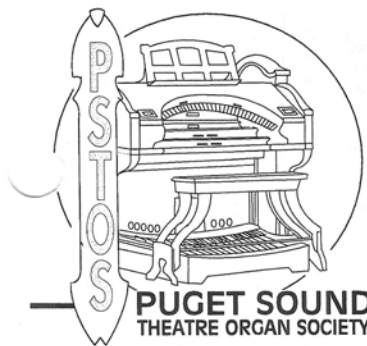


# PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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 14 No. 6

June 2003



Reserve now for...

## More-Than-A-Home-Party

Sat., June 21, 1:00

St. Columban Social Hall in Yelm AND

Bill & Carol Keller home nearby

- **1:00**—Be there when the Ladies of St. Columban Church ring the dinner bell calling everyone to their famous buffet lunch!
- **THEN**—Hear **ANDY CROW, DON WALLIN, and others** make music on Father Terence's 3116 Robert Morton Theatre Pipe Organ in the St. Columban Church Social Hall in Yelm.
- **Bring your music and 'have a go' at the organ, too!**
- **THEN around 3:00**—make the short drive to the **Bill & Carol Keller Home** and Bill's outstanding custom Allen Theatre Organ, with more music, more Open Console, more fun!

Admission \$7 per person – RESERVE NOW, pay at the door.  
Includes buffet lunch and all entertainment. What a bargain!

**IMPORTANT!** To plan for food,

**WE MUST HAVE RESERVATIONS!**

*Those with reservations will be served first.*

*Those without reservations will be called after others are served, if there is still food.*

*Deadline for reservations is  
Monday, June 16th.*

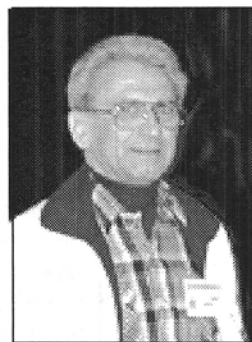
**PLEASE**

Reserve NOW with Bill Keller at 360-456-8269

or by email at [tibia8&2@comcast.net](mailto:tibia8&2@comcast.net)

'North-enders' may reserve at 425-485-5465

This day will be dedicated to the memory of LES LEHNE, whose love of the theatre



pipe organ was evident throughout all his life as he worked quietly behind the scenes to restore and preserve many instruments in our area. Most recently he was influential in the installation at St.

Columban Church, as well as the Wurlitzer at Olympia's Washington Center for the Performing Arts. We lost Les one year ago, and his passing left a vacant spot in the hearts and lives of his many friends.

**PLEASE SEE PAGE 6 FOR DRIVE DIRECTIONS**

## PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Vol. 14, No 6 – June 2003

Published monthly by

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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

On behalf of PSTOS, I want to publicly recognize and express our sincere appreciation to the Lavines, 'trustees' of the Wilcox Wurlitzer Home, whose generosity has once again made it possible for folks to experience a truly outstanding program at this unique place. The event generated approximately \$1500 to benefit the PSTOS scholarship fund, and about half-dozen new families joined PSTOS following the event. Thank you, Barbara and Raymond!

Speaking of events, the final wrapup of the Ralston concert shows we had about 600 in attendance. The Seattle Theatre Group, owners and operators of the Paramount, contributed the use of the theatre. Their ushers were volunteers. We paid only for the direct cost of house labor. Bob Ralston also made a generous donation. As a result, a great event was made possible, and we just broke even. Are theatre organ enthusiasts a great bunch of people or what?

As reported last month, Tedde Gibson has given PSTOS the three manual console from his Marr & Colton, and on May 31, a group of enthusiasts will finish its removal from Bethel Temple in downtown Seattle. If you would like to help, contact me or Russ Evans. The console will go to Carl Dodrill's facility on Mercer Island for refurbishment before installation at Franklin High School. Carl's *Pipe Organ Foundation* is leading the effort to get the Roosevelt High School pipe organ properly installed in the new arts facility there. With these two organs in place and playable, PSTOS and POF will work to get kids involved with theatre and classical organs in Seattle.

The Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association (AMICA) convention coming to Portland this August spotlights yet another facet of our American musical heritage, and PSTOS members are invited to participate. There will be lots of music, outstanding musicians, and at least four venues using theatre organs. The event is four days in length and will make a great getaway. If making the trip in a chartered Amtrak coach sounds interesting to you, let us know right away.

## PSTOS Coming Events

### **A Two-For-One Special!**

Visit St. Columban Church in Yelm to enjoy Father Terence's fine theatre pipe organ and have lunch. Then on to the Bill Keller home near Olympia to hear and play Bill's spectacular Custom Allen Theatre Organ.

**Saturday, June 21st, 1:00 PM**

### **Summer Social & Program with Don Wallin at the Wurl!**

Jack & Mary Lou Becvar home in Kent. A program on their 3-manual Wurlitzer.

**Sunday, July 20**

### **Home party!**

Ray & Muriel Whelpley home, Bellevue. Another opportunity to hear and play a beautifully restored Wurlitzer!

**Saturday, Aug. 9**

### **AMICA Convention, Portland**

(Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association) Let's charter a bus or even a train car! Hear Jonas Nordwall at the Oaks Park Rink and many other terrific programs. See page 5 for complete information.

**August 20-24**

### **Big Autumn Event at Haller Lake Community Club**

**Sunday, October 5**

### **PIAGMATAZZ with Ragtime Pianist BOB MILNE & Organist JONAS NORDWALL at Gig Harbor**

**Sunday afternoon, November 9**

### **Annual PSTOS Christmas Party**

**Sunday, December 7**

The May/June Theatre Organ magazine has an intriguing letter to the editor from Michael O'Brien starting on page 12. I urge you to read it. The letter was condensed. We will try to post the entire 20 page article on our website for discussion.

See you at church June 21 (St. Columban's Robert-Morton)!

...Clint Meadway, President

# PIPE ORGAN Terminology

Following the recent Gig Harbor concert, PSTOS member Roy Williams had some questions about the organ.

**Q:** *The Wilcox organ has six expression pedals, yet only one seemed to be used. What are the other pedals for and why weren't they used more?*

**A.** The Wilcox Wurlitzer console is a model built to control one of the largest organs ever produced by Wurlitzer. Well over 30 ranks (each rank has many pipes forming one voice) located in 4 chambers (separate "rooms"), the organ was designated a Fox Special. There were five Fox Special consoles built for the Fox Theatres in Brooklyn, Detroit, St. Louis and San Francisco, plus the New York Paramount. The Wilcox Wurlitzer console was originally built for the Brooklyn Fox.

From the left, the first 4 expression pedals on the console originally controlled the shutters (see May Pipeline) on 4 different pipe chambers. The 5th pedal is a general that opens and closes ALL the shutters in all the chambers together. The 6th pedal is a Crescendo pedal—as the pedal is depressed, a series of voices are turned on, starting with softer voices and rapidly adding the more powerful ranks—thereby reaching a true CRESCENDO!

As there are three chambers in the Wilcox Wurlitzer installation, the left-most expression pedal is unused. For most popular music, the General Pedal handles all of what the organist feels is needed.

**Q.** *The main expression pedal seemed to have a side lever and a silver button on the pedal itself. Why?*

**A.** How observant! And indeed, you are correct. The side lever provides sostenuto on the Great manual. What that means is if keys are held down and the side lever is then activated by moving the foot against it, those particular notes will continue to speak after the keys are released, allowing the organist to use his hands to do other things. The silver button, when depressed, activates the sustain for the piano, the same as a pianist putting down the right-most pedal.

**Q.** *How is vibrato obtained in a theatre pipe organ?*

**A.** Vibrato in a pipe organ is created by varying the air pressure to the pipes about 5 to 7 times per second. A "box" called a trémolo receives air from a pressure regulator controlling air to the pipes. A mechanical beater within the "box" causes air to be released from the regulator in gasps, rapidly raising and lowering air pressure to the pipes, which then quickly go off speech and recover. Our ears hear a vibrato effect.

**Q.** *Guest artists seem to be able to push the correct pistons and buttons on the fly as though it were their home organ. Are all organ pistons the same, or can they be programmed for each artist?*

**A.** Good question. Please refer to the March *Pipeline* for detailed information on pistons. Even the earliest organs had 'programmable' pistons, but the method was mechanical, very tedious and usually required two persons. Today, computerized control systems allow quick and easy customizing of presets for every organist.

# From The MAILBOX

Dear PSTOS Members and Friends,

On May 14th, the XXXVII International Organ Festival of Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico, opened with the French organist Maurice Clerc in the Cathedral. The Northwest's own David Di Fiore returned to give a concert on the 16th of May because of the acclaim of last year's concert. He received a standing ovation by the more than 800 persons in the audience after his virtuosic playing of the Reubke 94th Psalm and the concluding Bossi Studio Sinfonico. This year's festival had two concerts by well known Mexican organists in the following week and concluded the last Wednesday with the German organist Franz Hauk and the Michoacan Symphony.

David Di Fiore studied with the celebrated French organist Odille Pierre and made his European debut at the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris. This concert organist is much in demand for performances at organ festivals in the United States, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, and Mexico.

Di Fiore's recording of French music for Ambassador Records, *Les Amoureux de l'Orgue*, has received wide spread praise, as has his second recording, *The Grand Organ of Castle Church of St. Catharine*, recorded in the Slovak Republic. Of this disc, *Adoremus Te Magazine* said "...Di Fiore's interpretation is from a technical standpoint, absolutely accomplished and flawless, and the dose of musicality is healthy." He recently recorded a new CD on the same organ built by Rieger Kloss in 1992 (considered to be the best church organ in Slovakia). This CD should be available later this year.

In July, David Di Fiore returns for a series of concerts all over Hungary and to Vienna where he will give a recital in Schubert Church. In August and September, he returns to Slovakia for a series of concerts. Since September 11, 2001, David Di Fiore has traveled four times to Eastern Europe to play at organ festivals and twice to Mexico. It is a testament to his dedication to the organ to travel in uncertain times. Thank God for organists who have the courage and professionalism and are willing to give of themselves to bring beauty into this turbulent world!

Sincerely, Jon Paul Bush

## Other Northwest Theatre Organ Events

**Paramount Theatre "Silent Movie Mondays" coming in July...**

Buster Keaton in **GO WEST**, July 7

William Wellman's **HELL'S HEROES** and

Thomas Edison's **THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY**, July 14

William S. Hart in **TUMBLEWEEDS**, July 21

Accompanied on the Wurlitzer by Dennis James. All shows start at 7:00 with information about the film and the music, the film rolls at 7:30PM.

# Pages From The Past..

**Chelan's Ruby Theatre celebrated the installation of a FOTOPAYER in May, 1922.**

Among the treasures found in the Wm. K. Bunch Theatre Organ Archives is Sandy Balcom's scrapbook of newspaper clippings, many of which are at least 80 years old. Reproduced here is an ad that appeared in a Chelan newspaper in May, 1922, extolling the virtues of the FOTOPAYER as an enhancement to their silent movies.

## Hear Our New FOTO ORCHESTRA

**Sandy Balcom Special Musicians Engaged  
For Opening**

**TUESDAY, MAY 30**

**TWO SHOWS**

**First Show Starts at 7.00 O'clock**

Among the many mechanical changes and interior improvements in the Ruby Theatre the star feature will be the installation of a FOTOPAYER, the marvelous instrument which the larger theatres are installing to give their patronage the benefit of the best in film presentation.

R. A. Kelsey proprietor of the Ruby Theatre has fully realized the importance of music for the proper enjoyment of their pictures, and after critical survey of the music field the selection of the PHOTOPAYER was made in competition with the merits of all other instruments.

What louder laughs and deeper sighs do we express when both our sense of sight and hearing are in harmony with the story on the screen!

Music has "found" itself in the movie world and one of the greatest influences of tonal interpretation is the introduction of a FOTOPAYER, the wonderful instrument for producing an artistic performance.

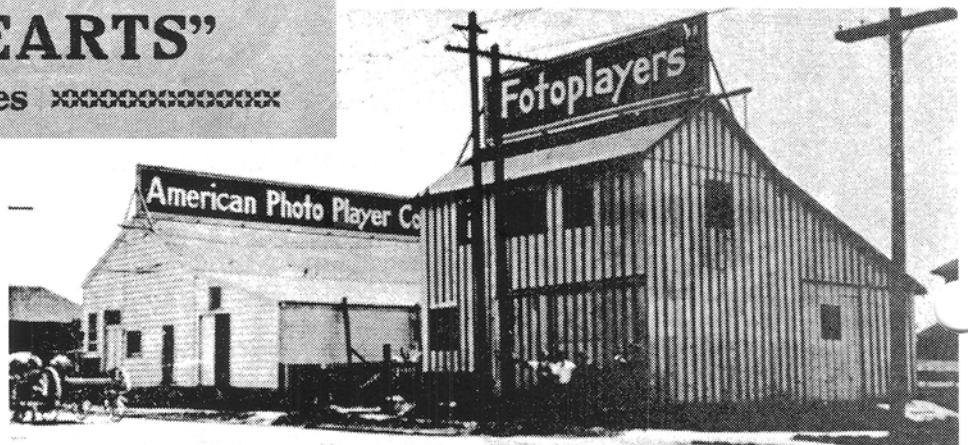
**The Film Feature of the Evening  
Round Three of "The Leather Pushers"  
Herbert Ralston in  
"CHEATED HEARTS"**

**Regular Prices**

In 1922, Sandy Balcom had just left his employment at Sherman Clay as pipe organ installer and gone independent. The Fotoplayer in the Ruby Theatre was most likely an AMERICAN FOTOPAYER, the company that was undeniably the leader in the field of supplying the smaller movie houses.

A Fotoplayer consisted of a roll-playing mechanism with limited pipework and an assortment of traps including drums, castanets, etc., and was the leading pit organ to be found in most American movie houses. In the larger movie houses, the theatre organ with a horse-shoe console was the next step, and the American Photo Player Company became the Robert Morton Organ Company.

American Photo Player Company first started manufacturing their famed product in buildings resembling former homes for horses in Berkeley, CA. The company later moved into larger quarters alongside the Santa Fe Railway in Berkeley.



# PSTOS joins AMICA for their 2003 International Convention (Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association)

## Featuring...

- **JONAS NORDWALL**  
at the Oaks Park Roller Rink  
Theatre Pipe Organ!
- Ragtime Piano Concert  
by brilliant young  
**NATHAN BELLO!**
- All day tour of  
**COLUMBIA GORGE**  
and the famous  
**CAROUSEL MUSEUM!**
- Tour of  
**SELLWOOD ANTIQUE ROW!**
- Banquet with entertainment  
and dancing to the  
**DICK SAUNDERS ORCHESTRA!**  
**AND MUCH MORE!**

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION—

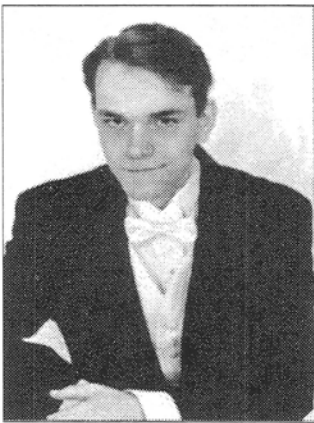
The registration fee of \$225 per person includes:

- Motor coach transportation to convention events
- Entrance fees to events
- FIVE meals (Thursday breakfast, sack lunch on Thursday tour, Friday breakfast, Saturday banquet, and Sunday breakfast.)

Registration does not include lodging. The host hotel is the Doubletree Downtown Hotel at 310 SW Lincoln, Portland. Guaranteed room rate is \$99 per night and is guaranteed for 3 nights before and after the convention for those wishing to spend more days in and around Portland. There is free parking at the hotel for registered guests.

For a full informational packet and Registration Form, phone Carl Dodrill at 206-236-0067 or email him at [carl@dodrill.net](mailto:carl@dodrill.net)

**THIS WILL BE A GREAT SUMMER GETAWAY. PSTOS Board Member Carl Dodrill is a moving force behind the planning and every detail has been covered. There is talk of organizing group transportation to Portland for PSTOS and AMICA members. Interested? Check with Carl at the number above and let him know! Let's all give serious consideration to this superb event!**



**NATHAN BELLOW** is just 16, and has already won the international Young Virtuoso's Competition sponsored by the Russian-American Music Association. He composed his first ragtime piece in the second grade, restored his first player piano at the age of 10, began participating in the local high school music program when in the fifth grade. He can read the tunes from the punchings in paper piano rolls! For this convention, he has

composed the *Rose City Rag* which will be a souvenir roll given to all registrants. He will play it at the Convention, where you can get your copy autographed.

Nathan will play a full concert on the Thursday evening of the Convention, performing both popular and classical music. This will be a "don't miss" event, showcasing a brilliant child prodigy whose name you'll be hearing again and again!

**JONAS NORDWALL** is no stranger to PSTOS members. His music credits could easily fill a page. Beginning at an early age playing accordion, he soon moved on to piano and organ. Equally adept at classical and popular/theatre music, Jonas has served as organist/music director at Portland's First United Methodist Church for over 30 years, was senior staff organist for Portland's Organ Grinder Restaurant for 10 years, was employed for many years for Rodgers Organ Company and more recently has been doing contract work for the Allen Organ Company. He has performed for numerous national ATOS conventions, and was chosen ATOS Organist Of The Year in 1987. Jonas lives with his wife Nancy in Portland.



**DRIVE DIRECTIONS**  
**For "More Than A Home Party"**  
**St. Columban Church, Yelm**  
**Saturday, June 21st, 1:00 pm**

From I-5 take Exit 111 (between Tacoma and Olympia) onto Marvin Rd. which is State Highway 510 East. Drive 1.5 miles on 510 East, crossing Martin Way and Steilacoom Rd. You will reach a 4-way stop intersection. **TURN LEFT** and continue on Hwy 510 East to the traffic light in downtown Yelm. Turn right at the traffic light onto Hwy 507. The parish Hall is on the left 0.3 mi. from the traffic light. It is the large building set back from the highway.

*Drive directions from Yelm to Bill Keller's home will be available at the church.*

**PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY**

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors  
 6521 N.E. 191st  
 Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Jonas Nordwall–Tony Fenelon receive standing ovation at Gig Harbor...  
 A full house, an unforgettable concert, and rave reviews!**

If you missed the Tony Fenelon–Jonas Nordwall duo concert at Gig Harbor on May 3rd, shame on you! What an outstanding day it was! The musicians were completely in sync with each other, the instruments had been tweaked to the max and performed flawlessly, Raymond and Barbara, our gracious hosts, were everywhere, making folks welcome, and even "the mountain was out!"

Tony and Jonas played to a full and very appreciative house, presenting a variety of music from Harry Potter to classics, Broadway to Buddy Cole, old favorites and some more obscure but delightful numbers. They played numerous duo numbers with Tony at the piano and Jonas at the Wurlitzer. They each played some solo numbers at the Wurlitzer, as well. What a versatile pair!

It was one of those unforgettable days, and thanks go to all who worked to make it such a remarkable and enjoyable experience.



At the end of a perfect day...Jonas, Raymond, Tony and Barbara enjoy the moment after an unforgettable concert.  
**BELOW,** Tony and Jonas rehearse as Dick Wilcox and Ed Zollman tweak the Yamaha Disklavier electronic controls.



Ever wonder what goes into preparing for such an event? First it's three days of rehearsal—a day for each artist and a day together. Concert day arrives, with furniture to move, chairs to set up, more rehearsal, technicians checking the control system, the record/playback system, the tuning. Lunch? No time! Outside folks line up. More last minute rehearsal. More tweaking of equipment. It's 1:00, hurry! One more time through a rough spot! It's 1:15, doors open soon. Hurry, change clothes, get ready! Doors open, people everywhere! Seats are full. Are you set? M.C. takes the mike. We're off, ready or not! What a day!