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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 21 No. 2

February 2010

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society



PUGET SOUND
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Pizza & Pipes

is coming to **Kenyon Hall**



Remember those great times you had at Pizza & Pipes in the 1970s and '80s! We're bringing it all back!

With **ANDY CROW**
at the Wurlitzer

- Plus •
- Silent movie!
 - Cartoon!
 - Pizza, salad, dessert.
 - Beer, soda, coffee.
 - Open Console



ADMISSION – just \$15 per person. Age 16 and under \$10.

What an entertainment bargain!

RESERVATIONS, PLEASE, to help us plan for enough pizzas.

Reserve by Wednesday, March 17 with Ray Harris at 206-546-8959
or by email at rayh@prosserpiano.com

Saturday, March 20, 1:00 PM

Kenyon Hall

7904 35th Ave. SW • West Seattle

See page 6 for
drive directions.

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Vol. 21, No. 2 – February 2010
Published monthly by
Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society
6521 NE 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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Paramount Theatre—Tom Blackwell • Wash. Center—Andy Crow

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 \$20 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 9-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:
Bill Keller, Treasurer, 9914 Hampshire Ct. SE,
Olympia, WA 98513-4241.

PRESIDENT'S Message

"Who, Me?" – or – The Joy of Volunteering

Preparations for the ATOS convention have made a great leap since the last Pipeline issue. The program is now finalized (though the "subject to change" disclaimer still applies); the website is now complete (check it out at www.atos.org/conventions/2010/); and online



registration just went live. We've already received quite a few registrations, from U.S. locations and around the world! Since you're in the Puget Sound region and won't need to pay for airfare or a hotel room, this is a golden opportunity for you to experience the excitement of the national convention, and some amazing theatre organ performances that are sure to be legendary. For information on special options for PSTOS members, email convention@pstos.org.

Aside from the convention, I've recently been thinking a lot about the joy of volunteering. I've noticed an interesting thing about volunteer organizations: When people join, if you ask them why they generally say it's because of their interest in the subject or purpose of the group. No surprise there. But what's revealing is that if you ask long-time members what they've enjoyed most about their experience, they generally say it's the social involvement – the fun they've had with other members, the satisfaction of collaborating on this or that project or event, and the lifelong friends they've made in the process. For us, theatre organs are what bring us together; volunteering is what keeps us together.

Consider a typical PSTOS event – it might be Haller Lake or Wurlitzer Manor or Kenyon Hall, or a residence event, or the Paramount Theatre. You love these events, and part of what makes them so enjoyable is that everything works so smoothly that we hardly notice, as if by magic (well, most of the time!). But then if you think about what goes on behind the scenes, you realize there are dozens of pieces that need to fit together just so, that must be planned, agreed on, and executed by – guess who – members just like you. The tasks can include everything from doing publicity to tracking reservations to arranging chairs, to putting up decorations, to preparing and setting up and serving refreshments, to (of course!) cleaning up afterwards.

Or consider the Pipeline. Weeks, sometimes months before an issue appears in your mailbox, members are writing up descriptions of planned PSTOS events, gathering information on other events, finding needed photographs, writing articles, collecting material for the Pages from the Past section, doing the layout on a computer, getting the issue printed and folded, printing

PSTOS Coming Events

A number of board members and other interested persons recently gathered at a special meeting to plan a series of programs for 2010. Several fun events are now tentatively set including a Home Party, concert at Wurlitzer Manor, special summer event at Calvary Church, and our always fun Holiday Party. All of these are in addition to the convention, which of course is the Big One! What an exciting year for theatre organ aficionados! Watch this column every month for all the news.

and attaching mailing labels, and preparing and delivering the copies for mailing. The editor handles the brunt of the work, but many other people contribute.

Or consider the "work parties" at the Paramount Theatre. In a typical session, the organ maintenance crew assembles at 6 PM and works until 9 or later, testing each note of each rank, finding problems with wiring, contacts, wind, pipes, etc. and fixing them, tuning and retuning the instrument, testing and retesting everything, and keeping records of what was done. Not to mention the uncounted hours in home workshops, re-leathering, re-wiring, re-gluing ...all to give the instrument that sound we all find so thrilling and entrancing.

Or consider what goes into producing an annual convention ...negotiations with hotels, artists, venues, caterers, bus companies ...planning the program, preparing the budget, setting pricing, and trying to mitigate financial risk ...building and maintaining a website and an online registration system ...processing registrations and handling any special needs ...arranging details for each venue, including practice time for artists ...and then managing the execution of a complicated sequence of tasks to create a magical convention experience for every attendee.

Now here's the really magical part: All the members do all this FOR FREE! That's right, no one gets paid – it is a volunteer organization, after all. Now ask yourself, why would anyone be goofy enough to do all this work without pay? Well guess what, BECAUSE IT'S FUN! There's a sense of satisfaction and achievement, the unique experience of working together with people you know are doing it only for the joy, and the bonding that creates deep and lasting friendships.

I still recall phone calls when I was asked if I would be willing to help with some project, and later if I would serve on the Board, and later if I would serve as President. Each time I said "Who, me?" but finally agreed, and I'm very glad I did. So I hope this little message may inspire you to consider volunteering, perhaps when tapped on the shoulder, or perhaps even spontaneously. You'll be glad you did!

...Jamie Snell

Other NW Theatre Organ Events

◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at www.kenyonhall.org or by email at kenyonhall@earthlink.net

◆ Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

The Wurlitzer is played prior to most movies. Please check website for schedule, www.lincolnthatre.org

◆ Columbia River Theatre Organ Society

For info and latest news go to www.croconline.org

◆ Bellingham's Mt Baker Theatre

Mt. Baker Theatre Organ Society presents Jeff Fox accompanying the Buster Keaton comedy-drama silent film, "College," with Anne Cornwall and Harold Goodwin.

\$10 suggested donation.

Sunday, February 7, 2 PM

◆ Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month and feature the historic and newly refurbished 1914 Seattle Liberty Theatre Wurlitzer. For up-to-the-minute news and events calendar, go to www.sfnatos.org

Remembering Walt Cook 1915 – 2010

An avid theatre organ enthusiast and gifted design engineer, Walt utilized his talents to build his own meticulously crafted theatre organ from scratch! He joined PSTOS in 1975 and generously invited members into his home on numerous occasions to enjoy his creation. A Boeing design engineer for 27 years, he later joined Harper Engineering where he continued his brilliant career. Walt and his wife Bessie frequently attended PSTOS events. They generously supported many organ-related charities including the Roosevelt H.S. organ fund. Walt was a true gentleman and outstanding person.



Paramount Theatre Silent Movie Mondays

March Series: Silents from the South Seas

All movies accompanied by Jim Riggs at the Paramount's original 4/21 Wurlitzer

◆ March 15, 7PM

LeGong: Dance of the Virgins (1935)

Starring Poetoe Aloes Goesti, Saplak Njoman. An original poster boasts this film to be true, shot entirely on-location in Bali with the use of an all-Balinese cast with native music and showing native customs. Known now as an "American exploitation film," the crew gained access to local villages and people willing to act in the film. This was also one of the last feature films to be shot using the two-strip Technicolor process.

◆ March 22, 7PM

Tabu: A Story of the South Seas (1931)

Starring Anne Chevalier, Bill Brambridge
Matahi falls in love with the beautiful Reri whom was just chosen to be the new Holy Maid. Matahi and Reri escape the confines of their village, but are being pursued by the village Elders.

◆ March 29, 7PM

Sadie Thompson (1928)

Starring Gloria Swanson, Lionel Barrymore
Sadie Thompson attempts to leave her wild ways behind by starting anew in Pago-Pago. But when an overzealous missionary finds out about Sadie Thompson's past he tries to force her back to San Francisco.

Pipe Organ Foundation News

Please check out the Pipe Organ Foundation's newly rebuilt website at <http://www.pipeorganfoundation.org/index.html>. While there, be sure to look under NEWS. The most recent items pertain to Roosevelt High School, and the first item brings up the complete text of a 61-page book on the rebuilding of the Roosevelt organ. This tremendous effort was headed up by Warren Henderson (PSTOS member) along with Andrea Wilson, and it recounts the rebuilding and enlargement of this instrument from one end to the other. The pictures are excellent! Thank you, Warren, for heading up this effort and for letting us put this entire document on our website.

Look also at PROJECTS for information about the rebuilding and expansion of the organ at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Issaquah. This instrument will be our Opus 6, and in many respects it will be patterned after our Opus 2 at Mercer Island Presbyterian Church. A great deal of the pipework will be displayed on this three manual instrument, and there will be an Antiphonal organ exactly as with Mercer Island Presbyterian. The acoustics at Covenant Presbyterian are truly fabulous, and this has every promise of being one of our best installations. We began work on this only last month.

Thank you for your interest in our Foundation. If you would like to assist with volunteer work, or could provide financial contributions, please contact us.

Carl Dodrill
Pipe Organ Foundation
(206) 236-3492
carl@dodrill.net

American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) receives huge gift

As a member of the ATOS board of directors, and chairman of the ATOS Endowment Fund, I am pleased to announce that ATOS has just received the largest single gift in its history, a check for \$900,000 from the estate of the late Kenelm M. Lufkin of Des Moines, IA, Mr. Lufkin was a longtime member of the organization.

The gift is not a promise of funds in the future, but an actual check that has been deposited in the organization's bank account as of this date. This money will be invested based on a plan to be formulated by our professional fund raisers and our finance committee. A portion of the bequest will be invested in the ATOS Endowment Fund, which will allow us to shore up our investment portfolio so as to be able to award grants to worthy organ projects for the foreseeable future. More information is available on the ATOS web site at www.atos.org.

Congratulations to Ken Double, who has headed our fund raising efforts for the last couple of years, for this and other recent announcements of gifts to the organization, and to all those who have worked to encourage our members and friends to support ATOS.

John G. DeMajo, ATOS

Pages From The Past..

A number of Robert Morton Theatre Pipe Organs were installed up and down the west coast by Sandy Balcom during the early 1920s.

Newspaper writers were skilled at weaving stories from tidbits gleaned from talking with workmen. Reading these articles may cause you to shake your head and roll your eyes!

These three articles, all about Robert Morton instruments, are from the Wm. Bunch archives. The location of the Orpheum Theatre in the first article is unknown. If anyone can determine the city in which this theatre was located, please advise Russ Evans at russ@pstos.org.

The Palace Theatre was located in Silverton, Oregon. The writer created quite a story about what was merely a 2-manual 4-rank instrument! It was installed in 1923.

Centralia, Washington was the home of the Grand Theatre and that instrument had just 2-manuals and 5-ranks. It was installed in 1921.

More information about the Palace and Grand Theatres can be found at www.pstos.org. Click on N.W. Theatre Organ History.

The ACME ad on page 5 tells about an usher signaling system, one of which is still preserved in the lobby of the Seattle Paramount Theatre. Look for it the next time you're there!

ORCHESTRAL ORGAN BEING INSTALLED AT ORPHEUM

The new Robert Morton Orchestral organ is now being installed in the Orpheum theatre.

The installation of this large instrument will extend over a period of several weeks, this time being necessary to build and adjust each mechanical part, such as hundreds of magnets, valves, pouches, switches, thousands of feet of the smallest size electric cable wire.

Voicing and tone regulating each individual pipe to the acoustics of the auditorium takes considerable time.

The organ, both mechanically and tonally, is the last word in organ construction. Tonal quality and orchestral effects reproduced by this instrument will be the orchestral oboe, piccolo, saxophone, violin, viola, flute, cello, baritone, bass viol, cornet, and the famous vox humana, representing the human voice. In the percussion family of tone and effects, the xylophone, orchestra bells, string harp,

drums, cymbals and thunder.

Sidney Hirshberg, owner of the Orpheum Theatre, after thoroughly investigating different makes of organs, purchased the Robert Morton while in Los Angeles on a recent trip.

The main factory of the Morton company is at Los Angeles and Mr. Hirshberg spent several days with the technical manager going over details of construction of the modern unit organ.

Sandy Balcom, superintendent of construction with Sherman, Clay & Co., distributors of the Morton, is making the installation, assisted by Guil Homan. Mr. Balcom says that the finished organ will be a decided success as Mr. Hirshberg has spared no expense in making concrete impression chambers and has given a large part of the stage, basement and orchestra pit toward making installation.

Comparatively speaking, the organ will be as large as any instrument in the western territory.

Mr. Hirshberg extends an invitation to anyone desirous of seeing the modern organ constructed.

Clara Sherman has been engaged to feature at the console, where she will standardize daily concerts and also make the silent drama speak by aid of the organ.

PALACE INSTALLS NEW ORGAN

For the convenience and comfort of the show-going public, many changes have taken place in the Palace Theatre, Silverton, in the past few weeks, perhaps the most wonderful change or addition is the new Robert Morton organ.

Realizing the necessity of giving the Palace Theatre patrons a standard of music, Manager Adams, after thoroughly investigating all makes, chose this particular type of organ to meet all requirements in the way of music.

This is absolutely the first and only organ in the Northwest completely installed in the orchestra pit.

This type of instrument will certainly revolutionize the organ pit instrument to a great extent.

This organ is voiced strictly orchestral, giving as tones reproduced the saxophone, violin, flute, cello, bass viol and piccolo, the Vox Humana representing the human voice, a complete set of pipes in itself. Organ tones of every family are represented, giving volume on a crescendo that exceeds any organ in comparison in the Northwest.

Traps are each and every one represented, snare drum, bass drum, cymbal, tympani, Chinese crash cymbal, tom tom, siren, tambourine, castanets, triangle, sleigh bells, chimes, bird whistle and xylophone.

The action of the instrument is electric throughout—driven by a huge motor blower which operates a generating plant to supply current for the magnets, switches, etc.

C.M. Balcom, superintendent of construction with the Sherman, Clay & Co., personally came here to install the instrument. Harvey Wersekuhl, northwest installation man, is assisting him.

Ralph H. Aldred, concert and orchestral organist has been specially engaged to play the organ.

D. W. Griffith's super-production "Dream Street," a dramatic comedy featuring Carol Dempster and Ralph Graves, will be the feature picture offered at the organ opening.

Pages From The Past...continued

INSTALL ORGAN AT NEW GRAND

Installation of Instrument Has Extended Over Period of Several Weeks—Theatre Has Now Been Arranged So That Acoustics Are Perfect

The new Robert Morton Orchestral organ in the Grand Theatre is now completely installed.

The installation of this instrument has extended over a period of several weeks, this time being necessary to voice each pipe and adjust the traps and percussions to the finished building.

Frank A. Graham, manager of the Grand Theatre, thoroughly investigated the organ line, and after having heard the different makes of instruments installed in theatres in the Northwest, made a trip to the Robert Morton factory at Van Nuys, Calif., and was impressed with the workmanship, tone, etc. He purchased a specification instrument for his new theatre.

The Grand is now so arranged that the acoustics are perfect. The organ being voiced very softly, together with the excellent acoustics, eliminates the rough harshness and blary tones that would be more prominent if it were not for this rare combination.

This combination, however, does not kill the volume of the instrument, for the organist has at his command ample volume to fit any scene on the screen.

C.M. Balcom, superintendent of construction and design, assisted by C. G. Evans, installed the organ. After careful deliberation Mr. Balcom installed the organ in the proscenium arch, and states that he is more than pleased with the finished results.

The Robert Morton organ is distributed by the well known firm of Sherman, Clay & Co.

The organ will accompany the picture, "Clarence," featuring Wallace Reid, Agnes Ayres and May McAvoy Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Specially Written Music Score
Rendered by Ed. Zollman and Paul P. Cowan.
ON OUR
**GIANT ROBERT MORTON
ORCHESTRAL ORGAN**
Mr. C. M. Balcom has just finished making additions to our organ which makes it the largest unified organ in Southwest Washington.

GRAND

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*of every exhibitor
is to make money*

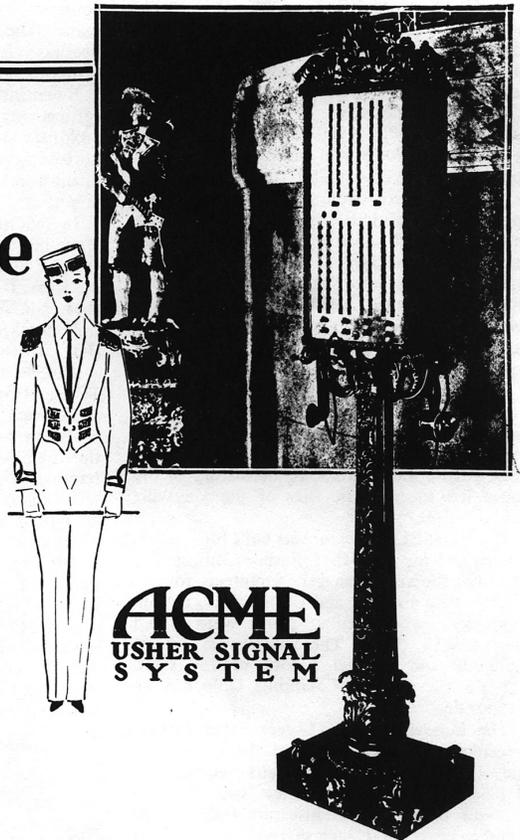
The successful theatres designed by C. W. and Geo. L. Rapp attract thousands daily by their sheer beauty and the line at the box office was a problem before the Acme System came into being.

Now in all the larger theatres designed by C. W. and Geo. L. Rapp, the Acme is as necessary as the box office for it reduces the crowd standing at the doors to a minimum.

Certainly the success of the Acme is a tribute to these famous architects who early sensed the need of such equipment.

Literature upon request.

ACME ELECTRIC CONSTRUCTION
COMPANY
407 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois



ACME seats the crowds quickly

Pizza & Pipes

is coming to

Kenyon Hall!

Drive Directions

From I-5 take Exit 163 to the West Seattle Bridge. Cross the bridge and drive up the hill to the first lights at 35th Ave. SW. Turn left at the lights. Drive south about 30 blocks. Kenyon Hall is at 7904 35th Ave. SW, just south of Kenyon St. and 35th, on your left. The #21 Metro bus from 1st Ave. stops in front of the Hall. There is ample street parking.

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors

6521 NE 191st ST

Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



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Counting down to the big 2010 ATOS Convention right here in the Pacific Northwest!

Monday, June 28
through
Sunday, July 4

Your chance of a lifetime to hear 16 fantastic artists performing
on 15 of the Pacific Northwest's most impressive theatre organs!

Wow! What a lineup! You'll hear—

- **DAVE WICKERHAM** at the historic 1914 Seattle Liberty Theatre 3/20 Wurlitzer now in Spokane's First Nazarene Church.
- **MARK ANDERSEN** at the Wenatchee Valley Museum 2/9 Wurlitzer.
- Australia's **TONY FENELON & JOHN ATWELL** officially open the convention at the Paramount Theatre with a piano-organ duo program.
- **NATHAN AVAKIAN** will play the 3/16 Kimball at the Everett Theatre.
- **LEW WILLIAMS**, from Mesa AZ Organ Stop Pizza, will play at the Mt. Baker Theatre in Bellingham, a 2/14 Wurlitzer.
- Visit Portland's **OAKS PARK SKATING RINK** and hear the famous 4/17 Wurlitzer in a tribute to famous rink organist Don Simmons.
- **DONNA PARKER** at Cleveland High School's 3/24 Kimball.
- **JONAS NORDWALL** at the unbelievable 4/107 combination classical and theatre organ at First United Methodist Church.
- **CHRIS GORSUCH** at the big St. Columban 3/16 Robert Morton theatre organ in Yelm.
- **SIMON GLEDHILL** at Washington Center's 3/25 Wurlitzer in Olympia.
- **SCOTT FOPPIANO** at Calvary Church's combination 3/19 Kimball-Wurlitzer.
- **JELANI EDDINGTON** at Bastyr University, playing an Allen electronic theatre organ.
- **JIM RIGGS** at the Seattle Paramount's 4/20 Wurlitzer.
- **WALT STRONGY** at the Tahoma Studio 3/29 Wurlitzer in Maple Valley.
- **RICHARD HILLS** at Wurlitzer Manor's 4/48 Wurlitzer in Gig Harbor.

Important information to help you plan—

- Convention registration includes busing from the Renaissance Seattle Hotel to all events.
- Four meals are included in the full convention package.
- "No-bus/no-meal" registration will be available for PSTOS members wanting to drive themselves.
- Individual days and select individual concert ticket pricing will be available by sending an email to convention@pstos.org
- Some of the events will be open to the public, good to know if you'd enjoy inviting friends to join you.
- For full information, including registration either online or by downloading the mail-in form, visit the convention website at www.atos.org and click on **Conventions**.
- Be sure to watch the **Promo Video** produced by your PSTOS team!

**This is the first ATOS convention to be hosted
by PSTOS since 1981! Don't miss it!**

Needed— bus captains, greeters, helpers in the record store, and much more! To volunteer, contact Convention Chair Tom Blackwell at tom@pstos.org