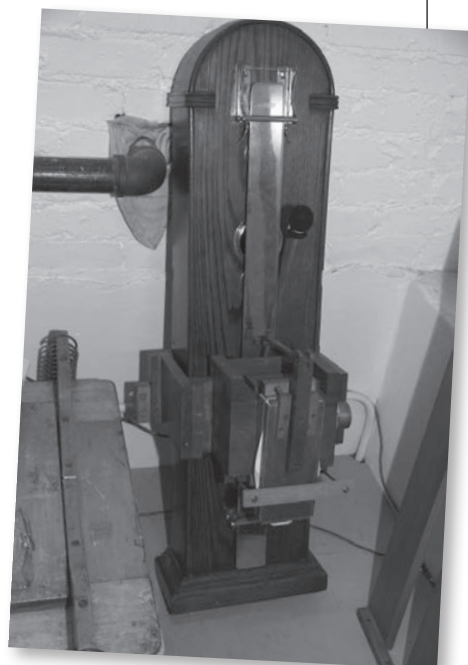
While we certainly haven't seen everything that ever had the Wurlitzer name on it, and we haven't heard it so we don't know what

its tonal characteristics are, we're a little skeptical that's what it is. We've never seen a Chinese gong that wasn't round, but might it have come off a Wurlitzer band organ? There are just too many question marks.

Speaking of question marks, the presence of one was the tipoff that the response we chose as the sort-of-winning entry was indeed a guess. The e-mail sent by Richard Stephenson of Wakefield, UK suggested "Grandfather Clock Gong?"

While this mystery will remain so for now, we'll go with Richard's moniker—not because we think Brian is wrong, but because that's how the coin toss went. After all, "Grandfather Clock Gong" is certainly better than anything we came up with!

Thanks for playing, Brian and Richard.



# Shopping for Recordings



**Allen Organ Company**  
150 Locust Street  
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[www.allenorgan.com/www/store/maincds.html](http://www.allenorgan.com/www/store/maincds.html)

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BY JOHN LEDWON

# The LEDwon Wurlitzer

## THE BEGINNING: CONSTRUCTION

When I donated my 4/52 composite Wurlitzer to the Nethercutt collection in 2007 I was completely convinced that I was finished with providing a home for a theatre organ. Having made a home for a pipe organ in my home since I was about 14 was a significant factor. Enough is enough! However, long associations are hard to break...especially one that was rewarding, fun and challenging, all at the same time. So, in 2010 I once again decided that I was willing to share my humble residence with another Wurlitzer theatre organ.

(All photos by the author  
except as noted)

## LOCATING AN ORGAN

At first I was looking for a totally original 2/8 or slightly larger, but couldn't find anything to my liking. With the help of Ken Kukuk and Scott Smith we located a 3/8 Wurlitzer church instrument with a somewhat checkered past. Opus 1379 was sent on June 30, 1926 to the First Christian Church in Lakewood, Florida. The church must have had financial issues, as the organ was repossessed and returned to the factory. It was resold and shipped to the Calvary Udenominational Church in Grand Rapids Michigan on February 17, 1929.

The organ evidently went through a complete restoration at the factory with new chests and support lumber. The instrument had black cap magnets and stenciled

identification on the support lumber when I bought it, practices not associated with a 1926 instrument. I sold off the original three-manual paneled walnut console and replaced it with a three-manual French-style walnut console from the Jacksonville, Florida School of the Blind. The original specification on the 3/8 was Concert Flute, Salicional, Diaphonic Diapason, Viol Celeste, Aeoline, Clarinet, Tuba Horn, and Tibia Clausa.

## DESTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION

My home is situated in a preservation area of Henderson, a southern suburb of Las Vegas. No sites under ½ acre, and no street lights or sidewalks...except my

property, which is located on a roundabout and has both street lights and sidewalks. But that was fine, as the house is fairly well isolated from other homes in the area.

In the addition built for the organ I only had 9½' of headroom because of an existing second floor, so it was decided to drop the chamber floor four feet below the great room floor level. That all had to be hand-dug. After much thought the blower was located under the great room floor right at the swell shade wall. For this we dug down an additional 2½ feet for a blower vault. At the same time I decided that we could put some of the regulators in the same area so we dug further and created a regulator alcove, also under the great room floor.

Once the main chamber area was excavated, we dug the depressed area for the blower.

## THE INSTALLATION

When the concrete work was completed the chamber walls were erected. Once that was completed the steel framework for the main chests was welded into position.

The blower is installed in its depressed area, and I have the feeling that it might live there forever...or until the house is torn down. The blower is mounted on 6" wheels which are bolted to the wooden blower base through GMC motor mounts. This way the blower can be moved out from its vault for maintenance. This occurred last year when the blower suddenly quit. I thought the problem was the cotton-covered motor-winding burning through due to the VFD (Variable Frequency Drive) output. But the problem turned out to be an undersized VFD. (I was using a 5-hp VFD on a 5-hp motor with a single-phase input. I upgraded to a 10-hp VFD.) I had the motor rewound with VFD-friendly wire, replaced the bearings and had the bearing mounts re-machined to fit the new bearings. In the picture you can see the baffles in the maintenance area to isolate the blower intake noise. The idea has been very successful in that you hear no intake noise coming from the intake port.

The first organ component to be installed (and first to be removed) was the Wurlitzer Marimba/Harp, which had been on my organ in Agoura (I purchased all the percussions from my Agoura organ when it was parted out). The Wurlitzer harp was one that had an unusual tertiary action with outside pneumatics. The harp was removed before the organ was completed due to space considerations and the fact that you needed access to both sides of the harp



*Preparing to pour the chamber floor*



*Preparing to pour the chamber floor*



*The floor pour begins*



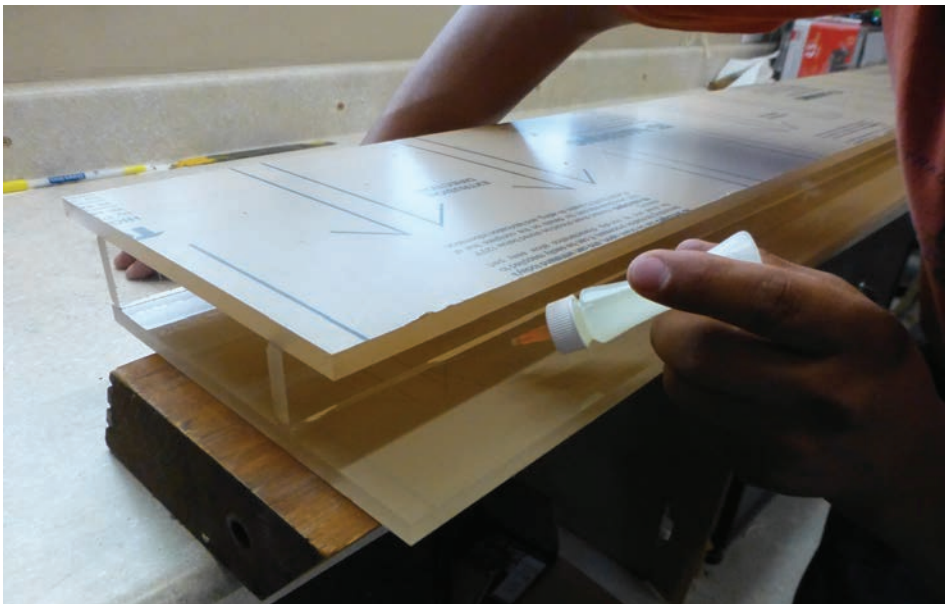
*The blower in place in its vault; notice the wheels*



*All manual chests ... 12 ranks deep!*



*Detail of gear drive which acts as support wheels for back of platform*



*Applying glue to a Plexiglas shutter...darker area (at glue application point) indicates good saturation of glue*

for maintenance. As tight as the chamber is, it quickly became clear that the harp would not be serviceable should anything happen. In fact, even before the organ was fully installed, two treble notes on the harp ciphered, and we found we couldn't get to them to clear the ciphers.

Originally the 16' Tuba and Diaphone were to go on the lower floor, but there wasn't enough height for the 16' Bourdons on the concrete ledge, so they were reversed. Chamber walls were painted black for LED lighting purposes.

## CONSOLE PLATFORM

When the house was remodeled I was left with a land-locked former entrance area. I puzzled over what to do with it until deciding that I might be able to enlarge the area slightly and put the console in it. The remodel became extensive when the width had to be increased—while still supporting the top of the stairway and landing above. New beams had to be placed to take the load, so that reduced the head room for the console—further exacerbated by the arched ceiling. But in the end all went well. So well, in fact, that a friend designed a steel platform that allows the console to come forward about four feet—so that the organist can listen “from” the great room, rather than “from” the alcove. That platform is controlled by the house automation system powered by a small three-phase gear motor and controlled by a VFD for soft starting and stopping.



*Uniflex output boards in the chamber*

## THE CONSOLE

The original console was a three-manual, single-row stop rail, walnut panel-style console—nice looking and in excellent condition. While in Portland to pick up a rank of pipes, I saw a beautiful French-style single stoprail console, also in walnut, and decided that I had to have it. It had had an encounter with water—and I guess the water won. Due to water damage Ken Crome restored the entire bottom portion. The keyboards, pedalboard, and bench from the original console were in far better condition than what came with the French console, so I substituted those from the other console.

The console was originally going to be pneumatic, but after releathering all the pneumatics and getting new stopkeys for a pneumatic system, I changed my mind and went all electric. I regret the move in some respects. But adjusting the pneumatic system was more trouble than I expected and, additionally, I was limited in my specification by the location of the pneumatics—so it too was scrapped.

The console was delivered to Boise, where a friend refinished it prior to making the journey to Henderson. Once here I quickly determined to go with Syndyne Stop Action Magnets (SAMs). So the stoprail was sent to Ken Crome to make a new one to accommodate the SAMs. The new stop keys were sent back to Arndt Organ Supply to be cut and drilled to fit the SAMs.

An interesting side note: The music rack has been on three of the four consoles I have owned. I usually buy a console sans music rack so this one has been on my Balaban 3-manual console, the large 4-manual Agoura console, and now on this console. All three are/were French-style consoles.

## SWELL SHADES

Never having been a real traditionalist in organ installation, I must admit I did a number of things that are probably not considered “kosher” in the installation: Plexiglas swell shades; steel support members throughout the organ; the blower location; and dump valves instead of tremis, to name a few. Plexiglas swell shades were decided upon to provide visual impact, and allow guests the opportunity to see the actual workings of the instrument. Made on-site from 3/8" Plexiglas and with a large overlap area, they give far better dynamic control...a definite issue on the Agoura instrument.

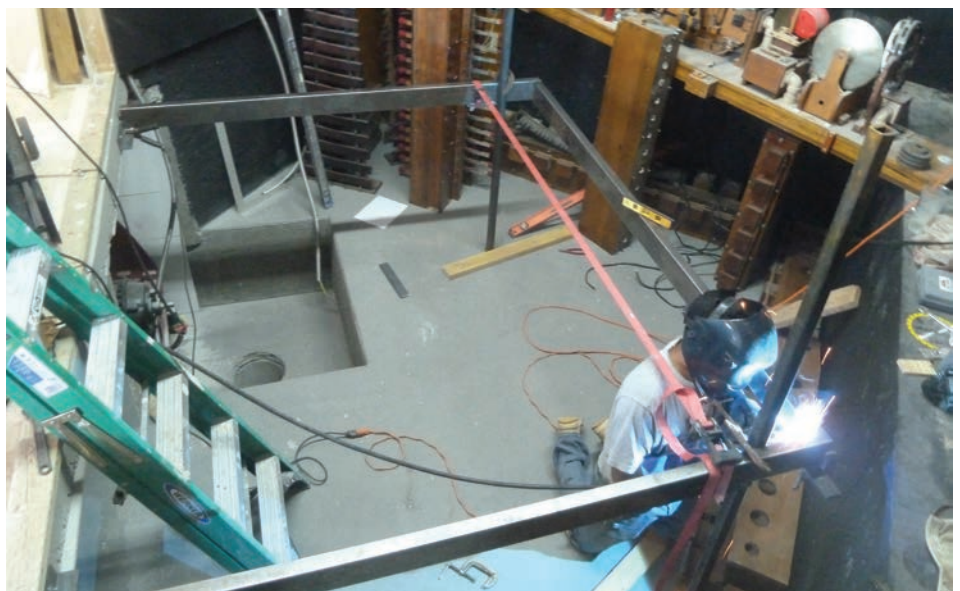
I had originally planned for 10 ranks (the original eight, plus a Vox Humana and



*Installing SAMs. Stop keys were “glued” to SAMs with burnt shellac*



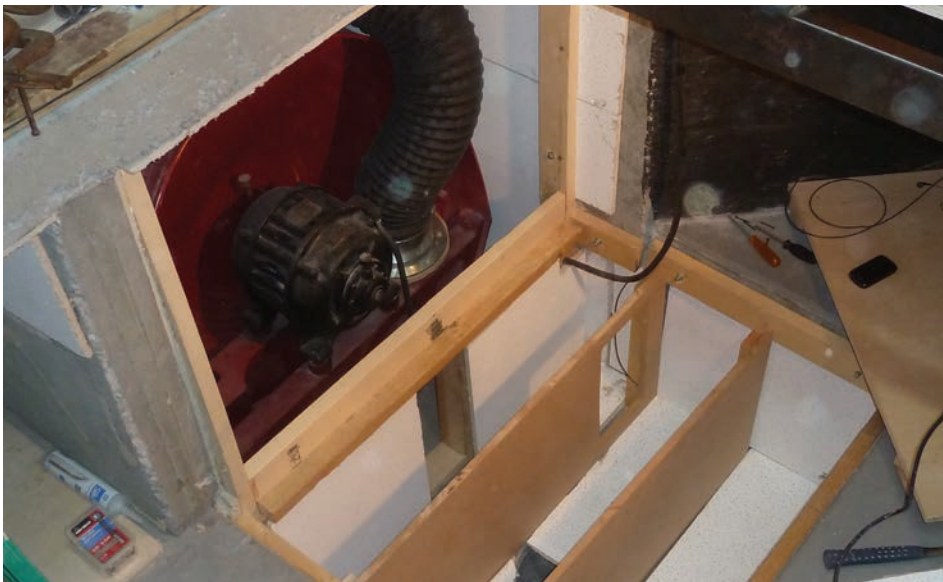
*The steel frame for the console platform*



*The manual chests sit on a steel-frame bearer, leaving a fully-open space beneath; the pit on the left provides access to the blower vault*



*Bourdon, Tibia, and Tuba offsets, Xylophone and Glockenspiel above*



*The blower in place in its vault; the removable baffle box is for sound control*



*View through Plexiglas swell shades with removable walkboard in place*

a Krumet). But I found a Brass Trumpet and a Kinura, so the three-rank chest I bought for the additions was no longer adequate—I needed an additional chest for the Vox Humana. Upon review of the maintenance requirements for the Wurlitzer harp, and the quality of the sample sets available for Hauptwerk software, I decided to remove the harp and replace it with Neil Jensen’s Connoisseur set, then put two additional ranks in the space formerly occupied by the harp.

Phil Maloof had an extra five-rank chest left from the pizza installation here in Las Vegas, so I purchased it. I cut off a single-rank reed chest for the Vox and two ranks for the Flute/String celeste additions. This brought the organ up to 14 ranks and what I consider a reasonably good compromise for a residence organ.

I love a Post Horn, but I can’t see a need for one on a 14-rank residence organ. Instead, I had the Brass Trumpet regulated bright, and it does a wonderful job for brassy riffs and accents while still being useful as a solo stop.

All in all, I am quite pleased with the solo and ensemble sound. The organ plays into a reasonably large area, so the sound mixes quite well. One additional rank is planned—it’s complete and total overkill!—a Brass Trumpet-en-Chamade. It will be installed this fall.

I researched several organ relay systems and determined that the Uniflex system best met my requirements. It has proven to be a good decision—as technical advice is readily available. My primary source of assistance has been Mike Bryant (Theatre Organ co-editor). Mike has spent countless hours, first doing the definition file, and has helped me out innumerable times when I screwed something up so badly that I couldn’t extricate myself from the mess. Dick Wilcox, the designer of the system, has also been extremely helpful.

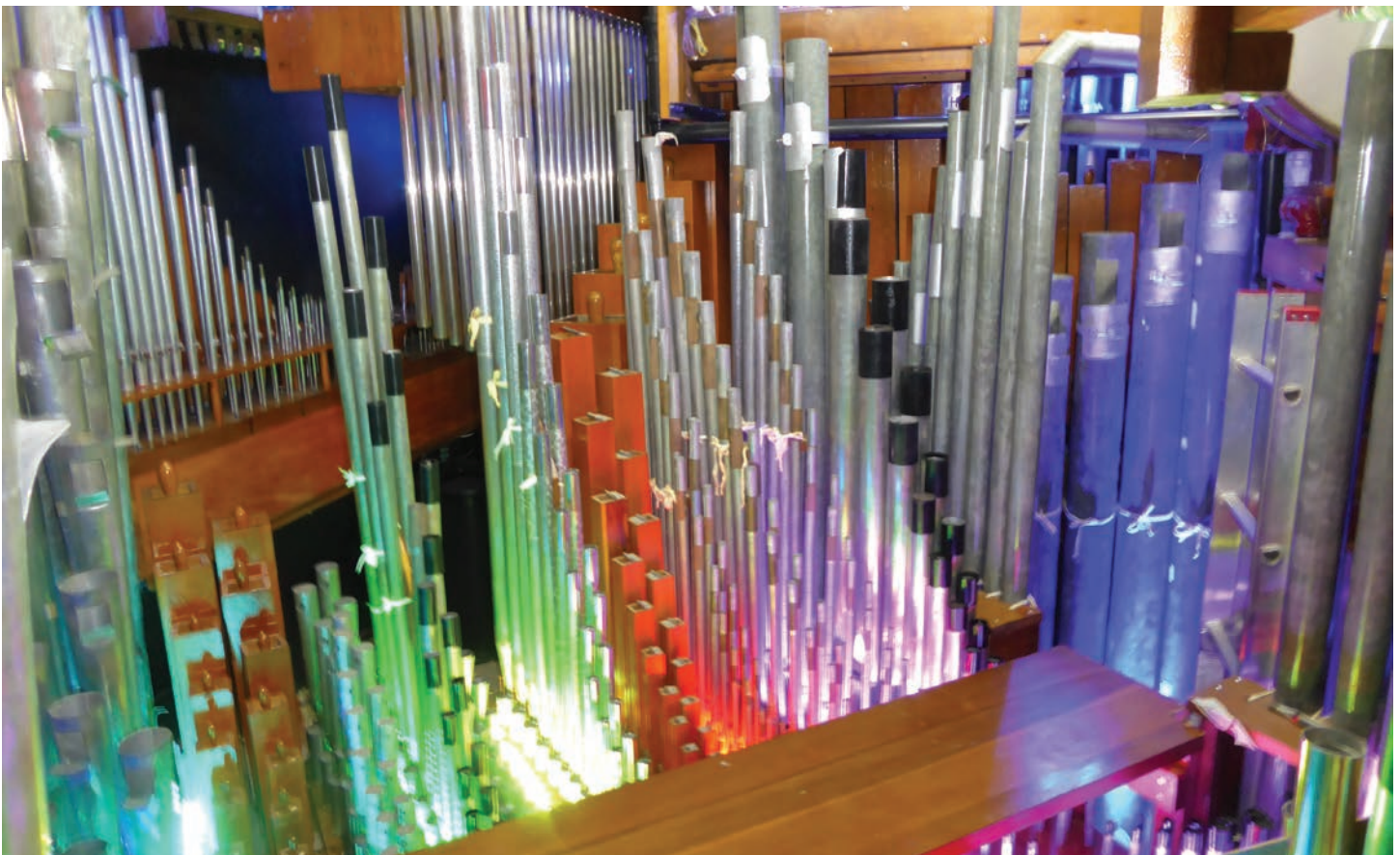
## LED LIGHTING

Due to many years spent in both educational and commercial theatre I, have developed a passion for innovative lighting design. The entire house is designed for dramatic lighting, which is controlled by an automation system running DMX control signals for all the lighting fixtures. LEDs have come into practical availability and price, so the house and organ are lit by Red-Blue-Green LED lighting. Many of these systems are now equivalent or actually cheaper than incandescent lighting, and far more economical to operate—to say nothing





*LED ambient lighting can remain static in any color, or cycle smoothly through the spectrum*



*Because there are no walkboards between the chests, tuning is done from the ends; the removable walkboard provides access for the pipes in the center of the chest*

of versatility and long life. Due to low cost and long life, several portions of the house, including the organ chamber and console, are lit with LEDs during the daytime hours. Here are some effects that LED technology make possible.

Blue being used to give depth to rear portions of the chamber

Various console coloring: green

Various console coloring: orange

More dramatic blues and magenta

## THE GREAT ROOM

The organ speaks into the great room, a multilevel area with ceiling height from 9'8" to 18'. The floor is travertine marble, but portions are covered with Oriental rugs. Acoustically, the room is quite dry. A Roland RSS-303A Ambiance system is being installed with a Mackie 4-channel mixer and Crown microphones to give some special qualities to the area. Lighting in the

great room is a combination of LED and incandescent.

The organ has been playing now for about six months; but only in the past two months has it started to come together as an ensemble instrument. Still, there's a lot of work yet to go. Ken Kukuk has been coming over from Los Angeles to work on regulation and, now that most other problems are solved, we can spend more time actually working on pipework rather than being sidetracked for some strange oddities.



*The great room, looking toward the chamber; the Chinese gong in the upper right is the doorbell; the console is in the "stored" position*



*Here, the console platform is extended into "playing" position*



*Leaded glass "windows" in upper background hide Leslie 122R speakers for the Hammond RT-3; they open pneumatically*

Strange? Well...like the 16' string chest doing multiple ciphering. We finally traced the cause to not enough air in the long primary box. There were only two ½" openings (that's how it came from the Wurlitzer factory). Adding four more passages stopped the problem immediately.

Also, a big "Thank You" to Mike Bryant for his trips to Sin City to help in getting the beast's Uniflex system under control. Thanks also to Todd, Wes, Scott and certainly Rolando—who has worked for me almost constantly for the past three years. He had never seen a pipe organ before we started working on this one, and now he is quite qualified to work on the mechanical portion of the organ.



## John Ledwon Residence 3/14 Wurlitzer Henderson, Nevada

(front to back)		Clarinet	8
All Wurlitzer except as noted		String	8
<b>RANKS</b>	<b>Notes</b>	Concert Flute	8
8' Brass Trumpet	61	Octave	4
16' Harmonic Tuba	73	Flute	4
8' Tibia Clausa	85	Pedal Octave	
8' Vox Humana	61	Great to Pedal	
8' Clarinet	61	<b>ACCOMPANIMENT</b>	
8' Kinura	61	Tuba Horn	8
8' Krumet (Trivo)	61	Trumpet	8
16' Concert Flute	97	Diapason	8
8' Viol Celeste	73	Tibia Clausa	8
4' Aeoline Celeste	61	String (2 rks)	8
16' Salicional	85	Concert Flute	8
16' Open Diapason	85	Vox Humana	8
(on side of chamber)		Aeoline	8
8' Aeoline	73	Piccolo (Tibia)	4
4' Flute Celeste	61	String (2 rks)	4
<b>PERCUSSIONS</b>	<b>Notes</b>	Flute	4
Glockenspiel	37	Vox Humana	4
Xylophone	37	Aeoline	4
Cathedral Chimes	25	Twelfth	2-2/3
Chrysoglott	49	Piccolo	2
Sleigh Bells	25	<b>GREAT</b>	
Saucer Bells	25	Tuba Profunda	16
Una-fon (Deagan)	33	Trumpet (TC)	16
Steinway Grand Piano		Diaphone	16
(The Steinway grand is		Tibia Clausa (TC)	16
controllable from the organ		Krumet (TC)	16
through a Live Performance		Clarinet (TC)	16
player system designed by		String (2 rks)	16
Wayne Stahnke.)		Vox Humana (TC)	16
<b>STOPLIST</b>		Tuba Horn	8
<b>PEDAL</b>		Trumpet	8
Tibia Clausa (MIDI)	32	Diapason	8
Ophicleide	16	Tibia Clausa	8
Diaphone	16	Krumet	8
Contra Viol	16	Clarinet	8
Tuba Horn	8	Kinura	8
Trumpet	8	Strings (2 rks)	8
Diapason	8	Concert Flute	8
Tibia Clausa	8	Vox Humana	8

Fifth (Tibia)	5-1/3	Piano	16
Piccolo (Tibia)	4	Tibia Pizzicato	8
Strings (2 rks)	4	<b>ACCOMP</b>	
Flute	4	Snare Drum	
Vox Humana	4	Tom Tom	
Flute	3-1/5	Wood Block	
Twelfth (Tibia)	2-2/3	Tambourine	
Piccolo (Tibia)	2	Castanets	
Fifteenth	2	Sand Block	
Tierce (Tibia)	1-3/5	Harp	
Fife	1	Chrysoglott	
		Piano	8

<b>SOLO</b>		<b>ACCOMP 2nd TOUCH</b>	
Tuba Profunda	16	Tuba Horn	8
Tibia Clausa (TC)	16	Trumpet	8
Krumet (TC)	16	Diapason	8
Trumpet	8	Tibia Clausa	8
Tuba Horn	8	Clarinet	8
Diapason	8	Piccolo	4
Tibia Clausa	8	Octave Glockenspiel	
Krumet	8	Harp	
Clarinet	8	Chimes	
Kinura	8	Piano	8
Strings (2 rks)	8	Triangle	
Vox Humana	8	Great to Accomp	
Fifth (Tibia)	5-1/3	Solo to Accomp	
Piccolo (Tibia)	4	<b>GREAT 2nd TOUCH</b>	
Twelfth (Tibia)	2-2/3	Tuba Profunda	16
Piccolo (Tibia)	2	Trumpet (TC)	16
Imperial Trumpet	8	Tuba Horn	8
		Trumpet	8

<b>UPPER BACKRAIL</b>		<b>SOLO</b>	
<b>GENERALS</b>		Solo Sub Octave	16
Glock Reit		Solo Unison Off	
Xylo Reit		Solo Fifth	5-1/3
Harp Reit		Solo Octave	4
		Solo Tenth	3-1/5
		Solo Twelfth	2-2/3
		Solo Tierce	1-3/5

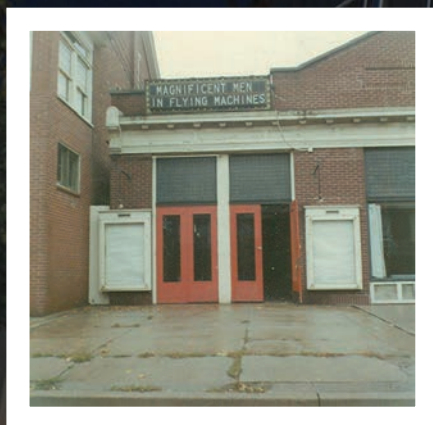
<b>GREAT</b>		<b>KEYCHEEK CONTROLS</b>	
Glockenspiel		2 MIDI On...buttons per	
Xylophone		manual and pedal	
Harp		Flute Celeste Off	
Chrysoglott		String Celeste Off	
Piano	16	Great Sostenuto Armed	
Piano	8	Transpose Up (+)	
Piano	4	Transpose Neutral (0)	
		Transpose Off (-)	

<b>SOLO</b>		<b>SWING-OUT TRAY, LEFT</b>	
Glockenspiel		24 effects buttons	
Xylophone		<b>SWING OUT TRAY RIGHT</b>	
Saucer Bells		Uniflex controls	
Sleigh Bells		<b>PISTONS</b>	
Harp		6 toe pistons	
Chrysoglott		23 General Pistons	
Piano	8	10 Divisional per manual	
Piano	4	<b>SWELL PEDALS</b>	
Chimes		Piano expression	
		Chamber Expression	
		Crescendo	

<b>TREMULANTS</b>		<b>LOWER BACKRAIL</b>	
Main		<b>PEDAL</b>	
Tuba/Trumpet		Bass Drum	
Tibia		Tympani (MIDI)	
Orch. Reeds		Roll Cymbal	
Vox Humana		Tap Cymbal	

# The Dream

BY CARL BLACK AND ED BUCHINSKI  
AS TOLD TO BOB DILWORTH



*The Grand Theater — then, and now*

As the story began, Ed Buchinski recalled, “Now that I had successfully started my real estate career, I began looking for a building I could purchase for an investment opportunity. I found two possibilities near my home. One was the closed Broad Theater in a nearby Souderton and the other was the closed Grand Theater in East Greenville, Pennsylvania. Of the two, the Grand was in a better location and so I closed the deal. I thought I could turn the property into a laundromat and an arcade.”

We had to get the building cleaned up and secure. Major repairs were needed. The roof was ready to collapse. The first big job in the restoration was to replace the roof and make it secure to withstand weather conditions. Once that was done, work could begin on the inside. About 80% of the pressed-tin ceiling tiles were missing. Should we replace them with other ceiling tiles, plaster, wallboard, or what?

Out went the trash and down came the drapery that covered the walls. Then, slowly, the true design of the theatre came to light. It could be a real gem.

The entire room was pressed tin. The walls, while not ornate, had a great design in the pressed tin. Around the walls at the ceiling level was a lighting cornice. Ed recalled, “As I realized what was behind those drapes and the other features of the room, I began to realize what I had purchased. As the room emerged I heard a clear voice saying, ‘I want to be a theatre again.’ I listened, and my plans changed.”

The question of the ceiling was answered. We needed to replace the ceiling as it was when built. This meant replicating the pressed tin ceiling panels. We found a company that could do that, even replicating the original design in a new mold. One problem solved.

Some additional construction was needed. The lobby was a bare shell. We constructed a new ticket booth and lobby doors based on old photographs. We constructed a new concession stand and relocated one of the rest rooms. We even found a vintage cash register, a soda machine and a popcorn machine so that the stand would stay true to the era.

The whole place was given a fresh coat of paint. It looked great—almost. We needed new seats and carpet; we needed a new screen and curtains. But now that the room itself was done, those things could be purchased.

The old marquee was basically a flat sign over the door. While original, we needed something with a little more pizzazz for the outside. So a new marquee was fabricated in the style of those found in major theatres of the 1920s and '30s. Finally, the project was complete and we were ready for opening night. The theatre looked great.

After a short period, there were thoughts of an organ for the theatre. However, the theatre had no space for an organ. The original owner had never wanted an organ, not even for silent films—he had his own orchestra which would supply the necessary music.

(All photos courtesy of the Grand Theater)



*The new snack bar, with antique cash register*

*The lobby — “then”*

Ed, however, was not interested in an orchestra and allowed the idea of a theatre organ to turn into a reality. Some modifications to the theatre were needed to allow installation of an organ. Chambers were constructed in the stairwells leading from auditorium to the stage. They were not spacious; in fact, they were unbelievably small, measuring only 30" wide, 6' deep, and 11' tall—just slightly deeper than a twin bed is long, but narrower! The installation almost ground to a total stop due to difficulties in the installation. Ed had to do something to salvage what had been started.

## Enter Carl Black...

When Carl Black was still in junior high school in 1978, his father purchased a two-manual, six-rank Marr & Colton theatre pipe organ, originally installed in the Rivoli Theatre in Chicopee,

Massachusetts, which he had installed in the family garage. Many years later, Carl placed the organ in storage, and when he sold the organ he kept track of it. Eventually it was offered to the Grand Theater. Ed Buchinski, who purchased it for the theater, desperately needed help with the installation.

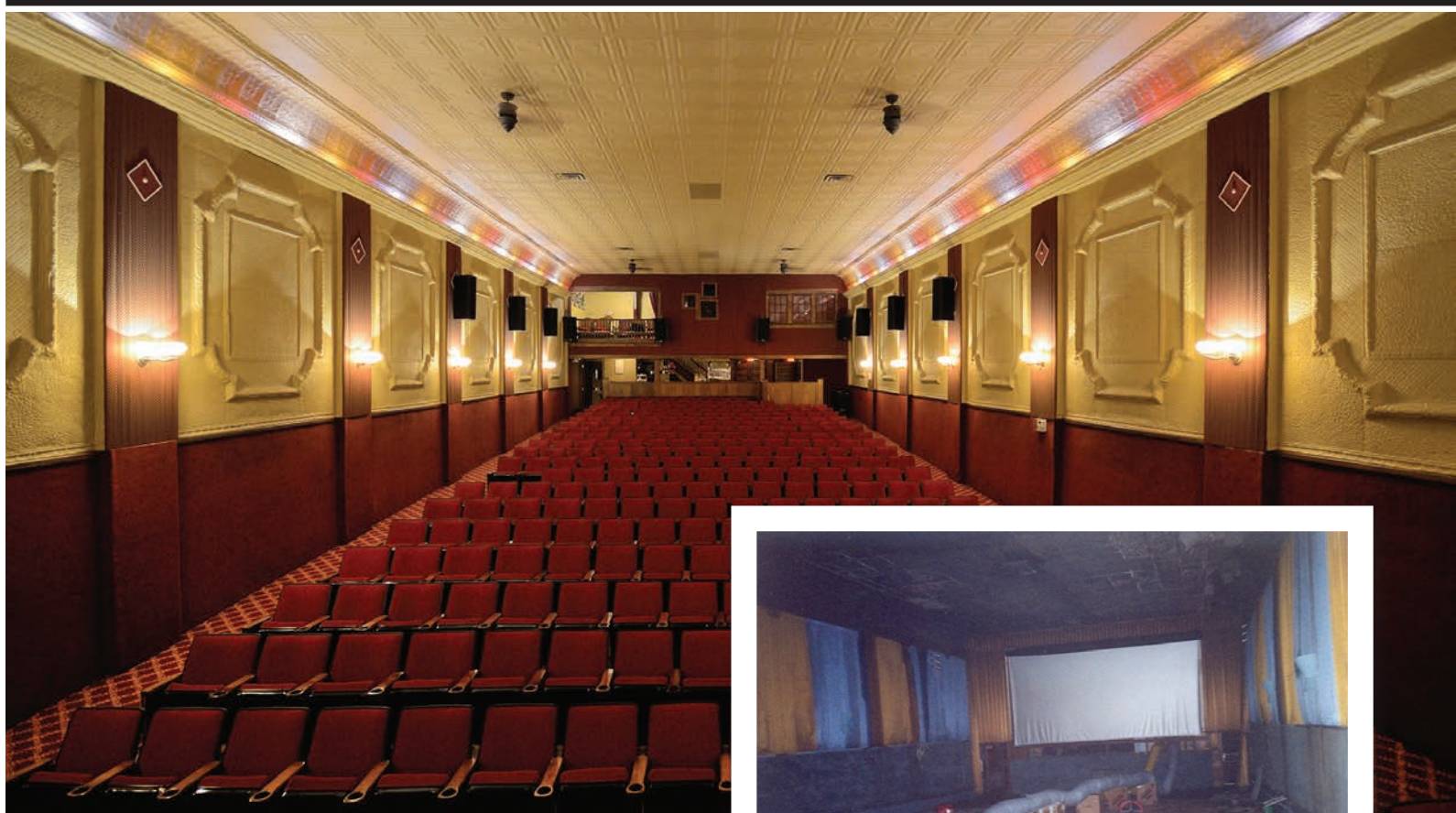
## ...and Brant Duddy

Brant Duddy has solved many problems over the years with fitting pipe organs into spaces that were too small for the organ. (This situation seems to have often been caused by salesmen with optimistic rubber rulers.) After looking at the space available, he and Carl developed a plan to install the Marr & Colton and eventually expand it to 13 ranks by adding ranks from a second organ, also a Marr & Colton. A three-manual Marr & Colton console was located shortly after the project began and the work began in earnest.

Each chamber has two levels of pipes. The original organ's pipes are on the lower level and the upper level was reserved for the additions. Most of the larger pipes wouldn't fit in the chambers and were placed on the small stage behind the screen, along with the percussions and toy counter. The 2/6 organ debuted on December 12, 2008.

Work continued, first to smooth out the 2/6 and then work on the later additions. The three-manual console was stripped and refinished; the keyboards were sent to Russell Grethe for a total

# 2015 ATOS ANNUAL CONVENTION



*The auditorium, now...and then*



*Staff member Michael Elderhorst prepares fresh popcorn, ready for the audience to arrive*

restoration with new bushings and new coverings (the originals were worn down to the wood); new Peterson SAMs were installed; and a relay and combination system (a combination of Peterson and Opus 2) was installed. The finished console was a beauty and set up to play the planned 13-rank organ.

The three-manual console was placed on line in early 2014, and the additional ranks added as they were ready. Both consoles are connected to the organ, but most times the three-manual is the one used.

Brant Duddy commented that there is almost nothing in the installation of this organ that is “traditional.” Every part of the installation required a great amount of ingenuity; it definitely is not a usual installation. It is a proverbial “three pounds in a two-pound bag.” For example, the house-left stairs to the stage were removed to accommodate the Vibraharp which speaks through a grill in the floor of the stage.

The organ is used for a silent film series each fall with John Baratta accompanying the films. It is also used for play-in music most weekends.

East Greenville residents are very supportive of the theatre both for the regular film presentations and the silent film series, and they seem to love the organ when it is played.

2015 ATOS Conventioneers will have an opportunity to enjoy the fruits of all the labor which has gone into bringing the Grand

# 2015 ATOS ANNUAL CONVENTION



The two Marr & Colton consoles; both are fully functional, although the three-manual is generally used

With a nod to the past, staff are professionally attired; from left, Michael Elderhorst, owner Ed Buchinski, Emily McKay, assistant manager Kris Kirkwood, and manager Carl Black

Theater back to life. Since its re-opening in 2005, it has seen many unique things. There was a black-tie event for invited guests the day before the official public opening. In 2009 the first silent film series was inaugurated with *The Phantom of the Opera*, accompanied by the late Jeff Barker.

In 2012, the theater hosted a day for the ATOS Summer Youth Adventure—an opportunity to take a step back in time to the early theatre days. They were given tickets which had to be handed in as they entered to the walking-in music being played. The lights dimmed and the silent film began. Following the film, there was walking-out music. Following the program there was open console time for the students and a chance to tour the organ.

The staff of the theatre is always dressed in uniform. Patrons are greeted at the ticket grinder by the manager or, occasionally, the owner. The entire staff, from the owner to the newest employee, is trained to be courteous and helpful. This is a class act.

A large vote of thanks goes to John Nelson for his support. (As he once said, “This never would have worked without a shoehorn!”) and the help of John Baratta, Jon Buchanan, Brant Duddy, Dennis Grafton, Steve Greene, Brad Shupinski, Jim Stemke, Matt Taft, Theater manager Carl Black, and theater owners Ed Buchinski and John Schortz.



The new ticket booth and entry

# 2015 ATOS ANNUAL CONVENTION



The photos on this page illustrate just how tightly packed the chambers are



The Kinura is tucked away below other ranks...



With floor space in the chambers at a premium, sometimes even regulators have to go up



Due to space limitations in the chambers, the offsets, percussions and traps share the stage with the theater's audio system



3/13 Marr & Colton  
Grand Theater  
East Greenville, Pennsylvania

## MAIN CHAMBER

Diapason  
Violin  
Violin Celeste  
Concert Flute  
Lieblich Flute  
Oboe Horn  
Kinura

## SOLO CHAMBER

Solo String  
Tibia Clausa  
Trumpet  
Clarinet  
Saxophone  
Vox Humana  
Xylophone  
Glockenspiel

## STAGE

Xylophone  
Vibraharp  
Sleighbells  
Chimes  
Piano  
Traps  
Toy Counter





*Moving the consoles into position*



*Bringing in the three-manual console*



*Ed Buchinski welcomes the 2012 Summer Youth Adventure prior to open console time*

## How did they do it?

Chambers only 30 inches wide and six feet deep? How would you ever fit a chest in there?

If it was a Wurlitzer, you probably wouldn't. For starters, Wurlitzer chests are well over six feet long, so you're out of luck to begin with. Then there's the issue of chest depth. After all, you do need to fit between the chest and the wall so you can tune.

Wicks built a few "pizza organs" with pretty narrow chests. Unlike Wurlitzer chests, though, where the pipes were arranged in two staggered rows (sometimes three, such as in the Tuba and Trumpet trebles), Wicks placed them in a single row from one end to the other. Those chests were nearly 12' long!

Here's where Marr & Colton would shine as a builder whose design made it possible to stuff, as the author put it, "three pounds in a two-pound sack."

M&C manual chests were made up of multiple single-rank chests, each rank fully independent—there were no shared walls. The inlet manifold on one end and the exhaust manifolds (or blanking plate) on the other end held everything together. To rearrange the ranks, or increase or decrease the rank count, all you needed to do was make a new manifold of the correct configuration for each end.



*The pictures above show just how tight space for the organ is; note how narrow the chambers on each side of the proscenium are*

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## Something Big

### **Overture July 2, 2015**

Morning & early afternoon – Longwood Gardens – Jonas Nordwall – limited to 300  
Late afternoon/early evening – Welcome Cocktail Party  
Special Concert (not part of Overture) – limited to 300  
Evening – Macy's Grand Court – Peter Conte

### **Day 1 July 3, 2015**

Morning – Membership Meeting  
Late morning – Group A – Macy's Greek Hall – Ron Rhode (lunch provided)  
Afternoon – Colonial Theatre – Mark Herman – dinner provided  
Evening – Dickinson HS – David Peckham

### **Day 2 July 4, 2015**

Morning – Membership Forum  
Late morning – Group B – Macy's Greek Hall Ron Rhode (lunch provided)  
Afternoon – Colonial Theatre – Young artist competition & Andrew Van Varick (dinner provided)  
Evening – Dickinson HS – Dave Wickerham

### **Day 3 July 5, 2015**

Morning – Group A – Allen Organ Co. Octave Hall – Lance Luce  
Group B – Grand Theater – John Baratta with film (lunch provided for both groups)  
Afternoon – Group A – Grand Theater – John Baratta with film  
Group B – Allen Organ Co. Octave Hall – Lance Luce  
Evening – Banquet at Sunnybrook Ballroom – Dick Smith

### **Day 4 July 6, 2015**

Morning – seminars in hotel  
Afternoon – Dickinson HS – Hector Olivera  
Late Afternoon – Wilmington & Western Train Ride (dinner provided)  
Evening – Dickinson HS – Simon Gledhill & Richard Hills

### **Encore July 7, 2015**

Morning – Broadway Theatre – Don Kinnier  
Noon – Concert on Boardwalk Hall Midmer Losh – Steven Ball (lunch on your own)  
Afternoon – Concert Boardwalk Hall Kimball – Steven Ball  
Late Afternoon/Early Evening – on the Boardwalk at Atlantic City (dinner on your own)

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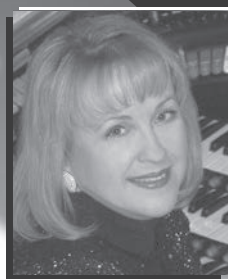
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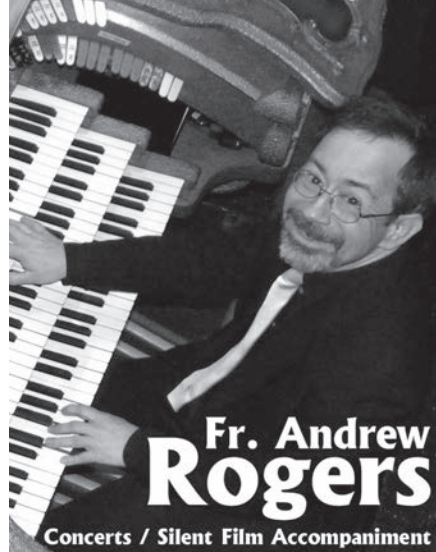
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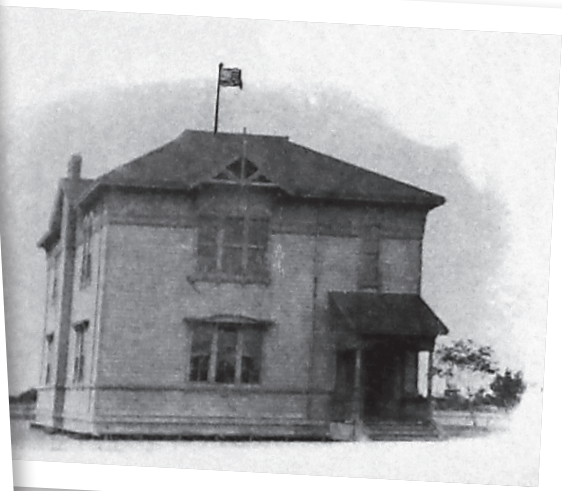
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Young George Wright  
(holding cello) in the  
school orchestra

Orland School

# On the Wright Track

BY WILLIAM L. COALE, PH.D.

August 11, 2013 was a life-changing day. Attending Chris Elliott's accompaniment to *The Mark of Zorro* on George Wright's Grant Union High School (GUHS) organ was just the beginning. A casual conversation in the auditorium lobby resulted in my focusing my efforts since then on conducting research for a biography of legendary theatre organist George Wright. Now, how did I get myself into all this?

A few weeks prior to the GUHS program, a conversation on Facebook, prompted by one Walter Strony, posed the challenge that GW deserved a biography...but who was to write it? Nothing tangible resulted from that conversation, but the idea wouldn't leave my head. At any rate, that idea was firmly lodged in my cranium when Wendell Jacob, owner of the San Francisco Fox lobby Möller, approached me on that fateful day in August, asking for some business advice. When that conversation wrapped up, I blurted out, "Wendell, would you consider backing a biography of George Wright? It's a book that needs to be written." Wendell was receptive to the concept, and asked for a written proposal, which I provided within

the week. From that point, "the chase was afoot!"

Oh great...now I've really gotten myself into something! Initially, the primary tasks involved deciding upon a methodology and developing a list of persons who could contribute to the book's contents. I quickly decided that I would prefer face-to-face interviews whenever possible. The list of potential interviewees was initially 30, although I realized the inevitability that for each person I would interview, more names would surface, and that's exactly what occurred, to the point of my wondering if the list would ever end! In addition to personal interviews, I researched online digital archives as well as physical holdings, such

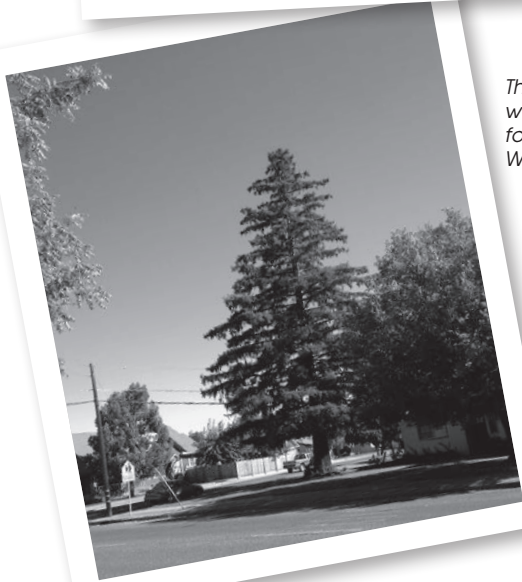
as those at the Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center in New York, and the Oscars (Margaret Herrick) Library in Beverly Hills, California. Research in facilities such as these is exhilarating, given the high security and priceless contents of their collections! I will never forget going through the New York Paramount Theatre's stage manager's book; viewing hand-typed schedule sheets listing George Wright's organ solo at the top of the bill; paging through the papers of theory instructor Joseph Schillinger; stumbling across an original composition that Jesse Crawford had submitted as a homework assignment; let alone a personal letter from Crawford to Schillinger, referring to his teacher as a "living god." Library archives

(All photos from Coale collection except as noted)



*George's grandparents' home in Orland*

*George's childhood home in Orland*



*This Redwood tree was planted by a four-year-old George Wright*



*Carol Baugher, George Wright's cousin*



*The Orland Grammar School Band, 1933, featuring George Wright on cello*

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

DATE EFFECTIVE: October 1, 1950  
 LOCAL OPEN: 9:30 P.M.

**PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE**

THEATRE: Paramount  
 CITY: New York

LENGTH OF RUN: 2nd Week  
 OPENING DAY AND DATE: Wednesday - Only  
 CLOSING DAY AND DATE: Open: Wed.: 10-4-50

**TIME SCHEDULE OF SHOWS BY UNITS**

UNIT AND TITLE OF PROGRAM	RUNNING TIME	1ST SHOW	2ND SHOW	3RD SHOW	4TH SHOW	5TH SHOW	6TH SHOW	7TH SHOW	8TH SHOW	9TH SHOW
George Wright - Organ Solo	7	--	--	--	7:09	9:57				
Advance Trailers	4		12:09	4:07	7:16	10:04				
UNIT: DUKE ELLINGTON & ORCH.	55		12:13	4:11	7:20	10:08				
Intermission	5		1:09 (3)	3:06 (3)	6:18	--				
This Is America? "PROCES OF LEADY"	15	10:00	--	3:04	--	11:03				
"Speeding Speech"	9	10:16	--	--	--	11:15				
FEATURE: "UNION STATION"	90	10:24	1:11	3:24	5:30	11:27				
Studio Preview	83	--	2:31	--	--	12:47 (OUT)				
Intermission	3	--	3:54	--	--					
POPOTE: "Baby Wants Spinach"	7	11:44	--	6:44	9:40					
Paramount News & Product Trailer	10	11:51 (10)	3:57	6:53 (10)	9:47					
In Person: Duke ELLINGTON & ORCH. - Sara VALENTI - Eddie ROOPER - Tolly HILL										

ATTRACTIONS AT OPPOSITION THEATRES

A run sheet from the New York Paramount in October, 1950; the first line shows "George Wright - Organ Solo" would be presented in the fourth and fifth shows of the day, and each would run seven minutes (New York Public Library - Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center)

57 and 57 a. "Song N1" Jesse Crawford

Musical score for "Song N1" by Jesse Crawford, featuring multiple staves of music with treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

MRS. JOSEPH SCHILLINGER  
 340 EAST 57th STREET  
 NEW YORK 22, NEW YORK

A piece by Jesse Crawford, written as a homework assignment (New York Public Library - Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center)

are amazing, but real-life interviews are even more special.

One of my first interviews was with George's cousin, Carol, who lives in George's hometown of Orland, California, in the heart of almond country. It was amazing to hear stories of their childhood together. I got to see the homes where George's grandparents lived, and the one where he spent the first decade or so of his life. While in Orland, I was also privileged to meet local historian Gene Russell, who has been of tremendous help in all things Orland. We visited the Masonic cemetery where George's grandparents are interred. We sifted through old pictures of young George, one with him confidently holding a cello in the school orchestra. We visited the Orland Theatre, a typical local theatre, where George's mother Lulu played piano for silent films. We walked the streets of the sleepy, rural town that would later be amazed at what it had produced. During the town's annual history days, the music

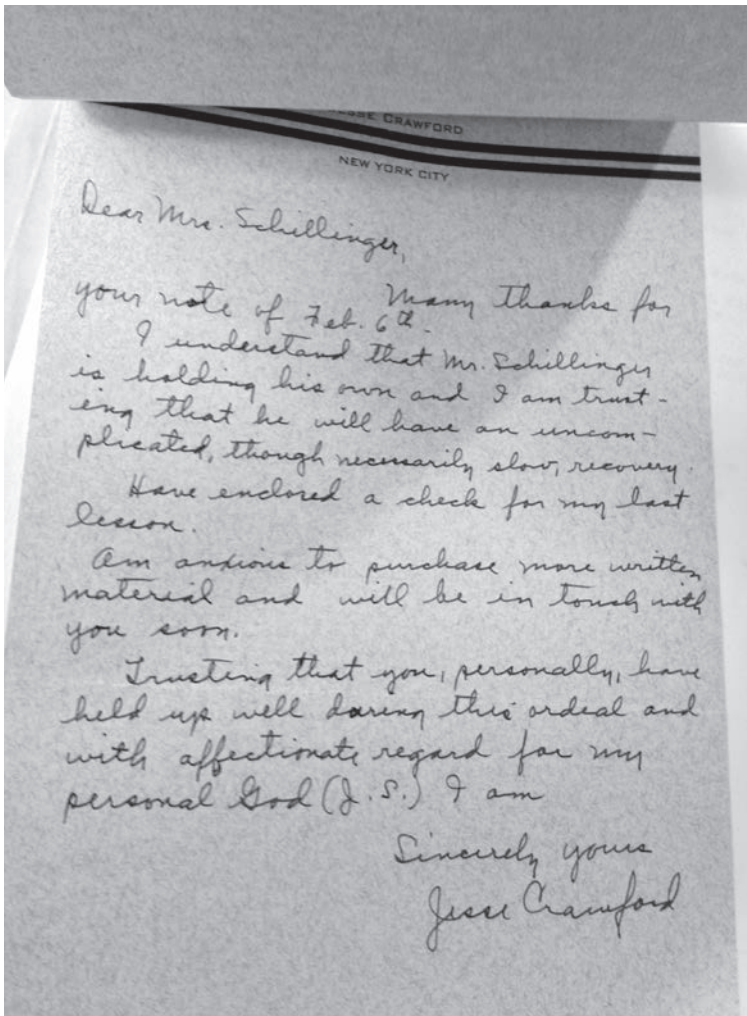
of George Wright is always heard in the background. Staring upward at a towering redwood tree that GW planted on his fourth birthday provided a reassuring sign of his continuing presence in his hometown. More amazing interviews were to lie ahead, of course.

I have been privileged to meet so many fascinating people during this quest for knowledge, and I still have a number of interviews yet to complete. The dozens of interviews have all provided a rich picture of this highly complex and incredibly talented individual. Weaving it all into a readable and enjoyable tome is a tremendous challenge, but well worth the effort. There will never be another GW, but hopefully this biography will keep his memory and talent alive for generations to come.

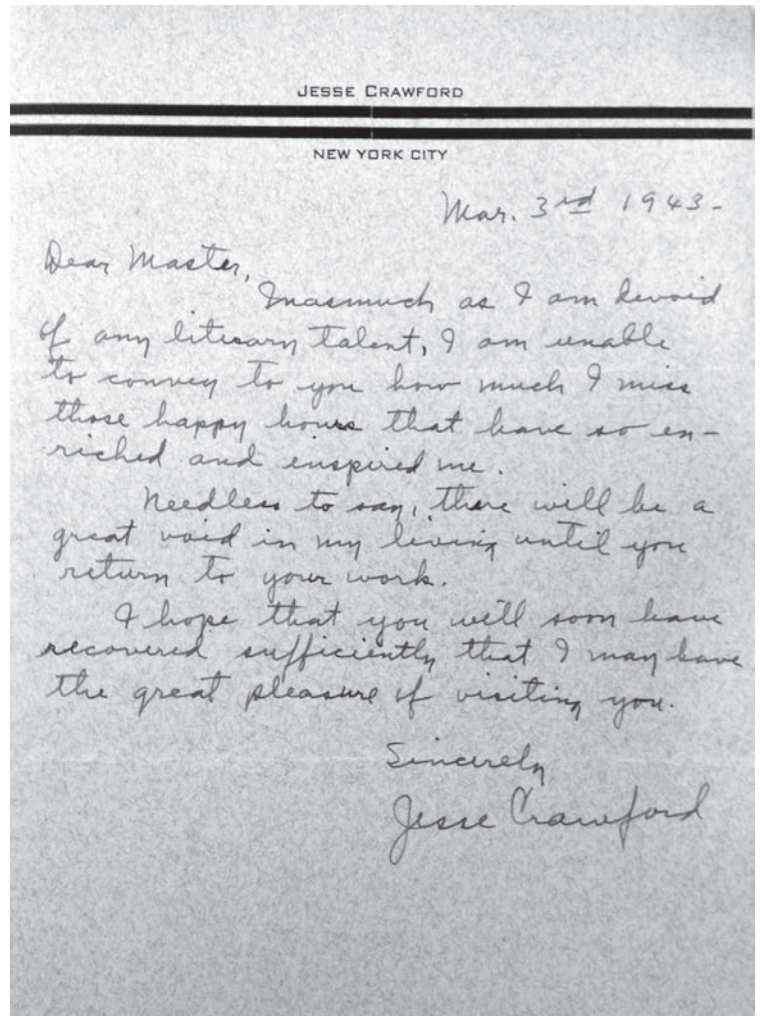
The biography is currently slated for publication/release at the 2016 ATOS convention in Cleveland. Much work lies ahead, and it wouldn't be possible

without the assistance of some amazing collaborators: Mark Renwick (Florida) and Brett Pratt (California) are collaborating on a comprehensive discography and tune list. We continue to discover more and more recordings on which GW played, and his recorded output is astounding! Former Conn organist Richard Rogers and Mesa Organ Stop's Lew Williams have offered to help with editing tasks. Robert Hope-Jones' amazing cover design will be used. This book would not be possible without the help of such talented, knowledgeable, and generous collaborators!

Needless to say, I've also been able to collect some significant GW memorabilia during the course of the research process. That, along with all of my research materials and recordings, will ultimately go to the archives at the University of Oklahoma. As a complement to the book, purchasers will also be able to access thousands of images and sound files on an accompanying website. I hope to do a short session at the



Letter from Jesse Crawford to Joseph Schillinger's wife, Frances, in which he refers to Schillinger as his "personal God" (New York Public Library - Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center)



Letter from Jesse Crawford to Joseph Schillinger, sent just three weeks before Schillinger's death (New York Public Library - Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center)

Philadelphia convention to share some of my research, photos, and recordings with those interested in learning how the book is progressing. If you have something (stories/pictures/recordings/documents, etc.) that you would like to contribute, please contact me at [GeorgeWrightBook@gmail.com](mailto:GeorgeWrightBook@gmail.com). Thanks, and stay tuned!

Orland Theatre

Orland Theatre interior



# Chapter News

## ALABAMA

Birmingham—The third of the three events that occurred between the Summer Film Festival and the Christmas Film Festival was the appearance of Tom Hoehn at the keyboards of the Mighty Wurlitzer in early November. Alabama's Big Bertha is perfectly suited to his unique style which ranges from sensitive to the dramatic. Tom was a student of the legendary Don Baker, and his playing reflects that influence.

In December, over 30,000 people visited the theatre for the Christmas film series, all of whom had the opportunity to hear the grand organ in the hands of organists Gary Jones, Stuart Thompson, and Kenny Lewis.

In January, the chapter hosted Rick McGee of Atlanta, one of Alabama's favorites. As always, Rick presented an interesting and varied program, improvising arrangements and registration changes on the fly as he made music on the Wurlitzer.

February 15 was the date of a very special occasion. For the first time in over two decades, the Alabama chapter of ATOS and the Birmingham chapter of the AGO met together at the Alabama Theatre for an afternoon of organ music. Martin Ellis was the artist for the occasion. It was his first collaboration with Bertha, and what a musical feast it was!

For the first half, Martin performed works that explored the classical side of the organ. His registrations were exceptionally creative, evoking sounds from the organ that were new to the theatre organ audience. The classical audience heard orchestral sounds uncommon in their world—and even some percussions! The second half of the program provided the opportunity for all the musical fun and entertainment that ATOS people expect from the Mighty Wurlitzer, but was new to the AGO members.

The afternoon was full of friendliness and fun.

—Larry Davis  
Gary Jones, President  
205-942-5611, smg4music@me.com



Rick McGee at the Alabama Theatre  
(Photo by Tom Cronier)



Martin Ellis at the Alabama Theatre  
(Photo by Larry Davis)

## ATLANTA

Atlanta—In January, the Atlanta chapter returned to Stephenson High School for a program on our Grande Page pipe organ. The chosen artist for the month was Jim Wingate, who brings with him a formidable resume, having been a staff organist at the United Artist Theatre in Louisville, Kentucky, and at the Beacon Theatre and Radio City Music Hall in New York. He has also recorded on the studio Wurlitzer at Radio City. At present, he is the organist at Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church in Sandy Springs, Georgia, where he has also accompanied silent films on the beautiful Austin organ. The Page organ crew has heard Mr. Wingate make wonderful music many times during work sessions on the Page, and on the appointed Sunday, it was the opportunity for the chapter to enjoy a diverse program that reflected both his theatre organ background and his classical/liturgical experience. His registrations were unique as he explored voices and combinations, many off-trem, that were new even to those who know the organ well.

In February, 20 members of the Atlanta chapter accepted the gracious invitation of our sister chapter in Alabama to join them at the magnificent Alabama Theatre, “Showplace of the South,” for a joint program sponsored by the Alabama chapter of ATOS and Birmingham AGO. It was a wonderful day for those who had not previously been in the theatre, and for all who came, a truly enjoyable concert presentation from the esteemed Martin Ellis at the keyboards of the Mighty Wurlitzer.

In Marietta, Georgia, chapter organists Ron Carter, Misha Stefanuk, and Rick McGee continued to open for shows on the Allen GW4 at the Strand Theatre, and in February, Ron accompanied the silent film *The Big Parade*, the first film in the Strand's 2015 silent film series.

—Larry Davis  
Larry Davis, President  
770-428-4091, acatos@earthlink.net



Jim Wingate at Stephenson High School  
(Photo by Larry Davis)



The Alabama Theatre (Photo by Larry Davis)



## BINGHAMTON

Binghamton, New York—Sunday, July 20, 2014 marked another first for us and probably for the rest of the theatre organ world. Binghamton High School Steel Drum Band, a unique percussion group, joined guest organist Nathan Avakian for his *Outside the Box 2* program. They created some crazy new music along with Nathan's original scores for the International Youth Silent Film Festival entries. As part of the program, Nathan showed the five three-minute films which were this year's winners. A recording was made of this well-received program—with an eventual CD release possible.

On Sunday, September 28, Gene Roberson, a well-known veteran California theatre organist, appeared for the first time in the Northeast (not counting his Radio City shows). He used fun and complicated programming which we titled *Anything Goes*, starting with a mask- and cape-induced *Phantom*, the "Warsaw Concerto" (on piano), J.S. Bach's "Toccatina and Fugue in D-Minor" with the original manuscript projected on-screen, and a host of other extremely well-improvised tunes. It's "bring-'im-back" for Gene! Special guests for the '70s sing-along were the Johnson City High School pops chorus, the Sophisticats!

Sunday, December 28 brought resident master theatre organist Jim Ford again to the Robert-Morton featuring his planned *Silent Film Funnies Fest* which tickled the audience's funny bones in the most unusual places! We showed the 1913 *The Insects' Christmas*; *The Conquest of the Pole* from 1912; Will Rogers' 1924 *Big Moments from Little Pictures*; and Chaplin's first full-length feature comedy, *Tillie's Punctured Romance* from 1914. All films were made available by David Shephard's Film Preservation Associates. We held our first raffle drawing the same day—which started us on new fund raising ventures!

—Paul F. Stapel  
John Demaree, President  
570-663-3017



Nathan Avakian and the Binghamton High School Steel Drum Band (Photo by Jim Mead)

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

Pinellas Park, Florida—Tuesday, January 20, Bill Vlasak returned to the Pinellas Park auditorium to play the monthly concert on the chapter theatre pipe organ. These concerts are free and open to the public on the third Tuesday of the month at 11:30am. It is thanks to skilled artists like Bill that our monthly concerts are popular and well attended.

Due to availability of the Pinellas Park auditorium, chapter monthly meetings are now held at 7:00pm on the second Tuesday of the month. The location is at 7960 59th Street North, Pinellas Park, Florida.

Central Florida Theatre Organ Society sponsored a February 7 concert at the historic Tampa Theatre. Dave Wickerham escaped a little of the Michigan winter weather to play the 3/14 Wurlitzer. Dave proved once again that the theatre is a great place for a concert—and his selections showed off the instrument very effectively. The combination of great artist and great setting can't be beat.

—Gary Blais  
Cliff Shaffer, President  
727-504-7012, [cliff71@aol.com](mailto:cliff71@aol.com)

## CENTRAL INDIANA

Indianapolis, Indiana—For our first business meeting and social of 2015, CIC met at the Hedback Community Theatre, home of the theatre company Footlite Musicals and the chapter's 2/11 Page/Wurlitzer, undoubtedly the most-heard theatre pipe organ in the Indianapolis area. The music for the social was presented by long-time member of CIC, George Smith of Anderson, Indiana. George, who is also the house organist at the beautiful atmospheric Anderson Paramount Theatre

and its original Page theatre pipe organ, played a lovely program. George is also one of the organists who provide pre-show organ music before every Footlite Musicals production.

The February CIC business meeting and social was held at the Carl E. Wright Auditorium at Emmerich Manual High School, home of the 3-manual, 26-rank Wurlitzer that our chapter installed there in 1989-90. Chapter member Justin Nimmo provided the musical entertainment for the afternoon. He played an enjoyable program which included songs in line with the St. Valentine's Day theme. Justin also performs regularly before Footlite Musicals performances.

Upcoming concerts presented by the Central Indiana chapter at the Warren Performing Arts Center feature Chris Elliott on June 14 and Justin LaVoie on October 11. Concert times are 2:30pm.

—Mike Rolfe  
Tom Nichols, President  
317-417-7414, [thomasnichols@prodigy.net](mailto:thomasnichols@prodigy.net)

## CHICAGO AREA

Chicago, Illinois—In February, CATOE, along with our friends from CTOS, met at Downers Grove North High School to hear Detroit-area organist David Calendine play the school's 3/10 Wurlitzer. All in attendance enjoyed the varied program. After David's encore, several of our members and guests tried their hand at the Mighty Wurlitzer.

CATOE is planning public concerts with Walt Strony and Dave Wickerham playing the 3/10 Wurlitzers at the Tivoli Theatre and Downers Grove High School. These two instruments are just a few blocks apart, and this is the first time that such an event has been planned. Check out our web page for more information: [www.catoe61.org](http://www.catoe61.org).

This will be a very big year for CATOE with many projects planned for several of the instruments in the Chicago area. The Tivoli, Downers Grove High School and the Arcada in St. Charles will all see some big changes! We are very excited about the prospects for the theatre scene in our area!

—Taylor Trimby  
David Rhodes, President  
630-687-0380, [DVRhodes85@gmail.com](mailto:DVRhodes85@gmail.com)

# Chapter News



David Calendine at Downers Grove North High School (Photo by Taylor Trimby)

## CHICAGOLAND

Chicago, Illinois—From a home in Winnetka, to a Catholic church in Arlington Heights, to another home. Then Al Miller moved it twice and, after 30 years, his dream of the 2/13 Estey pipe organ is a reality—and it's a honey! Meanwhile, wife Arlene hand-painted Christmas ornaments at the White House, not once but twice, and has displayed her beautiful oil paintings in their cozy organ rec-room. This gracious couple has opened their lovely home in Lombard for a CTOS picnic for the ninth time!

The 2/13 was a fine fit for Dennis Scott, our artist of the day. He began with a Cole Porter tune, then two autumn-themed songs. Arlene and Al recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. With this in mind, Dennis used 1954 as a reference point for the program that included songs made famous by the Chordettes, Doris Day, and Rosemary Clooney—Dennis always enlightens us with interesting facts. Next was his top-notch organ accompaniment for the Buster Keaton silent film *Balloonatic*. Such fun! Dennis closed with an unknown tune, "I'm Glad to See You Got What You Want," as played by his mentor, John Muri. What a swell program and a tasty ninth picnic!

Lee Maloney moved his Allen store from Naperville to Bolingbrook, and our CTOS clubhouse is a beautiful, new "showroom" for his Allen sales. Long-time friend of CTOS members, Sam Yacono provided the program for our November 9 social. Sam gave us a nostalgic program of tunes from yesteryear on the Allen as well as the Hammond B3. A real

talker, Sam acts cool but plays peppy. Thanks, Sam, for the stroll down memory lane! Thanks, too, to all who entertained during open console and to Bill Curry for keeping them in line!

—Jan Challender, President  
815-726-7665, janfromjoliet@gmail.com

## COLUMBIA RIVER

Portland, Oregon—We have been busy! The volunteer work parties continue the very detailed restoration of parts. The Beverly Ruth Nelson Memorial virtual organ is providing exceptional theatre organ sounds with the support and cooperation of the management and board of the Hollywood Theatre.

Once again, the International Youth Silent Film Festival (IYSFF) Northwest Regional competition was presented at the Hollywood Theatre with Nathan Avakian at the console. The Hollywood was the original venue for the first YSFF, which has now expanded internationally. The 2015 event is scheduled, and the Columbia River chapter will once again be a participant.

We also provided support for the very successful Summer Youth Adventure for a second year.

With the cooperation of the Hollywood Theatre management, we presented three Buster Keaton silent films last fall along with several classic shorts: September featured "The General"; October was "Sherlock Jr."; and November concluded the series with "The Navigator," all accompanied by Dean Lemire. There are plans for similar silent film presentations this year.

Our Christmas party was at Sleighbells Farm and Gifts in Sheridan, Oregon. Donna Parker, Jonas Nordwall, and Martin Ellis, along with several of our members entertained at the 3-manual Conn theatre organ. ATOS Marketplace Manager Rob Vastine runs Sleighbells, and he and his staff were exceptional hosts.

Organ workshops are already scheduled for this year with mini-concerts and locations in members' homes and several other locations, the regular membership meetings and the annual picnic.

There is "light at the end of the chambers" with the possibility that the chambers in the Hollywood Theatre may soon be scheduled for restoration, allowing the gradual installation of pipes. Meanwhile, an 18-note Wurlitzer

Wood Diaphone has been placed on the stage behind the movie screen, ready for winding.

—Ron Deamer  
Jonas Nordwall, President  
jgnordwall@comcast.net

## DELAWARE VALLEY

Cheltenham, Pennsylvania—On Saturday, January 17, TOSDV members and guests had the opportunity to meet at the Colonial Theatre in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania for an open house and open console on our 3/24 Wurlitzer Opus 585 theatre pipe organ.

Part of the open house was to introduce non-members of the community to the theatre organ, and how it differs from church organs—what you see (the console) and what you don't see (the blower, the pipes, the percussions, etc.). Our president, Wayne Zimmerman, handled this part of the program.

During open console, a number of members and non members tried their hand at the Wurlitzer, including Dick Auchincoss, Tom Rotunno, Thom Madura, and Brett Miller.

New member Brett Miller is also our youngest member—at 12 years old!

Altogether, a pleasant morning at the Colonial.

—Dick Metzger  
Wayne Zimmerman, President  
610-429-5378, WayneZimSr@aol.com



Members Bill Morong (L) and Brett Miller  
(Photo by Wayne Zimmerman)

## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Wellesley, Massachusetts—The EMCATOS annual Young Organist Concert, sponsored by member Charles Briggs, featured Justin LaVoie, who was named ATOS Student of the Year in 2010 and won the 2013 ATOS Young Organist Competition. Our audience was treated to a program which vibrantly displayed the breadth and depth of his study from the age of seven: six years of electronic organ, several ATOS Summer Youth Adventures, a period of study with Jelani Eddington, and actual experience with movie overtures and intermissions on the Barton at the Redford Theatre in Detroit, Michigan. His meticulous style of fingering occasionally produced very realistic reproductions of prototypical solo instruments, such as the bluesy wail of a clarinet. His selections included jazz, standards, show tunes, dances, and classical numbers, all excitingly arranged or transcribed, and sounding fresh and new.

Seamus Gethicker, a young EMCATOS organist, performed an impressive short number after the intermission.

The chapter's March social featured member Ed Wawrzynowicz and the Massachusetts Accordion Club. This ensemble included about eight accordions plus a trumpet. Ed alternated between playing his accordion with the group and accompanying the accordions with the Mighty Wurlitzer. It was an afternoon of fun—and something different for EMCATOS members and their friends.

—Roger Austin

Bob Evans, President

508-674-0276, bob@organloft.org



Justin LaVoie and Seamus Gethicker  
(Photo by Charles Briggs)



Massachusetts Accordion Club  
(Photo by Richard Handverger)

## GARDEN STATE

Little Falls, New Jersey—The Northeast was pounded with one snow storm after another as 2015 began. This slowed us down a little bit, but the organ music continues. Our February business meeting was held in the Rahway Senior Center. After discussions and decisions we relaxed with open console. The musicians on hand took turns playing the historic 3/10 Rainbow Room Wurlitzer, while other members enjoyed delicious foods prepared by Thom Madura and others who came out for the gathering.

At the Loews Jersey Theatre the monthly classic film series continues with pre-movie entertainment by various organists. Bernie Anderson and Paul Citti, two of the regulars for these events, were joined in March by a rather young GSTOS member. Brett Miller took command of the 4/23 Wonder Morton for two pre-film shows. After hearing the 12-year old talent play at various open consoles, Brett was invited to take a turn at the keyboards and surprise the audience with the impressive sounds he can bring from a big theatre pipe organ.

Like the rest of nature, we have been spending our wintertime preparing for new energies to blossom in the spring. We are fortunate to have many instruments in our area, and our program chair, Virginia Messing, makes sure that we have monthly musical events. Some are public, some are private; some are in theatres, and some in homes; but always with some of the best local and national musicians available.

—Catherine Martin, President  
973-256-5480, cmartin@cse.edu



The art-deco console of the Rainbow Room  
3/10 Wurlitzer in Rahway  
(Photo by Tony Rustako)



Brett Miller at the 4/23 Wonder Morton console  
in Loews Jersey Theatre (Photo by Carol Miller)

## JOLIET

Joliet, Illinois—We had a wonderful Christmas dinner at the Rialto on January 4 in the rotunda of the theatre, due to the theatre itself not being available in December. In spite of the terrible cold weather we had a large turnout. Jelani Eddington was our special guest artist on the beautiful Barton organ. What a beautiful holiday we had.

Our next social was in February and, again, in spite of minus-30-degree temperatures we had a real good turnout. We started out with our annual business meeting. JATOE is doing very well financially, so we seem to be in good shape. It was pointed out Dorothy Mavrich was responsible in 1975 for stopping the Rialto Theatre from being torn down. There is a plaque hanging on the wall in her honor.

One of our members, Judy Matarelli, is to play in Philadelphia on July 4.

Our Extravaganza #19 is coming up April 25 and 26. We will have four artists at the console and of course, the beautiful orchestra that we had last year. Jelanni Eddington does all the orchestrations for this event.

# Chapter News

Our artist for the social on February 15 was Justin Nimmo, who did a fantastic job, and didn't even need music in front of him.

I would like to mention that our crew chief, Glenn Tallar, had the Barton in perfect condition. It was very cold that day, but the organ acted like a perfect lady. I haven't heard a cipher since Glenn took over as crew chief. We are very lucky to have someone who knows what has to be done on the organ. Glenn also works on the Chicago Theatre organ as well.

Keep warm. Spring must be coming soon....

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

## LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Woking, Surrey—Our first show of 2015 saw the welcome return of Donald MacKenzie to the console of our Woking Wurlitzer.

Many may be aware that Donald is house organist at Odeon's flagship cinema at Leicester Square in London, playing for film premieres and other events. One of Donald's specialities is the accompaniment of silent movies. We were therefore delighted that Donald brought to life in music, the antics of the ever-popular Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy in *Do Detectives Think?* A well-constructed and wonderfully-timed improvised accompaniment was fully appreciated by our audience.

Donald's programme included several items which I had not heard before, and I particularly enjoyed hearing some of the softer sounds of the organ, including a rare and welcome solo outing for the Vibraphone/Chrysoglott.

We have a selection of ten artistes to present at Woking during 2015, displaying a variety of different styles, including Kevin Grunill, Len Rawle, Kevin Morgan, and Robert Wolfe. Playing a cameo spot during Len's concert in July will be the runner-up of our 2014 Young Organist competition, Jamyma-May Hanson. The winner, Thomas Pickering, delighted the audience at our 2014 Christmas show.

Talking of the Young Theatre Organist of the Year competition, committee member Michael Wooldridge is working hard making arrangements for our 2015 competition which is to be held on 26th July at the Musical Museum at Kew Bridge, by kind permission

of the Trustees. We look forward to another enjoyable and successful day.

—Peter Collett  
Nick Ashton, Chairman  
+44 7580 332217  
chairman@atos-london.co.uk



Donald Mackenzie at Woking  
(Photo by Keith Reeve)

## LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles, California—LATOS has been enjoying, and greatly benefitting from, the efforts of our current governing board, which includes Mark Herman and Tony Wilson, newly-appointed late last year.

Our annual meeting, held on December 14, 2014 was a fun affair. It took place at Paramount Iceland. This establishment is owned and operated by the Zamboni family, from which the famous Zamboni ice surfacing machine was born. The ice rink houses a Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ installed in 1941 which is played weekly by our own board member, Bill Campbell. The Zamboni family graciously opened its doors for our meeting during which an open console was enjoyed by several members who came prepared to try their hand at the console. This made for a most enjoyable experience.

February 21 found LATOS members and friends at the South Pasadena High School where our 3/17 Wurlitzer resides. This proved to be an unexpected evening of joy and surprises. Our organist, Dave Moreno, gave it his all in demonstrating the organ's capabilities and skillfully accompanied both a cartoon and a Harold Lloyd comedy, *Speedy*. After the show ended the audience was invited onstage to see the console up close.

—Angie Hougen, President  
818-667-4785, hougen@sbcglobal.net



Bill Campbell at Paramount Iceland  
(Photo by Tony Wilson)



Dave Moreno at South Pasadena High  
(Photo by Tony Wilson)

## NEW YORK

New York, New York—On February 1, membership chairman Walter Hilsenbeck hosted an open house and open console at his 3/11 Wurlitzer in Massapequa, New York. Approximately 15 members attended, which was the third such event that Mr. Hilsenbeck has hosted recently. All who were present had the opportunity to enjoy a variety of music and company. Thanks to the Hilsenbecks for their generosity in hosting these events.

—Dan Minervini  
Steven Frank, Chairman  
718-456-9741, steve@virgilfox.com



Members gathered around the console of Walter Hilsenbeck's 3/11 Wurlitzer (Photo by Joe Amato)



Donna Parker at the "Firehouse" 4/46 Walker Christmas concert. (Photo by Ken Brown)



Bob Whiteman presented the silent movie classic *Oliver Twist*. (Photo by Ken Brown)

## NORTH TEXAS

Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas—The holiday season was celebrated in grand style by the North Texas chapter with an evening of music, food and fun. Organist Donna Parker presented a program of holiday favorites, show tunes, and a bit of everything else, just to keep things entertaining. Chapter member Bob Acker opened his home for the event so guests could hear the "Firehouse" 4/46 Walker digital theater organ put through its paces. As always, Donna did a superb job, and the evening went a long way toward putting everyone in the holiday spirit. The guests each brought a covered dish, and were treated to a banquet during the intermission, where many had the opportunity to speak with the artist about her work.

The chapter started the 2015 calendar year in February with a traditional silent movie. Organist and chapter member Bob Whiteman provided his original score for the 1922 Jackie Coogan classic *Oliver Twist*. The film has long been a Hollywood favorite, having been remade more than a dozen times since the original was released in 1907. Bob's score was thoughtful and reflective of the sometimes-dreary and heartless backdrop of 19th-century London.

Since silent movies appear to be popular with local audiences, chapter members are looking forward to a spring festival of silent shorts featuring several artists contributing their talents to present a variety of brief comedy features.

—Mike Tarzis  
Don Peterson, President  
972-422-7757, dpete.tx@verizon.net

## ORANGE COUNTY

Fullerton, California—December was a busy month for the Orange County Theatre Organ Society. Early in December we held our annual open console and potluck. With over 40 members and guests in attendance, lots of good food and plenty of fine music were enjoyed by all. The annual membership meeting reelected the current board of directors.

On December 21, OCTOS teamed up with the Villa Park High School Band Booster Club to present a holiday show at Plummer Auditorium. With over 800 people in attendance, the sounds of the season filled the auditorium. With over 100 musicians, choir, and soloists, it was a fast-paced 45-minute show. Major Chuck Jay, as director and conductor, led the ensemble. Our own David Marsh was featured at the Mighty Wurlitzer throughout the entire show. Included as a special demonstration were a short talk by Major Jay on the history of the organ and a musical tour of the instrument by David Marsh. It seems only yesterday when a young, awkward, early teenager came to an open

console to try a theatre pipe organ for the first time. We were all amazed at this young man's talent, and he has continued to develop his skills. He just completed high school and plans to further his musical education. We expect great things from him!

To see this entire show, it is available online at [villaparkim.com](http://villaparkim.com).

January 25, 2015 Ty Woodward delighted our audience with variety of favorite organ pieces. This was his first show for OCTOS at Plummer, and we anticipate hearing him again on the Plummer Wurlitzer.

—Don Near  
Ed Bridgeford, President  
714-529-5594, ebridgeford@sbcglobal.net



Orange County Holiday Concert (Photo by Blake Rambo)



Ty Woodward at the Plummer Wurlitzer (Photo by Yoshio Nakamura)

## PIKES PEAK

Colorado Springs, Colorado—Work is nearing completion on our chapter's restoration of the 1923 Style 135 Wurlitzer in the Walsenburg Fox Theatre in south-central Colorado. The original piano-consoled organ served in a local church from about 1940 until about ten years ago. It was then donated back the theatre where it sat awaiting restoration. Our chapter's technical folks under the expert

# Chapter News

leadership of Don Wick have been working on it, and it is finally beginning to make sounds. Don has re-leathered the entire instrument and we have been successful in replacing most of the parts that were not moved to the church. We are planning to recreate the original specification of Flute, String, Vox Humana, and Trumpet. Hopefully there will be performances this year.

Back in Colorado Springs, our four Christmas-season *Sacklunch Serenade* shows were fairly well attended and we look forward to our 21st season beginning in May. The shows will run every Thursday, Noon until 1:00pm, in May through August. Various local artists will perform. Most shows are at Colorado Springs City Auditorium in downtown Colorado Springs. The organ is the original 3/8 Wurlitzer Style F Special, 1927, originally installed in the Burns Theatre a few blocks away.

Our friend Jim Calm from Denver was the featured artist at the Pipes and Pizza party at the Organ Gym in February, 105 attended. About 65 folks came on March 1 for our *March Madness* show, and Bob Flinn, Jim Calm, and Dave Weesner all performed rousing marches on the Joel Kremer 4/35. Hey, the organ is installed in a gymnasium—this gives new musical meaning to the term “March Madness!”

March 29 will be our presentation of *King of Kings* at the Organ Gym, and John Ledwon will be appearing on May 2 and 3.

—Dave Weesner

John Grunow, Chairman  
719-473-2010

## RIVER CITY

Omaha, Nebraska—RCTOS held their January monthly chapter meeting at Elmwood Tower, an independent senior living facility. Normally the program would have been played on the facility’s Conn organ, but after powering up the instrument it was evident that it was not functional, as the power supply was burning. The program was then altered to be played on Elmwood Tower’s grand piano.

The February 15 chapter meeting was held at the Omaha Scottish Rite Masonic Temple. The temple is a beautiful facility and has recently restored their 1927 Kilgen pipe organ. The program was presented by Lincoln, Nebraska organist Brent Shaw,

vocalist Nathaniel Sullivan, and saxophonist Nick May, all excellent award-winning young musicians. RCTOS officers Greg Johnson, Jeanne Sabatka, and Jerry Pawlak also contributed to the program. Most who attended the event enjoyed a buffet in Scottish Rite’s beautiful dining room.

RCTOS is proud to host the 2015 Summer Youth Adventure in Omaha. The primary instructional venue will be the Markworth residence, home of the Kimball 3/24 theatre pipe organ, with sessions at the Rose Theater and Orpheum Theater Wurlitzers.

RCTOS’ annual concert at the Rose Theater’s 3/21 Wurlitzer will be on Sunday, August 9, 2015 at 3:00pm and will feature organist Dave Wickerham, a short silent comedy, and Omaha Street Percussion.

Visit our website, [www.rctos.com](http://www.rctos.com), for current news, concert information and videos.

—Jerry Pawlak

Bob Markworth, President  
402-573-9071, [kimballorgan1@msn.com](mailto:kimballorgan1@msn.com)



Nick May, Brent Shaw, and Nathaniel Sullivan  
at Scottish Rite Masonic Temple, Omaha  
(Photo by Jerry Pawlak)



Greg Johnson, Jeanne Sabatka, and Jerry  
Pawlak at Scottish Rite Masonic Temple,  
Omaha (Photo by Jerry Pawlak)

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver, Colorado—Over 800 enthusiastic audience members enjoyed our January 25 performance of *Pipes & Stripes IX* at the Denver Paramount with organists Bob Castle, Jim Calm and Randy Morris at the Wurlitzer Publix 1. Also featured were the Rocky Mountain Brassworks directed by Doug Harris, and the Wind Ensemble of the 101st Army Band of the Colorado National Guard directed by Staff Sergeant Sean Hedding. The Flatirons Young Marines Color Guard looked snappy bringing in the colors as the twin consoles rose on their lifts to join the combined bands in performing the national anthem.

Special attention was given to registrations for the two-console duets and a band-with-organ piece separating the chambers, so the master console used exclusively main chamber ranks and the auxiliary console used only solo chamber ranks. Organist Randy Morris began one of his band-with-organ pieces playing the Publix 1’s auxiliary console, dropped into the pit during the band-alone middle section, then launched the master console for the sonorous final section and remained there for his solo organ time. The organ performed flawlessly and sounded great, thanks to the outstanding work of master pipe organ technician Don Wick assisted by David Charles, Ryan Kroll and Bob Castle.

Around fifty chapter members attended Wichita artist Brett Valliant’s February silent movie performance in Highlands Ranch—and left full of pizza and fond memories. We love it when this multi-talented young man comes to Denver and we hope to see him again soon.

The Searle family hosted a memorial gathering in honor of our late friend Duane “Dewey” Searle in February. Lots of family and friends were present, and organists were Jim Calm, Bob Castle, and DeLoy Goeglein.

—Jim Calm

Ryan Kroll, President  
[rkroll@colfax.com](mailto:rkroll@colfax.com)



*Pipes & Stripes IX finale (Photo by Bill Kwinn)*



*Long-time house organist Bob Castle at the Denver Paramount Publix 1 (Photo by Bill Kwinn)*

## ST. LOUIS

St. Louis, Missouri—The January 2015 meeting of the Saint Louis Theatre Organ Society hosted by organ technician extraordinaire Al Haker at the City Museum in downtown St. Louis. It was a rather cool night, but not too cold for January, with a nice turnout of members and several guests. As usual, Al had the 3/17 Wurlitzer theatre organ working very well for our featured organist of the evening, Jack Moelmann. We're used to seeing and hearing Jack play at the Fox Theatre, and at his home near O'Fallon, Illinois. So, it was a real treat to hear him take the museum organ through its paces. He played some patriotic and armed forces tunes, but also added several pop and standard pieces which were a delight to hear. During open console a few decided to play—including this writer who had a lot of fun, thanks to a lot of help from Mark Gifford.

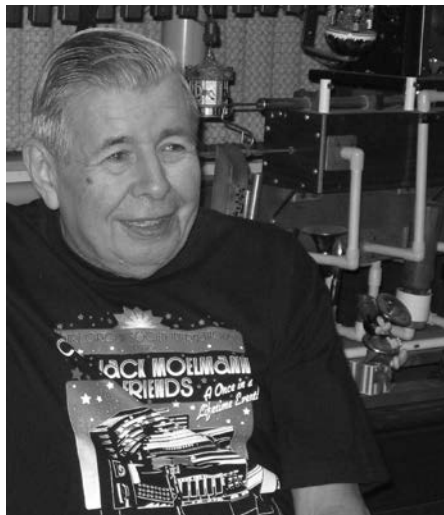
It was cold. It was going to snow. The highways were a mess, having received a treatment of salt and beet juice! Despite the conditions, many intrepid individuals trekked to the home of Larry and Bonita Krupp in Collinsville, Illinois for our February

meeting. Larry played the Rodgers 321 and then, much to our surprise, Bonny played too! Many of us didn't know Bonny could play. As she explained, she and Larry were at college together. She was studying piano with a minor in organ while he was studying organ with minor in piano! They dated, romanced, and married, and have made a wonderful life together. She then amazed us with some beautiful renditions of popular music. Larry returned to the bench to finish the afternoon with a couple of Latin-flavor numbers played in his wonderful style. Afterward, as usual, there was open console, and many wonderful snacks.

—Gary Broyles

*Jim Ryan, President*

*314-416-0146, jim@sltos.org*



*SLTOS January featured organist Jack Moelmann (Photo by Gary Broyles)*



*Larry Krupp, SLTOS February featured organist (Photo by Gary Broyles)*

## SIERRA

Sacramento, California—January 31 was the date for the Fair Oaks Parks District's annual silent movie night co-presented by the chapter at the Fair Oaks Community Club House. The small WPA-era auditorium seats nearly 200, and is the home of the chapter's 3/13 Wurlitzer with the Buddy Cole Morton console. A sell-out crowd enjoyed several silent comedies, featuring Dave Moreno showing off the Wurlitzer. Dave did his usual fine presentation accompanying the films, including the comic interludes between films that are becoming his hallmark. Because well over half of the attendees are new to theatre organ, Dave concludes these shows with a rendering of "It's a Small, Small World" allowing the opportunity to audition almost all the sounds of the organ. Kudos to the Parks District's Sabrina Bernardo, Nick Davison, and Katy Albers for their efforts in this event.

In Rocklin, a town at the northeast corner of the Sacramento metro area, progress is moving forward rapidly on Dick Taylor's building that will house the New York Paramount Studio 4/21 Wurlitzer. For all who have seen the quality of the progress being made it is evident that this historic Wurlitzer will have a wonderfully appropriate new home to house what will eventually be a beautifully restored organ.

—Randy Warwick, President

*661-333-5627, rwarwick@bak.rr.com*



*Dave Moreno at the Fair Oaks console (Photo by Randy Warwick)*

# Chapter News

## SOONER STATE

Tulsa, Oklahoma—In January the Sooner State chapter started the new year off with one of our favorite things to do—a “Silent Movie Night.” The movie which was selected for the evening was *The Freshman*, a 1925 feature-length comedy accompanied by member Bill Rowland at the console of our 1928 Robert-Morton.

The movie, starring Harold Lloyd, is about a college freshman who wants to become very popular, and tries to achieve his goal by joining the school’s football team. It is one of Lloyd’s most successful films, and in 1990 was selected for preservation in the US National Film Registry by the Library of Congress.

The evening began with a sing-along featuring songs from 1925. Afterward, popcorn and lemonade were served to over 300 in attendance, thanks to Charlie Hodges and friends.

The month of February has featured “Gospel Music Night” for our chapter for the past several years and has been a great success each year. This year’s was outstanding and well received by all in attendance. We heard a great variety of gospel music in various styles played on our Robert-Morton and Kimball grand piano by members Bill Rowland, Carolyn Craft, Joyce Hatchett, Phil Judkins, Lynda Ramsey, and Paula Hackler.

Our special guests were Dr. Joyce Bridgman, professor of piano at ORU; first-time guest Rev. Joseph Bias, vocalist; and Jocelyn Rowland, professional violinist and vocalist, and daughter of chapter president Bill Rowland.

There were solos on piano and organ as well as duets; a duet with violin and piano; and vocals with piano, organ and violin. For the first time, we had a sing-along. A special thanks to Rev. Joseph Bias for his outstanding vocals and to Jocelyn Rowland for her contributions.

—Paula Hackler  
Bill Rowland, President  
918-355-1562, Ragtimebill@gmail.com



*Silent Movie Night at the Sooner State Chapter (Photo by Rudy Geissler)*



*Gospel Music Night Participants (L to R): Rev. Joseph Bias, Dr. Joyce Bridgman, Phil Judkins, Lynda Ramsey, Jocelyn Rowland, Bill Rowland, Paula Hackler, Carolyn Craft, Joyce Hatchett (Photo by Phil Gray)*

## SOUTHERN JERSEY

Franklinville, New Jersey—The accompanying photo shows the rather naked horseshoe assembly from the console of the Broadway Theatre 3/8 Kimball in the shop of chapter member and recognized expert in the installation and care of pipe organs, Chuck Gibson.

In the process of getting ready for the upcoming ATOS convention, Chuck has stripped the horseshoe of the old stop tablets. New stop action magnets will be installed along with a solid state multi-level combination action and record-playback system. New stop tablets are being engraved and will be identical to the originals. The original relay action is being retained as it is in excellent working condition.

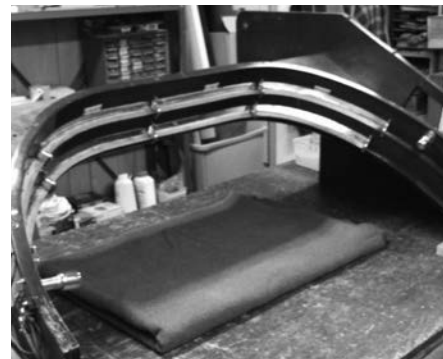
The original pneumatic combination action had some major components removed many years ago, supposedly for repairs. They were never returned and are considered lost. The assembly will be rebuilt and reinstalled in the console in plenty of time for use during the convention when Don Kinnier

will present a program including a silent movie.

Another chapter member deserving mention is John Breslin, who was a seventh-grade social studies teacher in the Upper Deerfield Township district here in South Jersey. In the Breslin basement music room there was a 3/7 Möller theatre organ. All of his classes had a turn visiting the strange thing; each visit included the sound, the sight (the pipe chambers) and the accompaniment of a short silent movie. Students who were studying the piano had their turns at the console. We wonder if any of those young pianists play an organ today! Almost 1,000 seventh graders were treated to an organ visit!

In recent years John has had the thrill of playing that monster 7/449 Midmer-Losh in the Atlantic City Boardwalk Convention Hall for groups taking the organ tour. You can take the tour, also. Just contact Dr. Steven Ball at sball@accnter.com for information.

—Fred Oltmann  
Joseph Rementer, President  
856-694-1471



*The horseshoe from the Broadway Theater Kimball (Photo by Chuck Gibson)*

(Just before press time, we received word that Southern Jersey chapter President Joseph Rementer has passed away. The Journal staff extends our condolences, and we expect a Closing Chord for the next issue.—Ed.)



# Closing Chord

## Robert Molesworth

The organ world lost a great enthusiastic theatre-organ nut.

Loving all things musical, he became an avid organ nut when a friend told him that he had to hear a theatre pipe organ, and sent him to the Sedgwick Theater in Germantown, Pennsylvania to hear Barbara Fasmire play. He was hooked from the start. He spoke to Barbara afterward, and she said he should join ATOS, which he did in 1964.

When we married the following year I found out how it was to be married to a theatre-organ nut. We attended many conventions and wherever we traveled, he checked out the area for theatre organs, getting into abandoned buildings, climbing creaky ladders and dusty chambers and always having fun.

He played both piano and organ by ear and always said that he played for his own amazement. We do have a two-manual, 11-rank organ with a full toy counter and roll player that is a marriage of many makers, but it seems that anyone who played it loved the sound.

Bob put it together himself with the sound he loved; he had a great ear and tuned the organ, too.

He had a unique ability to touch the lives of everyone he met, resulting in lifelong friends—telling them he enjoyed “Riding the Carousel of Life,” another passion.

I would like to thank all the wonderful friends we made in all the years we belonged to ATOS. It's been a fun ride.

My best to you all,

—Barbara



Bob Molesworth, riding the carousel of life  
(Photo courtesy of Barbara Molesworth)

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# Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs  
and Performances

Around the Circuit items may be submitted at any time, using the online form ([www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org)—click on “Events Calendar”). Submissions must be received by the tenth of the odd-numbered month prior to publication to be included in the upcoming issue.

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.

## UNITED STATES

### ALASKA

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

### ARIZONA

**Organ Stop Pizza**—1149 E Southern Avenue, Mesa, 480-813-5700 (4/78 Wurlitzer) [www.organstoppizza.com](http://www.organstoppizza.com). Charlie Balogh, Lew Williams. Evening Entertainment: Winter organ hours: Monday through Thursday, 4:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday 4:30pm to 10:00pm; Saturday 3:30pm to 10:00pm; Sunday 4:30pm to 9:00pm. Summer organ hours: Monday through Thursday, 5:30pm to 9:00pm; Friday 5:30pm to 10:00pm. Saturday 4:30pm to 10:00pm; Sunday 4:30pm to 9:00pm.

### CALIFORNIA

**Avalon Casino Theatre**—1 Casino Way, Catalina Island, 310-510-2414 (4/16 Page) [www.ecatalina.com/about-movie-theatre.html](http://www.ecatalina.com/about-movie-theatre.html). Pre-Show concert, Friday and Saturday, 6:15pm, John Tusak.

**Old Town Music Hall**—140 Richmond Street, El Segundo, 310-322-2592 (4/26 Wurlitzer). Organ played before and during shows, including silent movies. The theater opens on Friday at 8:15pm, Saturday 2:30pm, and Sunday at 2:30pm.

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

**El Capitan Theatre**—6838 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, 800-DISNEY6 (4/37 Wurlitzer) [www.elcapitantickets.com](http://www.elcapitantickets.com). Pre-Show concert. Organ played daily before shows. House Organist: Rob Richards, Staff Organists: John Ledwon, Ed Vodicka, and Ty Woodward.

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

**Orpheum Theatre**—842 S Broadway, Los Angeles (3/14 Wurlitzer) [www.laorpheum.com](http://www.laorpheum.com). Organ is featured as part of the guided tour of the theatre Saturday at 11:30am.

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

**Paramount Theatre**—2025 Broadway, Oakland, 510-465-6400 (4/27 Wurlitzer) [www.paramounttheatre.com](http://www.paramounttheatre.com). Public tours on first and third Saturday at 10:00am, starting at the box office.

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

**Paramount Iceland**—8041 Jackson Street, Paramount, 562-633-1171 (3/19 Wurlitzer) [www.paramounticeland.com](http://www.paramounticeland.com). Organ is played for skating sessions on Tuesday evenings from 7:00pm to 8:30pm, featured artist, Bill Campbell.

**Castro Theatre**—429 Castro Street, San Francisco, 415-621-6120 (4/21 Wurlitzer) [www.castrotheatre.com](http://www.castrotheatre.com). Intermissions played nightly by David Hegarty, Warren Lubich.

**Arlington Theatre**—1317 State Street, Santa Barbara (4/27 Robert-Morton) [sbtos.org](http://sbtos.org). Pre-show and intermissions for movies every Friday.

**Bob Hope Theatre**—242 E Main Street, Stockton (4/21 Robert-Morton). Organ played monthly by Dave Moreno before and after each movie.

**St. John's Lutheran Church**—4606 Michigan Avenue, Valley Home, 209-604-6942 (2/4 Robert-Morton). April 25, 2015 2:00pm: David Moreno.

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

### FLORIDA

**Polk Theatre**—121 S Florida Avenue, Lakeland, 863-682-7553 (3/12 Robert-Morton). Friday and Saturday, 7:10pm; Sunday, 1:40pm. Rodney Charles, Bob Courtney, Jim Helwig, Don Jeerings, Heidi J. Wuerfele, and Darrell Stuckey.

**Pinellas Park City Auditorium**—4951 78th Avenue, North Pinellas Park, 727-557-6087 (3/11 Wurlitzer). Free concert, third Tuesday of every month from 11:30am to 1:00pm.

**Grace Baptist Church**—8000 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, 941-371-0070 (4/32 Wurlitzer). Open console following most monthly meetings Sept. thru Dec., April and May. Professional concerts in January, February and March.

**Tampa Theatre**—711 N Franklin Street, Tampa, 813-274-8981 (3/14 Wurlitzer) [www.tampatheatre.org](http://www.tampatheatre.org). Pre-show concert. Wednesday: Chaz Bender; Thursday: Bob Courtney; Friday: Sandy Hobbs; Saturday: Bob Logan.

### GEORGIA

**Rylander Theatre**—310 W Lamar Street, Americus, 229-931-0001 (3/11 Möller) [www.rylander.org](http://www.rylander.org). Pre-show concert. Organ featured for pre-show productions of the Sumter Players and other events.

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

**Grand Theatre**—119 S Main Street, Fitzgerald, 229-426-5090 (3/18 Barton) [www.fitzgeraldgrand.org](http://www.fitzgeraldgrand.org). Organ is played 60 minutes before every film, six nights a week, monthly Sunday silent film series at 3:00pm. Films accompanied by staff organist, Jon Durkovic. Features include Laurel & Hardy, Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, and others. All silent film series proceeds go to the organ fund.

**Earl Smith Strand Theatre**—117 N Park Square NE, Marietta, 770-293-0080 (GW4Q Allen digital) [www.earlsmithstrand.org](http://www.earlsmithstrand.org). Organ played 30 minutes before movies and special events with organist Ron Carter and associate organists Ken Double, John McCall, Larry David, Rick McGee, Misha Stefanuk, Bob Fountain, and Phillip Allen.

### HAWAII

**Palace Theatre**—38 Haili St., Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii, 808-934-7010 (4/13 Robert-Morton) [www.palacehilo.org](http://www.palacehilo.org). Rick Mazurowski plays from 6:30pm until 7pm every Tuesday night before the movie. Occasional silent movies, concerts and special events featuring the organ. Organists also include Walter Greenwood and Tommy Stark.

### ILLINOIS

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

**Tivoli Theatre**—5021 Highland Avenue, Downers Grove, 630-968-0219 (3/10 Wurlitzer) [www.classiccinemas.com](http://www.classiccinemas.com). Organ interludes Friday and Saturday evenings 30 minutes before both evening shows by David Rhodes or Tim Charlton. June 27, 2015 10:00am, June 27, 2015 2:00pm: Walt Strony, David Wickerham.

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

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

**Arcada Theatre**—105 E Main Street, St. Charles (3/16 Geneva / Marr & Colton) [www.onestientertainment.com/arcada/arcada.htm](http://www.onestientertainment.com/arcada/arcada.htm). Organ interludes Friday and Saturday nights. February 22, 2015 5:00pm, March 10, 2015 7:30pm, April 8, 2015 5:00pm, April 9, 2015 6:00pm, April 19, 2015 4:00pm, April 21, 2015 7:30pm, May 3, 2015 5:00pm, May 10, 2015 5:00pm, May 17, 2015 7:00pm, May 30, 2015 8:00pm, June 6, 2015 8:00pm, June 28, 2015 5:00pm: Taylor Trimby, David Rhodes.

### INDIANA

**Warren Performing Arts Center**—9500 E 16th Street, Indianapolis, 317-251-6962 (3/18 Barton) [www.cicatos.org](http://www.cicatos.org). June 14, 2015 2:30pm: Chris Elliott; October 11, 2015 2:30pm: Justin LaVoie.

### IOWA

**Orpheum Theatre**—520 Pierce Street, Sioux City, 712-258-9164 (3/21 Wurlitzer) [www.orpheumlive.com](http://www.orpheumlive.com). Organ is used by the Sioux City Symphony and for special events. Call for schedules.

### MASSACHUSETTS

**Hanover Theatre**—Southbridge Street, Worcester, 508-831-0800 (4/35 Wurlitzer) [thehanovertheatre.org](http://thehanovertheatre.org). The Hanover organ is regularly used for pre-show music at events. For a list, please visit [thehanoverorgan.org](http://thehanoverorgan.org).

## MICHIGAN

**Music Museum House**—7377 US 31N, Acme, 231-938-9300 (3/12 hybrid) [www.musichouse.org](http://www.musichouse.org). September 18, 2015 6:00pm: Andrew Rogers; September 19, 2015 7:30pm: Andrew Rogers; October 24, 2015 5:30pm: Andrew Rogers; October 25, 2015 5:30pm: Andrew Rogers; November 27, 2015 7:00pm: Andrew Rogers; November 28, 2015 5:30pm, November 28, 2015 7:30pm: Andrew Rogers.

**Michigan Theater**—603 E Liberty, Ann Arbor, 734-668-8397 (3/13 Barton) [www.michtheater.org](http://www.michtheater.org). Lance Luce, Andrew Rogers, Stephen Warner, Henry Aldridge, Newton Bates. 3/13 Barton and Hammond C2 in the Annex Theatre played daily before movies and for special occasions. Henry Aldridge, Chief Organist; Stephen Warner, Andrew Rogers, Newton Bates, House Organists. May 17, 2015: Andrew Rogers.

**Redford Theatre**—17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, 313-537-2560 (3/10 Barton) [www.redfordtheatre.com](http://www.redfordtheatre.com). Before every film presentation by various local artists. Every other Friday at 8pm. Every other Saturday at 2pm and 8pm. Call to confirm.

**Senate Theater**—6424 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, 313-894-4100 (4/34 Wurlitzer) [www.dtos.org](http://www.dtos.org). Organ overtures and intermission music at events by Dave Calendine, Paul Jacyk, John Lauter, Lance Luce, Lynn Walls, Kevin Werner. September 20, 2015 3:00pm: Bill Tandy; November 15, 2015 3:00pm: Nathan Avakian; December 6, 2015 3:00pm: John Lauter. Organ concerts, \$15 at the door.

**Flint Institute of Music**—1025 E. Kearsley Street, Flint (3/11 Barton) [thefim.org/affiliated-organizations/530-flint-theatre-organ-club](http://thefim.org/affiliated-organizations/530-flint-theatre-organ-club). October 17, 2015 7:00pm: Andrew Rogers.

**Public Museum of Grand Rapids Meijer Theatre**—272 Pearl St NW, Grand Rapids, 616-459-4253 (3/30 Wurlitzer). Tours by appointment, and TSO guests welcome to hear organ weekly on Friday Mornings. Story time slide program Wednesday mornings year-round.

**Ironwood Theatre**—113 E Aurora Street, Ironwood, 906-932-0618 (2/7 Barton) [www.ironwoodtheatre.net](http://www.ironwoodtheatre.net). Organ is featured as part of the guided summer tour Fridays at noon and 2 pm.

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

**Temple Theatre**—203 N Washington, Saginaw, 989-754-7469 (3/11 Barton) [www.templetheatre.com](http://www.templetheatre.com). Organ is played before most events and tours on a regular basis by musicians Joanne Leach, Pat Portner, Arthur Ralph and Ken Wuepper.

## MINNESOTA

**Heights Theatre**—3951 Central Avenue NE, Columbia Heights, 763-789-4992 (4/11 Wurlitzer). Organ concert every Friday and Saturday before the first evening's show.

## MISSOURI

**Kansas City Music Hall**—301 W 13th Street, Kansas City, 913-568-2613 (4/28 Robert-Morton) [www.kctpo.org](http://www.kctpo.org). All events 2:00pm.

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

**Fox Theatre**—527 Grand Boulevard N, St. Louis, 314-534-1678 (4/36 Wurlitzer) [www.fabulousfox.com](http://www.fabulousfox.com). Fox Special. 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. August 23, 2015 2:00pm: Jack Moelmann, Walt Strony, Lew Williams.

## NEW JERSEY

**Northlandz Music Hall**—Route 202 S, Flemington, 908-982-4022 (5/39 Wurlitzer). Call for exact times. Bruce Williams.

**Loews Jersey Theatre**—54 Journal Square, Jersey City, 973-256-5480 (4/23 Robert-Morton) [www.gstos.org](http://www.gstos.org). Organ played before movies and events on a regular basis. Bernie Anderson, Paul Citti, Eric Fahner, Bob Maidhof

**Broadway Theatre**—43 S Broadway, Pitman, 856-589-7519 (3/8 Kimball). Organists include Harold Ware, John Breslin, Janet Norcross, Nathan Figlio and Marilyn Rabbai.

**Rahway Senior Citizens Center**—1306 Esterbrook Avenue, Rahway, 732-396-3395 (3/10 Wurlitzer) [www.gstos.org](http://www.gstos.org). Organ played monthly and for special events. Free public concert - first Thursday of every month. This organ originally from New York Rainbow Room in Rockefeller Center.

## NEW YORK

**Proctor's Theatre**—432 State Street, Schenectady, 518-346-8204 (3/18 Wurlitzer) [www.proctors.org](http://www.proctors.org). Preshow music, concerts and silent films presented by the Hudson-Mohawk chapter of ATOS. Noon concert series, Tuesdays unless stated otherwise.

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

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Carolina Theatre**—310 S Green Street, Greensboro, 336-333-2600 (3/8 Robert-Morton) [w/digital.augmentation.com](http://w/digital.augmentation.com). Organ played before and after the Carolina Classic Film Series.

## NORTH DAKOTA

**Fargo Theatre**—314 N Broadway, Fargo, 701-239-8385 (4/26 Wurlitzer) [www.fargotheatre.org](http://www.fargotheatre.org). Organ plays Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evening, before and between performances. Short organ concerts: Lance Johnson, Tyler Engberg, Ryan Hardy, and Alex Swanson.

## OHIO

**Cincinnati Music Hall**—1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati (3/31 Wurlitzer) [www.ohiovalleychapteratos.org](http://www.ohiovalleychapteratos.org). Concerts, special events presented by the Ohio Valley chapter of ATOS.

**Cincinnati Music Hall Ballroom**—1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati (3/31 Wurlitzer) [www.spmhcincinnati.org/Music-Hall-History/Albee-Mighty-Wurlitzer-Organ.php](http://www.spmhcincinnati.org/Music-Hall-History/Albee-Mighty-Wurlitzer-Organ.php). May 12, 2015 10:30am, May 12, 2015 7:00pm: Clark Wilson.

**Palace Theatre**—Playhouse Square, 1615 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, 330-454-9181 (3/15 Kimball) [www.playhousesquare.org](http://www.playhousesquare.org). Frequent pre-show and intermission use; occasional concerts. Organ pre-shows for summer film series and special events.

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

## OKLAHOMA

**Tulsa Technology Center, Broken Arrow Campus**—4600 S Olive Avenue, Broken Arrow (3/13 Robert-Morton) [www.theatreorgans.com/soonerstateatos](http://www.theatreorgans.com/soonerstateatos). Sooner State chapter ATOS, 3rd Friday of each month, programs and open console.

## OREGON

**Bijou Theatre**—1624 NE Highway 101, Lincoln City, 541-994-8255 (3/17 Allen digital) [www.cinemalovers.com](http://www.cinemalovers.com). Silent film series on Wednesdays at 1:00pm.

**Cleveland High School**—3400 SE 26th Avenue, Portland (3/24 Kimball) [www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/cleveland](http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/cleveland). Open console at 7pm on the first Friday of the month during the school year.

**Oaks Amusement Park Roller Rink**—1 SE Spokane Street, Portland, 503-233-5777 (4/18 Wurlitzer) [www.oakspark.com](http://www.oakspark.com). The Wurlitzer is played for skating sessions on Sunday afternoons and evenings, special parties on Monday and on Thursday evenings. Keith Fortune is the principal organist, with Gary Russell and Dean Lemire as associates.

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

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Keystone Oaks High School**—1000 Keltan Avenue, Dormont (3/19 Wurlitzer) [pittsburghtheatreorgan.com](http://pittsburghtheatreorgan.com). May 30, 2015 2:00pm: David Wickerham; September 26, 2015 2:00pm: Hector Olivera.

**Grand Theater**—252 Main Street, East Greenville (3/13 Marr & Colton) [www.thegrandtheatre.org](http://www.thegrandtheatre.org). Organ is played before selected events.

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

**Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center**—50 N George Street, York, 717-846-1111 (3/20 Wurlitzer) [www.strandcapitol.org](http://www.strandcapitol.org). Various artists. Pre-Movie organ music provided by members of the Susquehanna Valley Theatre Organ Society on selected Sunday afternoons from 2:30pm until 3:00pm. Check the theatre or SVTOS website for dates. May 1, 2015 8:30pm: Robert Pierce; May 3, 2015 2:30pm: Glenn Hough.

# Around the Circuit

Theatre Organ Programs  
and Performances

## TENNESSEE

**Tivoli Theatre**—709 Broad Street, Chattanooga, 723-757-5156 (3/13 Wurlitzer) [www.chattanooga.gov/education-arts-and-culture/tivoli-theatre](http://www.chattanooga.gov/education-arts-and-culture/tivoli-theatre). Organ is played for occasional pre-shows and special events.

**Tennessee Theatre**—604 S Gay Street, Knoxville, 865-684-1200 (3/16 Wurlitzer) [www.tennesseetheatre.com](http://www.tennesseetheatre.com). 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.

## UTAH

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

## VIRGINIA

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

## WASHINGTON

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

**Lincoln Theatre**—712 S 1st Street, Mt. Vernon, 360-419-7129 (2/7 Wurlitzer) [www.lincolntheatre.org](http://www.lincolntheatre.org). Original installation organ played one-half hour prior to movies most Fridays through Tuesdays.

**Calvary Christian Assembly Church**—6801 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle (3/25 Wurlitzer/Kimball) June 14, 2015 2:00pm; Jonas Nordwall; September 27, 2015 2:00pm; John Atwell.

**Haller Lake Community Club**—12679 Densmore Avenue N, Seattle (3/9 hybrid). August 9, 2015 5:00pm; Pete Eveland, Ray Harris.

**Spokane First Church of the Nazarene**—9004 N Country Homes Boulevard, Spokane (3/26 Wurlitzer). Organ is used weekly in the 10:45am Sunday traditional service and for other concerts/open console sessions.

## WISCONSIN

**The Phipps Center for the Arts**—109 Locust Street, Hudson, 715-386-2305 (3/16 Wurlitzer) [www.thephipps.org](http://www.thephipps.org). June 6, 2015 7:30pm; Clark Wilson.

**Organ Piper Music Palace**—4353 S 108th Street, Milwaukee, 414-529-1177 (3/27 Wurlitzer). Regulars include Dean Rosko, Zach Frame, Ralph Conn. Organ is played on: 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.

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

## AUSTRALIA

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**Orion Theatre**—155 Beamish Street, Campsie (3/17 Wurlitzer). Regular player afternoons on 2nd Thursday of the month, 1:30pm to 4:30pm. Contact Craig Keller at [craigkeller1966@gmail.com](mailto:craigkeller1966@gmail.com) to confirm. Players and listeners welcome.

**Orpheum Theatre**—380 Military Road, Cremorne (3/15 Wurlitzer). Saturday night, Sunday afternoon, intermissions, Neil Jensen.

**Marrickville Town Hall**—Marrickville Road, Marrickville, +61 2 9798 6742 (2/11 Wurlitzer). Regular player's evenings 4th Monday night of each month, 7:30pm. Call Neil to confirm.

### QUEENSLAND

**Kelvin Grove State College**—Victoria Park Road, Kelvin Grove (3/11 Christie) [www.tosa-qld.org](http://www.tosa-qld.org). 1st Sunday of each month - open console, etc.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Capri Theatre**—141 Goodwood Road, Goodwood, +61 8 8272 1177 (4/29 Wurlitzer) [www.capri.org.au](http://www.capri.org.au). Organ played before evening sessions on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday nights.

### VICTORIA

**Dendy Cinema**—26 Church Street, Brighton, +61 3 978 1455 (3/15 Wurlitzer). Organ before films, Saturday evenings.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**John Leckie Music Centre**—Melvista Avenue, Nedlands (3/12 Compton) [www.tosa-qld.org](http://www.tosa-qld.org). Regular player afternoons on the first Sunday of each month (March to November) at 2:00pm. Free admission. Players and listeners welcome. Contact Rodney Raymond at [email@tosawa.org.au](mailto:email@tosawa.org.au) for more information.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### DERBYSHIRE

**Pipes in the Peaks**—Dovedale Garage, Thorpe, Ashbourne, +44 01335 350258 (3/18 Compton) [www.pipesinthepeaks.co.uk](http://www.pipesinthepeaks.co.uk). April 26, 2015 2:30pm: Phil Kelsall MBE; June 6, 2015 7:30pm: Christian Cartwright; June 14, 2015: Christ Powell; October 17, 2015 7:30pm: Stephen Foulkes; October 25, 2015 2:30pm: Robert Wolfe; November 29, 2015 2:30pm: Christian Cartwright; December 6, 2015 2:30pm: Stephen Foulkes; December 12, 2015 2:30pm: Stephen Foulkes; December 13, 2015 2:30pm: Christian Cartwright.

### DEVON

**Congregational Church**—Fore Street, Beer (2/6 Wurlitzer) Britain's Oldest Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ [www.beerwurlitzer.org.uk](http://www.beerwurlitzer.org.uk). May 9, 2015 2:15pm: Michael Wooldridge; June 13, 2015 2:00pm: John Mann; July 11, 2015 2:00pm: Trevor Bolshaw; August 8, 2015 2:00pm: Simon Gledhill; September 12, 2015 2:00pm: Nicholas Martin; October 10, 2015 2:00pm: Damon Willetts; November 28, 2015 2:00pm: Matthew Bason.

## EAST SUSSEX

**Rye College**—Love Lane, Rye (2/6 Wurlitzer) Britain's Second Oldest Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ [www.ryewurlitzer.org.uk](http://www.ryewurlitzer.org.uk). April 26, 2015 2:30pm: Andrew Nix; May 24, 2015 2:30pm: Richard Hills; July 26, 2015 2:30pm: Kevin Morgan; September 27, 2015 2:30pm: Janet Dowsett; October 25, 2015 2:30pm: John Mann; November 22, 2015 2:30pm: Nicholas Martin.

## MANCHESTER

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

## WEST MIDLANDS

**Civic Hall**—North Street, Wolverhampton (4/44 Compton). Friday concerts 12:00noon to 12:30pm before the tea dance, Steve Tovey or Cameron Lloyd. Concerts Saturdays at 2:00pm.

## WEST YORKSHIRE

**Victoria Hall**—Victoria Road, Saltaire (3/11 Wurlitzer) [www.cinema-organs.org.uk](http://www.cinema-organs.org.uk). May 10, 2015 2:30pm: Nigel Ogden; June 7, 2015 2:30pm: Phil Kelsall MBE; July 12, 2015 2:30pm: David Lowe, Robert Rowley; July 17, 2015 7:30pm: Phil Kelsall MBE; August 9, 2015 2:30pm: David Gray; August 28, 2015: Howard Beaumont, Simon Gledhill, Richard Hills, Phil Kelsall MBE, Walt Strony, Christian Cartwright, Jonathan Eyre, Stephen Foulkes, Kevin Grunill, John Mann, Nigel Ogden; August 28, 2015 7:30pm: Phil Kelsall MBE; August 31, 2015 2:30pm: Walt Strony; September 18, 2015 7:30pm: Phil Kelsall MBE; October 11, 2015 2:30pm: Simon Gledhill.

# Board Directory

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*It shall be the duty of the board of directors (elected or appointed) to accept full fiduciary responsibility for the governance and operations of the American Theatre Organ Society, in accordance with all established bylaws, policies, and job descriptions.*

# Minutes

## MINUTES OF THE ATOS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Downtown Hyatt Regency Hotel,  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
July 5, 2014**

Chairman of the Board Bob Dilworth called the meeting to order at 8:32am.

Chairman Dilworth declared a quorum.

The meeting will be conducted in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* with Mike Bryant acting as Parliamentarian.

The secretary is recording the meeting for purposes of producing the minutes of the meeting. This recording is not available to anyone for any other purpose.

Bob Dilworth introduced the ATOS board and staff members.

The minutes of the 2013 ATOS Annual Membership Meeting were accepted as published.

### Old Business

Officer and staff reports:

Secretary (Evans): The secretary read his report of board actions since the last ATOS Annual Membership Meeting.

Treasurer (Hutcherson): Mike Hutcherson presented the ATOS Treasurer's Report

- The Membership Secretary and Treasurer are working on methods to make dues payment easier and more convenient.

- Our assets are now over \$2,000,000
  - In August of 2011 our assets were \$1,500,000

- Deficit Situation: We projected donations that did not materialize making our deficit larger than projected.

- Some members did not renew; some passed away, etc. We are making a concerted effort to contact members whose memberships have expired.

- We have not "overspent" the budget but the problem has been the revenue figures.

- Non-Profits often rely on "extra" donations to maintain operations. Revenue usually is not a steady stream.

- We have realized that we must do something to cut expenses. We need a permanent "fix" for the problem.

Budget Committee report (Ledwon/Coale):

- Bill Coale presented a budget overview and a history of the budget process this year.

- The ATOS Budget Committee recommended a 20% across-the-

board cut. The board passed this across-the-board cut at the ATOS Annual Meeting.

- Mike Hutcherson added that any donation is important. He suggested that some ATOS members might want to make a long-term gift.

- Paul Rogers (North Florida) asked about the fiscal forecast for 2014/15.

- Mike Hutcherson stated that a \$100,000 shortfall is predicted. Mike also stated that ATOS will be looking at programs and seeking additional revenue sources. Our goal is to operate within revenue received for the year.

- Ken Double noted that a one-time expense of about \$35,000 would be realized for the upcoming ATOS corporate retreat.

- Russ Shaner (RTOS) served on the ATOS Budget Committee and said that the committee did the best that was possible to get this budget in alignment with revenue received.

Convention Planning Coordinator report (Kinerk):

- Mike Kinerk discussed upcoming conventions and stated that any chapter that hosts an ATOS annual convention is entitled to a decent profit.

- 2015: Philadelphia/Wilmington. The dates are July 3,4,5,6, 2015.

- 2016: Cleveland, Ohio. Hosted by the Western Reserve chapter

- 2017/18: In discussion with Salt Lake City and Manasota chapter.

President/CE report (Double):

- Fundraising: Last year we expected a sizeable donation and based our budget on that gift we thought was coming. Fundraising generated just under \$60,000. Dr. Barry Henry remembered ATOS in his estate planning and Charlie Briggs (EMCATOS) was the first to remember ATOS with an estate-planning gift.

- "Glass Half Full": For every budgetary concern we have opportunities and programs in place that are exciting to talk about. We have to be sure that the glass remains "half full." The good news is that we have not had to dip into the reserve fund as of yet.

- New Convention CD Policy: Professional recording engineers will record future conventions.

- ATOS currently has about 2,500 members. Some members have missed the renewal notice that has been included with their journal issues.

- ATOS has scheduled a corporate retreat for September 19-21, 2014. This

retreat will feature self-inspection of our organization and promote introspection. Dr. William Weary will facilitate the retreat.

### New Business:

No new business was brought to the membership

**Good of the order:** (Any topic not covered in the agenda)

- Fr. Francis Early (Potomac Valley): In past conventions Sunday morning was open to allow those who wish to go to church.

- This matter was taken under advisement for future reference.

- Bill Vogel (Chicago Area/Joliet): Catholic Mass available locally.

- He also recognized Ken Double's mission to visit and connect with local chapters. Ken is a great salesman for ATOS. We need to push for "associate members" of chapters to join ATOS.

- Tom Stehle (New York chapter): Something is not working smoothly. A member joined in January but has not received the journal yet. Perhaps a postcard acknowledgement would be in order. If a member has not responded by the time two issues have been sent, a reminder should be sent to the lapsed member. The system "has some holes" that need to be fixed.

- Mike Bryant (Co-Editor, Theatre Organ) responded that we are converting to a new membership database. We are still finding an occasional glitch. These will be corrected. The publisher and staff are very aware of this issue.

- John Hudson (Richmond, Indiana): Our problem is advertising and getting people to realize what a theatre organ is. We need to describe what we are doing. Suggestion: Get out there in the marketplace and educate people. Advertising and recruiting new membership is the key to saving our organization.

- Charles Hague (Old Dominion Chapter): Advertising through YouTube is effective. Charles cited the Jelani Eddington *Star Wars* video edited by Donnie Rankin. This video went viral and received thousands of hits.

- Larry Grove (Valley of the Sun): Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona attracts upwards of 500 people each evening. Could we solicit members through Organ Stop?

Adjournment:

Chairman Dilworth, on a motion by Russ Shaner and Bob Evans, adjourned the meeting at 9:48am.

/s/ Bob Evans, ATOS Secretary

## SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE ATOS VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, December 17, 2014  
9:00pm EST

Chairman of the Board Bob Dilworth called the meeting to order at 9:04pm EST.

Officers Present: Bob Dilworth, Chairman; Bill Coale, Vice chairman; Bob Evans, Secretary; Mike Hutcherson, Treasurer. Directors present: Denise Andersen, Jelani Eddington, Michael Fellenzer, John Ledwon, Dan Minervini, Jack Moelmann, Don Phipps, Carlton Smith. Absent: Donnie Rankin. Staff Present: Ken Double, President/CE; Mike Bryant, co-editor THEATRE ORGAN; Greg Bellamy, IT Manager; Mark Renwick, Nominations Committee and Finance Committee Chair. Guest: Richard Neidich.

The minutes of the November 25, 2014 Virtual Board Meeting were accepted.

### Standing Business:

Treasurer's report (Hutcherson):

Mike Hutcherson acknowledged an additional gift of \$114,000 from the estate of Robert Mertz.

Mike noted that an artist just submitted his expenses from the 2014 Annual Convention to Tim Needler, Convention Chair. This submission was well after the cutoff date stipulated in the artist's convention contract. One board member asked that since the convention books are closed, should we honor the request? The request is six months late. Mr. Hutcherson said that he was not aware of the fifteen-day limit on submittal of expenses after the close of the convention. A request by an ATOS board member was denied in the past because of late submission. Consensus of the board was that the request should be denied.

Staff, committee, and task force reports:  
President/CE (Double):

- Ken noted the passing of Fred Bruffodt. Fred was a recording engineer for the 2011 Annual Convention (Providence) and recorded the bulk of the 2014 Annual Convention performances (Indianapolis). Ken will see if we can access Fred's recording area to see if we can get the original recording masters of the convention performances. As a backup, Ken has unedited recordings of the performances.

- New York Chapter/Loew's Kings Update: Because of architectural changes made in the restoration of Loew's Kings Theatre, installation of the former Van Der Molen Robert-Morton theatre organ will not be possible. Ace Theatrical will buy the organ, will retain the console, and the remainder of the instrument will be donated to a theatre to be identified later.

A board member noted that ATOS has a lien on the instrument due to a loan made to NYTOS. Ken said that the loan would be paid in full and the lien vacated.

Membership Secretary Update (Parker):

- Current membership is 2357.
- The practice of sending the renewal letters for expired memberships will commence starting right after the New Year.

Retreat Forward Task Force (Coale):

- The chairs of the Finance and Transition Bylaw and Policies Committees were invited to attend our last virtual meeting.

- The committee will introduce two documents:

A "Definition of Management" document (attached)

Establish a Communications/Marketing committee

Nominating Committee (Renwick):

- Mark Renwick is soliciting input from the board for possible nominees. The board is asked to review the membership list for qualified candidates to suggest to the Nominating Committee.

- Bob Evans added that Mark and he would be working on new bylaw language for the nominating process to align with the ATOS Retreat Forward Initiative.

Retreat Forward Finance Committee (Renwick):

- Finance Committee has made some minor strides.

- Mark has communicated with John Ledwon, Chair of the Endowment Fund board of trustees.

- He noted that the Finance Committee is looking for an accounting firm to help manage ATOS finances.

Retreat Forward Transition Bylaws and Policies Committee (Moelmann):

- Jack Moelmann reported that the committee has taken a preliminary look at the current bylaws and policies with a view of aligning them with the Retreat Forward Initiative.

- He noted that little time has been spent on the "governance" side of business.

- Jelani Eddington suggested that California counsel be retained to review and advise regarding any changes to the bylaws.

### New Business:

"Definition of Management" document  
**MOVED** (Coale) that the statement defining ATOS' operational structure, included in this document, be adopted by the board as the first step in reorganization of ATOS' day-to-day operations, and that its implementation begin effective January 1, 2015.

Discussion:

- Jelani Eddington asked about the next steps in implementation of this document? Ken Double replied that he would hold monthly staff meetings. The staff will report to him. Ken will report to the board on the content and results of these staff meetings.

- Denise Andersen reminded the board that it still has fiduciary responsibility.

- Ken Double noted that the board would receive a treasurer's report at each meeting.

(Motion **CARRIED**)

Adult Teaching Event (Double):

- Two ATOS members have given financial gifts toward the support of this event. With funding in place we would continue this as an official ATOS activity, and Jonas Nordwall would chair this program.

**MOVED** (Coale) that the adult teaching event temporarily titled "Step up Your Playing" be added to ATOS' lineup of official programs. (Motion **CARRIED**)

**MOVED** (Evans) that ATOS establish a Communications/Marketing Committee under the Retreat Forward Initiative. (Motion **CARRIED**)

### Good of the Order:

Mike Hutcherson will meet with the ATOS Budget Committee and present a written budget.

Next Meetings:

The next ATOS virtual board meeting will be held during the week of January 19-23, exact date to be determined.

The ATOS 2015 mid-year meeting will be conducted by GoTo Meeting on Saturday, February 7, 2015 at a time to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00pm EST.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Please Note: The meeting was conducted using *Robert's Rules of*

# Minutes

*Order-Newly Revised.* Mike Bryant, Parliamentarian.

## **"Definition of Management" document ATOS Management**

### **A statement defining ATOS' operational structure**

In addressing the need to streamline and better coordinate the day-to-day operations of ATOS, there is a need to better define the roles, and to re-shape the organization. To that end, the following will help facilitate the move forward in improving ATOS day-to-day operations and assist the transition to "mature nonprofit organization."

The board of directors shall be primarily responsible for the governance of ATOS, including a general oversight of—but not direct involvement in—the day-to-day operations of ATOS. Board oversight will include bylaws and policies, fiscal policy and direction, the Endowment Fund, scheduling the four quarterly meetings (two by conference call, two in person), and acting where necessary on the reports presented to the board by the President/Chief Executive, and working with the President/Chief Executive and the Chairman in establishing appropriate committees as necessary.

Operations will fall under the direction of the President/Chief Executive, and shall include the following: naming the Vice Presidents of each major committee category to create the proper chain of command within the operational structure; hiring and firing personnel; contract administration (with appropriate legal assistance as required); establishment and oversight of all standard program activities; reporting to the board regularly on programs, tasks and assignments, ensuring tasks are getting accomplished in a timely fashion; establishing the annual budget and presenting for board review; fundraising; marketing; communications; and the convention.

In this structure, the President/CE is responsible for these operations, and shall report to the board regularly. The board will work through and communicate with the President, and will avoid direct contact with personnel, as has been past practice.

## **SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE ATOS VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2015  
9:00pm EST**

Chairman of the Board Bob Dilworth called the meeting to order at 9:04pm EST.

Officers Present: Bob Dilworth, Chairman; Bill Coale, Vice chairman; Bob Evans, Secretary; Mike Hutcherson, Treasurer. Directors present: Denise Andersen, Jelani Eddington, Michael Fellenzer, John Ledwon, Dan Minervini, Jack Moelmann, Don Phipps, Carlton Smith. Absent: Donnie Rankin. Staff present: Ken Double, President/CE; Mike Bryant, co-editor, THEATRE ORGAN; Greg Bellamy, IT Manager; Donna Parker, Membership Secretary; Mark Renwick, Nominations Committee and Finance Committee Chair; Jonas Nordwall, Summer Youth Adventure Chairman.

The minutes of the December 17, 2014 virtual board meeting were accepted as revised.

Treasurers Report: Mike Hutcherson discussed the current Statement of Financial Position and the (budget) spreadsheet showing line-by-line figures. Mike also stated that our net worth has exceeded two million dollars. He then explained the budget changes to the board.

Jelani Eddington thanked Mike for his hard work on refining and explaining the budget.

**MOVED** (Hutcherson) to approve the 2014-2015 budget as amended. Voting Yea: Andersen, Coale, Dilworth, Evans, Hutcherson, Ledwon, Minervini, Moelmann, Phipps, Rankin, Smith. Voting Nay: Eddington, Fellenzer. (Motion **Carried** 11-2)

Staff, Committee, and Task Force Reports:

President/CE: (Double)

The NYTOS loan has been paid in full.

The former King's Theatre Development Company now owns the Van Der Molen Robert-Morton theatre organ. They will use the console to control a virtual theatre organ in the theatre and hope to find a home for the rest of the instrument.

Indianapolis Convention CD update: Ken has spoken with a close relative of Fred Brufoldt, the recording engineer. The relative has not even begun to sort out Fred's belongings. Ken is working with Bill Lightner who has copies of the concert CDs and will re-master them for the convention recording.

ATOS' receipt of the previously-reported Mertz gift of \$114,000 has incurred a slight delay due to legalities. All is still on track.

Membership Secretary (Parker):

Presently ATOS has 2381 members.

This is traditionally a heavy renewal period.

The ATOS Annual Fund Drive has received \$23,228 to date. This is the best figure yet for any Annual Fund Drive.

Donna is in the process of sending out a letter to international members. Bank fee rules are changing. We will not be able to accept any international bank checks. Most international members renew on the web site so this change should not affect many international members.

Summer Youth Adventure Update (Nordwall):

The Summer Youth Adventure will take place in Omaha, Nebraska July 19-24. This location will provide the easiest overall access for any session to date.

The event will have easy access to three instruments.

The Markworth home organ is the primary teaching instrument.

We have received a good rate from a local hotel.

Jonas noted a 40% rise in the number of new students for the event.

The SYA Committee may consider a restructure of the curriculum and change in the overall structure of the event. This remains to be seen.

Convention Planning Coordinator (Kinerk)

Bob Dilworth reported that registration for the ATOS 2015 Annual Convention has been open for two weeks. So far registrations total 64.

Mike Kinerk provided an update on the 2016 Annual Convention to be held in Cleveland, Ohio. Joe McCabe is the convention and chapter chairman. They are recruiting their membership to take on convention duties. Some of the instruments that will be featured are the organs at Playhouse Square, The Masonic Auditorium, Cleveland Gray's and the Akron Civic Wurlitzer.

Retreat Forward Task Force (Coale):

The Retreat Forward Task Force met again with the main goal of developing areas for the ATOS Marketing Committee to consider. We developed a list that will be given to the committee.

Finance Committee (Renwick):

The committee will present a proposal at the mid year meeting regarding the hiring of a financial manager.



The Finance Committee should soon have recommendations on investment policy and distribution policy for ATOS endowment funds.

Transition Bylaws and Policies Committee (Moelmann):

Jack has located a California non-profit attorney. When needed, Jack will send him packets of changes to examine; this process will not be done piecemeal.

Jelani Eddington suggested that the attorney would probably require a retainer agreement.

Bob Dilworth remarked that when the time is appropriate we should hire him and approve a retainer agreement.

ATOS Nominating Committee (Renwick):

The Nominating Committee presented four candidates for the board of directors:

David Barnett

Juan Cardona, Jr.

David Kelzenberg

Richard Neidich

#### **New Business**

Jelani Eddington has requested a notice be included in the call of the 2015 ATOS Annual Membership Meeting to limit the use of secret voting.

#### **Good of the Order:**

Bob Dilworth reported that his wife, Mary Ann, had heart-valve surgery. She is doing well.

Ken Double thanked Mark Renwick and his nominating committee for their hard work.

The 2015 board of directors mid-year meeting will be held in virtual form on Saturday, February 7, 2015 at noon Eastern time.

/s/ Bob Evans, Secretary

Please Note: The meeting was conducted using *Robert's Rules of Order-Newly Revised*. Mike Bryant, Parliamentarian.

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# Theatre Organ

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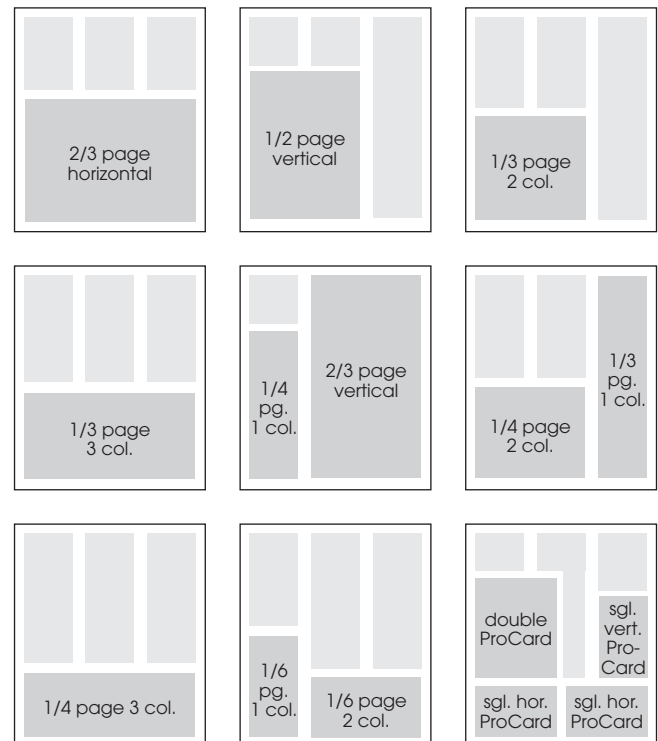
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## ADVERTISER INDEX

Allen Organs .....	OBC
Amica International.....	IBC
Arndt Organ Supply Co.....	41
Ashley, Steve.....	10
ATOS Convention Record Shop.....	IFC
ATOS Summer Youth Adventure .....	23
Bailey, Rosemary .....	41
Ball, Steven (Silent Film) .....	11
Crome Organ Co.....	25
Diapason.....	IBC
Double, Ken .....	41
Eddington, Jelani .....	55
Fenelon, Tony.....	55
League of Historic American Theatres .....	9
Ledwon, John.....	41
Luce, Lance .....	10
McCall, John Clark.....	7
MIDI Concepts.....	IFC
Moelmann, Jack .....	6
Musical Box Society .....	55
Organ Expressions .....	10
Organ Historical Society .....	10
Parker, Donna.....	41
Rankin, Donnie .....	10
Rhode, Ron .....	10
Rogers, Fr. Andrew .....	41
Scott Smith Pipe Organs.....	10
Theatre Historical Society of America.....	10
Wilson, Clark.....	6
Zollman Pipe Organ Services.....	11

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