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PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

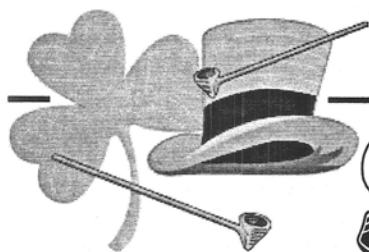
Published monthly by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, a non-profit organization
furthering the appreciation, preservation and use of the Theatre Pipe Organs of yesteryear

Volume 13 No. 3

March 2002



PUGET SOUND
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



Celebrate the 'Wearin' of the Green!

Saint Patrick's Day Pizza Party with MUSIC, MOVIES & FUN!

Featuring
our own...



Charlotte Blackwell

*with traditional
Irish harp music*

and

Jo Ann Evans

*with favorites
on the theatre pipe organ*

PLUS two rare movies

*"The Movie Palaces"
narrated by Gene Kelly
and*

*"A 1920s 'Tour' Through The Wurlitzer Factory"
showing just how theatre organs were made.
For more about these movies, please see page 3.*

Sunday, March 17th, 2:00 p.m.

Haller Lake Community Club

12579 Densmore Ave. N. • Seattle

A joint presentation of PSTOS and HLCC
to benefit the HLCC building upgrade fund.

The elevator is now working!

Park in the back lot and try it out.

ADMISSION • \$10 per person

RESERVATIONS are ESSENTIAL!

**INCLUDES PIZZA, SALAD, BEVERAGE,
DESSERT AND ENTERTAINMENT!**

WHAT A BARGAIN!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

Your PSTOS Board is working hard to make this a fun event for all. **Food will be ordered based on the number of reservations received.** Last year a number of folks came who had not reserved, and as a result, we ran out of pizza. This year, in fairness to members who reserve, those whose names are on the reservation list will be served first. So PLEASE, everyone—make your reservations now!! Help us plan for the right amount of food. ...Many thanks from your event planning committee.

Please turn to page 6 for drive directions
and information about street construction.

It's IMPERATIVE that you reserve by March 11 • 425-485-5465 or rj.evans@verizon.net

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society

6521 N.E. 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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**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.

President's Message



I had a phone call from a fellow PSTOS member who had just received her latest PSTOS *Pipeline*. She said she just had to call to thank me for the news-packed, wonderfully done *Pipeline* and for all the hard work I was doing for PSTOS. What a wonderful call! I told her I really appreciated her call and agreed with her that the *Pipeline* is probably the best newsletter I've ever seen but that she should really thank JoAnn and Russ Evans. I know JoAnn puts her heart and soul into our *Pipeline*.

As far as the 'hard' work part—I don't do the 'hard' work. Your Board Members are the movers and shakers who shoulder the responsibilities involved in keeping our organization strong and active. In addition to our *Pipeline* editors, Bob Zat maintains our Chapter pipe organ at Haller Lake. Bob also readies the Hall for our events held there—tuning, positioning and uncrating the console, setting up the Hall and final clean up. Norman Miller, our treasurer, handles our accounts, pays bills, and is the 'ticket-taker' at our events—he never gets enough credit for the tremendous job he does for PSTOS.

Les Lehne and Bill Keller drive from Olympia to Seattle each month to attend Board meetings. (I'm not sure I'd do that!) Jackie Cedarholm is our Franklin High School Liaison; Marilyn Schrum

offers invaluable assistance in event planning and her knowledge of PSTOS history; Clint Meadway is always ready with his pipe organ expertise; and Carl Dodrill, our newest Board Member, will be encouraged to share his suggestions and advice.

It takes a great deal of work to keep an organization like PSTOS going. All the Board Members share their ideas, chair committees, and volunteer wherever needed.

Other PSTOS Members accomplish a lot of the 'hard' work too. Tom Blackwell does an absolutely fabulous job as Webmaster of our Website, www.pstos.org. Doug and Terri Owen send new members a welcome letter, which includes their membership badges and roster. Diane Whipple is our Sunshine Chairman sending appropriate cards to members and their families. Ellen Sullivan almost single-handedly, sets up the Haller Lake Hall for our events by setting tables, making coffee, decorating and organizing the buffet food table (I'm not sure I'd do that either!) There are many others who help whenever there is a need—often un-thanked.

My caller said she wished she were able to help PSTOS more. I told her she helped the organization every time she attends an event.

I want to thank all our PSTOS Members for their support—not just paying your membership fee but by supporting our events. Even with the best of planning, nothing can happen without YOUR support.

THANK YOU!!

We may be starting a new tradition on March 17th. I don't think PSTOS has held a St. Patrick's Day event before. Everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day—so wear your green and join us for an afternoon of music, movies and fun on Sunday, the 17th. We ask that you call to reserve your place by March 11th so we can plan for adequate food. See you there.

- Barbara Graham

Get well wishes...

Bob Schladetzky recently took a misstep while he and Clint Meadway were installing the Glockenspiel in his expanding pipe organ at Beaver Springs Lodge near Port Ludlow. He tore off the Achilles tendon in his right leg. A surgical repair was required and he'll be in a cast for two to three months, with

physical therapy following.

This is the instrument PSTOS members visited in August of 2000. Organs tend to be "works in progress" for long periods and such is the case with Bob's instrument. We hope to again plan a trip to the Lodge when a full-blown concert can be planned.

Meanwhile, best PSTOS wishes to you, Bob, for a speedy recovery!

PSTOS

Coming Events

St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Jointly sponsored by PSTOS and HLCC to benefit the HLCC building upgrade fund. A full afternoon of fun entertainment, PLUS pizza, salad, dessert and beverages for just \$10! See cover page for details.
Haller Lake Community Club
Sunday, March 17th, 2:00 PM

Summer Social – NEW DATE!

Another summer music event at the home of Russ and Jo ann Evans.
Saturday, July 13, 2 PM

Summer Picnic

Home of Bill Keller with music on his exciting custom 3-manual Allen Theatre Organ. Watch for more details.
Saturday, August 10

Chris Powell Concert

Famous organist from England on a world tour. Time and venue TBA
Sunday, Sept. 8

OTHER

Events of Interest

Rick Parks at the Elsinore

Rick is resident organist at Salem's Elsinore Theatre and a fine musician. For information, 503-665-6633.
Sunday afternoon, March 24

Barry Baker In Concert

Barry is fast becoming one of the top theatre organists in the U.S. The good folks at Olympia's Washington Center are bringing Barry to town to celebrate completion of earthquake repairs to the Wurlitzer, for which PSTOS made a substantial contribution. Put it on your calendar now and enjoy both this great Wurlitzer AND a great organist...it's definitely a not-to-be-missed concert! More info next issue.
Sunday, April 14

From the Mailbox

Editor's note: When news circulated last year of the closure of the California pizza parlor that owned the original Wurlitzer from the Seattle 5th Avenue Theatre, it was hoped local interest could be found for returning the instrument to its original home. Alas! Such was not to happen! Following is news of the "travels" of this particular Wurlitzer, received from Harry Harkness, PSTOS member residing in the Bay Area.

Hello Pipeline Editors,

It was good seeing you again at the PSTOS Christmas function. The organ seems to be in great shape.

The letters following will give you an update on Seattle's good ol' 5th Avenue Theatre Wurlitzer. I used to hear Larry Embury a lot when he played Serramonte Pizza & Pipes and I lived down the peninsula at Santa Clara. I hope to hear it again on cable TV in a few years. Some of those Wurli's do get around.

Best regards, Harry Harkness

☺ ☺ ☺

From "Letters To The Editors" of the *Windsheet*, newsletter of Nor-Cal Chapter:

In an effort to keep you as informed as possible about the status of Bay area organs, we corresponded with Larry Embury, the new owner of the Redwood City Cap'n's Galley 4-manual special Wurlitzer [originally from Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre]. Many remember Larry Embury well from the days when he played at Serramonte Pizza and Pipes. In our letter to Larry, we recalled being present the night he recorded his LP on the Serramonte 3/15 Wurlitzer entitled "Reflections". [The LP has been recently released as a CD.] The letter details Larry's developing plans for the organ.

☺ ☺ ☺

And from Larry Embury:

November 18, 2001

Dear Rudy (of Nor-Cal Chapter),

Thank you for your interest in this project. Years ago this was my "baby" and the thought of it being sold for parts tore at my heart like you can't believe. I HAD to have it and restore it to its glory.

December 3rd (2001), it comes out and goes to Kenny Crome's place in Reno for a

Continued next column

MOVIE REVIEW

Don't miss these interesting movies to be shown at the St. Patrick's Day Party on Sunday, March 17th

"The Movie Palaces," narrated by Gene Kelly

A Smithsonian production provides a fascinating look back at the very early days of film and the building of the magnificent theatres which gave the public a fantasy world of the "movies." This was a time when a mere 65¢ offered both a movie and live entertainment. Seattle's still spectacular 5th Avenue Theatre is included, as well as an interview with Gaylord Carter as he shows off the theatre organ and the art of accompanying a film. See Radio City Music Hall and a look at some of the elaborate stage shows of the 20s and 30s—it was a world of fantasy and imagination in America's great movie palaces!

A "tour" through the Wurlitzer Factory, vintage 1920s

This is actual movie footage taken during the heyday of theatre organ production. See the casting of pipe metal, actual pipe making and voicing, mitring of pipes to make them fit in the chambers, wiring of the relays, curing of the lumber, console assembly, and ending with the delivery of the San Francisco Granada Theatre Wurlitzer, which filled ten railroad cars! A fascinating historical movie.

Don't miss this!

two year restoration. Then I will move it into its new home in mid-town Manhattan to be used primarily for a cable TV inspirational program and recordings and recitals and, and, and, the list goes on.

This 4/28 will be enlarged to some extent adding MIDI without changing the original structure of the instrument.

I hope this brings you up to speed. Tomorrow morning, my partner and I fly to New York to accompany Bette Midler at the Rainbow Room, Rockefeller Plaza, and we're pretty focused on that.

We have our new office at One Lincoln Plaza, right across the street from Lincoln Center, and while there are starting to scout out a place where "Baby" will have a home. Exciting times for us.

Sincerely,

Larry Douglas Embury
Douglas Music System

Pages From The Past...Portland Oriental Theatre

The following two articles originally appeared in *MARQUEE, The Journal Of The Theatre Historical Society*, in October, 1969. Dennis Hedberg has been prominent in theatre organ circles in the Portland area for many years, having been the owner of The Organ Grinder pizza restaurant at the time of its closure several years ago.

Sadly, the Portland Oriental Theatre is long gone, having been razed in 1970. A parking lot now occupies the site.



The Portland Oriental Theatre as it appeared in the late 1930s.

A surprise visit by the original sculptor of the Oriental Theatre decor

Portland's Dennis Hedberg had a surprise visit one morning while practicing on the Wurlitzer at the Oriental Theatre in downtown Portland. The artist and sculptor, Andrien Voisin, who designed the plaster work for the Oriental was passing through Portland and decided to pay a visit to the theatre. He was impressed with the work he had done forty years before and exclaimed on seeing the huge dome lighted for his benefit, "It is the best thing I ever did!"

They still don't believe him when he tells people that he put 16 full sized elephants around the ceiling of the Oriental theatre. But he did, and they are still there, though slightly dusty.

"The Oriental is a museum, a dream palace," said Mr. Voisin. He arrived in Portland in the 1920s to work on the Masonic Temple decoration and stayed on to do the Oriental, in which case he not only did the sculpture detail for the plaster work but also did all the designing for the entire decoration of the theatre. The castings were done by Rof O'Deane, who is still active in the field in Portland [1969].

Voisin said he was instructed by Mr. Tebbetts to give him an ancient temple from the far east. So he went to the public library and researched Angkor Vat, the evidence of which is seen throughout the theatre. Mr. Voisin also recalled that the two large Buddhas near the entrance doors were really a "spur of the moment thing." One morning he said to a workman, "I need something to fill these spaces," and by noon the two figures had been cast right on the premises.

He also recalled that he had worked on the Seattle and Portland Paramount Theatres, as well as the Los Angeles Orpheum and the El Capitan in San Francisco.

Mr. Voisin, 74 years old, is disposing of his famous collection of sculptures of the Blackfoot Indians. He was on his way to Spokane to negotiate with Gonzaga University relative to the sale of his works.

Federal Archive to Include Picture Palaces

The Oriental theatre in Portland, Oregon, is to be demolished, but its history and appearance will become a part of a public record, available through the famous Library of Congress.

The Historic American Buildings Survey was founded in 1933 and through the years has built up a vast collection of drawings and photographs with written histories and descriptions of thousands of historic buildings throughout the country. The buildings are selected for inclusion in the Survey on the basis of their historic and architectural merit, and in recent years a great deal of attention has been paid to unusual and endangered building types, many of which have been traditionally overlooked as historic monuments. A prime example of such a type is the movie palace. Recently, through the efforts of staff architect, Craig Morrison, the Survey has begun a project of recording the 20th century American theatre.

The first building in the recording project will be the Oriental Theatre in Portland, Oregon, which has recently closed and will be demolished shortly after the first of the new year. Built in 1927, the Oriental's decoration, featuring great plaster elephants, is most unique. The survey records will include a series of professional photos and a written description and history of the theatre.

Other theatres for which recording is in progress or under consideration are the New Amsterdam in New York and the Grand Riviera in Detroit. Now in the Library of Congress are drawings of the Fulton Theatre in Pittsburgh.

Pages From The Past, continued...

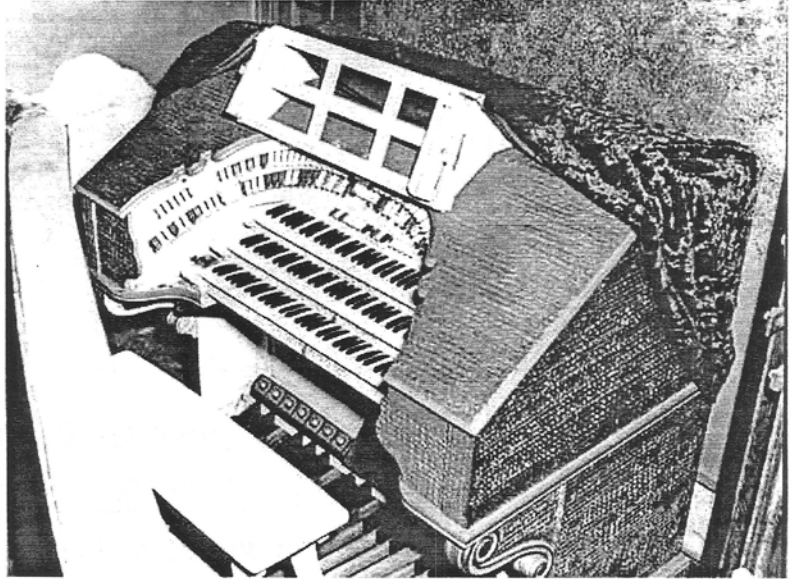
You'll find this information and much more about the Oriental on the PSTOS website...

The Oriental Wurlitzer was opus #1710, a Style 260. The original installation was supervised by Wurlitzer employee Harry E. Carruthers. It was a unique installation in that all of the speaking voices of the organ were in two adjacent chambers which spoke via a tone chute through the front part of the ceiling dome. The piano was in the right end of the orchestra pit.

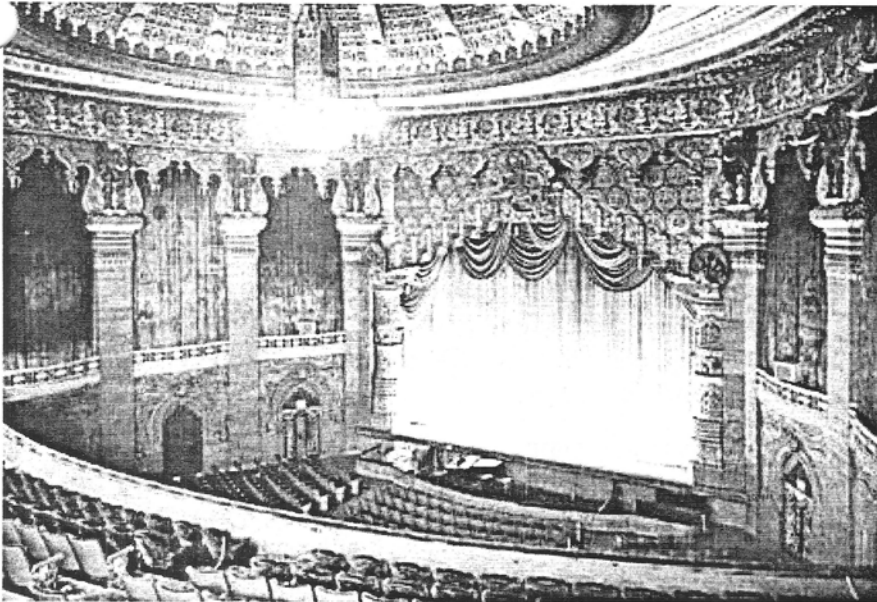
Dennis Hedberg performed extensive work on the instrument in the 1960s, raising pressures on all ranks and revoicing almost every pipe. His goal was to counteract problems created by the tone chute installation. Stop list modifications were also made including additional Tibia Mutations and couplers. A second blower was added and the console key contacts were adjusted to help speed the action to overcome the considerable time delay between the chambers and console.

Dennis Hedberg and partners removed the Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer in late 1969. It formed the basis of the Portland Organ Grinder restaurant organ. The restaurant is now closed and the instrument was broken up for parts.

The original Oriental Theatre console later controlled the Wurlitzer at Uncle Milt's Pizza Co. in Vancouver, Washington, also now closed.



The Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer console. It was later put into service at Uncle Milt's Pizza Co. in Vancouver, WA.



LEFT: The beautiful Oriental Theatre interior. The Wurlitzer console is visible in the orchestra pit.

This "East Indian" playhouse was designed by architects Thomas and Mercier. The magnificent plaster work was designed by Adrian Voisin. The theatre opened on December 31, 1927 and seated 2,038. Opening organist was Glen Shelly.

The theatre was an interesting essay in exotic Hindu style, inspired by the India Temple of Angkor Vat. The interior sported life-size models of Indian elephants and other bizarre statuary.

Unfortunately, the theatre was never really viable as a movie house and it was eventually torn down to make way for a parking lot. An auction was held on February 17, 1970 to dispose of all the contents (light fixtures, etc).

The theatre was photographed for inclusion in the Library of Congress list of America's most interesting buildings.

To learn more about the beautiful Portland Oriental Theatre, check the PSTOS website at www.pstos.org and click on "N.W. Theatre History," then click on "Oregon" and scroll down to "Oriental."

Have you seen the latest additions to the PSTOS website?

You'll find over 1100 historical pictures of Pacific Northwest theatres and their organs. There are over 750 pages of fascinating information which will keep you busy for hours. More pages are added weekly. Webmaster Tom Blackwell is doing an absolutely outstanding job and the site has had nearly 27,000 visitors since it began in June of 1998. Rumors are that other organizations are using this site as a model for their own.

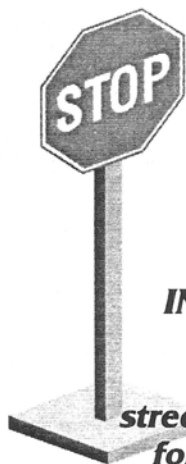
Check www.pstos.org today. Be sure to sign the guestbook and make your comments to Tom. Let him know how much you appreciate his fine work!

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Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

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**IMPORTANT
INFORMATION!**

***Because of
street renovation, the
following revised
route to HLCC is
recommended for the
St. Patrick's Day Party***

Northbound I-5: Use Exit 174 onto NE 130th St., turn left over freeway and drive several blocks to **Meridian Ave. N.E.**

Turn left (south) one block to 128th.
Right on N.E. 128th to Densmore Ave.
Left on Densmore, clubhouse is on the right. Parking both front and rear.

Southbound I-5: Use Exit 175 onto N.E. 145th, turn right and drive several blocks to **Meridian Ave. NE.** Turn left (south) and drive through N.E. 130th to N.E. 128th. Continue where underlined above.

**AND PLEASE
wear your name badge!
HLCC members are invited,
too. Name badges will help
everyone get acquainted!**

A genuine headache from the 70s!

An interesting excerpt from a bulletin issued by Austin Organs, January, 1973.

PERFLEX-E – a New Material In Place Of Leather For Pneumatics

PERFLEX-E is a blown polyurethane film product of Union Carbide Corporation covered by registered trademark. The use of PERFLEX-E as a substitute for pneumatic leather is a result of over a decade of intensive and continuing research by AUSTIN ORGANS, INC.

PERFLEX-E is not only an answer to pollution and deterioration problems which have long been of concern to organ builders, it is a material superior in all ways to previous pneumatic membranes and coverings.

PERFLEX-E is very thin (.002"), yet strong and absolutely airtight. More flexible than the thinnest leather available, it will withstand millions of cycles of folding and flexing without showing signs of wear. PERFLEX-E will stretch over 200% before breaking and can be stretched 150% without any permanent change in shape. Tensile strength is over 5,000 P.S.I. The properties of PERFLEX-E show no change in a temperature range of -100° to +200° F.

Except for discoloration in certain cases, strong concentrations of chemicals found in polluted air, even in the presence of heat, do not affect PERFLEX-E. In similar tests, leather rots within minutes. Continued exposure to direct sunlight (ultra-violet rays) will weaken PERFLEX-E (50% after 6 months, typically).

Ideal for use on square and hinged folding pneumatics and pouches up to 4" wind span on pressures up to 20" wind, and even higher pressures on small pneumatics, PERFLEX-E will actually increase the speed and efficiency of a pneumatic system. Its properties make it equally desirable for use in low and high pressure organs and player or reproducing piano actions.

This product worked beautifully for awhile – until natural breakdown and deterioration of the film began. Much Perfex eventually had to be tediously removed and replaced with natural leather. The product was thought by organ builders to be the ideal replacement for leather, but such was not the case.