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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 25, No.3

March 2014

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

Coming Saturday, April 26

Wurlitzer Afternoon

at the Jack & Mary Lou Becvar home

Great music!

Refreshments!



WITH

SHARON STEARNES

AND

JAMIE SNELL



SHARON STEARNES was staff organist for many years at all three Pizza & Pipes restaurants in Seattle, Bellevue, and Tacoma, where she enjoyed a loyal following of fans. When Tacoma P&P burned in the late 1990s, Sharon's happy times on the Wurlitzer bench came to an end. She has since raised three children, played for churches and various events, and now is thrilled to be back entertaining her fans.

Saturday, April 26, 1:30 PM

Home of Jack & Mary Lou Becvar
11617 SE 258th • Kent

ADMISSION

**\$10 Members, \$15 Non-Members
16 and under FREE**

JAMIE SNELL, our own PSTOS past president, started piano lessons at 11 and Hammond organ lessons at 13. He got his first gig at 14 playing a Wurlitzer on Sunday afternoons at a roller rink in Alexandria, VA. Though he attended music school for a time, as a performer he is strictly a hobbyist. His favorite pastime is learning new jazz and Broadway standards on the piano and organ.

**Take a leisurely spring drive to Kent and enjoy a fun afternoon of great music!
Drive directions coming next month.**

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

VOL. 25, NO. 3 – March 2014

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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.

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Haller Lake Community Club—Bob Zat
Paramount Theatre—Phil Hargiss
Washington Center—Andy Crow
Calvary Christian Assembly—Jeff Snyder
AGO—David Locke

JOINING PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY IS QUICK AND EASY!

For a one year household 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, your email address, and your phone number to:

PSTOS, Jon Beveridge, Treasurer
9594 1st Ave. NE #453,
Seattle WA 98115-2012

OR...you may now securely join PSTOS or renew your membership ONLINE!

Go to: www.pstos.org
Click on "Join PSTOS."
Secure!
No checks!
No stamps!
A few clicks and it's done!



PRESIDENT'S Message

How did you become interested in the theatre organ? For me it was a combination of growing up close to the Greenwood Pizza & Pipes and attending a church with a Wurlitzer/Kimball organ.



In the past week I experienced two different venues that presented the theatre organ to people of all ages, some who knew what they were hearing and some who had never seen or heard that sound live before.

First was at the Silent Movie Mondays at the Paramount Theatre. This is one of my favorite experiences since it's like going to a movie, concert and live show all in one event. The last movie in the "Adored and Restored" series, *The General*, had over 1400 people in attendance. That's a record since Silent Movie Mondays began in the late 1990s. The sound of laughter from that many people responding to a silent movie in an auditorium the size of the Paramount's was amazing. The combined attendance for the four films was around 4450!

The second experience I had was roller skating to the sounds of the Wurlitzer at Oaks Park Rink in Portland over the President's Day weekend. Having heard this organ for the first time during our 2010 convention I had been looking forward to taking my family there to skate. Because the organ only plays once a week, the timing never worked out until now. My family loved it and it was the first time any of us had ever skated to live pipe organ music. My boys definitely want to go back. (If it were only in Seattle...) I could tell there were the regulars there who keep themselves young by skating, but there were also families with young kids and a group of teenagers. People couldn't help but stop every once in a while to just watch Keith Fortune at the console. What both of these organ venues have in common is that they attract kids from pre-school age to those in their 80s. While some, like me, may have come primarily because of the live organ music, most came for another purpose, either to see a movie or to roller skate. Everyone left, however, with a positive experience with the theatre pipe organ. Doubtless, there will be those, who like me, will someday realize just how much they like that music and will help keep both the artform and the audience alive.

PSTOS Coming Events

- **Join SHARON STEARNES and JAMIE SNELL for a fun Wurlitzer afternoon at the Kent home of Jack & Mary Lou Becvar**

Enjoy again hearing the Becvars' 3/19 Wurlitzer in this very unique setting!

Saturday, April 26

- **PAUL QUARINO will play Bill Keller's 5-manual Allen. A real treat!**

It's been many years since Paul has played for PSTOS and we're happy to welcome him back. Mark your calendar now for this rare event.

Saturday, June 7

- **"Lazy Hazy Crazy Days of Summer" with RAY HARRIS and JO ANN EVANS at the Evans Wurlitzer and piano**

Ray and Jo Ann will again entertain with a social afternoon of music, smiles and food.

Sunday, July 20

- **JONAS NORDWALL at the Merlyn Johnson Wurlitzer in Tacoma**



What a combo—Jonas and Merlyn's magnificent Wurlitzer!

PLUS—Saturday morning workshop for all players. Great opportunity to learn from a true expert!

Saturday, September 13

- **DAVE WICKERHAM returns by popular request**

The CCA organ will be back online and sounding better than ever. Can't wait!

Sunday, October 19

Calvary Christian Assembly



- **Annual PSTOS Holidays at Haller celebration with JAMIE SNELL at the PSTOS Wurlitzer**

Put on your holiday attire and get ready for a fun day with your friends at this festive event!

Sunday, December 7

More NW Theatre Organ Happenings

Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

www.kenyonhall.org or email
kenyonhall@earthlink.net

Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

www.lincolnthatre.org

Columbia River Theatre Organ Society

www.croconline.org

Bellingham's Mt. Baker Theatre Organ Society

www.mountbakertheatre.com

Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

www.sfnatos.org

Oregon Chapter ATOS, Portland

www.theatreorgans.com/oregon/ocatos/
ocatos2.htm



Welcome to
new members

Nathan Jensen, Shoreline

Brian Stanley, Tacoma

2013 TREASURER'S REPORT

Income:

Membership	4,414
Donations	1,013
Sale of assets	525
Program & Events	6,716
Total:	\$12,668

Expenses:

Pipeline	1,612
Mailbox & Postage	996
Insurance	1,109
Accounting	306
Scholarships Paid	395
HLCC Organ	576
To STG Organ Fund	1,118
Artist Fees	2,350
Events, Programs	3,345
Website & Dues	268
Inventory Reduction	525
Total:	\$12,600

Net Income: \$68

Note: The "To STG Organ Fund" was the proceeds from the Jim Riggs concert in July 2012, due to STG, but wasn't transferred until 2013.

Note: Capital expense for the CCA Organ was paid from the 2010 Convention Fund, so is not shown above.

REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP

PSTOS was chartered 59 years ago this month! In all that time we have never been able to plan an annual concert series featuring top organists. Why? We've not had a regularly available venue with an organ worthy of the best performers.

This is changing! Funds generated from past conventions—1971, 1981 and 2010—are making it possible for PSTOS at long last to have a first class performance instrument!

After lengthy negotiation, Calvary Christian Assembly and PSTOS have in place an agreement regarding maintenance and use of CCA's 3/19 (soon to be 3/23) Kimball-Wurlitzer theatre organ.

The organ was installed in the church around 1970. As time passed, it was used less and less, as younger generations moved toward guitars and contemporary music. Because of the cost of maintenance, the instrument was neglected. PSTOS funded basic repairs to make it usable for the 2010 convention. Several successful programs have been presented since the conven-

tion. It has worked so well that the board began exploring upgrade and maintenance possibilities in exchange for use of the organ and church several times a year for concerts.

With the agreement in place, which protects both PSTOS and CCA, the PSTOS board of directors has approved substantial expenditures to bring the instrument up to concert standards. This includes adding four ranks of pipework and percussions acquired from the Ray Whelpley estate, all in premium condition, and an up to date Uniflex 3000 relay system.

Presently the organ is out of commission as work progresses as rapidly as possible with Greg Smith in charge. Midyear is the target completion date, with the enhanced instrument being re-inaugurated by Dave Wickerham in October.

Meanwhile, the PSTOS Program Planning Team is anticipating putting together an annual concert series featuring some of the nation's top organists. Exciting news!

Following for our members' information is the 2013 summary of progress prepared for CCA's year end financial statement.

2013 summary of progress by Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society toward renovation of the Calvary Christian Assembly pipe organ

PSTOS, upon signing the agreement with CCA, proceeded to purchase from the Whelpley estate \$6500 of theatre organ components to enhance the CCA organ. (Four ranks of pipes, chests, regulators, tremolos, three percussions, snare drum and bass drum, as well as a full set of theatre organ traps—castanets, tambourine, oogah horn, fire gong, doorbell, boat whistle, horses hooves, etc., all used to provide excitement to silent films.

A platform and walk boards were constructed in the solo pipe chamber to accommodate these additions. All of the additions have been wired and winded, and are awaiting the new digital organ control system that will replace the obsolete 1922 air driven system. A trip was made to Portland to investigate a new control system.

The 6-rank Wurlitzer chest in the Main chamber has undergone a major upgrade. All primaries

with new leather, new valves for every note, and new chest cables have put this important chest in first class condition.

The old relay system referred to above has been totally removed and the new digital system arrived mid-January and is ready for installation.

A moveable platform upon which to place the console was constructed to provide easy moving.

Unexpected was the total self-destruction of the blower motor. Today we have a new motor and starter with greater air-delivering capacity involving a total cost of \$2,592.

The console panel above the keyboards was in need of enlargement and major revision to accommodate and expand the range of the new additions. This new portion of the console will be professionally built and will include all new stop tabs and electric stop tab actions.

Summary of Dollar Outlay and Donated Hours

Labor by compensated professional technician, 380 hours	\$12,800
Whelpley estate, 4 ranks pipes plus additions described above	6,500
R&R Blower Services, 8-1/2 HP replacement blower motor and starter	2,592
Uniflex Corp., N.J., new control system, received and paid	12,200
Klann Organ Supply, Waynesboro, VA, new console panel, currently in progress, paid in advance	8,460
Total Outlay to date	\$42,552
Labor donated by PSTOS members, 380 hours	

PSTOS expresses appreciation for additional donated labor coming from CCA church members. We wish to thank John Albert, Todd Lindstrom, Bill Donnelly, Jeff Snyder and Dave Snyder, all of whom have stepped forward when called to lend a hand, especially with the big heavy components. Their help has been invaluable.

Work progresses on a regular basis with the goal of having the organ once again joining in church services. Although the work in progress isn't visible to people sitting in the pews, there is a lot taking place in the organ loft!

...Greg Smith and Russ Evans, January, 2014

Pages From The Past..

BILL BUNCH collected every bit of organ related information he found throughout his life— newspaper articles, letters, catalogs, photographs, copies of documents, and more. This invaluable collection is the source of most "Pages From the Past" articles.

Following is part 2 from a packet of photocopied pages stapled together. It is undated and neither source nor author is identified.

Several more installments will follow.

THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE MIGHTY WURLITZER

PART 2

The first organs in theatres were ponderous affairs, about as well suited to their purpose as a string quartet in a six-ring circus. All they had in common with the later Mighty Wurlitzer was the fact that they all depended on wind, keyboards, foot pedals, and pipes to make their music. And yet these early organs—nothing more than transplanted church instruments—brought a certain grandeur to the premises that set a movie *theatre* apart from the nickelodeon with its beleaguered upright piano.

As movies grew longer and more ambitious, something more versatile than the piano was needed to cope with the flickering changes of mood and the demands for special sound effects that filled every scene in a photoplay. A full orchestra at every performance was out of the question for even the grandest of the early de luxe cinemas, and the organ was the ideal substitute. But a tubby church-type organ that made even "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie" sound like an offertory was woefully out of place, as audiences grew more discerning. Then, a few years before World War I, the answer to the problem came in the form of the Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra, built by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company of North Tonawanda, New York — famous until then as importers of fine violins, makers of pianos and mechanical organs for merry-go-rounds.

Robert Hope-Jones, its inventor, a remarkable little Englishman with a shock of white hair that made him resemble Franz Liszt in a fright wig, had been tinkering with ideas for "liberating" the pipe organ ever since the turn of the century. A former telephone engineer, he pioneered the developments that were later to result in the theatre organ while modifying church instruments in England. The first of these innovations was electro-pneumatic action. This replaced the noisy and cumbersome "tracker" action (that literally tied the organ console to its pipes by hundreds of rods or stretched wires) with a system for opening and closing the valves in the pipes with electromagnets which were, in turn, controlled by sterling silver electrical contacts under each key on the console.

Operating on low voltage, this system made it possible for the console to be located almost any distance from the pipes (and in later days of splendor, on lifts that would raise and lower it in orchestra pits and, in many instances, revolve).

Hope-Jones also introduced stop tablets—tongue-shaped pieces of ivory in various colors which could be easily flicked by the organist's fingers to activate the organ's stops or voices. These tabs appeared in place of the awkward draw-knobs of the traditional organ. At the same time, he conceived the idea of arranging them in curved rows above the keyboards or manuals—thus the familiar "horseshoe" console was born.

But Robert Hope-Jones's most important contribution to the organ was his system of pipe unification. Up until that time all organs were built so that each manual could play only a limited number of the organ's basic sets of pipes or "ranks." The unit principle, by means of an intricate system of switches and relays, made it possible for every rank to be played from every manual, at many different octave pitches. Thus, a unit organ of six ranks (six separate sets of pipes each with a distinctive voicing) could be made to outshine in performance and tonal variety a "straight" organ requiring more than thirty ranks.

Hope-Jones often made the comparison between the Unit Orchestra organist and the painter who had six fundamental colors to work with: "By mixing these six colors, he can get a limitless number of various shades, because he can mix them at will. With a 'straight' organ of six ranks, one is very limited in musical results, whereas with a Unit Orchestra of six ranks, one has a really remarkable number of possible combinations."

By devising ways to combine ranks into new voices or stops, and by developing many completely new solo voices, (his Diaphone was invented first as a fog horn, and is still used by the Coast Guard as such) Hope-Jones enriched the organ, made it an instrument of incredible flexibility, and opened up a dazzling new career for the stuffy church mouse in the outside world.

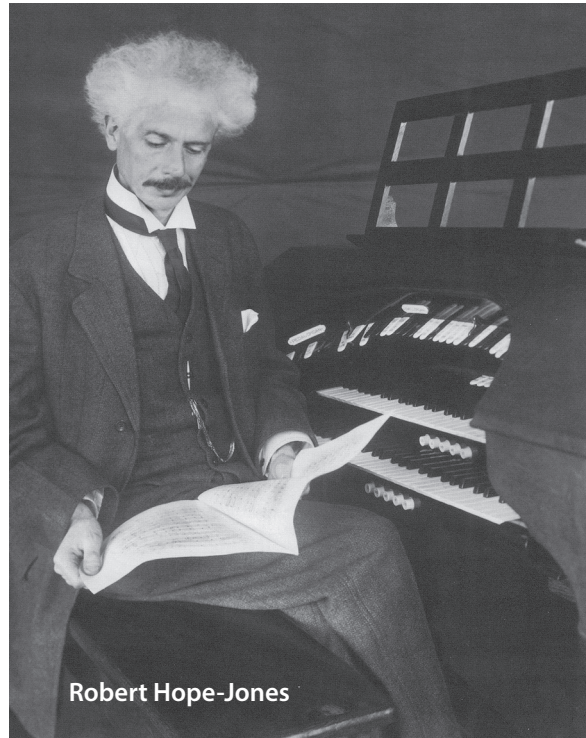
Pages From The Past...continued

After coming to the United States, the brilliant if more than slightly eccentric inventor built a number of instruments for churches, hotels, and small theatres before going bankrupt. When Andrew Carnegie was introduced to Hope-Jones in 1908, he remarked: "I want to have an organ overwhelm me with the feeling of how miserable a sinner I am," and the inventor obliged by giving him a demonstration on the giant organ his company had just built in the Tabernacle at Ocean Grove on the nearby New Jersey shore. Unfortunately, Carnegie was not made to feel sufficiently miserable to invest in the organ works in Elmira, New York, and in 1910 the Hope-Jones Organ Company (motto: "*Scientia Artem Adjuvat*") was absorbed, along with its owner and all his patents, by the Wurlitzer Company.

Quick to realize the exciting possibilities of the instrument as a theatre organ, Wurlitzer launched into full-scale production of the Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra. By the time the first real movie palaces were being built, it was ready to roar to fame and glory. Its success, however, came too late to have meaning for its inventor. With less and less to say about the destiny of his brain child, he became increasingly bitter. "The Wurlitzers say that they are going to build better organs without me," he wrote to a friend on April 1, 1914. "I am no longer at the factory, neither have I anything to do with the jobs outside. I am a 'gentleman at large' on \$60 per week. They refuse to stop the \$60 because it would give me my freedom."

On September 13th of that year he perfected his last invention—a new and bizarre way of committing suicide. He attached a rubber tube to a gas jet and fitted it with a T outlet. One end was firmly taped with adhesive to his mouth which was sealed closed, as was his nose. Gas escaping from the other end of the T outlet was ignited so that there would be no danger to others from escaping gas after his death.

"Unit Orchestra" was the perfect name for the new instrument. Basically a pipe organ, its voices



Robert Hope-Jones

were designed to imitate all the instruments of the orchestra, plus many that no orchestra (or organ) had ever heard before. These musical marvels were equipped—in addition to their thousands of pipes—with a battery of bass drums, snare drums, xylophones, glockenspiels, marimbas, grand pianos (that could also imitate banjos and mandolins), sets of tuned sleigh bells, chimes, triangles, cymbals, castanets, Chinese blocks, tambourines, tomtoms, gongs, and saucer bells.

But that wasn't all. The organist at the console of the Unit Orchestra could conjure up nightingales, canaries, galloping horses, steamboat and train whistles, auto horns (both "honk-honk" and "ah-oo-gah"), fire-engine sirens, airplanes, hurricanes, swishing surf, rain on the roof, telephone bells, door bells, trolley bells, and the sound of smashing crockery—all with hair-raising verisimilitude. There was virtually no mood or situation on the silent screen that a quick-thinking and agile organist couldn't heighten with some musical theme and mechanical effect from the Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra's bag of tricks.

Watch for Part 3 in the April Pipeline.

* **a-poth-e-o-sis**

1. The highest point in the development of something.
"His appearance as Hamlet was the apotheosis of his career"
2. The elevation of someone to divine status; deification.

The evolution of the PIPELINE since 1990

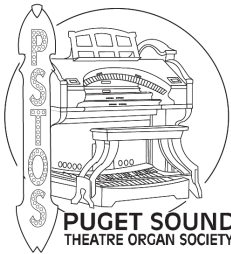
PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors

6521 NE 191st ST

Kenmore, WA 98028-3453

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Although PSTOS was chartered 59 years ago, the *Pipeline* as we know it began publication in April, 1990. As computers improved, software became more sophisticated, and printing methods evolved, so has the *Pipeline* changed. Printing in 1990 was accomplished by self-service photocopying. Today a PDF file is emailed to the printing company. The *Pipeline* was totally black and white until the past few years when color for the front page became affordable.

Exciting news! The next iteration is just around the corner! Tom Blackwell and his wife Becky Lucas Blackwell, a professional graphic designer, are collaborating to develop a new up-to-date PSTOS logo and *Pipeline* banner. Soon you'll be enjoying a completely redesigned *Pipeline*!

And with the electronic age upon us, and printing and postage costs increasing, we'll soon begin delivering the *Pipeline* electronically. Not to worry, there will be hard copies available as well. But the electronic version will be 100% color!

The evolution of the *Pipeline* over the past 24 years is shown here. The old logo and banner have served us well but are truly ready for a face lift! We're thrilled that Tom and Becky are willing to share their talent and expertise to design all new and up to date graphics for PSTOS. Many thanks to them both!

Puget Sound Pipeline
Newsletter of Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society
August 1990

Fix up a plate of finger food....
Pack up your music....
Grab your tape recorder....
and join your fellow members for

An Evening At The Paramount Wurlitzer!

You asked for it... a "Members Only" evening at the Paramount with no concert artist scheduled, giving those who wish to play the magnificent Wurlitzer the opportunity to do so.

With Mike Chervenock's help, such an evening has been planned.

MONDAY, AUGUST 13th
5 to 10 p.m.
FREE ADMISSION

- Each member please take a plate of finger food
- Chapter will supply beverages
- There will be a sign up sheet for playing—two numbers or fifteen minutes
- The list will be repeated
- Registration help will be available
- Take your tape recorder if you wish
- Please observe the theatre's requests:
- All eating and/or smoking must be in Lower Lobby only

Members Turn Out In Force To Welcome Thelma Barclay Back Home...It Was A Great Evening!!!

Pizza 'n' Pipes in Bellevue was jumpin' on Tuesday evening, July 17th, as members gathered to greet Thelma Barclay, who looked great despite a nearly overwhelming presence of friends. She was absolutely glowing when presented with a lovely bouquet of flowers.

It was Dick Schrum's night to play the mighty Wurlitzer and he had lots of help as various members including Thelma, took a turn to enjoy the fabulous instrument. Several of Dick's musician friends were in attendance.

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April 2000

Coming April 15th

Jonas Nordwall
Plays a Theatre Organ Pops Concert on the Leif & Bonnie Johnson 4/48 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ Johnson Mansion, Gig Harbor, WA
Saturday, April 15th, 2:30 p.m.

Jonas is a contributor to the renaissance in the popularity of the theatre organ as a recital instrument and has recorded over 15 albums. For 10 years he was the senior staff organist for the Organ Center Restaurant in Portland. He has been a featured artist for numerous national ATOS conventions and in 1987 was chosen ATOS organist of the year.

Regarded as one of the nation's top theatre organists, Jonas' creative arrangements and clever stylings always entertain and impress!

Leif & Bonnie Johnson will once more open their beautiful home to PSTOS members and their friends. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy their fabulous 4/48 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ in concert.

Paid PSTOS & CROC Members \$10 • All others \$15
Seating is limited to 325. To avoid overbooking, all ticket sales will be handled by mail, with no door sales. PSTOS members have first opportunity to purchase tickets, and on March 27 unsold seating will be made available to non-members. For last minute ticket inquiries, please contact Norman Miller at normanm51@aol.com or 206-784-7154.

DON'T DELAY—ORDER YOUR TICKETS TODAY!
Please use the ticket order form printed on page 6

Drive directions will be mailed with your tickets. • Questions? 425-485-5465

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE
Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society Newsletter
April, 1995

1995

HELP! We need a willing person to head up the Telephone Committee!

Marilyn Schrum took charge of the Telephone Tree for four years, and did a marvelous job. Many folks have commented about providing a reminder call each month with much appreciation.

Now it's time for someone else to pick up the reins—can you help?

The biggest part of this job is just getting it set up—establishing a list of folks in various zip code areas to phone about a dozen members quickly each month with a meeting reminder. After that each caller before a meeting providing details to be passed on—a 30-minute task! You will be supplied member names and phone numbers sorted by zip code to make it easier. New member names

Tony Felon - John Atwell concert SOLD OUT!
Sunday, April 23
2:00 p.m.
Johnson's Gig Harbor Mansion

This event will be our biggest of the year, and it's clear our membership agrees! With three weeks to go, and the available 375 tickets nearly all spoken for, we have no choice but to say, "We're sold out!"

RECORDINGS WILL BE AVAILABLE

John Atwell reports that both he and Tony are completing production of brand new compact disks to be available for sale at the concert. This is great news for those who were disappointed at previous concerts when there were no recordings to take home.

We hope to see you on the 23rd!

Questions about tickets? Phone Norman Miller, 784-7154

Members-In-Concert program was outstanding success!

The unexpectedly large turnout was so very gratifying to all those who practiced hard to bring you the

Denais, and several dozen and movie tunes.

ERIK MCLEOD, barely 16 years old and a real

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Volume 16, Nos. 11/12
November/December 2005

Visit our web site at www.pstos.org

2005

Santa sez... YIPPEE! Another PSTOS Holiday Winding!

Featuring our very own...
ANDY CROW
at the pipe organ with an afternoon of holiday music and a fun silent movie
Sunday, Dec. 4, 2PM
Haller Lake Community Club
12579 Densmore Ave. N., Seattle

Vintage LPs LAST CHANCE!
Choose from over 1000 LPs of every description donated by members Margaret Hill and Jack Beaver

Pick through them, grab what you want, pay what you think is fair!

All LPs remaining after this event will be sold to a dealer.

All receipts will benefit the PSTOS Scholarship Fund.

REMEMBER, THIS IS TRULY YOUR LAST OPPORTUNITY!

ENJOY...

- All your favorite holiday organ music
- A fun silent movie comedy
- Angel's & devil's puns
- Our famous holiday buffet
- Great door prizes—purchase as many chances as you wish @ \$2 each
- Great performances preceding the event, with PSTOS members
- Carnie performances preceding the event, you won't want to miss!
- PLUS some special added attractions you won't want to miss!

BE THERE!

ADMISSION - A plate of NON-SWEET finger food!
Small sandwiches, deviled eggs, relish or fruit tray, hot hors d'oeuvres, etc.
PSTOS will furnish all sweets and beverages.

A brief annual general membership meeting will precede the festivities, with election and installation of 2006 officers.

Please find **DRIVE DIRECTIONS** on Page 6.
Info—425-485-5465