



PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 28, Nos. 2-3 • February-March 2017 www.pstos.org • www.facebook.com/pstos

2017 Series **THEATRE ORGAN POPS**



From London, England
RICHARD HILLS

at the 3/25 Kimball-Wurlitzer

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2:00 PM

Calvary Christian Assembly
6801 Roosevelt Way NE • Seattle

ADMISSION

(for those who are not series subscribers)

PSTOS members \$20 • Non-members \$25
Age 16 and under FREE with adult

Richard Hills is one of the very few musicians truly to have bridged and mastered the divide between the world of the classical organ and that of the theatre organ. Having commenced classical organ studies under William Whitehead at Rochester Cathedral, he became Organ Scholar at Exeter College Oxford, studying with David Sanger. Further organ scholarships followed at Portsmouth Cathedral, where he studied with Rosemary Field and at Westminster Abbey. He now pursues a freelance career and is Organist at St Mary's, Bourne Street, London.

His career in the theatre organ world has been equally prestigious. He has numerous prizes and awards to his credit, both in the U.K. and in this country where he was named Organist of the Year in 2010 by the American Theatre Organ Society. He has appeared many times on national and international TV and radio, including solo appearances on programs as diverse as Radio 3 Choral Evensong and Radio 2's 'Friday Night is Music Night', and has several recording credits. His most recent solo recording was made on the magnificent dual-purpose Compton organ of Southampton's Guildhall.

When not on the bench Richard serves as Musical Advisor to England's Cinema Organ Society and maintains a practical interest in organ building.

IMPORTANT! The Calvary parking lot is operated by Diamond, but parking is free for those attending this event

Drive Directions

SOUTHBOUND I-5—Take exit 171 toward NE 71st St/NE 65th St, merge onto 6th Ave NE. Take a slight left at NE 71st St, continue onto NE 70th St. Turn right at Roosevelt Way NE, destination will be on the right.

NORTHBOUND I-5—Take exit 171 for WA-522/Lake City Way toward Bothell. Take a slight right to NE 73rd St, then the first right onto Roosevelt Way NE. Destination will be on the right.

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

PRESIDENT'S *Message*

Vol. 28, Nos. 2-3, February-March 2017

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 10002 Aurora Ave N, Suite 36 #516
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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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JOINING PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY IS FAST AND EASY!

Simply click on the link below and select your preferred level of membership.

- Secure!
- No checks!
- No stamps!
- A few clicks and it's done!



<http://www.pstos.org/membership/new-member.htm>

Tours, Teachers, Tracks, and Tips: A Childhood Musical Memoir

When I was in 3rd grade my class was given a tour of the organ in the parish church connected to the school. It included a demonstration and a chance to sit at the console. I was utterly transfixed by all the keyboards and controls; I started to play “Chopsticks” and was quickly stopped! Without a doubt, this encounter changed my life.



In 5th grade my parents started me with piano lessons. But where my older sister had succeeded, I failed. The music sounded babyish, and the emphasis was on fine details of notation; I complained and finally boycotted practicing, and after a few months my parents finally stopped the lessons. That might have been the end of my musical education.

But in my 7th grade year the Heathkit Company announced a build-it-yourself electronic organ, and I was thrilled. I asked my parents if they would buy it; we could never afford an organ from a store, but this kit cost much less. My mother was sure I would build it and then never play it, so she said no. But I persisted, and finally she said we would buy it if I would take organ lessons and prove I was serious about the music. She found a Hammond organ teacher [1], who taught me how to form any chord and play old standard songs from a fake book. This was real music! I loved it and practiced enthusiastically. And I started seeing patterns: I realized that a song could be played in any key - what mattered wasn't the absolute notes and chords, everything was relative to the key. I began to recognize scale steps and chords by ear and transcribe songs I heard. Clearly I was serious about the music, so we got the Heathkit and I built it and played it in every spare moment. I was hooked.

During this time I discovered George Wright recordings. My first one, and still my favorite, was “Encores: Vol. 2,” which I listened to endlessly. His spectacular arrangements and keyboard gymnastics, and the sound of a huge pipe organ were like nothing I had ever heard; I wanted to play like that! I transcribed some of the tracks from this and other albums and played them on my Heathkit organ, but yearned for a bigger sound.

Then one day as an 8th-grader I was talking with a salesman in a music store, and he gave me a tip: You should go hear the Wurlitzer at the roller rink in Alexandria. That was just outside DC where we lived, so we arranged a visit and one Sunday my dad drove me to the rink. We heard the amazing sound [2], climbed up to the console, and met Jimmy Boyce. To my astonishment he said: Would you like to play a tune? So I got on the bench and played; this was my first experience playing a real pipe organ! I was pretty sure I had gone to heaven. Then he said: I need to have special rehearsals with my choir on Sunday afternoons for a couple of months; would you be willing to substitute for me? Then I was quite sure I was in heaven! I said yes, of course, and did that.

Through high school I continued to play and learn theatre organ, built a larger organ kit [3], and got to know the organ in my school's chapel. Then in 1967 I went off to college and didn't play an organ for forty years. But then as I was nearing retirement age I thought, I could get back to playing the organ! I joined PSTOS, acquired a decent practice instrument, and “the rest is history.”

Here's the point of all this: That tour of the organ in 3rd grade, my Hammond organ teacher, those George Wright tracks, and that music salesman's tip for me to visit the roller rink, were huge influences and led to boundless joy in my musical life. As enthusiasts dedicated to keeping the theatre organ alive, we need to keep giving youngsters similar experiences and opportunities.

...Jamie Snell

[1] Rudy Lewis, formerly organist at the Trocadero Theatre in London. That organ was recently moved to the Troxy Theatre; see the article “Troc to Troxy” by Simon Gledhill in the March/April 2013 issue of Theatre Organ.

[2] Wurlitzer Opus 2178, the 4/34 from the Center Theater in Rockefeller Center; the console is now in the Berkeley Community Theatre. You can hear and see Jimmy Boyce playing it in the 1973 movie “Scorpio” starring Burt Lancaster.

[3] The theatre version of Schober's recital model; see the ad reproduced on page 6 of the April 2016 issue of the Pipeline.

PSTOS

Coming Events



▶ **RICHARD HILLS**
Theatre Organ Pops at CCA
Sat., March 18, 2 PM

From London to PSTOS! One of Britain's most talented young organists, Richard has won numerous prizes and awards,

both in England and in the US. He has appeared many times on national and international TV and radio. He serves as Musical Advisor to England's Cinema Organ Society.

▶ PSTOS & AMICA

(Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Assoc.)

JOINT EVENT—FREE!

Vintage automatic musical instruments to see and play— PLUS cameo performances at the Wurlitzer Haller Lake Community Club

Sun., April 9, 2 PM

▶ MEMBER OPEN CONSOLE

at Haller Lake Community Club

A special Open Console Day for any and all members who would like an opportunity to play our upgraded and much improved PSTOS Wurlitzer. Info: russ@pstos.org

Sun., May 7, 1:00–4:00PM



▶ **BRETT VALLIANT**
Theatre Organ Pops at CCA
Saturday, June 3, 2 PM

From Wichita, Brett is an exciting young organist. He has been a featured performer at national conventions of the American Theatre Organ

Society and has toured extensively as a solo artist abroad and throughout the United States.

"Lazy Hazy Crazy Days of Summer"

▶ **RAY HARRIS & JO ANN EVANS**

at the Evans

Wurlitzer and piano

Ray and Jo Ann will again bring you an afternoon of music, smiles, food and some surprises.

Sun., Aug. 13, 2 PM



▶ **JERRY NAGANO**
Theatre Organ Pops at CCA
Sat., October 14, 2 PM

Well known Bay Area organist comes to CCA for an entertaining and musical afternoon. Jerry was influenced

by Gaylord Carter, George Wright, and Lyn Larsen. He has played for California pizza parlors as well as many concerts both in the U.S. and overseas.

2017 Series

THEATRE ORGAN POPS

SAVE \$\$! Order the three-concert series now at

<http://www.pstos.org/events/ticketing/TOP2017/TOP2017.htm>

PSTOS Member – Subscription to all three concerts \$50 USD

PSTOS Member – Richard Hills Mar. 18 \$20 USD

PSTOS member – Brett Valliant June 3 \$20 USD

PSTOS Member – Jerry Nagano Oct. 14 \$20 USD

Non-Member – Subscription to all three concerts \$65 USD

Non-Member Richard Hills Mar. 18 \$25 USD

Non-Member Brett Valliant June 3 \$25 USD

Non-Member – Jerry Nagano Oct. 14 \$25 USD

AGO Programs

American Guild of Organists presents...

Sunday February 19, 7:00 PM

Organ recital by Dr. Paul Thornock. Works of J.S. Bach and Bruhns on the Pasi organ at Trinity Lutheran Church of Lynnwood. 6215 196th St SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036. Donation at door.

Friday February 24, 7:30 PM

Flentrop Organ Concert by Dr. Janette Fishell, Professor of Music and Chair of the Organ Department of the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. \$20/\$15 suggested donation. St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle

Sunday February 26, 6:00 PM

Sacred Music of Venice and the Balkans presented by Agave Baroque led by Henry Lebedinsky. Epiphany Parish 1805 38th Ave, Seattle, 98122.

Sunday March 5, 3:00 PM

Jonathan Wohlers, Interim University Organist in the Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series on the Fritts organ, Lagerquist Hall, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma. Jonathan Wohlers is the Director of Music at Trinity Lutheran Church and Artist-In-Residence at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Tacoma. Tickets: \$15 General Admission, \$10 Seniors and Students. More info at www.plu.edu/music

Sunday March 12, 5:00 PM

Choral Evensong followed by an organ recital by Michael Kleinschmidt on the Pasi organ in the chapel of Epiphany Parish, 1805 38th Ave, Seattle, 98122.

Friday March 17, 7:30 PM

Flentrop Organ Concert by John Stuntebeck, Associate Organist at Saint Mark's Cathedral. He will perform music by Alain, Vivaldi/Bach, Grigny, Buxtehude, Sweelinck; and Vierné's complete 3rd Symphony. \$20/\$15 suggested donation. St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle.



with Seattle Opera. Accompanied by Christian Elliott at the Mighty Wurlitzer.



A warm welcome to these new PSTOS members...

Rob Brewer, Seattle

Tanya McDonald, Woodinville

Tyler & Lauren Pattison, Seattle

PARAMOUNT THEATRE

Doors open at 6:00 PM

Films at 7:00 PM

General Admission \$10

Student/senior admission \$7

(Not including fees)

Monday, February 27

CARMEN (1915), Don José, an officer of the law, is seduced by the gypsy girl Carmen, in order to facilitate her clan's smuggling endeavors. Don José becomes obsessed, turning to violent crime himself in order to keep the attention of Carmen. Starring Geraldine Farrar. In partnership

Monday, March 6

THE DRAGON PAINTER (1919), a wild man and genius becomes a master painter's disciple, but loses his divine gift when he finds love. Starring Sessue Hayakawa. Music composed and performed by Aono Jikken Ensemble. (No organ accompaniment)

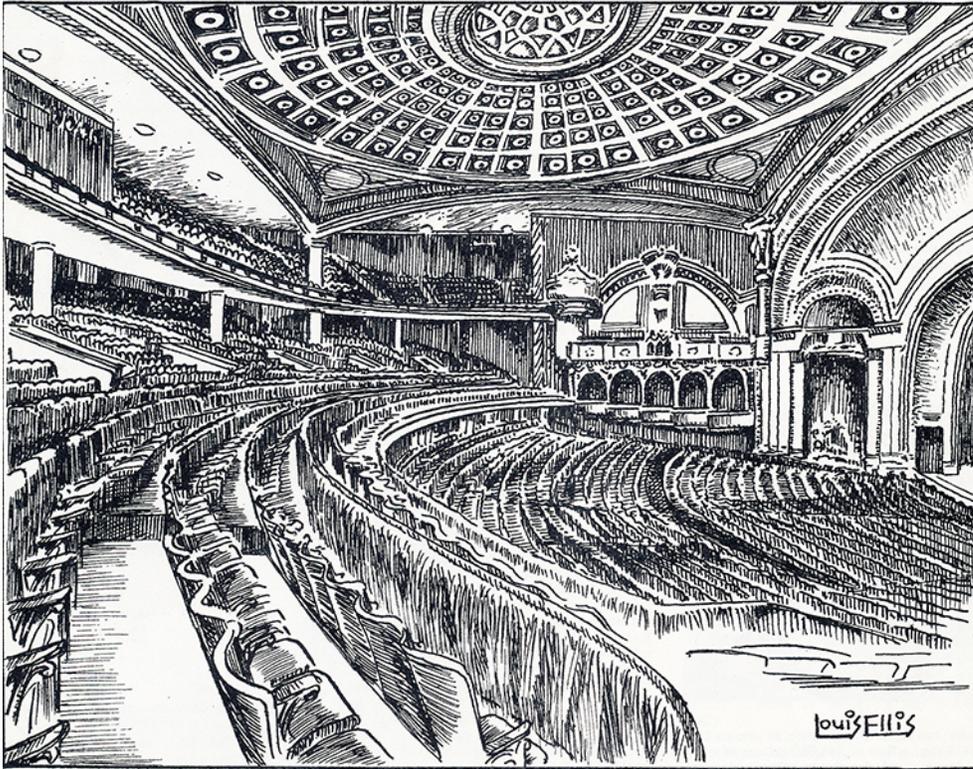
PAGES FROM THE PAST...1905-1939

Before theatre organs... Before full length movies... History of a fantastic theatre—

“Hip, Hip, Hippodrome”

By Frank Cronican — Part 1

Reprinted from *MARQUEE*, the journal of the Theatre Historical Society, 1972



New York has Radio City Music Hall, London the Palladium, Paris the Lido, none of which are comparable, but each in its own way is an outstanding show-place of today. Yet, back at the turn of the century, New York had the greatest of them all, the Hippodrome...still the largest theatre ever of its kind. The Music Hall outranks it only in seating capacity. The stage, for dimensions and equipment, has never been surpassed and today's prices would prohibit a duplicate.

The Hippodrome opened April 12, 1905, the brainchild of an architect from Ohio, Frederick Thompson. His partner, Elmore S. Dundy, hailed from Nebraska and was well educated in the world of the carnival. Thompson was a genius and dabbled in the realm of illusion. During the great epidemic of World's Fair fever their paths crossed several times and met head-on at the fair in Buffalo in 1901. They joined in a bit of hokus-pokus called “A Trip to the

Moon.” Thompson's illusion plugged them into a rainbow, and they filled pot after pot with expositionite's gold. The fair closed and the lunar voyage landed them at Coney Island. A rerun into space brought astronomical profits that would orbit them into their next venture, where they buried the pot to the brim in real estate called “Luna Park,” another creation from Thompson's fertile brain. It was costly and both were wearing rented suits at the opening, but profits soon deluged the till. They met John W. Gates, better known as “Bet-a-Million” Gates, a horse fancier, raw and ready at all times. He liked money and wasn't fussy from whom, or how, he got it. It was his suggestion they move into New York's show world. At dinner Thompson sketched plans on the tablecloth for a gigantic theatre, while Gates and Dundy sat goggle-eyed. Gates unloaded \$2 million for a gaping hole at 43rd Street and Sixth Avenue, where one year later

the Hippodrome stood completed, the largest and costliest theatre in the world.

There were seats for 5,697 paying patrons who sat facing a richly draped stage resembling an ornate hole in the wall. It was 210 feet wide, 110 feet deep and 60 feet high, still the biggest ever constructed. It was divided into 12 sections that could be raised in many patterns by hydraulic lifts. Thompson put an apron in front of the proscenium in addition to the stage. With a flip of a switch the surface became the floor to a giant tank 17 feet deep, 48 feet wide and 140 feet long with 960,000 gallons of water. Within minutes lakes, waterfalls, streams, spillways and fountains could be created. This was the famous Hippodrome tank.

The switchboard to operate everything was the largest constructed and all control platforms were 30 feet in the air. There were 9,000 lights of all types on stage, 20,000 bulbs turned darkness into daylight in the cavernous interior. Five thousand additional mazdas exploded into illumination in the sunburst fixture in the auditorium ceiling.

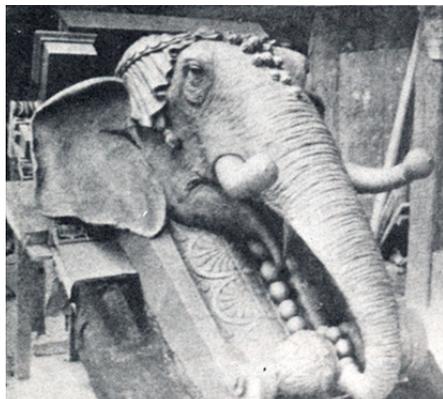
To span the tremendous openings over the stage and auditorium four huge steel trusses were used. The steel in them and the balcony totaled 15,000 tons. The stage fly gallery had a grid with moving cranes to lift and move the tons of scenery. The Cyclorama was 85 feet high and 212 feet wide compared to 24 feet by 35 feet for a normal stage. When completed, the stage and all its operating machinery weighed 300 tons (without water).



PAGES FROM THE PAST... *Continued*

The walls of the theatre were covered in crimson velvet and silver, with gold trimmed borders, ivory and gold completing the color scheme. All pillars and posts on the boxes, columns and borders of the house were topped with carved marble elephant heads. Their tusks of gilt were tipped with light bulbs.

The building fronted on Sixth Avenue for 240 feet and upward for 115 feet. The facade was attractive with twin towers at either end with finials of illuminated globes. Flag poles in dozens ringed the edges of the roof. Entrance doors centered on the Avenue between cafes on either corner of the building. A grand lobby lined with marble (and elephant heads) was pierced on the sides with extensive stairways. Additional halls, promenades, tea rooms, and such, honeycombed the upper floors as well as



more elephant heads. Thompson had a passion for elephants.

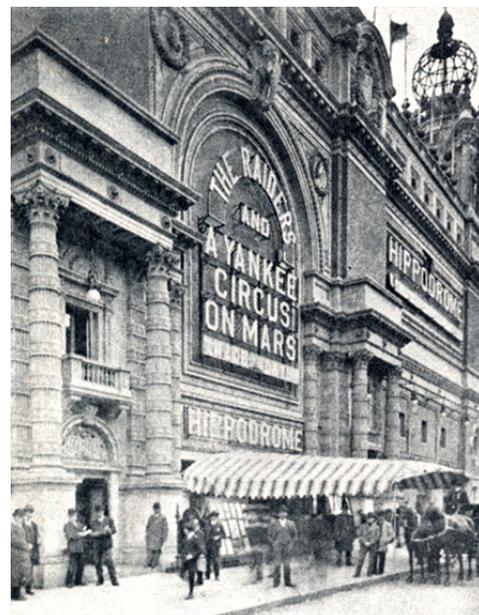
An automatic arrangement, in case of fire, would start a flow of 445,000 gallons of water to any part of the theatre. The water was always on hand for this purpose. The principals were in 44 dressing rooms off the stage, each having a window. Other rooms were under the stage and in the auditorium basement were pens and quarters for the animals and rooms for their keepers. The building was classed as the safest in New York with its countless appliances and devices for just about anything even a genie could imagine. The structural steel and concrete was covered with walls of red brick and trimmed with white stone.

Backstage were 800 production employees that included carpenters, prop

men, electricians, costumers, engineers, dressers, stagehands, scenic painters, and animal handlers. The company for the spectacles numbered 1,000. To operate the auditorium were 125 doormen, ushers, attendants, ticket takers, sellers and cleaners. The ushers were uniformed and drilled military fashion by a corps of officers...and Roxy was never at the Hippodrome!

April 12, 1905 saw the biggest opening New York ever witnessed. Ticket gougers were selling the top \$2.00 boards for the first show in the new Cathedral of Spectacular Frivolity for \$20. It was a curious conglomeration of fantasy, color, animals, clowns, gymnasts, airships, and countless numbers of people. They called it "A Yankee Circus on Mars."

Thompson was at his best, Dundy was in his glory, and Gates was now in for \$4 million—plus! Barlow's elephants came in from Coney Island and to make sure there were enough, they put Power's troop in with them. The audience watched in awe, almost in disbelief, for here was a stage opening in which Thompson and Dundy could have lost the Grand Canyon. Scenery was changed magically, as part of the show, in full view of the audience. Toward the end, King Borealis of Mars, with his troop of 200, flocked onstage to join the assorted gross already in position amid bejeweled totem poles topped by elephant heads! Within moments 280 shapely ladies carrying golden scorpions danced on with their insects. When it appeared the stage must bend from sheer weight, another army of dancers entered, not with lit guns, but with a forest of spears to gyrate in endless action. The audience loved it, responding with resounding ovations. The little space left was promptly filled with a Martian ballet under ever-changing iridescent lights. When it was obvious they had run out of room, horns honked and a parade of motor cars driven by the elephants in caps and chauffeur's uniforms came out with ten chorus girls stuffed into each open auto. The audience went wild, the applause emanating from 6,000 pairs of hands shook the structural bones of the building. And that was only the finale of the first part!



Detailed view of the main entrance during the opening attraction



The upper promenade as redone by Lamb in the Keith remodeling

Watch for Part 2 in your next Pipeline

PIZZA & PIPES Recreated

Donna Parker took us on a nostalgic trip back in time to the memorable Pizza & Pipes days

Over 70 enthusiastic folks enjoyed an afternoon of typical pizza parlor music and food

A sense of expectation prevailed at Haller Lake Community Club as PSTOS and HLCC members and friends gathered to munch on a lunch of pizza, salad, beverages and desserts, and enjoy an afternoon of theatre organ music from the *Pizza & Pipes* days of the 1970s and '80s.

Donna did not disappoint. Nor did the newly upgraded Wurlitzer theatre organ.

Having been staff organist for a number of restaurants in Michigan, Indiana, Portland, Vancouver WA, and Mesa AZ, Donna knows what pleases. And she delivered with a range of music that set heads nodding and toes tapping.



Donna Parker at the PSTOS Wurlitzer at Haller Lake Community Club



Donna at the Wurlitzer (far right) accompanying the old Charlie Chaplin silent, "One A.M."

Between tunes, Donna shared many of her experiences as a pizza organist, from humorous to teary, all to the delight of the audience.

Midway through the afternoon the lights dimmed, the screen came down, and Donna accompanied a short Charlie Chaplin silent comedy entitled "One A.M." to the delight of all.

Following the movie, there was more music along with desserts—custom heart-shaped brownies, handmade and donated by member Susan Buchholz, with ice cream cups, delivered to each table via rolling serving carts. YUM! Many thanks to Susan!

And thanks as well to a large team of loyal PSTOS members who faithfully pitch in to ensure the success and smooth opera-

tion of an event. Sunday's list included Bob Zat, Barb Graham, Ellen Sullivan, Susan & Bob Buchholz, Jon Beveridge, Terry & Marie Perdue, Russ & Jo Ann Evans. Add the many who helped put tables and chairs away at the end of the day, a much-appreciated group. Then there's cleanup, putting the Wurlitzer back in its box, the supplies down one level in the PSTOS locker, shutting down, turning out lights, locking up.

Many many thanks to Donna for presenting a wonderful nostalgic *Pizza & Pipes* program. And thanks, too, to the many dedicated PSTOS volunteers who seem never to tire of helping to make such events possible.

We look forward to Donna's next program for PSTOS.

PSTOS 2006 Scholarship recipient, Tyler Pattison, comes full circle



Tyler at the Kenyon Hall console after playing for PSTOS in 2006

In 2006 PSTOS awarded a scholarship for organ study to 14-year-old Tyler Pattison of Gig Harbor. Over the next several years he studied with Don Wallin, Donna Parker and Jonas Nordwall.

After graduation he entered Gonzaga University in Spokane to major in electrical engineering with a minor in music. Along with his engineering studies, he studied organ performance (mainly classical) and voice. He organized and performed a series of annual Halloween concerts at St. Aloysius Church to support restoration of their pipe organ. He played sousaphone and baritone in the Gonzaga Pep Band, traveled to Europe as organist and vocal soloist with the Gonzaga Chamber Singers, and gave organ performances in Venice, Florence, Vienna, Munich, and Salzburg.

Back in Spokane he served as assistant organist at St. Aloysius Church, then as organist at Zion Lutheran Church. He accompanied the famous silent movie, *Nosferatu*, was winner of Musicfest Northwest, organ division, and winner of the 2014 Spokane AGO Award.

Upon graduation he accepted a job as an electrical and electronics engineer in aircraft/avionics and he his wife Lauren moved to Seattle. He performed for the Seattle Symphony Chorale during the 2015-2016 season. On weekends he is busy developing his own organ control system and electronics.

We're delighted to welcome Tyler as a full fledged PSTOS member and look forward to hearing him perform for us in the future.



Tyler at an organ in Germany in 2013