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PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Published monthly by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, a non-profit organization
furthering the appreciation, preservation and use of the Theatre Pipe Organs of yesteryear

Volume 14 No. 4

April 2003

Come to another fun PSTOS

HOME PARTY

Saturday, April 5, 2-5PM

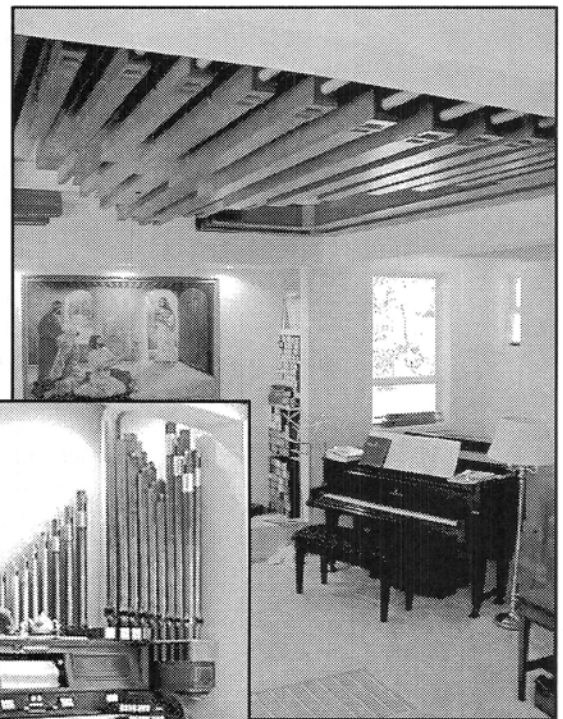
Home of Dr. Carl & Halie Dodrill
4488 W. Mercer Way • Mercer Island

- *Enjoy organ & piano duos with Halie Dodrill & Jo Ann Evans!*
- *Bring your music and take a turn at the organ or piano!*
- *Pump the "pumpers!" — the Dodrills have several for you to try!*
- *Enjoy four wonderful roll players—two Aeolian reed organs, an Aeolian pipe organ, and a Steinway grand player piano!*
- *Socialize and nibble!*
- *Visit the Pipe Organ Foundation workroom and view a Wicks pipe organ restoration in progress.*

There's no charge, but please bring a small plate of finger food to share. Beverages furnished.

**Reservations
not required.**

**WE'LL SEE
YOU THERE!**



ABOVE: Notice the wood pipes installed on the ceiling of the listening area .



LEFT: The Dodrill's Aeolian Player pipe organ.

For detailed information about the Dodrill Aeolian organ, go to <http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/mercer-island/dodrill.htm>

Drive directions to the Dodrill home—

From Seattle— Go east on I-90 over the floating bridge in the regular (not Express) lanes to Mercer Island. Take first exit (#6--West Mercer Way). Turn right (south) at the end of the off ramp. Proceed south on West Mercer Way 2.6 miles and you will see our house on the left at 4488 West Mercer Way. You can park on the left side of the street on the long parking strip and come up the stairs. Or, if steps are difficult, go south past our house but immediately turn left up a paved drive, then left again and

pull up to the concrete wall. Our garage is directly ahead, and you may walk around the right (east) end and up to our front door.

Directions from the Bellevue side— Proceed West on I-90 to Mercer Island. Get off on exit #7 (Island Crest Way). Turn left on Island Crest Way and proceed south 1.5 miles without making any turns. Turn right on Merrimount Drive when Island Crest Way curves up and to the left. We are at the end of the fourth driveway on the left (look for the sign), and you can park on the lane or in our driveway.

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Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society

6521 N.E. 191st St.

Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.

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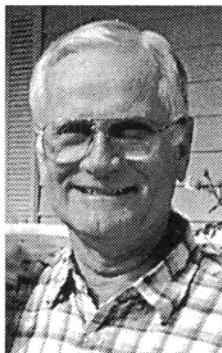
Listing of non-PSTOS events in the Pipeline

PSTOS, upon request, will list non-conflicting non-PSTOS theatre organ events in the "Other Events" column of the two Pipelines immediately preceding the event, providing Pipeline editors receive sufficient prior written notification. Venue, artist, type of event, date, and contact information will comprise the included information.

Advertising in the Pipeline

Classified-type ads for member-owned electronic, electric, or pipe organs, and/or pipe organ parts, will be published at no charge. Please limit copy to include brief description, contact name and phone number. Prices will not be listed. Ads may be edited for content and length. Mail ad copy to address above. Other advertising is not accepted.

PRESIDENT'S Message



What fun!! We had a real live theatre organ in a real live theatre with a real live TV star performing for us on the Wurlitzer. It was a wunnerful, wunnerful show. If you weren't there, shame on you!

And, thanks once again to all of you who helped with the Bob Ralston event. I'm sorry I don't have space to list everyone, but Tom Blackwell, Carl Dodrill, Russ Evans, Barbara Graham and Bob Zat put in over 300 hours of repairs to the Wurlitzer over the two and a half weeks prior to the program. Thanks team!

Teams are important in keeping our favorite musical instruments playing. We need more volunteers to take care of the Paramount, Haller Lake and Franklin High School instruments. If you don't have any experience, there are qualified people who will show you the ropes. You only need a willingness to learn.

While we are talking about volunteers, we left Terri Owen out of the list of food servers at the Valentine's party. Sorry, Terri. And we really do appreciate you.

I tried to personally invite each of you to the Bob Ralston show and chose email to do the job. Our roster is missing a lot of email addresses, and about 20% of the addresses that we have are wrong! Do me a favor, if you will, and send me your email address. I promise I won't "spam" you. Some of your addresses are not tied to your name, so give me both. Send to clint@pstos.org and thank you.

Speaking of communication, I have made it easy for you to contact me. In addition to my email I have toll-free voice mail where you can leave me a five minute message 24 hours a day 7 days a week. It is 1-877-843-0953. If you want to join the organ maintenance teams, have a PSTOS problem that needs attention, a suggestion, a question or a complaint, I want to hear about it. Hearing about things "through the grapevine" is not the way for us all to have a good time. Talk to me!

PSTOS Coming Events

Home party!

Carl & Halie Dodrill home, Mercer Island. Lots of interesting instruments to see, hear and play! See front page for more info!

Saturday, April 5th, 2 – 5PM

Tony Fenelon and Jonas Nordwall Duo Concert at the Wilcox Wurlitzer Home in Gig Harbor

What a special event this will be! It may well be YEARS before you have another opportunity for such a musical experience as this. See back page for all the details and ticketing information. Seating is limited— Get tickets now!

Saturday, May 3, 2PM

A Two-For-One special!

Visit St. Columban Church in Yelm to enjoy Father Terence's fine theatre pipe organ and have lunch. Then on to the Bill Keller home near Olympia to hear and play Bill's spectacular Custom Allen Theatre Organ.

Saturday, June 21st

Summer Social & Concert

Jack & Mary Lou Becvar home in Kent. A concert on their 3-manual Wurlitzer. Artist to be announced.

Sunday, July 20

Home party!

Ray & Muriel Whelpley home, Bellevue. Another opportunity to hear and play a beautifully restored Wurlitzer!

Saturday, Aug. 9

AMICA Convention, Portland

(Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association) Let's charter a bus or even a train car! Hear Jonas Nordwall at the Oaks Park Rink and many other terrific programs. Full information coming in the May Pipeline.

August 20-24

Big Autumn Event at Haller Lake Community Club

Possibly another Oktoberfest!

Sunday, October 5 (date change)

Continued next page

PSTOS Coming Events continued...

Something new!...

RAGMATAZZ featuring **Ragtime Pianist BOB MILNE & Organist JONAS NORDWALL at Gig Harbor**

WOW! What a day this will be! Topnotch ragtime piano AND the Wurlitzer in a one-of-a-kind duo program. Don't miss it! A benefit for the PSTOS Scholarship Fund and Children's Home Society.

Sunday afternoon, November 9

Annual PSTOS Christmas Party **Sunday, December 7**

FOR SALE *Organ Stuff*

A lifetime collection of theatre organ LPs and commercially recorded reel-to-reel and cassette tapes. Over 700 in all! Long time members and theatre organ enthusiasts, Jack and Mary Lou Becvar, are selling their entire collection and have just finished cataloging them all. Priced to sell! For more information, titles, and price, please phone Jack or Mary Lou at 253-852-2011 or contact by email at tibia61@aol.com

PIPE ORGAN *Terminology*

Organs have been around for centuries. Until the early 1900s, they were found primarily in churches and concert halls. With the development of "pictures that moved" came the realization that the pictures were much enhanced by the addition of music. Pianos were used at first, but an organ made more sense...it could more easily fill a large hall with sound, and mimic a full orchestra. The first organ used to accompany film—right here in Seattle as a matter of fact!—was a regular church-type organ. That's what was available at the time.

As movie making evolved and became more sophisticated, aggressive pipe organ companies jumped on the band wagon—Wurlitzer, Kimball, Barton, Marr & Colton, Robert Morton, and others. Competition was fierce.

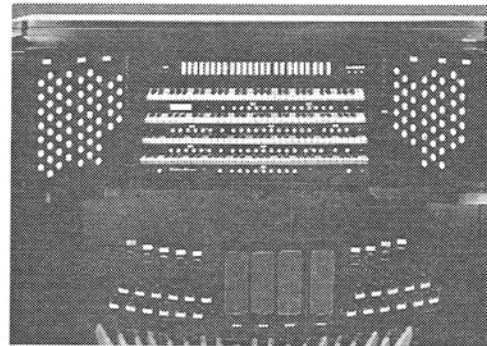
To enhance the many moods on the screen, new organ sounds appeared, the most important of which was the Tibia, a romantic flute-like sound coupled with throbbing tremolos. A vast array of sound effects began appearing, such as auto horns, sleigh bells, boat whistles, bird whistles, horses hooves, doorbells, surf, etc.

Theatres were dark and to make the

THEATRE Organ? CHURCH Organ? CLASSICAL Organ? What's the difference?

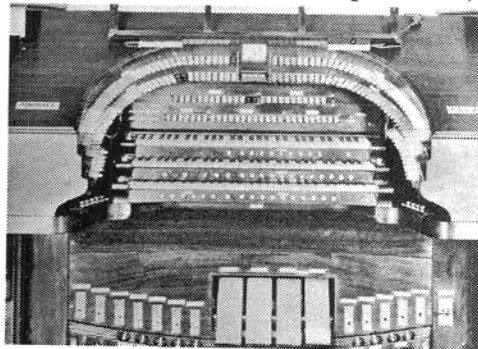
organist's job easier, a curved stop rail became standard, eliminating the long reach to change sounds. Colored stop tabs identified the various sound families, with foundational sounds (tibias, flutes and diapasons) white, string sounds yellow, and reed sounds red. The colored stop tabs along with the curved stop rail, and lights—similar to dashboard lights found on Model A Fords!—around the rail, all helped the organist make lightning quick changes in the sound as the mood on the screen changed.

Church and classical organs traditionally have straight stop rails and all



white stop tabs, or in many cases, draw knobs, and lack the broad variety of sounds and sound effects found on theatre organs. Tremolos are light and shallow, contributing to the traditional church-like sound.

At first glance for the inexperienced,



if the console has a curved, or horse-shoe stop rail and colored stop tabs, it's a theatre organ. If it has a straight stop rail and white stop tabs, it's a classical or church organ. Although designed for totally different purposes, both make wonderful music in the hands of an experienced musician!

Other Northwest Theatre Organ Events

Wings, silent movie at the Paramount, Monday, March 31, 7PM

Stars Charles "Buddy" Rogers and Clara Bow. Wurlitzer accompaniment by Dennis James. Celebrate the Paramount's 75th anniversary—all tickets 75¢. www.theparamount.com

Jelani Eddington Concert at Salem's Elsinore Theatre, Sunday, April 6, 2PM

Sponsored by CROC. Email jsclausen@aol.com for information.

Simon Gledhill Concert at Portland's Cleveland H.S., Friday, May 2, 7:30PM

Sponsored by Portland Chapter, ATOS.

The Hokum Show, 8PM Saturdays, 3PM Sundays.

Music, magic, silent films, vaudeville, and the Wurlitzer with Professor Hokum W. Jeebs and friends. Hokum Hall in West Seattle. 206-325-6500, on the web at www.hokumhall.org

HISTORIC EVERETT THEATRE features silent movies during April and May—

With organ accompaniment by Dennis James. Info at 425-253-6766.

Wings, Mon., April 14, 7PM With Charles "Buddy" Rogers and Clara Bow. 1926.

Tumbleweeds, Mon., April 21, 7PM With William S. Hart and Barbara Bedford. 1925.

Blood and Sand, Mon., April 28, 7PM Starring Rudolph Valentino. 1922.

The Iron Horse, Mon., May 5, 7PM The building of a transcontinental railroad. 1924.

A Dog's Life and The Pilgrim, Sun., May 11, 2PM Charlie Chaplin as a tramp. 1918.

Pages From The Past..

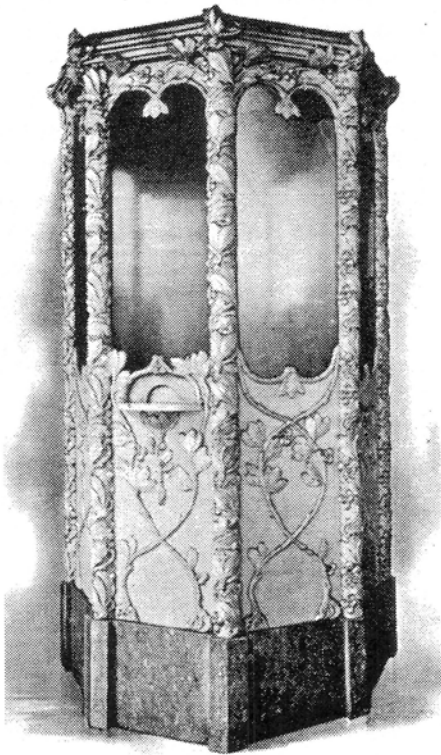
The history and evolution of theatre box offices is as interesting and colorful as that of theatre pipe organs. Following are excerpts from a larger article printed in a 1974 issue of *Marquee*, the journal of the Theatre Historical Society.

The “nerve center” of every theatre operation, the box office, has always merited special attention from owners and planners. Originally, in the legitimate theatre with the general practice of reserved seating, the box office was located within a ticket lobby and often featured two or more windows to take care of the performances of the day as well as future bookings.

With the advent of the motion picture—from the very first days of the nickelodeon—the box office moved from the inside ticket lobby to the outside to catch the customer off the street, since there were no reserved seats, but rather ‘immediate seating’ for one and all at one price.

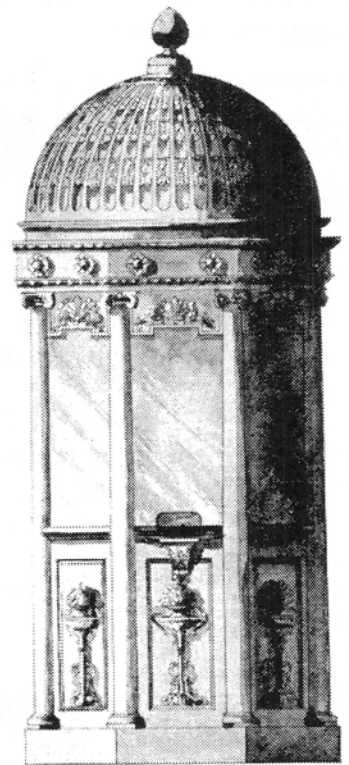
The box office became an important sales medium and was often a direct carry over of the barker’s platform of the carnival. In many instances it became a carnival in itself, both architecturally and as a point of sales.

Architecturally, the early nickelodeon box offices were always of great interest and as each tried to outdo the other in attracting the attention of the street traffic, they did become marvelously wild and imaginative in appearance. Although all this was toned down (or up) as the movie theatre gained in respectability, one feature was often retained—the row of bare light bulbs around the top of the box office, even when it was a custom design done by the architect.



These two beauties are from the 1916 Chicago Decorators Catalog. That's just two short years after Seattle's Liberty Theatre opened, boasting the very first truly successful Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ! It took a lot of nickels and dimes

to pay for one of these. Shown above is a booth priced at \$400. If purchased unfinished, \$370. With glass omitted, \$30 was deducted. With a wood base rather than marble, another \$30 was deducted. The booth shown below was priced at \$260 with similar price reductions available.



Kansas City's NEWMAN THEATRE boasted beveled glass in the doors and leaded glass in the box office. Real Class! Notice the fine example of the woodworking art in the display cases. It was October, 1927, a full year before our beloved Paramount Theatre opened in Seattle. Mary Pickford was supported by Buddy Rogers in *My Best Girl*.

Pages From The Past..continued



The GOLDEN GATE THEATRE in San Francisco was an Orpheum vaudeville house with a traffic problem. The entrance doors to the auditorium were on the left instead of the customary right and the off-center ticket window was to encourage the customer to bear left. A cardboard doorman, barely visible immediately right of the booth, points to the left doors. This photo was taken in 1941, and shows the highly ornate box office and large area for patrons to wait out of San Francisco's weather. Adolph Menjou and Gloria Swanson were playing in *Father Takes A Wife*.

Bob Ralston concert was a real crowd pleaser!

The Wurlitzer behaved perfectly and sounded better than ever!

We heard orchestral transcriptions, classical music, Broadway, hits of 1928, Rhapsody in Blue, a broken merry-go-round, the remote controlled Wurlitzer accompanying the artist at the Steinway for a hymn, dance music and *God Bless America*. There were good stories, corny jokes, bubbles, beautiful lighting, selections from the audience and singalongs. We heard every rank, percussion and sound effect, all used in the most musical manner. There was even a short "bump and grind" routine on the organ bench!

About six hundred music lovers enjoyed a spectacular show provided for our pleasure by Bob Ralston of Lawrence Welk Orchestra fame. Bob kept us spellbound for over two hours, then greeted us in the lobby, signed autographs and answered questions.

The Seattle Theatre Group provided staff and volunteers to handle all of the details. This was done in the most professional manner. There were displays by PSTOS, the Pipe Organ Foundation, the Automated Musical Instrument Collectors Association, Prosser Piano & Organ and the Society for the Preservation of Theatre Organ Music in America.

The youngest audience member was a two year old. One six year old boy got a tour of the Solo chamber. There were many folks in their 20s and 30s, plus the rest of us veteran theatre organ fans up through the 90s. A young music pastor who had



never heard a theatre organ before wants one for his church! Several noted organists attended including House Organist Dennis James. Mr. Ralston gave Dennis high praise stating that he is the best practitioner of the art of silent film accompaniment today.

Prosser Piano & Organ bused in 90 of their customers. Two PSTOS members brought groups of 20 each. One couple from Tacoma rode the bus to the front door of the Paramount and took the bus home after the show for \$5.00 total round trip.

If you weren't there this time and you talk to anyone who was, we are willing to bet you won't miss next time!

Extra! Extra!
NEWS
FLASH!
Coming
May 3rd!

A fabulous duo performance!

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors
 6521 N.E. 191st
 Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



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Jonas Nordwall



And



Tony Fenelon

In a spectacular Duo Program of
Pipes and Piano Pops
at the
4/48 Wilcox Wurlitzer and Grand Piano
Gig Harbor, WA
SATURDAY, May 3, 2PM

JONAS NORDWALL, a native of Portland, possesses unique talents as a concert organist. Equally adept at both classical and popular music, he rarely needs printed scores, improvises freely without losing the identity of the music, is truly a master organist. He is organist for Portland First United Methodist Church, and the Oregon Symphony Orchestra. He has recorded over 15 theatre organ albums. For 10 years he was senior staff organist for Portland's Organ Grinder Restaurant. He has performed for numerous national ATOS conventions and in 1987 was chosen ATOS Organist Of The Year. Regarded as one of the nation's top theatre organists, Jonas' creative arrangements and clever stylings always entertain and impress.

The musical credits of Australia's **TONY FENELON** could easily fill several pages. A gifted child prodigy, early training in the classics gave him the foundation to later become a spectacular theatre organist. He has nineteen recordings to his credit, is a regular soloist with the Australian Pops Orchestra, received ATOS Organist Of The Year award in 2002. He has completed over a dozen major international concert tours throughout Australia, England, Canada and the U.S. He is currently under contract to Roland International and spends time in many countries concertizing on the Roland Atelier. Whether pop music, favorite standards, light classics, Broadway, or traditional classical music, Tony does it all and is always in high demand.



Paid PSTOS Members and their guests \$15
All others \$20

Use the enclosed pink TICKET ORDER FORM to order your tickets TODAY!

Seating is limited. All ticket sales will be handled by mail, with no door sales. For questions or last minute ticket inquiries, please contact Norman Miller at colmiller@attbi.com or phone 206-784-7154