

The Organ Log

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NOTE:

"Guess Who is in the Photo" results from the June issue and a new challenge will appear in the August issue of *The Organ Log*.

Web: www.LATOS.org
Toll Free: 888-LATOS22

LATOS Member Appreciation Day Coming Soon!



Old Town Music Hall Organ and Piano (cropped photo). Photo courtesy of DonHoltz.com

LATOS Member Appreciation Day on Saturday, August 17 at the Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo is being held to thank our members for their loyalty and support. The event will be *complimentary* for the first 100 LATOS members who RSVP by sending an e-mail to Angie Hougen at Angie-Hougen-LATOS@latos.org (deadline to RSVP is Wednesday, August 14). **There are still complimentary spaces open for this exciting event that will include:**

- **11:00am to 1:15pm Open Console** on the fabulous 4-manual/27-rank theatre pipe organ. If needed, someone will be available to help with registration to insure an unforgettable experience playing the "the real thing".
- After a short break, the theatre will re-open between 1:45 and 2:00pm for a **2:30pm Movie Matinee** with the 1927 Academy Award-winning silent film, "Sunrise", accompanied on the theatre pipe organ by the brilliant artist, Mr. Bill Field. The matinee will also include music and a fun sing-along.
- **The Richmond Bar & Grill** near the theatre will be open for lunch from noon into the afternoon. Their sensibly priced menu has a variety of tasty dishes. 75 seats will be held at the restaurant for anyone who would like to have lunch during the event. Lunch will be *no-host (members pay for their own lunch)*, and the Richmond Bar & Grill is cash-only (*no credit cards*).

Angie will respond to **all** RSVP emails, and will include check-in information to those who are amongst the first 100 to RSVP. She will also provide wait list information for those who respond late. *The theatre cannot accept RSVPs for this event.*

Theatre admission is only \$10 each for *non-member* guests and only \$8 each for *non-member* seniors over 62 (cash only/no credit cards). If you RSVP 'with a guest', please provide the name of the guest to Angie so she can plan the space ahead of time. Of course, guests are welcome to attend the open console, but will need to directly pay the theatre for their admission at the time that they attend the matinee (you do not have to pay for guests in advance).

Look for a map and directions in the August issue. **See you then!**

The Wanamaker Organ and Macy's

an Editorial by Tony Wilson

The Macy's Wanamaker pipe organ was originally built for the Festival Hall at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, and was designed by the organ architect George Ashdown Audsley. The initial instrument had more than 10,000 pipes. In 1910, Mr. John Wanamaker purchased the former World's Fair organ and a 2,500 pound bronze eagle (also from the World's Fair), and installed them at his famous Center City store. The organ was inaugurated in the Grand Court in 1911, and the building was dedicated that year by President William H. Taft.

The pipe organ was deemed inadequate to fill the Grand Court, so Wanamaker opened a private organ factory in the store attic and staffed it with full-time employees. The organ became an enviable example of excellent design and craftsmanship, and has been considered by many to be the finest *orchestral* instrument in the world.

Marcel Dupre, Louis Vierne, Nadia Boulanger, Fernando Germani, Marco Enrico Bossi, Keith Chapman and Virgil Fox (to name a few) have performed on this instrument.

In 1978, the John Wanamaker store was sold to California-based Carter Hawley Hale Stores, and was later purchased by two or three other companies. Even before this barrage of changes, the organ's condition was deteriorating due to lack of maintenance. I performed on the Wanamaker organ at the Grand Court in the early 1980's, and it was in a very bad state of disrepair and difficult to play as a result. The console was in des-

perate need of overhaul; and when playing the organ, it was best to select many stops in hopes that the vast number of missing notes might not be noticed by the listener. The Grand Court was no longer grand. It was very depressing and dark; and the drapes and covered walls made for terrible acoustics.

An old custom still used today to rendezvous in Center City is to say, "Meet me at the Eagle" (on the floor of the Grand Court). This is where I met my friend Stephen Ross who hosted my visit to the store. Of note is the fact that Stephen is from Los Angeles and was a dedicated and active contributor to LATOS for many years. Stephen has been in the Philadelphia area since the late 1990's, where he has been a supporter of the "Friends of the Wanamaker Organ" organization.



Stephen Ross (L); and Mark Mills (R) from Los Angeles

My visit to the Macy's store was an emotional experience in seeing the restored and superbly lighted Grand Court, and the Wanamaker organ that was in the absolute best condition it has ever been in. In fact, original parts of the organ that were never finished are now playing beautifully. The 6-manual/729-stop console was refinished and is stunning to see. The organ boasts over 28,500 pipes (463 ranks).

Even more impressive is that maintenance of the organ occurs on a *continual* basis.



2nd and upper Grand Court floors.

Stephen Ross offered wonderful insight about the Wanamaker organ, including the fact that Peter Conte has been the Grand Court Organist since 1989. Curt Mangel (their truly dedicated Curator) along with Sam Whitcraft and other devoted crew are responsible for the amazing condition of the organ. Curt has even worked with Macy's on beautiful lighting effects that highlight the Wanamaker organ and Grand Court. Equally important is the commitment that Macy's upper management and the Center City store management has made to ensure that the Wanamaker Organ and the Grand Court are in tip-top shape, and are a truly spectacular experience for their visitors.

I just wrote a letter to Mr. Terry Lundgren (Macy's Chairman, CEO and President) and copied others within Macy's to thank them for preserving an important part of history. I also informed them that because of what I experienced in Philadelphia and their support of the Wanamaker organ; my shopping preference will be Macy's when looking for a store in their category.

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Wanamaker Organ, continued:

If you hear an instrument that you like, please give the owner or manager positive feedback. If the venue is retail (such as Macy's), then please shop there when you can (and let them know why). If it is a church, then please support their organ program. If it is a theatre such as the Old Town Music Hall, please help by enjoying a movie or concert there.

If these people do not hear from you about the instruments that they host, or don't get the support or patronage of the public – their instruments might no longer be top-of-mind, and fall to a dangerously low priority in their list of what is important. This sometimes results in an instrument falling into disrepair, and even being removed or disappearing.

Of course, supporting LATOS is also important in helping to keep its instruments at South Pasadena High School, Pasadena City College and the Wilshire Ebell Theatre alive and well.

Visit WanamakerOrgan.com for more information.



The organ console from across the Grand Court



Tony Wilson at the Wanamaker Organ console.

Quote of the Month

"Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." Berthold Auerbach

Inaugural LATOS Training Day

by Angie Hougen, LATOS President & Chairperson

Our LATOS board members are a great group of knowledgeable, friendly people who all work hard towards creating memorable programs for our membership, and dedicate countless hours to the stewardship of our instruments. One of the things I am working on as LATOS' new President is cross training between our board members so that we can share the many vital skills that are necessary to run and manage each and every one of our precious instruments. On **Friday, June 14th**, we had our first training day at South Pasadena High School.



Left To Right: Steve Asimow, Don Near, Wayne Flottman, Jim Dawson, Dorsey Caldwell and Angie Hougen.

LATOS Board Member Dorsey Caldwell who plays a key role as Crew Chief for our South Pasadena High organ spent a full morning showing us the ins and outs of the instrument, as well as the auditorium. He patiently took us through, step by step, how to set up the organ for "show time", as well as how to troubleshoot a few problems should they arise. Most of us were new to this type of instruction, but with Dorsey's guidance and enthusiasm, we were "pros" by the end of our session. We even had time for board members play the organ, as well as play back recorded selections from prominent organists who have visited over the years. This enjoyable morning was an example of our knack at combining business with pleasure. We then traveled to Irwindale to inventory our storage locker where we found a few *wonderful* treasures, and finally, enjoyed the camaraderie of lunch in a nearby '50's diner.

Being on the LATOS Board is a very rewarding volunteer activity. We have a two hour meeting every second Saturday of odd months in Pasadena to review and conduct LATOS business. We also volunteer at the concerts as our schedules allow. We currently have a vacancy on the board, and would be happy to welcome new volunteers any time. For more info, feel free to talk to one of us on Member Appreciation Day at the Old Town Music Hall, or contact me at angie-hougen-latos@latos.org



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL

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Southern California Theatre Organ Related Events

July 21, 2013 – Sunday at 4pm – Bob Salisbury Organ Concert, a barbershop quartet and ice cream social at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, 6201 E. Willow, Long Beach. Free Admission

August 10, 2013 – Saturday at 6:30pm – Bob Salisbury accompanies "The Mark of Zorro" (Douglas Fairbanks) at the Broadway Café at 1117 W. Big Bear Bl., in Big Bear. \$20 includes dinner "under the stars".

→ **August 17, 2013 - Saturday – LATOS Member Appreciation Day at the Old Town Music Hall. Read about it in this and the August issue of *The Organ Log*.**

October 6, 2013 - Sunday – Scott Foppiano in Concert with two short silent films and a sing-along at the San Gabriel Mission Playhouse. *Read about it in upcoming issues of The Organ Log.*

ONGOING: The **Organ Grinders** every 2nd Sunday of the month at 2:00pm. Open console on a digital theatre organ (also a volunteer pot-luck). 1270 Lincoln Ave., Suite 100, Pasadena, CA 91103 Info and directions: 626-791-9193

ONGOING: Concerts, Movies & Shows at the **Old Town Music Hall**, 140 Richmond Street, El Segundo. Many events featuring the 4-manual theatre pipe organ. Call (310) 322-2592 (recorded info) or visit <http://www.oldtownmusichall.org>

LATOS Board Members

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Visit LATOS.org for committee & other contact info.