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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. PSTOS is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Volume 15 No. 1

January 2005

A Chapter of American Theatre Organ Society

## 2004 was a productive year for PSTOS workers and contributors

### The beloved Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer enjoyed much TLC from PSTOS work crew during 2004

Since PSTOS resumed 'care and feeding' of the Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer nearly two years ago, the instrument has again become a joy to play. PSTOS is credited with originally 'saving' the instrument about 40 years ago, and was responsible for its preservation and maintenance until the theatre was sold in 1994 and the console was removed to storage during renovation of the building. The task of refurbishing was given to a local church pipe organ company, but ongoing maintenance was spotty.

Before the Bob Ralston event in 2002, PSTOS was again asked to work on the instrument, with Tom Blackwell heading the crew. Untold hours (literally hundreds!) of volunteer time have been given to this work. The crew gathers regularly when access to the instrument is possible. The result is nothing short of spectacular! All notes play on all stops, ciphers are rare, tuning is good, the blower room is clean and painted, and the decorative fence surrounding the console has been returned. House organist praises our accomplishments. If only it could be heard by the public more often!

### Our PSTOS theatre pipe organ at HLCC gets upgrade

Upgrade improvements and additions to our Chapter-owned pipe organ, located at Haller Lake Community Club in North Seattle since 1969,

are proceeding virtually every Sunday.

The chimes, which have been on a cumbersome roll-out cart all these years, are now permanently relocated in the Main chamber totally out of the way. The toy counter (with 'ahoogah' horn, door bell, boat whistle, etc.) has a new home in the Main chamber as well as the chrysoglott. No longer will we have to work around these two large components.

New walkboards have been installed in both chambers making tuning and maintenance much, much easier.

The new clarinet chest is in, wired and winded, and the pipes are racked. A new violin celeste rank and a new chest for these pipes are installed, wired and winded.

The largest remaining upgrade is to realign the stop rail on the console. New stop tabs are ready to install. This changeover will also entail getting the tabs in the correct accepted order, division by division, voice by voice.

Last, but not least, will be a further refinement of the pipework, both voicing and regulation.

We look forward to completing this work in early 2005.

### PSTOS contributed much to saving the Roosevelt H.S. pipe organ

...by Carl Dodrill

An outstanding accomplishment of PSTOS in 2004 was the vigorous support of the saving of the Roosevelt High School Moller concert organ, and the return of the instrument to the school to interest students in the pipe organ for generations to come.

The high school is currently being totally renovated, and the organ had to

be removed in May, 2004. PSTOS President Clint Meadway supervised the move, and he was assisted by PSTOS members Russ Evans and Carl Dodrill. The organ is now securely packed and in a Seattle school system storage facility.

Equally important, however, was the support of PSTOS in having a concert at the Wurlitzer Mansion in September. That concert plus gifts from PSTOS members netted more than \$15,000 toward making a place for the organ in the new theater at Roosevelt. This money will go toward the \$90,000 that is needed to prepare the two chambers for the pipes, stairways to the chambers, a place for the console, electricity for the organ, winding, and all else that will be needed. \$73,000 toward the \$90,000 has now been raised, and based on this \$73,000, the Seattle School District has issued change orders to the contractor to have the space for the organ actually constructed. The District has stressed the importance of raising the rest of the money, and you are invited to be involved. "Friends of RHS Froula Memorial Organ" is an organization specifically devoted to the inclusion of this instrument in the renovated Roosevelt High School.

If you have not made a contribution thus far, please join our efforts by making your tax deductible contribution out to the Alliance for Education, RHS Froula Memorial Organ Fund, c/o 1506 NE 76th Street, Seattle, WA 98115.

If you have any questions please contact Andrea Wilson, 206-526-8120.

Let's encourage our youth to become interested in the pipe organ!

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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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#### 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.

#### Joining Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is quick and easy!

For a one year membership, send a \$15 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 7-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:

Norman Miller, Treasurer, 2644 NW Esplanade, Seattle, WA 98117-2527.

## PRESIDENT'S Message

History says the pipe organ was invented by the Roman engineer, Ctsebius, about 300 B.C. A recent find from 4,000 B.C. in Ireland looks like wooden organ pipes. History is always full of twists and turns.

Ctsebius built his Opus 1 for the Coliseum in Rome. That pipe organ provided music for the spectacle of throwing the Christians to the lions in the first three centuries A.D. Is it any wonder, then, that the first pipe organ in a church caused quite a stir? The hapless eleventh century cleric responsible for "bringing this profane and worldly instrument inside the sacred walls of the Church" was sacked.

Fast forward a millennium. A new entertainment medium came to Seattle in the early years of the twentieth century: motion pictures. From the start, they were shown with some form of musical accompaniment be it piano or orchestra, an early form of multimedia presentation. Then an enterprising Seattle movie house owner moved a used church pipe organ into his establishment and started a new industry—silent movie organist. Almost a decade later a musical instrument manufacturing family, the Wurlitzers, purchased pipe organ patents from Robert Hope-Jones, an English engineer and inventor. Their *very first* truly successful instrument designed specifically for silent movie accompaniment was installed in Seattle's Liberty Theatre!

As the movie house pipe organ became increasingly popular and movie house organists started making more money than church organists, a rift developed. Comments were made such as "how terrible it is to take this sacred musical instrument inside the profane and worldly walls of the movie palace." Even after theatre organist Albert Haye Mallotte composed his much beloved music for "The Lord's Prayer," the clucking continued.

As we completed the second millennium, Pope John Paul proclaimed the pipe organ as "The Instrument of the Millennium." Things seem to run in cycles (Frank Sinatra got that right).

A very happy and prosperous New Year to all. —Clint Meadway, President

## PSTOS Coming Events

### Winter Goodtime Event

Haller Lake Community Club,  
No. Seattle, **Sun., Feb. 13, 1:30PM**



### Organ Crawl to Bremerton

See and hear the Masonic Center 2/8 Wurlitzer originally installed in the Rialto Theatre in 1927, and moved to the Lodge in 1941. Then on to the Bremerton Community Theatre and its 2/11 Wurli/Morton originally from the Pasco Liberty Theatre. See pages 4 and 5. More details next month.

**Saturday, March 12**

### Paramount Wurlitzer Event!

A joint program with AGO, this will be a very special Monday evening event. More details as they develop... stay tuned!

**Monday evening, Apr. 4**

### Jelani Eddington will play at Wurlitzer Manor May 15

One of the brilliant younger stars in the Theatre Organ World, a recent winner ATOS Young Organist of the Year award. Jelani is wowing audiences world-wide. Mark your calendar now!

### A warm and hearty PSTOS welcome to these recent new members!

Eric & Virginia Baron, Gig Harbor

R.R. Dick Biles, Shoreline

Edward & Mailyn Crosby, University Pl.

Brian & Carolesue Edwards, Burien

Tom Endresen, Gig Harbor

Paul & Norma Flick, Salem, OR

Craig Gammon, Enumclaw

Dave Goodwin & Larry Sanchez, Fed. Way

Peggy Green, Granada Hills, CA

Jonathon & Susan Hayes, Seattle

Brian & Valerie Hogan, Seattle

Paul W. Jones, Tacoma

Doretta & Richard Markham, University Pl.

Doug Morgan, Vancouver, WA

Ele & Jim Nash, Kenmore

Robert Newhall, Seattle

Tyler Pattison, Gig Harbor

Rod & Karen Powell, Olympia

Andy & Jane Rittig, Gig Harbor

Chuck & Vickie Sandvik, Auburn

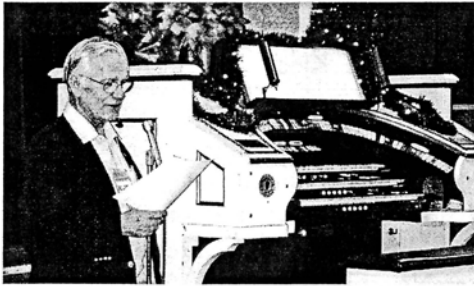
Claudia Simpson-Jones & Robert Corl, Yelm

Cynthia Smith, Seattle

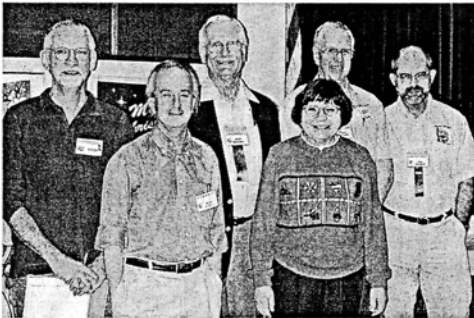
# Glimpses of the PSTOS Holiday Party

A fun time was had by all.

## Officers and Board members for 2005 elected and installed



President Clint Meadway at work



Board members, back row: Bob Zat, Clint Meadway—President, Bill Keller, Dan Warner. Front row, Mark Baratta, Diane Whipple—Secretary. Missing from photo: Norman Miller, Tom Blackwell, Barbara Graham.



Irene Hendele and daughter, Ellen Sullivan, who decorated the hall for the event.



Megan Driscoll helped Clint Meadway draw door prize winners. There were lots of prizes!

Thanks to ELLEN SULLIVAN, Haller Lake Community Club was all decked out and ready for the party when members arrived on December 5th. And it was a party indeed! Great music by Don Wallin, great food by members, great decorations and kitchen supervision by Ellen, and great camaraderie by all. The door prizes were many and varied, with Jack Driscoll's granddaughter Megan helping out with the drawings.

Election and installation of officers preceded the party, with Clint Meadway reluctantly agreeing to serve one more year as president, and Tom Blackwell as Vice President. Norman Miller will continue as treasurer, and Diane Whipple, whose Board position expired, will take over as secretary. Mark Baratta and Bob Zat will serve as new board members for two years, and Bill Keller and Dan Warner for one year.

Members were wonderful about staying to help put away chairs and tables, and to tidy up. Many thanks to all who pitched in on both setup and cleanup. It's teamwork that makes things happen!



Kathy Swedberg (right) and friend.



Long time members Jack & Mary Lou Becvar.



Honorary Life Members Clyde and Adeline Hook from Tacoma.



Joani & Tom Roughton with Mark Baratta



Terri and Doug Owen from University Place



Diane Whipple, Don Wallin, and Merlyn Johnson.



Mary and Don Moore from Kenmore.



# Pages From The Past...1977

## Theatre Pipe Organ to Enhance New Bremerton Community Theatre

*You will visit this theatre  
during the Bremerton  
Organ Crawl on March 12*

Reprinted from the June - July, 1977 issue of *Theatre Organ*, the ATOS journal. Written by Lloyd E. Klos.

Those of us who attended the 1971 ATOS Convention in the Seattle area remember the concert at the Bremerton Masonic Temple by Byron Melcher at the 2/8 Wurlitzer, and the exhilarating ferryboat ride back to Seattle. Noted for its U.S. Navy facilities and mothball fleet, including the famed battleship "Missouri," Bremerton, small as it may be, is still a community with a heart. It soon will have another theatre pipe organ playing.

In late 1976, a group of 16 enthusiasts, realizing their city needed a theatre organ which the public could enjoy, pooled their funds and purchased the 2/13 hybrid from the estate of the late Dan Adamson. Mr. Adamson had collected parts from several instruments and had a substantial organ in his home's basement at the time of his death.

At the time this article went to press, the group was busily engaged in installing the instrument in

Bremerton's new Community Theatre, located at Lebo Boulevard and Juniper Street, overlooking the Washington Narrows.

The console is from the Wurlitzer, Opus 537, installed in the American Theatre in Walla Walla, Wash., in 1922. It has room for 55 tablets on the horseshoe and 29 on the second-touch stop rail.

There are chests for 13 ranks, of which 11 are filled as follows: Tuba, Diapason, Tibia I, Tibia II, Clarinet, Viol d'Orchestre, Viol d'Orchestre Celeste, Flute, Kinura, Vox Humana I and Vox Humana II.

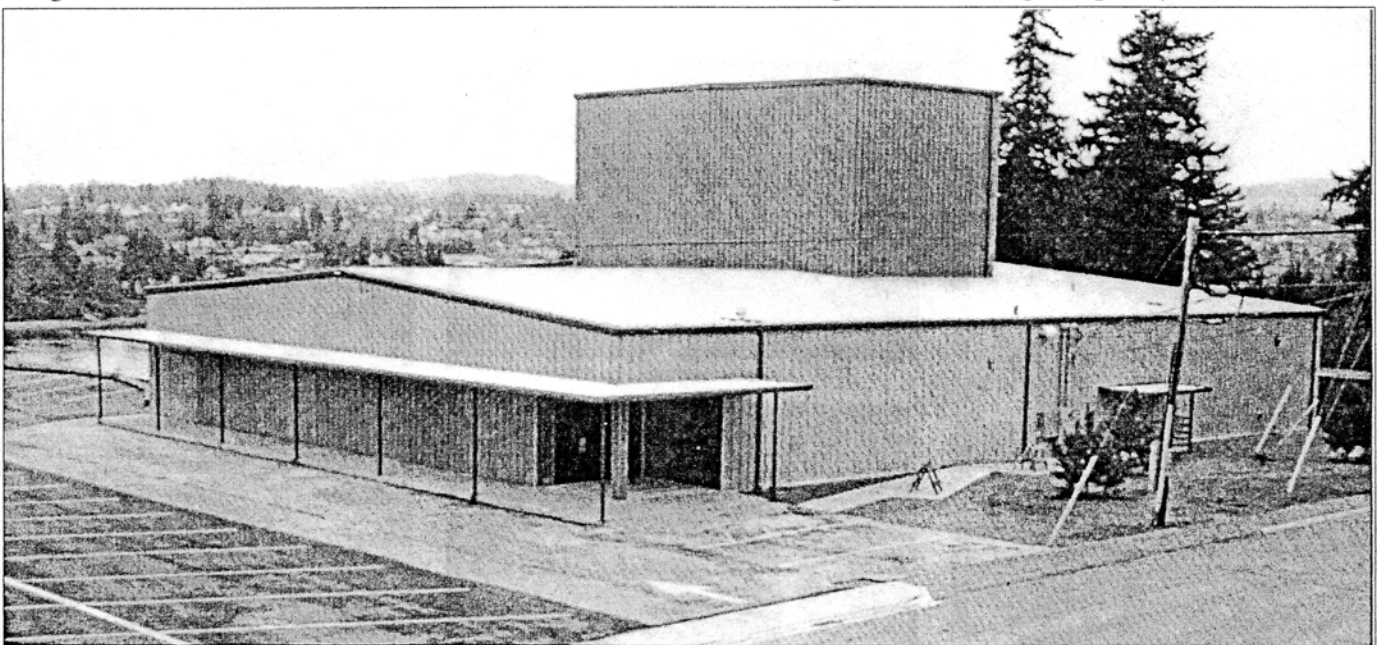
The Diapason, Flute, Viol and Vox are in a chest which was installed by Robert Morton in the Liberty Theatre in Pasco, Wash., in 1921. Lew Wells, who is helping the Bremerton group install the organ, played the Morton for about a year in the early twenties, and assisted in its removal to the Catholic church in Moxee, Wash., in 1935. The other chests are Balcom & Vaughn,

Smith and Robert Morton.

Percussions include a Liberty Harp, a Morton Xylophone and Glockenspiel, and a Wurlitzer Xylophone, Glock and Chimes. Traps are well represented in treble and bass.

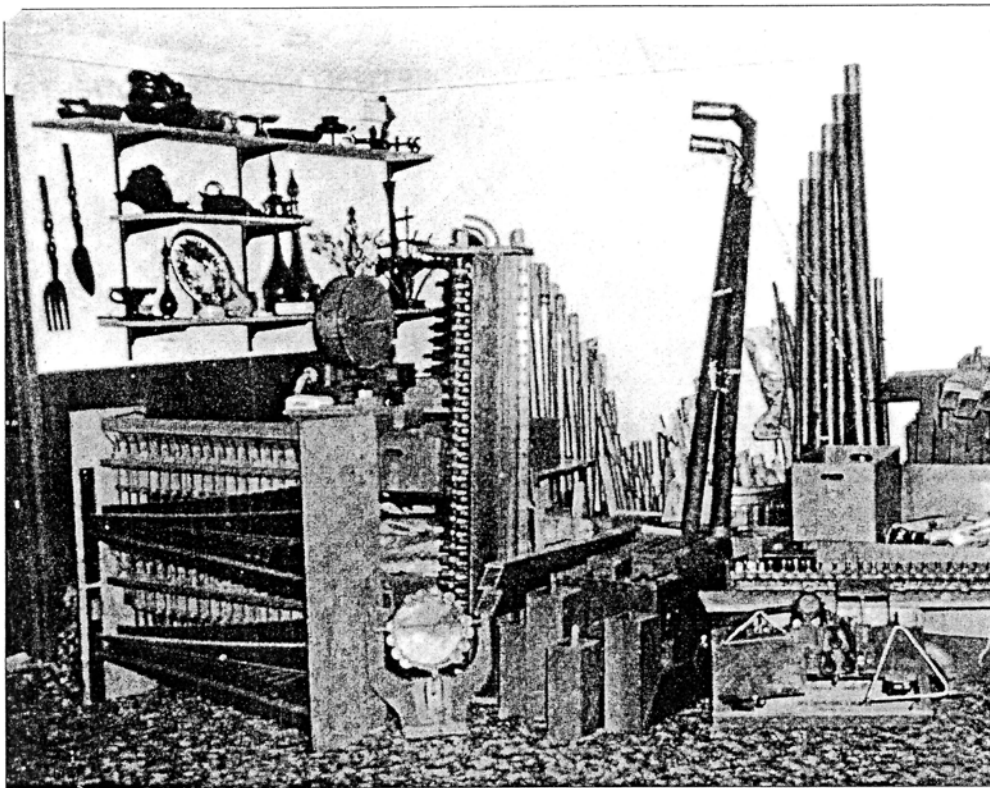
The new Community Theatre is being built using funds derived from several sources. From the EDA has come \$152,000 in federal money. Community Theatre donors have contributed over \$50,000. The city of Bremerton will contribute \$35,000, mostly for construction costs. Additional funds will be needed to finish the interior and to buy the projection and stage equipment. A novel way to accomplish this will be by "selling" seats in the auditorium for \$200. A brass plate bearing the donor's name and address will be affixed to the back of the chair.

The big red upholstered chairs originally came from the loge of Seattle's Music Hall Theatre, and are being completely renovated.



The building was designed primarily as a legitimate theatre for the production of plays. It seats 203. The stage is equipped with a full rigged fly gallery, built mostly from equipment recovered from the Seattle Orpheum Theatre when it was demolished in 1969. It has provisions for electronic stage lighting, movie projection equipment, work shop and scene construction shop, rehearsal space and a community meeting place.

# Pages From The Past..continued



Storage in Mel Retzlaff's rec room. Most of the pipes are stored here. Objects on shelves are not part of the organ.

The organ pipes, percussions, etc., will be housed in stacked chambers. Eight ranks will be housed in the lower one, and the upper chamber will contain five ranks, plus percussions, traps and the relays. It is planned to eventually have the console on a lift in the orchestra pit.

Many ferry trips were made across Puget Sound to move the dismantled organ from the Adamson home to Bremerton. The console had to be disassembled to remove it from its basement location. To Roger Hoffman go many thanks for donating his truck with lift for the operation. As the work progressed, a model railroad layout and 10 fish tanks had to be removed as more pipes and regulators were discovered, spotted about the basement.

Progress in the installation work is slow as volunteers work in their spare time. However, it is hoped that part of the organ will be playing by late summer, with completion scheduled by the end of the year. Chamber work was 75 per cent completed in January

[1976]. Extensive rewiring was needed in the console, relays, etc.

The theatre can be used for organ concerts and club meetings when other

events are not scheduled. At least two silent movies a year are planned.

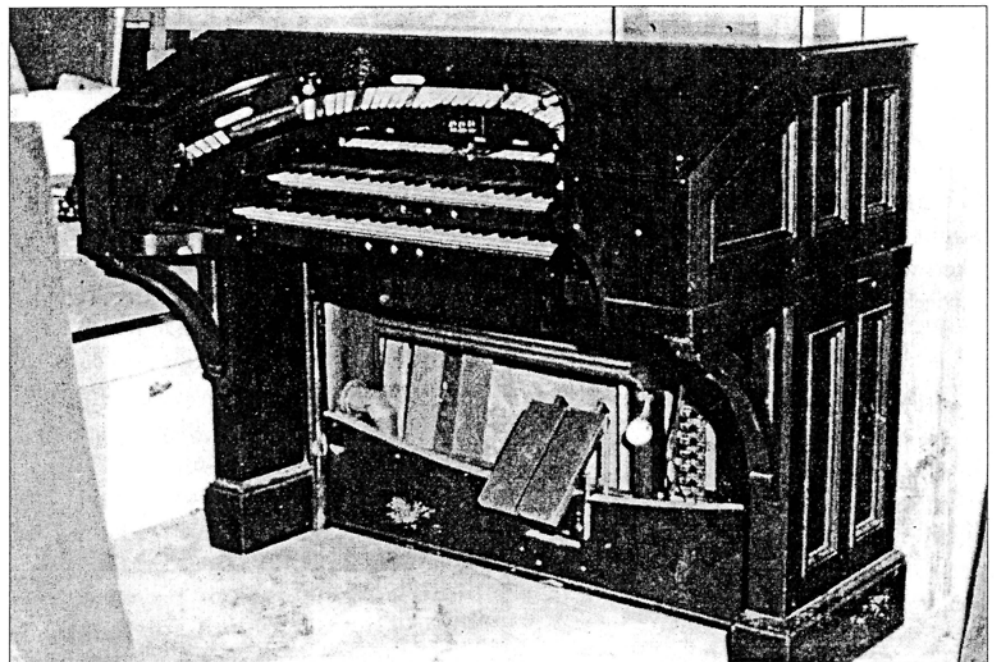
The new organization, the Bremerton Pipe Organ Society, is here to stay. Its officers are: Mel Retzlaff, president; Bob Arnold, vice president; Ellena Retzlaff, secretary; and Marlin Mangels, treasurer.

The society is fortunate in having Lew Wells as its technical advisor. Retired, he was an employee of the noted organ-building and repair firm of Balcom & Vaughn for 10 years. He also played theatre organs in the silent movie days.

Since a number of the Bremerton group belong to the Puget Sound Chapter [PSTOS], a harmonious relationship between the two organizations is anticipated and some meetings of the chapter will possibly be held in Bremerton.

To the members of the Bremerton Pipe Organ Society go ATOS wishes of good luck and many years of successful operation of their new enterprise.

(The writer thanks Genny Whitting of the Puget Sound Chapter who supplied the information for this feature.)



The Wurlitzer console will have all new key contacts and combination pneumatics as well as new console-to-relay cable.

# The American Theatre Organ Society turns 50!

The 2005 ATOS convention will celebrate its first 50 years with the biggest and best conclave ever! For up-to-the-minute news of this exciting event, check out this website:

[www.ATOSconvention.org](http://www.ATOSconvention.org)

## PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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## For a smile...on the wall of Paul Fritts' organ shop

Attributed to Garrison Keillor

AND IT CAME TO PASS, when Paul was at Corinth, he and certain disciples came upon a mob that was stoning an organist. 2 And Paul said unto them, "What then hath he done unto thee that his head should be bruised?" 3 And the people cried with one voice, "He hath played too loud. 4 Yea, in the singing of psalms, he maketh our heads to ring as if they were beaten with hammers. 5 Behold, he sitteth up high in the loft, and mighty are the pipes and mighty is the noise thereof, and though

there be few of us below, he nonetheless playeth with all the stops, the Assyrian trumpet stop and the stop of the ram's horn and the stop that soundeth like the sawing of stone, and we cannot hear the words that do come out of our own mouths. 6 He always tosseth in variations that confuse us mightily and he playeth loud and discordantly and always in militant tempo, so that we have not time to breathe as we sing. 7 Lo, he is a plague upon the faith and should be chastised." 8 Paul, hearing this, had himself picked up a small stone, and was about to cast it, but he set it down, and bade the organist come forward. 9 He was a narrow man, pale of complexion, dry, flaking, thin

of hair. 10 And Paul said unto him, "Why hast thou so abused thy brethren?" 11 And the organist replied, "I could not hear them singing from where I sat, and therefore played the louder so as to encourage them." 12 And Paul turned around to the mob and said loudly, "Let him who has never played an organ cast the first stone." 13 And they cast stones for a while until their arms were tired and Paul bade the organist repent and he did. 14 And Paul said unto him, "Thou shalt take up the flute and play it for thirty days, to cleanse thy spirit," and afterwards they returned to Corinth and sang psalms unaccompanied and then had coffee and were refreshed in the faith.

## A Visit to Bellingham's Mt. Baker Theatre

By Canadian member Norm Schmidt

As soon as I entered the lobby, I could not only hear, but feel, the thundering sounds of the Wurlitzer. I thought I was late for the performance! I asked who was playing and was told it was the 'performer of the day,' Hokum W. Jeebs, playing a 'prelude' to the main show.

Sharply at 2:00 pm, the entertainment began. There were two "one-reelers," the first being *A Trip Down Market Street*, where, in 1905, someone had placed a new-fangled movie camera on a cable car and photographed the whole trip from, probably, the Castro district to the waterfront. Sound background was supplied by Hokum on the Wurlitzer.

This was, remember, the year before the Great Earthquake of 1906.

The second one-reeler was the Thomas Edison movie, reported to be first movie with an actual plot, *The Great Train Robbery*. By today's technology, it was a virtual step back in time. One can only imagine what the audiences of that time would think if they were to go into a theatre today, with wide-screen innovation, and multi-channel sound! It was announced that early movie theatres seldom had an organ to accompany the films, but rather, a piano, and this movie was accompanied exactly that way...the pianist being Hokum's friend Dan Grinstead. He and Hokum played a number of duets during the afternoon.

Then it was time for the featured sounds of the two-manual Wurlitzer, installed in the theatre in 1927, and

still played today on a regular basis. Hokum was introduced and immediately hit the lifts 'up' button—he and the console rose to the thundering sounds of Strauss' *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* from the memorable Kubrick film, *2001...A Space Odyssey*.

The audience welcomed him with an equally thundering round of applause.

One of Hokum's great innovations is the *Piano a la Cart*, and one has to see this to fathom the combination of a bicycle and piano. He drove it onto the stage playing Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A Minor*, never missing a note while driving this three-wheeled contraption around. The audience loved it,

Too soon, the entertainment was over, but I am certain many individuals will be anxiously awaiting a return visit by Professor Hokum W. Jeebs!