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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. PSTOS is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Volume 18 No. 10

October 2007

A Chapter of American Theatre Organ Society

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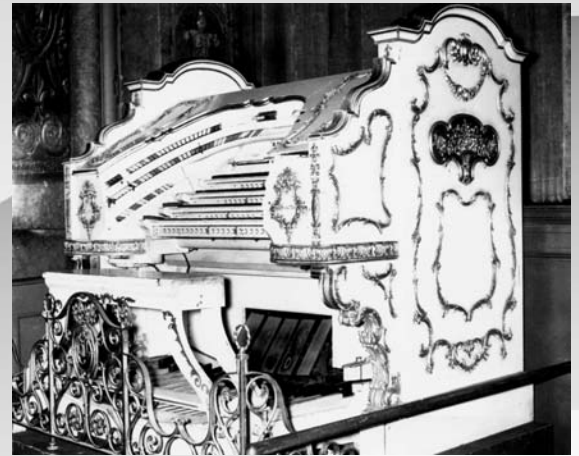
Coming to the Seattle Paramount November 18th

Old Time Radio Hour

**A Benefit/Fund Raiser for Restoration
of the Paramount Theatre's
Original 1928 Mighty Wurlitzer**



**Featuring
KEN
DOUBLE
At the
WURLITZER**



**With Reenactment of famous
Old Time Radio Programs**

**By members of
Radio Enthusiasts Puget Sound**
performing classic radio program re-enactments from
the Golden Age of Radio, fun vintage commercials,
crooning vocal numbers and more!



Paramount Theatre, Sun., Nov. 18. 1:30, Tickets \$20

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All proceeds will benefit the Paramount's Wurlitzer Restoration Fund

Questions? Phone 206-784-9203 and leave message—your call will be returned. Or check the PSTOS website at www.pstos.org

To order tickets, please use the enclosed Ticket Order Form

Sponsored jointly by PSTOS and Seattle Theatre Group (Paramount Theatre)

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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.

Joining Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is quick and easy! For a one year membership, send a \$20 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 9-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:
Norman Miller, Treasurer, 2644 NW Esplanade,
Seattle, WA 98117-2527.

PRESIDENT'S Message

Hello PSTOS
Friends:

Old Time Radio Hour

As Summer winds down, it's time to focus on our upcoming Fall benefit-fundraiser event at the Paramount Theatre – OLD TIME RADIO HOUR! This year we've partnered with the nationally-acclaimed Radio Enthusiasts Puget Sound (REPS) group to put on a great program of radio-themed entertainment featuring classic radio program reenactments, radio theme music, crooning vocal numbers, fun vintage commercials and even a few surprises! ATOS President Ken Double will be our artist for the day at the keys of the Paramount's original Publix 1 Mighty Wurlitzer!

After talkies came in, many original theatre organs were re-purposed for use in Northwest radio stations. Seattle's KJR, KOL & KOMO and Portland's KGW-KEX, KOIN & KXL radio stations all had pipe organs that came from silent movie-era theatres. These instruments were used heavily during the 1930s and '40s to support live radio broadcasts of the type you will hear faithfully re-created at our November 18th program. So bring your friends and family to this fun afternoon looking back at the Golden Age of Radio. Tickets are just \$20 per person (suggested donation) and all proceeds benefit the Paramount's Mighty Wurlitzer Restoration Fund. Of course, tax-deductible additional contributions above and beyond the ticket price are enthusiastically encouraged!

Don't want to drive or park in downtown Seattle? Let Metro help. Park at a Park & Ride and take the bus. Access the Metro Trip Planner here:

<http://tripplanner.metrokc.gov/>

Town Hall Meeting with the ATOS Prez!

With dual duty as both ATOS President and busy concert touring artist, Ken Double likes to incorporate "Town Hall"-style meetings with the ATOS chapters he visits whenever possible. We



PSTOS Coming Events

◆ KEN DOUBLE at the Seattle Paramount, with "Old Time Radio Hour"

This is the third annual fund raiser for restoration of the Paramount Wurlitzer. A grand event, indeed! Don't miss it! Details on front cover. Ticket order form enclosed.

plan to have such a meeting on Saturday afternoon, November 17 at the home of Russ & Jo Ann Evans in Kenmore. This will be an opportunity for you to talk directly with Ken and communicate what you like and don't like about ATOS. It is also an excellent time to share your ideas for ATOS's future. All PSTOS members are encouraged to attend. Coffee and cookies will be served. Watch the November Pipeline for details about how to RSVP for this special event.

ATOS 2010 Convention Update

As reported in the August Pipeline, PSTOS will be hosting the ATOS 2010 annual convention! We have had many positive preliminary conversations with venues regarding the convention but are still working on a few. There will be many opportunities for you to get involved: hotel, transportation, catering, venue and artist liaisons, media/press relations, hospitality and, of course, organ technical prep. If you would like to help out, contact me at tom@pstos.org or by phone at (206) 784-9203, or contact any Board member for more information.

PSTOS 2008 Program Lineup

Speaking of getting involved, we need your help with our 2008 Program planning. We've tried a variety of new events over the past two years including progressive home parties, historic walking tours, special open consoles and remote organ crawls. We want to hear from you with what you liked best and why. We also need your creative new programming ideas. Contact Programs Chair Tom Roughton at tomr@pstos.org or by phone at (253) 946-4400 to share your feedback and ideas!

Tom Blackwell, President

Other NW Theatre Organ Events

◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at www.kenyonhall.org or by email at kenyonhall@earthlink.net

◆ Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

Hear the Wurlitzer every Mon/Tue at 7PM & Fri/Sat/Sun at 5PM.

◆ Columbia River Organ Club

For info and latest news go to www.croconline.org

From The MAILBOX

Mt. Vernon's Lincoln Theatre gets portable second console for Wurlitzer

PSTOS members Fred Beeks & Gene Peden instrumental in getting the console installed and working

Hi,

Just to let you know we have the portable console working at the Lincoln Theater. It is easy to move and plugs into a long extension cord. Now we can still use the organ when the stage is extended.

The organ will get used by the band for the live Rocky Horror Picture Show next month. The new console will be up on the stage and played by the band leader.

Fred Beeks

Keep up to date about PSTOS events—be sure Tom Blackwell has your correct email address

Technology makes keeping in touch so quick and easy. Tom Blackwell often sends an "email alert" to provide late-breaking updates about events. Be sure you're set up to receive these important messages by providing Tom with your current email address. Send it to

tom@pstos.org

Be assured, your address will NOT be shared with anyone!

Your Scholarship Fund dollars at work!

The editors apologize for failing to put a headline last month over Tyler Pattison's glowing report about his experiences at the July ATOS "Theatre Organ Adventure" in the Chicago area. As a result, some folks overlooked his interesting letter, published under the "From The Mailbox" heading.

The PSTOS Scholarship program provided financial support for Tyler's attendance at this educational event, for which he extends his sincere personal thanks.

This event, a first for ATOS, attracted a large class of eager young organists. It was a marvelous experience for these talented folks to get together, share their interest, and learn from such notables as Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Jelani Eddington, and Jeff Weiler.

During the event, the group visited several world-class theatre organ installations in the Chicago area, including Jasper Sanfilippo's famous and nearly unbelievable Victorian Palace. Check it out! http://www.wurlitzer2003.com/victorian_palace.htm



Tyler with instructors Jelani Eddington, Donna Parker and Jonas Nordwall



The class displays their graduation certificates. That's Tyler, middle row, second from left.

Pages From The Past..

It's been 40 years since Seattle's Orpheum Theater was razed. This nostalgic article appeared in *The Seattle Times* July 26, 1967

John J. Reddin's *Faces of the City*

Requiem For A Beloved Theater



If you don't think the city's skyline isn't changing—almost from day to day—just take a good look around. The old town is really flexing its muscle.

It's particularly noticeable if you've been out of touch with the local scene for several weeks, like being out of town on vacation.

I HADN'T REALIZED, for instance, that the new 50-story Seattle-First National Bank Building is beginning to inch its way skyward, and no longer is the site just a big hole in the ground.

Or that the structural steel framework for the new Denny Building at Sixth and Blanchard now stands high above the flatland "prairie" of used-car and parking lots in the Denny Regrade area.

I also was surprised by the big excavation adjacent to the Orpheum Theater, obviously the prelude to demolition of the fine, old theater building. So, farewell, my lovely...

The Orpheum (then new) was THE theater of my Seattle boyhood, the elegant and wonderful house of vaudeville where I first saw Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Fred Allen, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, Ken Murray, Olsen and Johnson and all the other headliners long before many of them hit it big in radio or motion pictures and became virtual household names.

In our home, the Orpheum was a family tradition. Always on Sunday evening, my parents took me and my brothers to the show—but only if we had behaved and weren't being disciplined AND on the solemn assurance that each of us had done his school homework.

I always insisted I had my homework finished, but never had.

CONSEQUENTLY, I worried throughout the three-hour show, pestered by the thought of that undone homework, or, even worse, that my mother somehow would discover that I had fibbed to her. Always, I was miserable—but it taught me absolutely nothing.

I continued to postpone my homework each weekend, and every Sunday evening it was exactly the same routine. And I can still recall

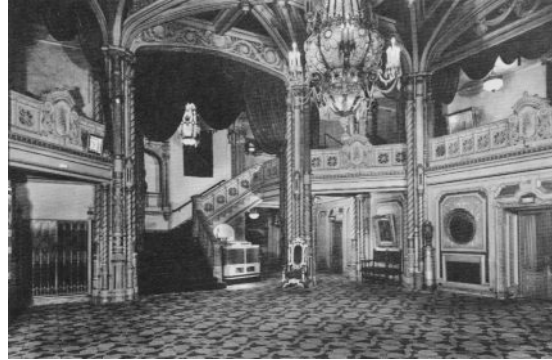
the long walk to school each Monday morning, still fretting about that undone homework and what the teacher would say.

Never, before or since, have I had worries that seemed so important!

But my Orpheum recollections are penny-ante compared to the fond recollections of Henry Broderick and Charles (Tiny) Burnett, (shown in photo) two guys who really

knew the Orpheum!

Broderick, realtor, civic leader and respected elder statesman, attended shows at the present Orpheum and its two



"Orpheum" predecessors every Saturday night for almost 50 years. And, always, he and his wife had the same two seats.

And Burnett had led the Orpheum's orchestra ever since 1915.

The two men made a nostalgic pilgrimage to the old theater last week for a final look before wreckers begin razing the building, long a landmark at Westlake and Stewart.

BRODERICK TOOK along a souvenir program of the theater's dedication long ago. It triggered many happy recollections—Lillian Russell and Sarah Bernhardt; the late Carl Reiter, a delightful story teller and probably the city's best-loved theater manager; John W. Considine and Timothy D. Sullivan, pioneer organizers of the Keith-Orpheum vaudeville circuit, and a ghostly legion of other Orpheum old-timers.

"The Divine Sarah (Bernhardt) insisted on being paid each night," Tiny Burnett recalled with a chuckle. "She was getting \$7,000 a week, an unheard-of salary in

those days. So, after every performance, Carl Reiter handed her \$1,000..."

"I'll bet," said Broderick, "that you didn't know the very first talking pictures were tried as an experiment at the old Orpheum way back about 1912. It was pretty primitive, however. The voices weren't synchronized with the film.

"People walked out of the theater shaking their heads and saying, 'It will never work.' And it didn't—not until many

years later."

"Talking pictures didn't kill vaudeville," said Burnett. "We had good vaudeville here



Pages From The Past...continued

along with talking pictures. But the high cost of stagehands, musicians and vaudeville acts finally priced us out of the business.

"Theater owners decided to give the people two pictures instead of vaudeville. The double feature ended variety shows and vaudeville."

BURNETT, who now makes his home in Bremerton, comes to Seattle at least once a week, usually to visit his old buddy, B. Marcus Priteca, the architect who designed

the Orpheum along with most of the city's other major movie houses.

"Benny Priteca and I have dinner at Art Louie's in Chinatown or at Gasperetti's Roma, smoke a few cigars, tell a few lies and have a lot of laughs," Burnett said. "There aren't too many of us old-timers still around. We manage to get a lot of mileage out of the old days..."

And next week the wrecker's ball will begin a requiem for another old-timer—the

Orpheum at Westlake and Stewart, torn down to make way for the new \$18 million Washington Plaza Hotel, a 400-foot circular tower that will be an imposing addition to the city's skyline.

That's progress. So...
Farewell, my lovely!

For more information visit this site:
<http://www.pstos.org/instruments/wa/seattle/orpheum.htm>

From the *Wallingford Outlook*, August 16, 1956...

Wallingford Man Entertains With His Own Pipe Organ



Alden Bice and his "Mighty Wurlitzer"

A theater without seats is a weird place, as Alden Bice will tell friends. He knows, because his hobby is music and he owns a "Mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ," brought to Seattle from Raymond, Washington.

Bice has the organ assembled in a building at 3540 Wallingford, which he purchased in 1952 from which to conduct his vending machine business. Getting the organ to Seattle is quite a story.

A friend SOS'd from Portland about 10:30 one evening, telling Bice that a wrecking crew was scheduled to fill in the space beneath a theater stage at Raymond. By 11 p.m. Bice was on his way. There's a hint of exhaustion even now, when he adds, "And we made it."

"I passed the pieces through an opening in the side of the old

Raymond Theater to Sydney Smith and another man from a moving company, who loaded them on the truck. It took us three Sundays and we finished moving on the Sunday before Labor Day in 1952. We just stacked the pieces in the store here, like cord wood."

Hobbies will not be denied nor ignored, so by the following Christmas the pipes were assembled. This was no small task, for there were 385 pipes, plus a bass drum, snare drum, castanets, chimes, xylophone, tambourine and even a glockenspiel.

"This is just a small organ, for a theater," Bice explained. "It never occurred to me to mark the pieces as I dismantled the organ. Things could have been worse, though. Some pieces were marked 'solo' and so I knew they went into a 'solo section' which somewhat simplified matters."

There is a sign in the window of the "organ" building on the North 36th St. side that says "Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ."

Bice is a bachelor of arts graduate of Central Washington College and is about nine hours of credit work away from a Master's Degree in music at the UW.

"Once I thought I'd teach music, but it has remained just a hobby, and I don't need a master's degree for a hobby," he says.

The neighbors for whom he plays almost every night, and engagements he fills for lodge installations and other affairs do not require a degree, either.

Some of the passersby wanted to watch him play the big organ, and so the console was moved to the front of the store to oblige his listeners.

"When I first started to play I didn't know if the neighbors would approve," he said.

The only complaint has come from a woman listener, who tried to step a little fancy one night while Bice was playing "Alexander's Ragtime Band." She fell to the sidewalk and no one could hear her call for help because of the music. Insult was added to injury when "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby!" filled the air.

Bice is one of several Seattle musicians who own similar organs. His guest book includes the names of Tubby Clark, among other locally known artists. And listed as organ owners are two other local residents, Dan Adamson and Jim Collier.

Editor's note: Alden Bice in his will specified that his Wurlitzer be returned to the Raymond Theater. Today it is back and playing in its original home!

September's "Lajko Lanai & Kenyon Kauwela" was fun for everyone!

It was a perfect day to enjoy Patrick Lajko's stunning view of Mt. Rainier, not to mention his unique organ installation, with digital voices, a Wurlitzer console and 16 sets of Conn pipe speakers, some mounted en chamade at ceiling height. A number of members played the instrument and all marveled at the impressive sound.

Folks enjoyed both the music and the view as they savored delicious munchies and beverages in this delightful location. Many thanks, Patrick, for making this afternoon so enjoyable!

Folks then drove the short distance to Kenyon Hall to hear the Wurlitzer and sip on root beer floats. Thanks to everyone who participated. It was truly a fun day.

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors

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Clockwise from top: Patrick's unique organ installation; Patrick and friends enjoy the deck; Tom Roughton and, just below, Jo Ann Evans, test the organ; Tom Roughton, Patrick and Don Wallin at the console



ABOVE: At Kenyon Hall, members listen intently to the music.

RIGHT: Tom Roughton and Mark Andersen in an unrehearsed but very enjoyable duo presentation.