



On the web at [www.pstos.org](http://www.pstos.org) • Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/pstos](http://www.facebook.com/pstos)

# 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 23 No. 2

February 2012

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

*Reserve Now!*

## Valentine's Day Ice Cream Social



With **ANDY CROW**  
at the **Kenyon Hall**  
**Wurlitzer**

Followed by "Organized Open Console" Practice up, bring your music, and sign up on the play list. Three songs or ten minutes. You may then sign up a second time.

Create your own **Ice Cream Sundae**  
at the **Topping Table! Yum! Yum!**

**Sat., Feb. 11, 1:00 PM**

**Kenyon Hall**

7904 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW in West Seattle

ADMISSION – \$12 members – \$15 non-members  
16 and under FREE

**RESERVATIONS, PLEASE!**

**Reserve by Thurs, Feb. 9**  
**with Barb Graham at**

**206-525-7859** (leave message with number in your party)

or Email [barbara@pstos.org](mailto:barbara@pstos.org)

We need to know  
how much ice cream  
to purchase!



We're so pleased to welcome ANDY CROW back to the console following his successful hand surgery! Andy has been a theatre organ fixture in the Pacific Northwest for many years and it's wonderful that we'll once again enjoy his delightful arrangements.

Congratulations and welcome back, Andy!

### **Drive Directions to Kenyon Hall**

From I-5 take Exit 163 to the West Seattle Bridge. Cross the bridge and drive up the hill to the first lights at 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW. Turn left at the lights. Drive south about 30 blocks. Kenyon Hall is at 7904 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, just south of Kenyon St. and 35<sup>th</sup>, on your left. The #21 Metro bus from 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. stops in front of the Hall. There is ample street parking.

## PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Vol. 22, No.2 –February 2012  
Published monthly by  
Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society  
6521 NE 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.

### OFFICERS

President—Jon Beveridge, jon@pstos.org  
Immediate Past Pres.—Bob Zat, bob@pstos.org  
Vice President—Russ Evans, russ@pstos.org  
Secretary—Joani Roughton, joani@pstos.org  
Treasurer—Clint Meadway, clint@pstos.org

### DIRECTORS

Micah Bisson, micah@pstos.org • Bob Buchholz, bob@pstos.org  
Jeff Snyder, jeff@pstos.org • Alain Rhone, alain@pstos.org

### COMMITTEES

**Organ Restoration & Maintenance**—Bob Zat

#### Program Coordinating

Jo Ann Evans, joann@pstos.org • Joani Roughton, joani@pstos.org  
Barb Graham, barb@pstos.org • Ray Harris, ray@pstos.org  
Jamie Snell, jamie@pstos.org • Bob Zat, bob@pstos.org

**Scholarship**—Carl Dodrill, carl@pstos.org

**Volunteer Coordination**—Tom Blackwell

**Development & Grant Writing**—Tom Blackwell, tom@pstos.org

**History & Archives**—Tom Blackwell

**New member processing**—Doug Owen, 253-566-6734

**Haller Lake keys**—Bob Zat

**Sunshine**—Joani Roughton, 253-946-4400

**Hospitality HLCC**—Ellen Sullivan, 206-365-7554

### NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

**Pipeline Editors**—Russ & Jo Ann Evans, joann@pstos.org

**Pipeline Online Website**—Tom Blackwell, tom@pstos.org

### LIAISONS

**AMICA & POF**—Carl Dodrill • **Haller Lake Comm. Club**—Bob Zat  
**Paramount Theatre**—Tom Blackwell • **Wash. Center**—Andy Crow

### 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 fast 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:

**PSTOS, Clint Meadway, Treasurer**  
9594 1st Ave. NE #453,  
Seattle WA 98115-2012

## Treasurer's Annual Report

### Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society Financial Report for 2011

Income, member dues	\$4,984
Spent for:	
Pipeline	\$1,841
Postage	826
Insurance	790
Operations	<u>361</u>
Total	<u>3,818</u>
Cash generated	\$1,166
Scholarship donations received	600
Scholarships paid	<u>2,020</u>
Cash used	(1,420)
Events admission fees	7,200
Venues, artists, refreshments, decorations	<u>(6,310)</u>
Cash generated	890
Interest earned	287
Cost of everything else we did	<u>(178)</u>
Net cash generated by Club operations	\$745
Cash received from Seattle Theatre Group to cover costs of continuing repairs to Paramount Wurlitzer	10,452
Net cash proceeds from 2010 ATOS Convention	<u>34,660</u>
Which provided a net cash income of	<u>\$45,857</u>

### Our year end financial position:

Two consoles, an electronic instrument, our HLCC pipe organ and computer equipment are valued on our books at \$65,336.

Cash in the bank and in certificates of deposit is \$77,975 of which \$53,882 is restricted as to what it can be used for. The unrestricted cash available is \$24,093.

PSTOS will file an IRS form 990 for the year 2011. It will be available for public inspection.

...Clint Meadway, Treasurer

## PSTOS Coming Events

### ► VALENTINE DAY ICE CREAM SOCIAL at Kenyon Hall

ANDY CROW will entertain at the Wurlitzer as everyone enjoys ice cream sundaes of their own making at the "Toppings table."

**Saturday, Feb. 11, 1:00 PM**

### ► Australia's JOHN ATWELL in concert at Calvary Christian Assembly

John with his friend, Tony Fenelon, opened our big 2010 convention at the Paramount Theatre to a rousing ovation. This is one to be sure you have on your calendar!



**Sunday, April 15, 2012**

### ► SHARON STEARNES will bring the Pizza & Pipes experience to Haller Lake Community Club

Everyone enjoyed hearing Sharon at the Becvar home. We've asked her to return to do what she does best—play the music we all enjoyed at Pizza & Pipes! And yes, there'll be pizza, beer and other beverages, and dessert!



**Saturday EVENING, June 9, 6:00 PM**

### ► JONAS NORDWALL CONCERT and WORKSHOP at Bill Keller's home

Plan to attend a workshop from 10:30–noon, then enjoy a full concert at 2:00, all on Bill's fantastic 5-manual Allen! Watch for details.

**Saturday, September 15**

### ► Annual PSTOS HOLIDAY PARTY at Haller Lake Community Club

Plan ahead for the annual fun holiday extravaganza! Music! Food! Fun!

**Sunday, December 2, 2012**

Many thanks to our generous members who supported PSTOS during 2011 by paying dues at higher **SUPPORTER, PROMOTER, and LIFE MEMBER** levels.

**2011 SUPPORTERS**

- Tom Constant
- Ron Edgbert
- Paul and Marta Hammack
- James and Joyce Hopkins
- David Johnston
- Helen Lajko
- Patrick Lajko
- Ruth Lavine
- Kriss Ray Morris
- Carroll Richards
- Bill and Edith Ryan
- Norman Sammons
- Linda Van Dyk
- Fran Willyard

**2011 PROMOTERS**

- Mark and Lynn Andersen
- Jon Beveridge
- Joani Roughton

**2011 LIFE MEMBER**

- Bob Franklin
- May he live long and prosper.*

**Other NW Theatre Organ Events**

For other theatre organ happenings in and around the region, check the websites of our fellow theatre organ groups:

- ▶ **Kenyon Hall in West Seattle**  
www.kenyonhall.org or email kenyonhall@earthlink.net
- ▶ **Bellingham's Mt. Baker Theatre Organ Society**  
www.mountbakertheatre.com
- ▶ **Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon**  
www.lincolntheatre.org
- ▶ **Columbia River Theatre Organ Society**  
www.croconline.org
- ▶ **Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society**  
www.sfntos.org

**The First Academy Awards**



The Paramount Theatre presents **Trader Joe's Silent Movie Mondays**

This all-classic film series, *First Oscars*, is accompanied by live music from the historic Mighty Wurlitzer, one of the last three remaining organs of its kind to reside in its original environment, played by acclaimed organist Jim Riggs.

Interest in the Academy Awards has always run high, though not at today's fever pitch. The first ceremony on May 16, 1929, was a black-tie banquet that drew 270 people to the Blossom Room of the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel and received little media attention. There were no "and the envelope, please" moments as the recipients were announced three months earlier – quite a difference from today.

The Academy's first president, silent film actor Douglas Fairbanks, handed out the statuettes to winners. German-born Emil Jannings won for Best Actor for two films including *THE LAST COMMAND*. Best Picture honors went to *WINGS*, the World War I drama directed by William Wellman. While the films that won that year remain well regarded, many have virtually disappeared from sight. This silent film series, First Academy Awards, returns these statue winners to their original glory by presenting them once again on the big screen!



**February 6, 7PM**  
**LAST COMMAND, 1928,**

Starring Emil Jannings, Evelyn Brent.  
Directed by Josef von Sternberg



**February 13, 7PM**  
**WINGS, 1927**

Starring Clara Bow, Charles 'Buddy' Rogers.  
Directed by William A. Wellman

**Please wear your name badge to events!**

**Has yours gone missing?**

*A replacement may be had by sending just \$2.00 along with your request to*

**PSTOS**  
**9594 1st Avenue NE #453**  
**Seattle, WA 98115-2012**

**It's quick and easy. Do it now!**

**From The MAILBOX**

Another "feel good story" about the success of our PSTOS Scholarship Program

Norman Miller, who serves on our scholarship committee, recently received this update from former PSTOS scholarship recipient Daniel Goltz. How gratifying it is to know our PSTOS members, who contributed to this young man's musical education for several of his high school years, have played a role in his outstanding success story.

Another fine young man, Jesse Zylstra, is currently being helped gain a solid musical education through your ongoing contributions to the PSTOS Scholarship Fund. Thank you to all who continue to support this worthwhile program.

Dear Norman and PSTOS members,

To catch you up on myself, I transferred out of Whitman to Columbia, where I studied Applied Mathematics in the Engineering School. Also, I did cancer research at the medical school.



But you'd probably be most interested in the fact that I studied organ with Paul Jacobs at Juilliard. If you haven't heard of him, he's one of the most prominent organists today, and he has become a very dear friend. I graduated from Columbia with a B.S. in May, briefly worked for a hedge fund before deciding that I hated it and was hurting the world, and quit to get a job running the clinical trials of a surgical oncologist in NYC. Also, I'll be applying for medical school this next year (for entrance Fall 2013), which I'm pretty excited about.

During my time at Columbia, I played organ a lot at various churches near me. I did the service about once every five or six weeks at Riverside Church where Virgil Fox played for so many years, and also played a few times at the cavernous St. John the Divine. So yeah, I've been able to play some *huuuuuge* instruments--the Riverside organ is giant.

Regards, Daniel

# Pages From The Past... 1916

## The Robert Morton Unit Organ

Its history as published in *The Console Magazine*, 1966. Part two.

### Part 2 of a continuing history of the Robert Morton theatre pipe organ.

Negotiations proceeded to the point where Stanley Williams was given the authorization to go ahead and design a unit organ to be marketed by the American Photo Player Company and constructed in the Van Nuys facility. When the designs had been completed and Williams was ready to start actual fabrication of the unit instrument, Spencer was sent east to install an organ.

Recalling the first unit organ, Stanley Williams said, "One night at the very beginning of the association with American, when I was building the two manual unit job, Mr. Werner and some of the men from Berkeley came in to examine my sample. It was much different than the classic instruments they had seen on the floor, the ones designed by Spencer. In its construction I used different contacts, key actions, chest actions and they approved it without change.

"Later on, Mr. Spencer was sent to the Foto-player factory in Berkeley as head of the works. He really never forgave me for siding with the American Photo Player people. Subsequently I was made superintendent of the Van Nuys plant. I never was too enthusiastic about the change and didn't want the job, but I remember so well that somebody took me aside during one of the organizational meetings—he was a Photo Player company man—and told me, 'Stanley, if you don't do this somebody else will come and take over your job, and we're going to build the organ according to the model you've designed. You might just as well do it yourself. You are not being disloyal to Mr. Spencer because he is out. He just doesn't understand what we want to do.' And that was actually how I got into building the Morton. Spencer eventually left American and moved to the southern part of the state and opened his own business in Pasadena.

"I had been brought up by Robert Hope-Jones on his famous unit system which I had more or less forgotten about until the change was made at Van Nuys. In looking back, I do not particularly point with pride to the unit system, but with a touch of regret because the organs that were built on the unit system in general were pretty poor things as organs. They made satisfactory noises for accompanying movies, but for the rendition of music they, well, music wasn't composed for them. It was like expecting an inferior brass band to play the great works of music.

#### First Robert-Morton went to the California Theatre

"Anyway, the first organ I built on the unit

design, a two-manual instrument, eventually went into the California Theatre in Santa Barbara and stayed there for quite a long time. This was strictly an eye opener—to find that Wurlitzer wasn't the only firm to have a man who could design a unit orchestra."

By this time the year had passed and 1917 was prominently displayed after the names of the months on all calendars. The legal aspects of taking over the California Organ Company had been delved into and an application was ready to be filed with the State of California for a charter to do business as a corporation. There was one drawback to filing the application—it had been discussed and decided that the new organ must have a name. A name that would give individuality to the product, make it easily identified and yet be so different that it could not be associated with another firm's competitive item. The latter requisite, of course, applied to the Wurlitzer organ.

Nuys. It was a very warm day for being still in the winter months, unseasonable even for the San Fernando Valley. Harold J. Werner, head of the American Photo Player Company, was deep in thought about the problem of selecting a suitable name for the firm's theatre pipe organ that was now a reality and ready to be placed on the market.

#### The new organ finally got a name

As he stepped outdoors, his mind was taken off the problem momentarily by his children who were already outside playing in the warm sunshine. Werner, as all proud fathers do, stood in the driveway for a time watching them at play. Then, as he turned to leave for the office, young Mort and Bobby called "Goodbye" to him. He replied, called each by name—and it struck him at this very moment that here he had the desired name for the new organ—Robert-Morton! All the way to his office he repeated the name to himself. It filled the entire order: Robert-Mor-

**THE SPIRIT OF THE SCREEN**

At Miller's California Theatre  
is Musically Interpreted by

**THE ROBERT-MORTON ORGAN**

A Reproduction of the Symphony Orchestra



Console of The Robert Morton

**T**HE impersonal and Pervading tone of the organ as expressed by the Robert-Morton furnishes a quiet and unobtrusive background of music for any dramatic action on the screen.

The potent emotional influence of organ music is ultimately realized in the wide range of color and orchestral Expression stimulated and sustained by The Robert-Morton.

Shading its harmonies with the lights of the screen—the symphonic character of The Robert-Morton fits every character, motif and action of dramatic situation.

**THE AMERICAN PHOTO PLAYER COMPANY**

NEW YORKCHICAGOSAN FRANCISCOLOS ANGELES

The selection of a name for the organ has been known to most of the people who were employed by both companies—where the "Robert-Morton" designation originated—but there are several explanations that have been handed down through the years since the day in 1917 when the name was first thought of. In typical silent film flashback style, the reader is transported to the town of Van Nuys for a first-hand glimpse of what transpired to enable the man responsible for naming the organ to come up with it:

The day dawned bright and clear in Van

ton was a name offering singular identification to the product, it was individuality-plus. And there was also in this name a connotation that would let it be associated with or even confused by the Hope-Jones name to the unsuspecting or uninformed theatre man interested in buying a pipe organ. There was also the undeniable fact that he, Harold J. Werner, was honoring his two sons in a way that not many fathers could boast of doing.

Yes, this was the perfect choice!

This sequence involving the naming of the organ is the one stated by a majority of those

# Pages From The Past...continued

who were part of the Morton Company. Another version, also stemming from the two Werner boys, holds that Werner thought of the name the night the boys were born. There is no proof available to show that they were twins, and the story most often repeated has been accepted as the correct one for this part of the history.

Little or no opposition to adopting Robert-Morton as the name was encountered and the application for corporation papers was duly filed with the Secretary of State of California. On May 2, 1917, the Robert Morton Company was issued its charter to conduct business in California as a corporation. Almost seven years later the same charter was to be suspended by the state for failure by the company to pay franchise taxes due to financial conditions which led to the total collapse of the firm.

Even before the charter was granted by the state, business was accelerating at the Van Nuys plant of the American Photo Player Company. The name Robert-Morton (the hyphen was used on all name plates affixed to the consoles as part of the plan to keep the name connotation before the public, which would include buyers and theatre executives, so the "Hope-Jones" and Robert-Morton might be thought of as the same product) was used before the charter was granted even though the same name did not appear on the building until later that year.

During 1917 the first large organ to be constructed was the three manual instrument installed in Miller's California Theatre on Main Street near 8th in downtown Los Angeles. This house was one of the leading theatres during the early twenties and only because it was situated in what eventually became the center of the garment industry did it lose out to the other deluxe houses built in the office building and department store section of the city, some five blocks to the west. The theatre still operates today [1966] as an outlet for Mexican films.

## Not a true "horseshoe design" console

A brief note about the console of this organ reveals that it was not a true horseshoe design, but more in a semi-elliptical shape; the tab stops were more in front of than at the sides of the organist.

The organ was identified by Divisions, there were four, rather than by the "Solo," "Accompaniment," etc., designations used by competitors.

Markings used on Morton stop tablets were another idea peculiar to this company alone. The reason for such marks was something of a mystery in recent years and every company employee interviewed had forgotten the significance of the lines that were engraved on some tabs. Recently a partial explanation was found in an early copy of *The American Organist* in which was published an article about the large Morton organ installed in the Los Angeles Ki-

nema Theatre. Flutes were designated by white tablets with black lettering; Strings were same but with the addition of a black bar; Brass tablets were red with white lettering; Reeds were same but with the addition of a white bar; Percussions used black tabs with white lettering; Trap tabs were amber. Later on, blue colored tablets were employed on some consoles, but the significance of this has yet to be discovered.

## Jesse Crawford was the first to play the new Morton

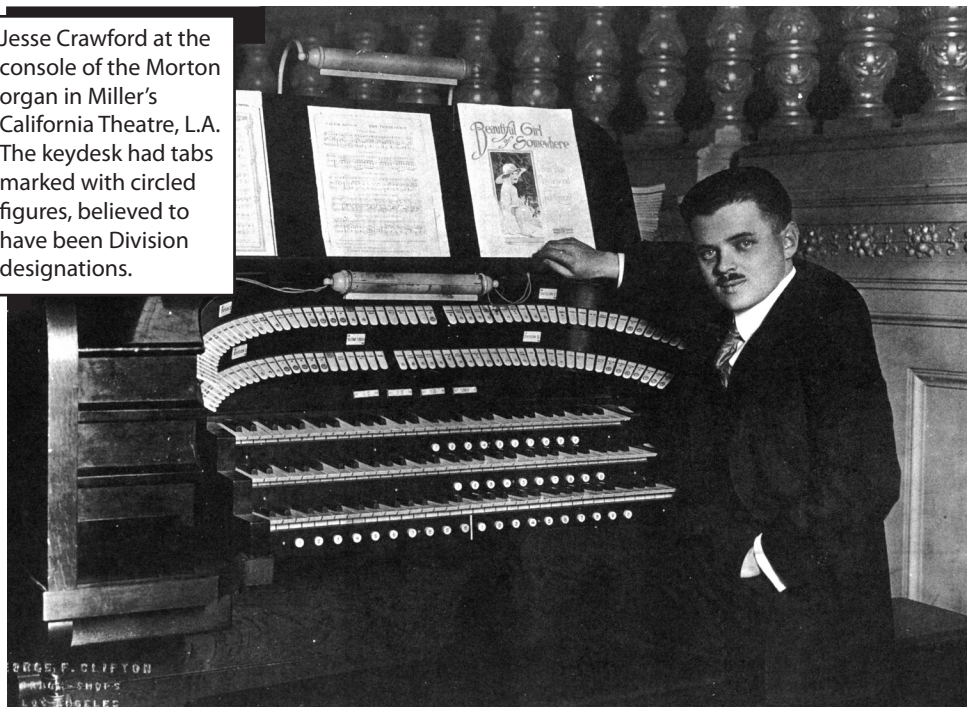
Jesse Crawford was one of the first organists to play this instrument. He was pirated away from Sid Grauman by the Miller brothers, owners and operators of the California Theatre, and in the program for the week of March 31, 1919, Crawford was listed as solo organist, playing "every afternoon and evening the latest popular song numbers in his original and inimitable

Company had offices in St. Louis and also in New York. There were a number of high speed salesmen employed to peddle the products of the two factories. Harold Werner was the man who could pick such a staff. He was a man of short stature, but very active and quick on his feet. Stanley Williams said he doubted the man ever went to sleep because he was up and around at all hours of the day and night.

To be a successful salesman in the early days of the firm, as were most salesmen who were connected with the movie industry, a huge capacity for drink and the ability to keep sober were prime requisites. If the salesman could keep his wits about him while the prospective customer was being entertained, the end result was that a sale could usually be consummated.

At one time Williams was asked to train

Jesse Crawford at the console of the Morton organ in Miller's California Theatre, L.A. The keydesk had tabs marked with circled figures, believed to have been Division designations.



style." During this week, Louis Diamond was relief organist and played with the symphony orchestra from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and again from 5 to 7:30 p.m. The film offered was "Out of the Fog," starring Alla Nazimova.

Crawford did not remain long at the California. In charge of stage presentations at the theatre was the great "Roxy," who had come west from New York City. A hassle developed between Roxy Rothafel, Jesse, and the orchestra leader, and the latter two men were fired. Roxy later argued with the two Miller brothers, operators of the theatre, and in turn was fired by them.

## Robert Morton's high powered salesmen

One reason the sale of Robert-Morton pipe organs was not long in gaining momentum was the fact that the American Photo Player

these salesmen so that they could talk logically about the workings of an organ. "Most of these men called me Willie," Williams recalled, "and requested that I refrain from telling them about pipe organ operations because, in their own words, 'It cramps our style because now we don't know when we are lying.' You can be sure I didn't waste my time trying to tell them anything after they said what they did." The high speed or high pressure sales force was maintained well into the twenties primarily because the other builders were not applying the 'soft sell' technique and it was necessary to be able to have salesmen who could forcefully advance the features of their company's instruments to clinch the deal and get a signed contract.

Watch next month's Pipeline for Part 3 of this interesting story.

# Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer string chamber work completed

**Six-month effort finished  
just in time for the winter  
Silent Movie Mondays  
series during January and  
February!**

Members of the PSTOS Paramount Publix organ crew completed a six month push to fully re-leather and re-wire the STRING chamber located on the house left side of the theatre. This phase of our restoration work involved three major subprojects:

- Releathering and re-gasketing of the five-rank manual chest. Major kudos to Russ Evans who leathered all 600+ primary and secondary pneumatics in his home shop. Russ releathered, tested and adjusted magnet and valves for each of the ten bottom boards so they were largely “plug and play” when installed at the theatre.

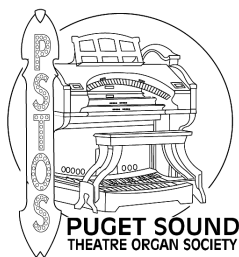
- Complete re-wiring of every component in the chamber, and replacement of the original 1920s cotton covered wire with new PVC color-coded telephone wire. Quick disconnect connectors allow components to be removed from the chamber if necessary. A new backboard for the Artisan control system fabricated by Tom Blackwell was also installed.

- Refurbishing and re-positioning of the Chrysoglott instrument (49 tuned metal bars struck by soft felt hammers) to provide better sound projection into the auditorium. The new position more closely matches the 1928 location as depicted on the original chamber blueprints. Phil Hargiss did a beautiful job polishing and re-lacquering each of the 49 nickel-plated steel bars, re-stringing and installing new bushings to provide a more pure tone.

The Publix crew put in nearly 700 hours on this phase of the restoration work. Phil Hargiss deserves special recognition for an ex-

## PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors  
6521 NE 191st ST  
Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Bothell, WA  
Permit #287

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

traordinary contribution, often working by himself, day and night, at home and at the theatre to complete many of the detailed tasks required to bring the chamber back online.

Publix team members involved in this phase of the work: Tom Blackwell, Jake Cihla, Russ Evans, Phil Hargiss, Larry

Mayer, Alain Rhone and Ron Sillence.

We look forward to seeing PSTOS members at the upcoming Silent Movie Mondays February 6 and 13 featuring films from the “First Oscars” accompanied by Jim Riggs at the Mighty Wurlitzer.

...Tom Blackwell, crew lead



Jake Cihla, Phil Hargiss and Tom Blackwell place the Chrysoglott bars back into the action frame. Also assisting, but not pictured: Larry Mayer and Alain Rhone.