

The Organ Log

LOS ANGELES

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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July, 2018

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OPEN CONSOLE!



LATOS Open Console & Social
Sunday, August 19th at 2pm
Vic Lopez Auditorium, Whittier High School.

There will be a 45-minute program by David Marsh, followed by an open console and refreshments. We encourage everyone to bring a snack or dessert to share. It will be a fun afternoon with friends, food and music! See you there!

Date subject to change



A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Whew! Was that some convention or what? With about 400 attending, I'm sure no one went away hungry for any more theatre organ music after that!!! I would just like to take a moment to thank Convention Chairperson Mark Herman for all of his hard work and overseeing the many different functions needed to have such a successful event! I'd also like to thank everyone that volunteered during the convention, from coordinating buses, working in The Record Shop, picking up and working with the artists, repairing and tuning organs, checking attendees in, coordinating finances, hosting events, and the list goes on, and on, and on!!!

Now back to our regularly scheduled program:

We have a new Social Committee that is working hard to establish a year's worth of socials and concerts. You will be seeing more frequent gatherings for our members to meet, play, and just enjoy the different theatre organs with which we associate.

We hope to be able to put on public concerts once again and will need help publicizing and coordinating these events as well to keep them profitable for the club and be able to expose the theatre organ to people that may be unaware or have never had the opportunity to see or hear one. With all of this we will need volunteers! Please feel free to let us know if you would like to become involved!

We look forward to seeing you at upcoming socials and events soon!

Musically yours,
Charlton F. Quinn, President

CONVENTION STORIES

(These articles will continue in future issues)

By John Koerber

It was a privilege and pleasure to work with Mark Herman, Clark Wilson, our professional technical advisor Tom DeLay, and the staff of the Orpheum Theatre in preparing Wurlitzer Opus 1821 for two performance days.

Those of you who aren't members of the Los Angeles (Architectural) Conservancy may not be aware that in the very week preceding our Convention show, in addition to his Convention preparation duties, ATOS Convention Chairman Mark Herman entertainingly and skillfully accompanied the Buster Keaton silent movie classic "Steamboat Bill, Jr" for the Conservancy's "Last Remaining Seats", a series of classic movie shows in classic movie palaces.

Just nine days later, for our Convention's delight, Clark Wilson made his third appearance at the Orpheum's 3/14 Wurlitzer. But first he interviewed Harold Lloyd's granddaughter onstage about the glamorous world of the film industry, doing such as preserving nitrate film with protective paper! Clark then expressively

and dynamically accompanied the Harold Lloyd silent classic "Safety Last!".

In the movie, as Harold Lloyd ascends the corner quoins, awnings, friezes, ledges, masonry and other architecture of the DeVore department store, encountering distractions and difficulties at every floor, a large white building comes into view across the street. That street is LA's Broadway, and that bright white building is the May Company building, right across the street from the LA Orpheum Theatre! The May Company building has changed hands and is now being beautifully refurbished for retail use on the first floor and live-work "creative spaces" on the many floors above. See it in the movie, leave the theatre, look across Broadway and there it is!

Regarding the Orpheum's Wurlitzer, the performance (or performances!) you heard were played through its original electro-pneumatic relay mechanism comprised of key relays, switchstacks, spreaders and all! The Orpheum's Wurlitzer is one of fewer than 40 original-installation theatre pipe organs still operating on their original EP relays.



REMEMBERING LATOS MEMBER, PATRICIA SANDOR

Patricia Marilyn Sandor, 91, of Yucaipa, passed away peacefully at home on May 10, 2018. She was born in Chicago, Ill. On Aug. 25, 1926. Patricia married William Edward Sandor on Aug. 25, 1969 in Redlands. He preceded her in death. She is survived by one son, William Tate of Yucaipa and one daughter, Diana Loraine Warren; one granddaughter and three great grandchildren. Our condolences to her family.

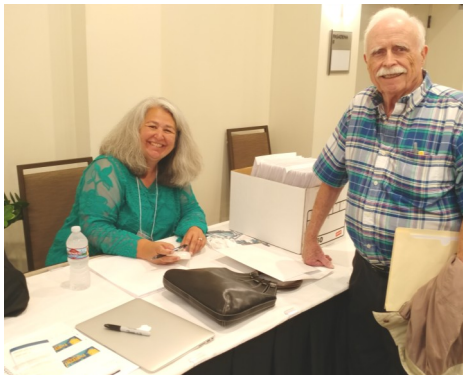
Longtime member of LATOS, Patricia loved theatre organ music. She, and her husband Bill, took lessons for more than ten years from neighbor, and good friend, Dennis Bertwell on their 2 manual Allen. Patricia and Bill often enjoyed the drive up the coast to partake in the Asilomar "Home Organ Festival" which you might remember from several years back. Patricia was a very nice woman and she will be missed.

AT THE ORPHEUM

June 30, a delightful presentation of the exciting, Harold Lloyd film, "Safety Last," was performed by Clark Wilson at the console.



The program began with Clark interviewing Lloyd's granddaughter who shared stories and tipped the audience what to watch for during the show. Clark then talked about the presentation and the fact that he used at least 42 themes within the film. A visual and audible delight!



Picture left, Angie Hougen — always a smiling face, as she worked at the registration desk.

Picture right, Richard Hills played an outstanding opening night performance at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. The Moller Organ filled the auditorium with spectacular sounds.



REGISTRATION WORKSHOP

Educational and entertaining! Simon Geldhill shared tips and tricks for Theater Organ registration while Richard Hills demonstrated. At the end of the program Simon and Richard treated everyone to a lively duet.

WILSHIRE EBELL THEATER

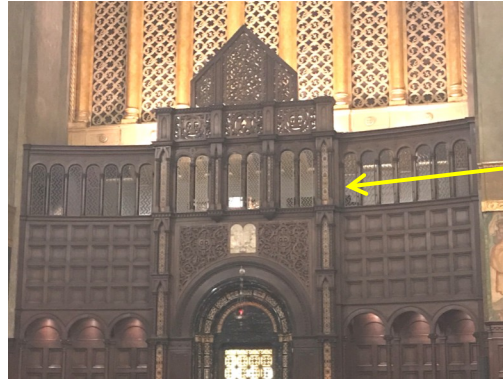
Dave Wickerham treated all to a variety of music. He even turned the organ into a jazz ensemble, and then proceeded to weave in other melodies as themes. He also played pieces in classical style, but playfully took advantage of the additional theatre organ extras. It was amazing to watch Dave's hands and feet glide across the keys and pedals for his finale as he played a majestic Strauss waltz.



WILSHIRE BOULEVARD TEMPLE

Brett Valliant played many moving pieces including several favorites: Finlandia, Bach's Come Sweet Death (Virgil Fox arrangement) and Edward Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance military march number one.

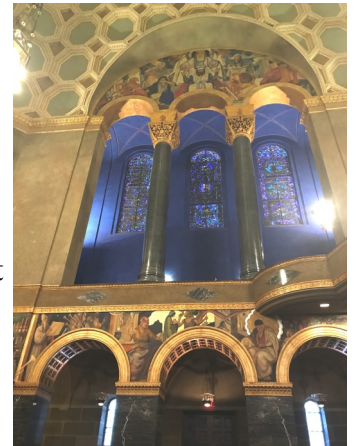
The interior of the Magnin sanctuary is modeled after the Parthenon and photos cannot begin to do justice to the beauty or significance of this building. The 1929 Kimball organ and console are way up high, hidden by grill and lattice work.



There is absolutely no fair comparison between the experience of a great organ recording and the experience of listening live in the venue for which the organ was designed.



Brett informed us that there is an echo division consisting of flutes some 100 feet above our heads high in the dome. *See picture left.* The domed sanctuary IS magnificent! audibly as well as visually...



THE EL CAPITAN

The amazing Scottish organist David Gray gave a stunning concert at Disney's El Capitan theatre on the 4-manual Wurlitzer originally installed at the Fox Theatre in San Francisco. Gray's stellar transcription of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture was an exciting conclusion to the event and included confetti cannons!
We'll done David!



WHITTIER HIGH SCHOOL

Justin LaVoie performed the closing convention concert at Whittier High School. Just after intermission, LATOS presented an Honorary Lifetime Membership to Ken Crome and recognized Ken's many outstanding achievements, one of which include this very installation.



THE NATHAN BARR STUDIO

Mark Herman showed off the Nathan Barr Wurlitzer that was formerly the house organ at the 20th Century Fox movie studios. The installation and restoration has been beautifully carried out by Ken Crome.



Nathan Barr

THE NATHAN BARR STUDIO



As for the organ, it is the original Fox Studio Wurlitzer, built in 1928 and used for many key pieces of music in Hollywood Cinema. Nathan Barr hired Ken Crome, from whom he purchased the organ, to restore it to mint condition — a process that took 4 years. Meanwhile, Nathan built a custom recording studio with three floating floors to house this amazing instrument. The HVAC and wind supply are located adjacent to the building so that the organ is absolutely silent unless it is playing. In fact, he had us listen while he turned on the tremulants — still silent. Amazing! It is so silent, that you can hear the decay of the chimes and other percussive instruments. Nathan explained that his goal is to bring the Theatre Organ back to

Hollywood and the main stream (to thunderous applause) and he shared that he is already using it in various scores and that it will be featured in the closing theme of an upcoming film.

FOUNDER'S CHURCH

The Wurlitzer organ at Founder's Church was reintroduced to the theatre organ world by Christian Elliott, who has a long history with the instrument. As an added treat, young organist Tobias Washburn played an exciting cameo of "The Petite Waltz" during the program.

Special thanks to Ken Crome for going above and beyond in his generosity to work on this organ to make it playable again. LATOS has made arrangements to start using this organ again for concerts and events, and we couldn't have done it without Ken's help!



(Ken Crome)



Summer Youth Adventure

Written by Edward Torres

A few weeks ago, I had the great opportunity to attend the Summer Youth Adventure put on by the American Theater Organ Society. In case you have never heard of the SYA, it is a wonderful music program that happens once a year for young up-and-coming theater organists to meet and have weeklong workshops and one-on-one sessions with five of today's professional theater organists. The instructors this year were Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Jelani Eddington, Martin Ellis and Christian Elliott, and the guest instructor this year was Ken Double. The "adventure" took place in Atlanta, Georgia.

We all arrived Sunday prior to the busy week. It was great to see old friends again; we would embrace and then catch up on what had been going on in our lives since last year's SYA that was held in Chicago. It was also great to make new friends, and I must say that although many of the newer students were younger, they had no problem holding their own on the bench.



The first instrument we went to see was the 4/22 Page Theater Organ installed in Stephenson High School. This was my first experience with a Page

pipe organ, and I must say it sounded fantastic in the school's auditorium. To my understanding this was one of four, 4 manual, Page Theater Organs the company produced, and this one happened to start life in radio station W-H-T of Chicago. We all had a blast during an open console session and later we were given chamber tours to see the inner workings of the instrument.

Throughout the week, all the students received plenty of one-on-one sessions with the teachers, and we usually had a master class where one teacher would address everyone and speak about a specific topic. Jelani Eddington's master class was on the use of energy in ones playing. We went into the importance of different styles of playing, and the importance of putting together medleys. There were a few ideas tossed around on medleys and how to build them. There usually is a theme when trying to make a medley, the music can come from a particular Broadway show, perhaps share a particular year that a few tunes were released, or even just have a reoccurring theme like "rain" and one might play "Rain" or "Singing in the Rain" etc. This is something that was a relatively new concept to me as I usually don't play medleys, but it certainly opened up ideas for me as to what I can work on to be performance ready. Martin Ellis discussed the importance of using the theater organ's tonal resources to build a registration that the organist would want, where it would be appropriate to change it and then be able to begin to create an arrangement for a particular piece. We also discussed the importance of different musical styles and how a particular registration would fit better with one piece rather than another. For example a "buzzy/novelty" registration would be far better suited for an upbeat tempo piece rather than having some of the quieter sounds of the organ which might be better suited for a ballad.

Another venue we visited was a private home installation that had a very fine Allen GW4. Everyone had a blast playing the Allen, and as we played the teachers reminded us to start thinking of a particular piece we wanted to perform at the end of the week in a "mini concert" for the local chapter members.

The next day we took a trip to Alabama to visit the famed Alabama Theater and "Big Bertha" which is a 4 manual red and gold leafed styled Publix 1.

(See picture on next page)

(continued from page 3)



"Big Bertha" at the famed Alabama Theater

This is an original installation Wurlitzer, and boy, it did sound amazing in that theater! From my understanding, the reason the theater was saved from demolition was The Wurlitzer. The organ crew we met is extremely dedicated to making sure that the instrument is ready for performing for the public audiences. I remember I sat down on the bench and played a rather upbeat version of "Pennies From Heaven" and then played another 1930's hit "Cherry". Two of the instructors stood near the console to help with registration as needed for those students who were not yet comfortable with how to register a console.

Another venue we visited was a private home installation that had a very fine Allen GW4. Everyone had a blast playing the Allen, and as we played the teachers reminded us to start thinking of a particular piece we wanted to perform at the end of the week in a "mini concert" for the local chapter members.

I would now like to thank those who have read my little article on my experience at the SYA. This wonderful music program is an excellent opportunity for students to have time with professional theater organists to discuss ideas and learn from the many workshops and master classes of the week. It is also a great chance for us to meet other young theater organists who have similar likes. We all keep in touch over the year through social media and we have all grown to be a small family, all of us are very supportive of one another.

-Edward Torres



Editor's note; Thank you Edward for a very nice article.

Next month you can read "The Rest of the Story" when another fine young artist writes his review of the "Summer Youth Adventure."

LATOS DUES

Please, Join / Renew ONLINE

Go to www.latos.org, click on the MEMBERSHIP link and then select "JOIN / RENEW NOW"

"The doors are always open for donations."

From Treasurer, Bill Campbell: As a non-profit organization, LATOS depends on its membership fees and donations to pay the operational expenses of the chapter. If you would like to donate to our chapter, checks can be mailed to our PO Box 15626, Anaheim, CA 92803. OR EVEN EASIER, donate online! Click here [LINK TO DONATE to LATOS](#)



LATOS
PO Box 15626
Anaheim, CA 92803

So Cal Theatre Organ Related Event

OCTOS: Aug. 18, Open Console and Pot Luck 10am - 2pm at Plummer Auditorium, Fullerton Union High School.

LATOS: Aug. 19, Open Console, 2-6pm at Whittier High School.

OLD TOWN MUSIC HALL: Aug, 19, Ron Rhode Concert at 2:30pm.
Contact 310-322-2592

TOSSD, San Diego: Aug, 25, Open Console and Ice Cream Social,
11am - 3pm, Trinity Facilities, Spring Valley, CA.

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

ONGOING: Concerts at The Nethercutt Collection. Visit <http://www.nethercuttcollection.org/Calendar.aspx> for dates & info.

ONGOING: The Organ Grinders every 2nd Sunday of the month at 2:00pm. Open console on a Roland Atelier (also a volunteer pot-luck). Westminster Presbyterian Church. 1757 North Lake Ave., Pasadena, in the "Lawrence Chapel" (not in main sanctuary). Free parking in the rear. Contact Elly Reitz 626-281-3311 for more info.

ONGOING: Paramount Iceland, (3/19 Wurlitzer) organ is played for skating sessions every Tuesday 7-8:30pm. featured artist, Bill Campbell. 8041 Jackson St. Paramount. 562-633-1171

OTHER EVENTS: Visit GoOrgan.com for an extensive list of theatre and classical organ concerts throughout southern California.

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