



PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 28, Nos. 9-10 • Sept.-Oct. 2017

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An enjoyable afternoon of wonderful music!

2017 Series **THEATRE ORGAN POPS**

Toe-tapping tunes from the 1920s, '30s, '40s & more



NEWS FLASH!

*Jerry received the prestigious
2017 American Theatre Organ Society
"Organist of the Year" award in July!
Congratulations, Jerry!*

Jerry Nagano began playing the theatre organ early in life and studied with Gaylord Carter, Gordon Kibbee, and Tom Hazleton. He has concertized throughout the U.S. and served as resident organist at Pasadena's Civic Auditorium. For nine years he was featured artist at the famous "Ye Olde Pizza Joynt" in the Bay Area, home of the "Wurlitzer in the Pizza Parlor" concept.

He regularly plays for intermissions at Palo Alto's Stanford Theatre where classic Hollywood movies are screened nightly. He plays the lobby Wurlitzer before many shows and events at the California Theatre in San Jose.

Aside from a very busy musical life, during the day Jerry is a computer systems engineer for Stanford University.

From California

JERRY NAGANO

plays the 3-manual 25-rank
Kimball-Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ

Sat., Oct. 14, 2:00 PM

Calvary Christian Assembly
6801 Roosevelt Way NE
Seattle

*Easy on/off I-5
Easy entry—no steps
Accessible facilities
Lots of free parking*

ADMISSION

(for those who are not series subscribers)

PSTOS members \$20 • Non-members \$25

Age 16 and under FREE with adult

Tickets at the door or online at

www.pstos.org/events/ticketing/TOP2017/TOP2017.htm

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.

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Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a 501(c)(3) 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>

PSTOS Coming Events

SPRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Annual Christmas celebration
and membership meeting.



TYLER PATTISON

at the Haller Lake Wurlitzer

Tyler was a PSTOS scholarship recipient in 2006, and is now back to entertain us! Always a fun and festive affair. Invite your friends. Make this special event a part of your holiday celebration!

Sun., Dec. 3, 1:30PM
Haller Lake Community Club

Coming in 2018 Theatre Organ Pops at CCA

TEDDE GIBSON - Sat., April 14

SCOTT FOPPIANO - Sat., June 23

DAVE WICKERHAM - Sat., October 6

A message from the ATOS Chairman of the Board



Dear Friends,

Beginning with this message, I plan on sending monthly news updates to all ATOS members that have registered their e-mail address with our Membership Secretary, Donna Parker (d.parker@atos.org). Please pass this message to your friends if you find its content of value to others.

If you have not been a recent or regular visitor to the ATOS website, www.atos.org, you will now find a message I have posted regarding ATOS Board actions, newly elected Directors and a couple of our planned initiatives. If you have not seen the information, it is available here:

<http://www.atos.org/chairmans-message-looking-back-going-forward>

One of its several topics is that ATOS welcomes and can use your help in many ways. Whether you plan events, activities or just listen but have a passion for theatre organ, we can use your talents in a variety of capacities. As an example, for those that like to write and review programs and other efforts, consider being an ATOS Journal contributor for articles. The Journal provides an easy way to document and share our knowledge.

AGO Programs

American Guild of Organists presents...

Friday September 15, 12:10 PM

Wyatt Smith, plays the Brombaugh organ at Christ Episcopal Church, 310 North K Street, Tacoma, WA. Mr. Smith is organist at St. Alphonsus Roman Catholic Church in Seattle and is a doctoral student in organ performance at the University of Washington. Join us for 40 minutes of delightful music! Donation at the door.

Friday October 20, 12:10 PM

Christopher Lynch, plays the Brombaugh organ at Christ Episcopal Church, 310 North K Street, Tacoma, WA. Mr. Lynch, a graduate of the University of Indiana, is Fellow in Church Music at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Portland, Oregon. Join us for 40 minutes of delightful music! Donation at door.

Friday November 17, 12:10 PM

Joseph Adam, plays the Brombaugh organ at Christ Episcopal Church, 310 North K Street, Tacoma, WA. Mr. Adam is Organist and Associate Director of Music at St. James Cathedral, Seattle, and Resident Organist at Benaroya Hall, Seattle. Join us for 40 minutes of delightful music! Donation at the door.

Another new posting is the 2017 Chapter Showcase.

<http://www.atos.org/video/atos-2017-chapter-showcase>

If you are active in your local ATOS Chapter, consider contacting our new Chapter Liaison, Taylor Trimby (t.trimby@atos.org). Taylor will be working to increase Chapter content on the website, among other efforts.

Another area needing contributors is the ATOS website and Facebook. We need content contributors, just like the ATOS Journal. Shorter articles with photographs are of great interest to many, and the website provides a better platform to tell a story that compliments Facebook posts. In fact, I'm looking to identify several individuals to evaluate our current website content and materials to make the information we present more relevant and representative of current theatre organ activities. We are not wanting to erase history, just make it reflect the current state of our mutual interests.

Please watch for my monthly updates to the website concerning ATOS and theatre organ happenings.

Richard Neidich
Chairman of the Board
American Theatre Organ Society
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www.atos.org



A NOT SO LAZY-HAZY-CRAZY DAY OF SUMMER

Reviewed by Jamie Snell • Photos by Jeff Snyder

Nat King Cole's 1963 hit song "Those Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer" was the apt inspiration for the August 13 event at the home of Russ and Jo Ann Evans, attended by about fifty PSTOS members and guests. Actually, the day was neither lazy nor hazy nor crazy: The concert, with Jo Ann at the 3/18 Wurlitzer and Ray Harris at the piano and accordion, was highly energetic; the air was clear, with only a hint of haze from the recent B.C. wildfires; and the artists' comments on the music, and Bob Zat's explanation of the virtual marimba planned for the Haller Lake Wurlitzer, seemed anything but crazy.

The duo opened with Ray at the piano, starting with the upbeat 1921 Irving Berlin song "Say It With Music," followed by a weather-themed medley of "Rain" and "Breezin' Along With the Breeze." Before proceeding to "Ain't Misbehavin'," the autobiographical explanation of this song was noted, namely that Fats Waller composed it in 1929 while in alimony prison! Following "Carolina Moon," Ray brought out his accordion, which he used in duet with Jo Ann at the organ for "Manhattan" and "Twilight Time"; a highlight of the afternoon was his haunting accordion solo of "The Shadow of Your Smile" from the 1965 film *The Sandpiper*.

For a change of pace, Ray described how one of the delights of his former career in the retail music business had been opening the benches of trade-in pianos and discovering obscure sheet music. He and Jo Ann then handed out a sheet they had prepared, showing the cover of one such "bench find," along with a mini-bio of the composer and the hilarious lyrics. With Ray back at the piano, the duo then played the song: "You're a Snootie Little Cutie" by Bobby Troup, better known as the star of the 1970s TV series *Emergency!* and the



Ray tells another of his famous stories

writer of Nat King Cole's hit "Route 66."

The duo continued with a luscious rendition of "Skylark," with its surprising harmonies by Hoagy Carmichael. It was noted that Johnny Mercer's lyrics are thought to have been inspired by his longing for Judy Garland, and that the song in turn inspired the Buick car of the same name. Then came yet another highlight, a special tribute to member Norm Sammons in recognition of his recent 100th birthday: the 1928 Eddie Cantor hit "Makin' Whoopee!" Norm had a good laugh over that. Congratulations, Norm, on your first century!

Jo Ann and Ray wrapped up the program with five more great songs played beautifully in duet: "Them There Eyes," "The Sheik of Araby," "Ain't We Got Fun," "Moon-glow," and inevitably, "Those Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer." The extended and enthusiastic applause was well deserved!

Following the concert, attendees mingled on the back patio, partaking of birthday cake and ice cream, elegantly prepared and

served by Barb Graham and Marie Perdue. Those wishing to learn about the organ gathered around the console and had a chance to see the pipework up close. Speaking of which, the organ sounded magnificent, thanks to Russ Evans, of course, and to master technician Greg Smith, who was on hand during the concert just in case.

This occasion was, in part, a fundraiser for the virtual marimba soon to be added to the chapter's 3/10 Wurlitzer at Haller Lake Community Club. The Evanses generously donated the refreshments and covered all other expenses of the event. So all admission fees, plus the money attendees generously placed in the donation box, brought in a total of \$525 toward the \$750 goal! Many thanks to everyone who attended, donated, and/or helped make this fun event such a success.



Approximately fifty PSTOS members and friends enjoyed the day



Norm Sammons' hundredth year was duly observed with cake and a special song

PAGES FROM THE PAST...

“Waffle Nose Waller, the palpitating, panting Portuguese Piano Pounder”

Fats Waller's interesting years as a theatre pipe organist

From the Wm. Bunch archives, publication date unknown



Much has been written about Fats Waller, his life and his music. As with any individual of note and prominence, confusion and controversy abound. This article will not necessarily clear up any confusion, but hopefully add a few interesting anecdotes.

In attempting to trace what had happened to the pipe organ Fats had used in Camden, New Jersey, a very good friend, E.J. Quinby, was contacted. He replied as follows: “In the early days after the 1929 Wall Street crash, I was a member of the RCA crew that was dispatched by David Sarnoff to leave the New York RCA Laboratories and journey to Camden, N.J. to take over and operate the recently purchased Victor Talking Machine Company, which we renamed RCA Victor Company. Along with the rest of the plant property thus acquired, we found the Baptist Church with its 3-manual Estey Pipe Organ which had been converted to recording studios by the Victor organization. Ray Sooley was the head of Victor’s phonograph recording activities. He was the expert who recorded the many famous musicians and vocalists of the period, including Stokowsky and his Philadelphia Symphony group, Caruso, Chaliapin and other greats. I cultivated the acquaintance of Ray Sooley with the result that I carried a key to the

Church Studio so that I could use the organ after working hours, and Sooley made it his custom to phone me whenever he had some choice bit of recording scheduled so that I could run over and enjoy watching and listening to the process. On one memorable occasion he invited me over to hear a group of black musicians from Harlem headed by somebody named Fats Waller. When I met Fats in the studio, he spotted the Estey organ console with its peculiar bank of push-buttons that served as registration controls. They were ‘reversible’ in that each one depressed became illuminated to indicate that it was ‘on,’ and upon second touch, it went dark and thus indicated it was ‘off.’ Fats became fascinated by the strange rig, tried out a few sample stops (including the Tibia) and announced to his musicians “I’ll work HERE today. Let Sam take over the piano.”

As simply as that the succeeding recordings were ‘rearranged’ and the group promptly took off on a wild session that included a number called “Honeysuckle Rose,” which I heard for the first time that Saturday morning. Ray was so enthusiastic that he prevailed upon the Fats Waller group to stay over and finish up on Sunday morning, at which time I returned to the Church Studio to witness more of the group’s incredible, unrehearsed performances.

As I arrived at the front door, I was intercepted by an enthusiastic group of natives who inquired concerning what kind of church was holding such an inspiring service, and how one could arrange to join the congregation. I had a difficult time trying to explain the lively production in progress, but I managed to shut the door against the clamoring mob.

Those were the days of recording on wax, but the conversion to electronic processes was already underway, to improve reproduction. Because any errors resulted in the necessity of shaving off a layer of wax from the master, there was no ‘editing’ possible. Each fumble required a whole new ‘take.’ When the red light went on, signaling the start of actual recording, many famous artists panicked and broke up, necessitating a fresh start. But not Fats Waller and his group. They were completely at ease. The red light didn’t intimidate Fats. It was simply a signal to him for a deep draft of his gin, handy on top of the console, and then they were off on a perfect take of each number.”

Much controversy and proclaiming exists today around the “Moon River” pipe organ. A few simple facts are: WLW, The Nation’s Station—also known as the Cradle of the Stars—first broadcast from studios on Arlington Street. Of the four studios there, two had pipe organs, any one of which could have and did originate “Moon River.” When WLW moved to their present Ninth Street location, three studios had theatre pipe organs—Studios A, B and E. The smaller Studio E had a 2-manual console, from which “Moon River” occasionally originated. That Wurlitzer pipe organ is presently installed in a private home in the western area of Cincinnati. The Ninth Street location had an installed Wurlitzer pipe organ left by the previous owners. This area then became Studio A. The Studio A organ from Arlington Street was installed in Studio B on Ninth Street. The Studio E instrument was the same pipe organ in both locations.

“Moon River” primarily originated from Studio A at Arlington Street, and Studio B at Ninth Street. This instrument, a 3-manual Wurlitzer, Powel Crosley, owner of WLW, had secured and installed in his mother’s memory. Mr. Crosley fully expected and insisted that this instrument would never be used to produce raucous or improper (jazz) sounds. Mr. Crosley’s reverence for the “Moon River” pipe

PAGES FROM THE PAST... *Continued*

organ should be borne in mind while reading the WLW anecdotes.

Where the Moon River Wurlitzer is presently remains a question. A resident of Texas claims to have the organ. However the writer knows the guts of a "Moon River" pipe organ are installed in a restaurant outside of Hamilton, Ohio.

Several WLW radio personalities, Peter Grant, Cecil Hale, Charles Woods, Bill Brown, Lee Erwin, Sid Ten Eyck, Phil Underwood, were at the Nation's Station, some at the time of Fats Waller's tenure (early 1930s). The following has been gleaned from the keen, alert memories of those who were there while Fats was either on staff or on tour stop-overs in Cincinnati, playing Moon River many times.

Sidney Ten Eyck for sometime was producer and master of ceremonies for a radio program on WLW called The Doodle Sockers. Many prominent show business people were early performers on the Doodle Sockers, the Mills Brothers and Jane Froman amongst others. Sid remembers Fats early 1930s times in Cincinnati.

"What was happening at that time, WLW financially was doing quite well. And we had a very progressive management. John Clark was manager. Don Becker, John Clark, perhaps one or two more, would go to New York.

"Now up in New York there were a whole flock of people who were top grade entertainers, starving to death. Frankly, my wife and I, in late 1932, lived at the Piccadilly Hotel in New York City, on 45th between Broadway and Eighth for \$10.00 a week. That's how bad times were. Well, they would make a selection of a half dozen people, bring them back to Cincinnati, pay their hotel room and give them \$75.00 a week, and try them for a period of, well depending on who they were, 8 to 10 to 12 weeks, to see if they could sell them. If they couldn't, they'd give them their train ticket back to New York and a hundred bucks or so and say thanks a lot and good bye. Now Fats Waller was one of those.

"Fats and I used to come on at 10:00 in the morning for a half hour program. "The Rhythm Club" was at night. He was on my "Doodle Sockers." I used to call him Waffle Nose Waller, the palpitating, panting Portuguese Piano Pounder. Fats had a wonderful sense of humor. He liked to get in front of the microphone and go, "Ah my, yas, yas," play a few more chords, "Oh! Do it again."

"You see now, here's the point. You've got to remember, at that particular time, the WLW had its own newspaper. All you had to do was send

your name and address, and every week, at no cost, they would mail you a copy of the program listing. And it was just listed as Fats Waller, that's all.

"Fats played "Moon River," as did Herschel Lueke, Gene Perazzo, and Arthur Chandler, Jr. There's a story that goes around about Fats' drinking. Supposedly the cleaning lady pulled the organ out one time to clean behind it and found Fats' gin bottles. Of course that's ridiculous, if you had half dozen Belgian Percheron horses, men with crowbars and some dynamite, you might have pulled the organ out enough to clean behind it.

"Now here's what happened. Powel Crosley issued an edict. If Fats was caught drinking in the studio under any circumstances, he didn't care who he was. Fats was to be fired immediately. So Fats hid his gin in a closet out in the hallway. He would rush out between numbers, take a big drink and rush back in. He was not drinking in the studio.

Fats was at the station about one year.

"He liked to play the piano. He had little short stubby fingers, and the musicians would come in and just stand there, gaping at the way he could cover the octaves on the piano with those little short stubby hands.

"The thing I would say is he was a grand personality. You almost never saw him without a smile on his face. He was always all right. He was a wonderful, marvelous, outflowing person. I was proud to call him my friend. Wonderful man. And what a piano player!

He always wore a derby. I think he wore it to bed. He never took it off. Waffle Nose Waller, the palpitating, panting Portuguese Piano Pounder. How he loved to play those Doodle Socker programs."

Cecil Hale, a staff announcer of WLW, was originally hired for Moon River. He remembers Fats warmly as he recollects "walking into Studio A while Fats was composing." If you scan a list of Fats' compositions, published and unpublished, it became very obvious ideas were constantly running through his mind. As Cecil put it, "he would sit down at the console, smoking a cigarette, his favorite liquid support close at hand. Noodle around a bit, stop to write something on some paper on the music rack. After he had finished, he started at the beginning and being so pleased with the effort, he would rock and sway back and forth on the organ bench. He never sat still." Fats was producing bouncy music on the pipe organ Mr. Crosley had directed would NOT be used in that manner.

Fats had apparently felt the wrath of Mr. Crosley about this rule. An ingenious telegraph system was devised to warn Fats of Powel Crosley's approach to the station. As the doorman saw his car approach the entrance, he would push a door bell button, sounding a warning upstairs in a control room. Thus Fats could be cautioned that the owner of the station had entered the building. After the message was passed to Fats, the Moon River organ would once again be heard to produce the usual dreamy music.

"During those times of composing, Fats never showed any irritation at someone listening to the development of a new tune," relates Cecil. "Fats was always a gentleman to work with, always genial. I never saw him angry or display any temper. Everyone liked Fats." Mr. Hale related he would go over and lean on the organ console as Fats was composing, and talk with him. "Fats would say, 'Cece, how do you like that?' In Cecil's opinion Fats enjoyed his compositions, enjoyed what he did, the acknowledgment from the music world. He loved people, was quite happy with his achievements. He also recalls Fats playing the Moon River program.

Phil Underwood, who joined the Crosley Corporation in June of 1934, recalls Fats Waller was on staff at the time. Phil also recalls Fats "catching the devil" from Powel Crosley for playing jazz on the Memorial Pipe Organ, as the Studio B instrument was referred to by the station personnel.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Moon River was a long-running late-night American radio program which originated from WLW in Cincinnati, Ohio. A combination of soft, "dreamy" music and romantic poetry set to organ accompaniment, the program aired from 1930 to 1972.

Fats Waller was organist on the program from 1932 to 1934.