PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 30, Nos.9 – 10 • Sept. – Oct. 2019 www.pstos.org • www.facebook.com/pstos

Final concert of the 2019 season

THEATRE ORGAN POPS

MARTIN ELLIS

at the 3/25 Kimball-Wurlitzer

with flutist LINDA BERGMAN

Saturday. October 12, 2:00 PM

Calvary Christian Assembly
6801 Roosevelt Way NE • Seattle

BE THERE!

ADMISSION

(for those who are not series subscribers)

PSTOS members $20 • Non-members $25
Age 16 and under free with adult
Purchase tickets online at www.pstos.org/events

Martin Ellis bridges the boundary between the classical and popular music worlds. As an active theatre and classical organist, pianist, and music arranger, he has brought innovative programming, creative arrangements, and a unique style to his performances worldwide. He is an active solo artist, having performed in many of the major theatre organ venues throughout the country. He was a house organist for the Sanfilippo Palace de Musique in Chicago on the largest theatre pipe organ in the world. He has served as staff organist at Milwaukee's Piper Music Palace, and at Uncle Milt's Pipes and Pizza of Vancouver, WA.

Martin currently resides in Portland where he is co-music director and organist for Rose City Park Presbyterian Church, and an active face in the Portland music scene.

Drive directions to Calvary Christian Assembly, 6801 Roosevelt Way NE

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 at NE 73rd St
Take the 1st right onto Roosevelt Way NE
Destination will be on the right

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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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!

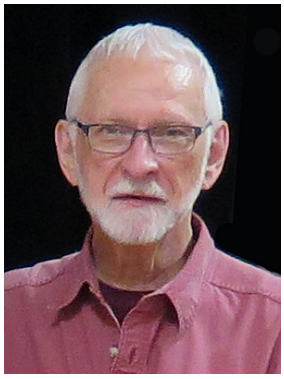
Simply click on the link below and select your preferred level of membership.

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

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

PRESIDENT'S Message

Greetings PSTOS members, families, and friends.



Summer is fast coming to an end, and as we approach the fall season, please be reminded of two upcoming Chapter events you will not want to miss. At 2PM Saturday, October 12th, Martin Ellis will perform on the 3-manual 27-rank Wurlitzer-Kimball Theatre Organ at Calvary Christian Assembly. He will be joined by Linda Bergman, an accomplished flutist. This program is the last in the 2019 series. Martin is a favorite with PSTOS folks, having performed both at Kenyon Hall and at CCA in the past. We are thrilled to welcome him back! Please bring your friends and neighbors. And if you have acquaintances living in retirement communities, please spread the word to them and to their respective activities directors so that those who wish to attend may arrange in-house transportation, or make arrangements to carpool.

As a wrap-up to the year and a welcome to the holiday season, PSTOS will host its annual holiday party Sunday, December 8th, 1:30PM, at Haller Lake Community Club. Once again there will be a variety of entertainment for everyone's enjoyment.

The program planning committee is busy finalizing the list of performers for the 2020 concert series. Check the next Pipeline for the lineup and dates. Also please consider supporting one of the concerts in the series by becoming a Program Sponsor through a tax deductible donation. And save by purchasing tickets for the entire series when they become available in December.

Opportunities abound for members to become more actively involved in the organization! You may volunteer at functions, become a committee member, or assume a position as an active board member. If this sounds like fun (it is!), please email me at **bob@pstos.org**

We would very much appreciate your help. Thank you for your continued support!

Bob Zat, President

PSTOS Coming Events

SUN., DEC. 8
Haller Lake Community Club
Annual PSTOS Christmas celebration
http://www.pstos.org/events

PARAMOUNT THEATRE

SILENT MOVIE MONDAYS

Doors open at 6:00 PM
Films at 7:00 PM
General Admission $10
Student/senior admission $7

October 7 —The Scar of Shame (1927), directed by Frank Perugini, tells the story of a young woman who escapes from her abusive father and is rescued by an aspiring composer but encounters opposition from his class-conscious mother. The film, a collaboration between races, was produced by Colored Players Film Corporation out of Philadelphia. It is preserved by the Library of Congress and was restored in 2015. Musical accompaniment by Tedde Gibson on the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ.

October 14 —Body and Soul (1925), written, produced and directed by Oscar Micheaux, stars Paul Robeson in his first film role. Robeson plays twin brothers, one a badly behaved minister and the other an ordinary working man, both vying for the affection of a young woman who is trying to abide by the misguided wishes of her devout mother. Musical accompaniment by Tedde Gibson on the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ.

October 21 —Within Our Gates (1920), written, produced, and directed by Oscar Micheaux. It is the earliest surviving feature film by an African American director. The story involves an idealistic young woman who attempts to raise money for an elementary school to serve the Black community. The film touches upon themes that recur throughout the filmmaker's career such as the promise of rural life vs. the corruptive influence of the city, and the use of religion as a means of misleading the Black community. The film is included in the Library of Congress National Film Registry as a significant film in the history of African American cinema. Musical accompaniment by Tedde Gibson on the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ.

A warm welcome to new members...

Erin Hildebrand
Oak Harbor, WA

Daniel Leon
Seattle

Dean Jamieson
Shoreline, WA

Victoria Olcott
Seattle, WA

AGO *Programs*

Friday September 20, 12:10 p.m.
Una Hwang, pianist, plays the Hamburg Steinway grand piano at Christ Episcopal Church 310 North K Street, Tacoma. Donation at the door.

Sunday September 22, 3:00 pm
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series on the Fritts organ at Lagerquist Hall, PLU Campus, Tacoma. Paul Tegels, singer Soon Cho and dancer Sarah Seder present organ music with dance and visual arts. Tickets: $17, $10, $5. www.plu.edu/organ

September 29, 5:00 pm
Evensong for the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels at Epiphany Parish 1805 38th Avenue Seattle, WA 98122. The Epiphany Choir will sing led by Zach Hemenway and Wyatt Smith. It will feature music by Philip Moore, William Mathias, and Richard Dering. A wine and cheese reception will follow.

Sunday October 6, 6:15 pm
All Bach: Eight hands, four harpsichords featuring music by J.S. Bach for multiple harpsichords and strings. Features Jillon Stoppels Dupree, Dr. Mark Brombaugh, Dr. Wyatt Smith and Zach Hemenway at four harpsichords. Free to the public. Epiphany Parish 1805 38th Avenue Seattle, WA 98122.

Tuesday October 8, 7:30 pm
Phillip Brisson plays the three manual Marceau pipe organ for the annual All Souls Memorial Organ Concert at Trinity Episcopal Church 609 8th Ave Seattle, 98104. Donation at door.

Friday October 11, 12:05 pm
A Leipzig Soundbyte: Wyatt Smith will perform a free program on the Fritts organ in Kilworth Chapel, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma. Wyatt Smith is Affiliate Artist in Organ and Harpsichord at the University of Puget Sound. Free event.

Friday October 18, 12:10 p.m.
Susanna Valleau, organist, plays a noon recital on the Brombaugh pipe organ of Christ Episcopal Church 310 North K Street, Tacoma. Ms. Valleau is Director of Music at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, Shoreline (Seattle). Donation at the door. christchurchtacoma.org

Friday October 18, 7:30 pm
Christopher Houlihan in concert on the Flentrop organ at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral Seattle. Program includes Buxtehude, Schumann and Vierne. $20/$15 1245 Tenth Ave East Seattle, 98102

Sunday October 20, 3:00 pm
Richard D. Moe Organ Recital Series on the Fritts organ at Lagerquist Hall, PLU Campus, Tacoma. Bruce Neswick (PLU alumnus) presents an organ solo recital. Tickets: $17, $10, $5. www.plu.edu/organ

Brett Valliant Shines at the Evans Wurlitzer

By Jamie Snell Photos by Jeff Snyder

There are not many things more fun than an intimate concert by a first-class artist on a first-class residence theatre organ, and it happened on August 11 at the home of Russ and Jo Ann Evans, with Brett Valliant at the console of their 3/18 Wurlitzer. The roughly fifty audience members were seated comfortably only feet from the console and the pipe chamber, surrounded by a wide assortment of percussions and a few unenclosed pipes.

After brief introductions and thankyous, Valliant opened the concert with the ever-popular theme from *Phantom of the Opera,* a hint that the mix might include some more recent songs in the direction of rock, along with the usual older jazz/pop standards. Sure enough, next was "Working My Way Back to You," the 1966 *Four Seasons* hit, followed by Melissa Manchester's 1975 song "Come In from the Rain," and "Bad, Bad Leroy Brown," Jim Croce's No. 1 hit in 1973. Turning to standards, Valliant continued with two 1939 hits by the Glenn Miller Orchestra, "Moonlight Serenade" and "In the Mood." In a softer mood, next was Charlie Chaplin's best-known song, "Smile," from his 1936 movie *Modern Times.*

One of Valliant's specialties is ragtime, so his creative transcription of Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag" came as no surprise. That was followed by "June Night," and then three Hawaii-related songs: "Blue Hawaii" and "Hawaiian Sunset," complete with the marimba evoking a Hawaiian guitar; and Elvis Presley's "Can't Help Falling in Love with You" from his 1961 album "Blue Hawaii." Valliant closed the first half with the theme from *Love Is On the Air,* Ronald Reagan's film debut, and the beloved "Tonight" from *West Side Story.*

After a short break, Valliant demonstrated his classical organ chops with an animated rendition of J.S. Bach's famous "Gigue Fugue," featuring some fancy footwork on the jig-like fugue subject. Next were "Go the Distance" from the 1997 Disney animated film *Hercules,* and Ralph Rainger's "I'll Take an Option on You" from the 1933 Broadway show *Tattle Tales,* as arranged by the late Richard Purvis. Returning to light rock were Burt Bacharach's "Always Something There to Remind Me," a 1967 hit by Dionne Warwick; "My Prayer," the 1939 Boulanger song popularized in 1956 by The Platters; and Neil Diamond's 1986 gem "The Story of My Life." Rounding out the program were a rousing rendition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and Bernie Wayne's 1952 classic "Vanessa." The audience stood and applauded heartily, bringing the artist back for an encore with the "Pennsylvania Polka" and another round of applause.

As an added delight, the Evanses served light refreshments on their shaded patio, giving the audience plenty of opportunity to mingle in the afternoon air. There were also chances to see the console and pipes close-up, and even for one young attendee to have a brief lesson courtesy of the day's artist!

Many thanks to Brett Valliant for this full and varied concert, to Russ and Jo Ann Evans for their hospitality and fabulous instrument, to Greg Smith for making sure it was in top condition, and to everyone who helped to make this event so enjoyable.

David Gray Thrills Again!

Review by Jamie Snell Photos by Jeff Snyder

The mood was anything but gray at CCA on July 13 as about 110 audience members gathered for David Gray's eagerly awaited concert. This was the second in our three-concert "Theatre Organ Pops" subscription series. Gray, a native of Scotland, had traveled from the U.K. to play at the ATOS convention in Rochester the previous week, and extended his U.S. stay to play for us. Anyone familiar with his playing knew it was not to be missed!

After President Bob Zat's introduction, Gray opened with Harry Warren's snappy "All's Fair in Love and War," and "Nickel in the Slot," a Zez Confrey novelty tune no less fun for being less known. Then, for a slower pace, the traditional Irish melody "Londonderry Air," also known as "Danny Boy" with lyrics by Frederic Weatherly. Gray then performed the legendary "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," a short ballet by Richard Rodgers from the 1936 musical *On Your Toes,* followed by three more numbers maintaining the "feeling low" theme: Piazzolla's accordion tango "Oblivion"; the Davis/Young/Ager toe-tapper "I Hate Myself (For Being So Mean to You)," as arranged by Sidney Torch; and a transcription of the aria "Nel di della vittoria" from the Verdi opera *Macbeth.* Next were two songs as arranged for organ by Jim Riggs, a major influence on Gray: "Georgia on My Mind"; and Ray Henderson's "Strike Me Pink (If I Don't Think I'm Falling in Love)" from the same-named 1933 musical starring Jimmy Durante.

As if that weren't sufficient for the first half, Gray slid off the organ bench, made brief comments on his career as a classical pianist, slid onto the piano bench, and performed the final two movements of Rachmaninov's Piano Sonata No. 2, Op. 36 – a tour-de-force both musically and technically, played from memory (as was the whole concert). The audience went wild. And as if that weren't sufficient, down the aisle came Bob Buchholz bearing a chocolate cake with one candle – it was David Gray's 29th birthday! After a jovial rendition of "Happy Birthday," accompanied by Greg Smith at the organ, the audience adjourned for birthday cake and coffee in the lobby.

Gray opened the second half with a rousing march, "The Dam Busters," from the same-named 1955 British war film, recognizable if not known by name. Continuing the alternation of moods: the Barbra Streisand hit "People" from *Funny Girl*; an organ transcription of Liszt's piano arrangement of Schubert's "Soirées de Vienne: Valse-Caprice No. 6"; Rodgers and Hart's "Manhattan" from *Garrick Gaieties;* and "A Garden in the Rain," a hit first in 1929 by Gene Austin, then in 1952 by The Four Aces.

No David Gray program would be complete without an example of British light music, in this case Frederic Curzon's "Dance of the Ostracised Imp," delightfully sprinkled with sudden modulations. To close the concert, Gray played a medley from the 1934 Cole Porter musical *Anything Goes,* including variations on the title tune, "You're the Top," "All Through the Night," "Blow, Gabriel, Blow," and "I Get a Kick out of You." Following an extended standing ovation, Gray encored with the 1945 Ellington hit "I'm Beginning to See the Light," predictably followed by another standing ovation.

PSTOS is grateful to be blessed with a visit from such an artist as David Gray; we hope to have him back many times. Thanks to everyone who pitched in to make this concert a reality.

It was David Gray's 29th birthday!

New Member Appreciation Event a Hit

Review by Jamie Snell Photo by Jackline Hill

Elston Hill in the chamber

The first-ever PSTOS New Member Appreciation Event took place in the afternoon of Saturday, July 20 at the home of Russ and Jo Ann Evans. This was the fruition of an idea that had been bubbling around for a while in the program team: Wouldn't it be nice to welcome new members, present a little information about the organization, give a short musical program and a chamber tour, and provide a chance to get to know each other? Invitations were sent out to those who had joined within the past two years, and about 15 attended.

President Bob Zat launched the proceedings with overall comments about PSTOS, introductions of the Board members present, and round-the-room introductions of the attendees. Bob then spoke about the HLCC 3/10 Wurlitzer; Phil Hargiss about the Paramount 4/20 Wurlitzer; Russ Evans about the CCA 3/25 Kimball-Wurlitzer, as well as the Evans 3/18 Wurlitzer; and Jo Ann Evans about event planning, other activities, and ways to help out. She had made a small booklet for the occasion, so the attendees could follow along and have the essential information to take home.

After a short Q&A session, Jamie Snell and Jo Ann played a few tunes each on the Wurlitzer, and a few duos with Jo Ann at the organ and Jamie at the piano. The audience was then invited to take a closer look at the organ and mingle on the patio for light refreshments. Everyone seemed to be having a good time, and a few expressed interest in getting more involved. The organizers agreed that the afternoon was a success, and the plan is to make this an annual event. Many thanks to everyone who participated.

Young classical organ students learn about theatre organ at CCA

By Jamie Snell Photos by Jeff Snyder

From time to time, chapters of the American Guild of Organists host "Pipe Organ Encounters," in which young students spend a week learning about the pipe organ – visiting church organs, hearing recitals, having lessons and workshops, etc. Seattle AGO planned a POE July 15-19; the organizer, Rita Stoess, asked if I would be willing to present a theatre organ session, and I agreed.

The session took place July 17 at Calvary Christian Assembly, and began with pizza for the 24 students ages 13-18, 6 AGO chaperones, Jeff Snyder (the PSTOS liaison with CCA), and myself. During the pizza fest, the group watched a 10-minute silent movie, and I briefly described the historical origin of theatre organs.

The group then assembled in the sanctuary, with the students in chairs around the console, and the chaperones in a front-row pew. I distributed a 6-page handout to everyone and presented a brief history of the theatre organ, followed by a comparison of church/classical vs. theatre organs. Because the CCA console is not a typical theatre organ console, I had made a life-size poster of the Paramount Wurlitzer console, which I used while explaining its features. I then played a few tunes to illustrate voices and effects.

Then came a visit to the chambers, which Jeff had suggested. He launched a Uniflex playback of a John Williams movie score transcription, and the group proceeded up the stairs and into the chamber near the blower. Everyone was excited to see the pipes, particularly while they were sounding (most were covering their ears).

Twenty-four clasical organ students ranging in age from 13 to 18 were excited to be at CCA

The final part of the session was open console. All the students had a chance to play; they lined up and each had a limit of two minutes. Some played parts of pieces, memorized or reading from printed music, classical or pops; some played scales or arpeggios as they tried different stops and combinations. After everyone who wanted to had played, those who wanted more time lined up again for another play, and so on until it was 9:00 and time to go.

During the session I had announced that if there were students who would like to play the Paramount Wurlitzer and would be available the following week, we would try to arrange play visits. Four expressed interest, and after the session I worked with Phil Hargiss (the Paramount Wurlitzer crew chief and PSTOS liaison with the theater) to find suitable times. We were able to schedule visits for three of the four for the following Tuesday and Friday evenings. Phil gave a brief tour of the console, and he and I answered many questions; each student had time to experiment with registration and play a few pieces; Phil conducted a brief tour of one of the chambers; and the students and their moms had a chance to sit in the theatre and hear the organ in its full majesty, thanks to Uniflex playback.

Many thanks to Seattle AGO, and especially Rita Stoess, for this opportunity and arranging many details; to Jeff Snyder for making the arrangements with CCA, getting everything set up for the session, conducting the chamber tour, and taking photos; and to Phil Hargiss for arranging the play visits with the Paramount, leading them and conducting the chamber tours, and handling so many details. We're now helping the interested local students get lessons and access to practice instruments, and hoping they will become involved in the theatre organ community.

Students try the CCA organ during Open Console

LEFT: A workshop given by Jamie Snell explained differences between classical and theatre organs and techniques.

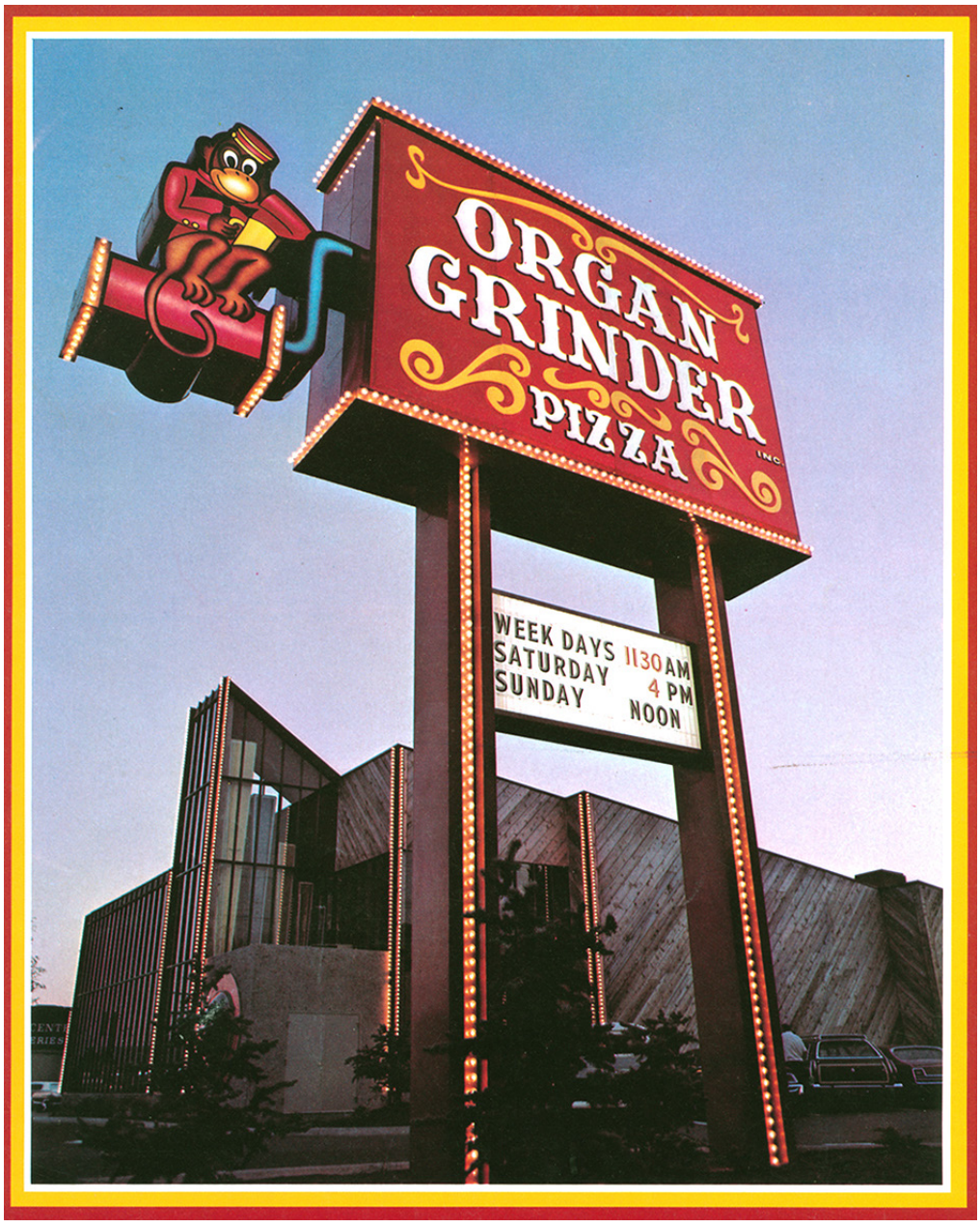
RIGHT: The kids were excited to see and hear the pipes up close.

PAGES FROM THE PAST...1973

The Glory Days of Portland's Organ Grinder Restaurant

The story of the Organ Grinder Wurlitzer

Edited from the brochure available to patrons during the heyday of this memorable eatery
Original story written by owner Dennis Hedberg



Portland's Organ Grinder Restaurant opened September 27, 1973, and was an immediate success. The organ was the realization of a longtime dream of its owner, Dennis Hedberg, to build the finest example of a great theatre pipe organ.

Tonal design was based on the San Francisco Fox Theatre's 4/36 Wurlitzer and George Wright's 3/30 Wurlitzer prior to its destruction by fire. The long process of acquiring necessary components took over 20 years. The 3/13 console was originally installed in Portland's Oriental Theatre, and that instrument served as the nucleus of the Organ Grinder organ.

The angled walls and ceilings of the building made the three chambers perform acoustically like horns projecting sound into the listening area with much clarity.

There was generous use of glass in the chamber design for maximum visual impact. Such large areas of glass made maintaining constant temperature difficult, and twenty tons of refrigeration equipment were used to keep the chambers and blower from overheating.

A pipe organ requires a constant stream of pressurized air, which was generated by a 3-stage turbine blower powered by a 60 hp electric motor. Rotors spinning at 1,400 r.p.m. developed over 6,000 cubic feet of wind per minute at static pressures of 23 and 35 inches of water displacement.

Wind from the blower passed into the chambers through underground air lines to the chest regulators, which upheld a constant wind pressure at all times. Without the regulators, pipes would change pitch, loudness, and timbre if the pressure varied.

Pipes sit on chests—large wooden boxes containing valves which allow air to pass into the pipes. For every pipe there are two leather pneumatic bellows, one electromagnet, and miscellaneous valves. The electromagnets initiate the chest action on command from the console and relays, while the pneumatic components supply the necessary force required to open and close valves. Thus, the organ was said to have an electro-pneumatic action.

The electrical wiring in a highly unified theatre organ is staggering. Every circuit is repeated for each of the 61 keys on each manual or keyboard. Plans were to increase the number of ranks, making the organ over five times larger than the Oriental Theatre organ. With such expansion, the original Wurlitzer electro-pneumatic relays could not be made to perform satisfactorily. A unique alternative was therefore decided upon—a totally solid state electronic relay and power supply was built. This system used a complex diode matrix to decide which pipe was to be played when a given key and given stop tab was depressed. The new electronic system utilized about 35,000 diodes, 4,000 discrete transistors, thousands of tiny components, and the equivalent of 33,000 discrete transistors in 4 integrated circuits.

PAGES FROM THE PAST... *Continued*

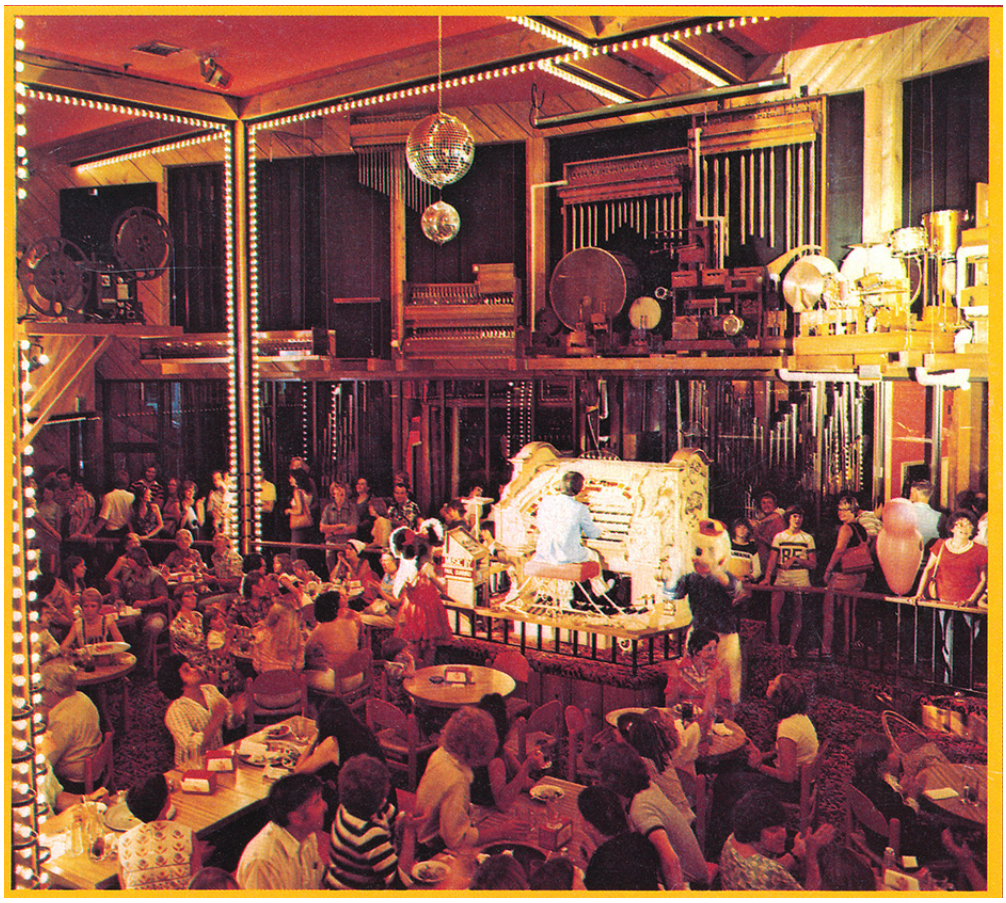
The console is what controls an instrument. Prior to October, 1975, the console used was from the Oriental theatre. Since the number of pipes and percussions had grown to about five times the original number, the console layout had been re-designed to accommodate the additions. Almost 100 additional stops and controls were added, which presented organists with severe handicaps. A larger console was needed.

In 1973, a 4/26 Wurlitzer from Boston's Metropolitan Music Hall Theatre was acquired, fitted out for the Organ Grinder Restaurant, and during the early morning hours of October 10, 1975, some sort of record must have been set when a console of such complexity was installed in just 12 hours!

With 44 ranks of pipes, the Organ Grinder boasted having an example of every major voice ever used in Wurlitzer pipe organ. At the peak of its success, the Organ Grinder claimed its organ to be the largest of its kind in the world.

Sadly for its many devoted fans, after 23 memorable years the restaurant closed in 1996.

The organ was sold for parts.



Overview of main dining area and Wurlitzer organ

ABOVE–Four manual console with 253 stops, 244 keys and 50 presets

LEFT–Organ Grinder, Pizza Pete and 100 year old street organ