



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.

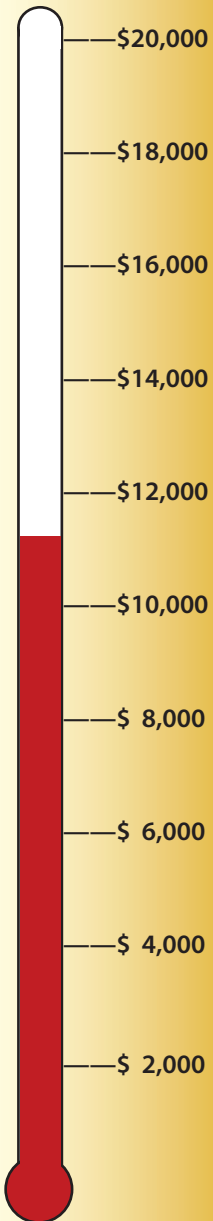
Volume 25, No.4

April 2014

PUGET SOUND
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

**CCA Organ
Fund Drive
Thermometer**
We're 57% there!
PLEASE HELP!



Don't miss this fun day! Saturday, April 26

Wurlitzer Afternoon

at the Jack & Mary Lou Becvar home

Great music!

Refreshments!



With
**SHARON
STEARNES**
and
**JAMIE
SNELL**

**At the Becvar
Wurlitzer!**



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.

Sat., 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.

PLEASE help us plan food and beverages!

Let us know if you will attend and how many in your party

Email barbara@pstos.org or

Phone **206-525-7859** leave message

**Drive directions
on page 6**

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VOL. 25, NO. 4 – April 2014

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.

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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

Puget Sound Chapter ATOS, later renamed Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society, was founded in 1958. Eleven years later PSTOS had its own pipe organ installed at Haller Lake Community Club, made possible by the last PSTOS major fund drive.



There's a great story behind the Haller Lake organ. Famed organist Gaylord Carter had been playing in eastern Canada and was on his way back to the west coast when he contacted Russ Evans and asked about stopping in Seattle and "doing something for you folks." It was arranged for Carter to present a silent movie and program at Seattle Pacific, which had a pipe organ installed in one of the buildings. The McMahan family, who owned the organ now at HLCC, belonged to the chapter and attended that event. The next day they left on a trip and on the first or second day, their vehicle was hit by a truck and Mr. McMahan was killed instantly. Russ sent a condolence message to the family, offering to help in any way possible. Shortly afterward, Mrs. McMahan contacted him about possibly selling their pipe organ to the chapter. After reaching an agreement, the chapter launched a fund drive, selling \$50 bonds. Funds were raised to acquire our HLCC organ and to make the agreed-upon modifications to the building to create the chambers, blower room, etc.

The organ was installed in the summer of 1968, and since then, the Haller Lake organ has served our chapter well. The organ and the room are well suited to our social programs.

Now 46 years later, PSTOS has launched a second major fund drive in order to have a much enhanced organ on which to present an annual concert series for the first time in our 56 year history.

The major upgrade of the Kimball-Wurlitzer organ at Calvary Christian Assembly is nearing completion but we need your help to complete the project. The proceeds from the 2010 ATOS Convention allowed us to purchase all the major components of the upgrade, but more funds are needed to complete the project and continue to maintain the organ.

Please consider a donation today to help PSTOS grow and move into a new chapter in its history.

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**

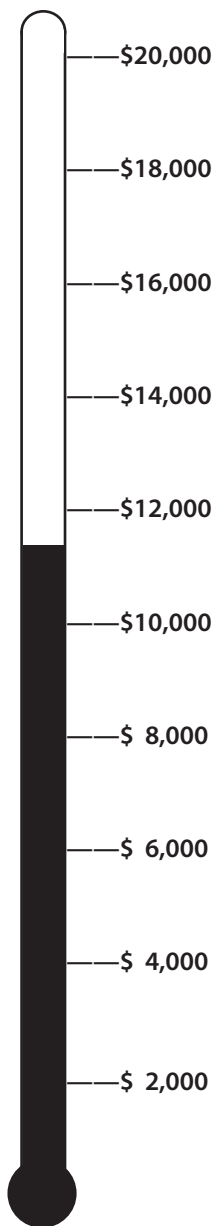
Put on your holiday attire and get ready for a fun day with your friends at this festive event!

Sunday, December 7

Fund Drive Update

We're 57% there! PLEASE HELP!

- Warm thanks for the great response and to all those who have already contributed! If you have not yet done so, **PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TODAY!**
- Our last fund drive was in 1968, 46 years ago, to purchase the Haller Lake organ.
- Now we need your help to complete the major upgrade of the Kimball-Wurlitzer organ at Calvary Christian Assembly. This will give us an instrument with a world-class array of voices and a state-of-the-art console worthy of the most highly skilled organists.
- For the first time ever, PSTOS will sponsor an Annual Theatre Organ Concert Series, featuring three top artists, including John Atwell in Sept. 2015.
- To date PSTOS has spent \$44,552 on the project, using funds from the 2010 ATOS convention. This is exactly the kind of project that these funds were intended for.
- It is projected that about \$20,000 will be needed for completion. As we go to print, approximately 57% of that amount has been received. Your help is very much needed, **and appreciated**, to make this project a reality!
- Remember that 100% of the funds collected go directly to PSTOS for this project.



Rewards!

- All contributors will be acknowledged in the Pipeline and in the special commemorative program for the re-inauguration concert on October 19, 2014 featuring Dave Wickerham.
- Contributions of \$500 or more will receive two FREE season tickets for the 2015 CCA Theatre Organ 3-Concert Series currently being planned.
- PSTOS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, making your contributions tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Yes!

Here's my **TAX DEDUCTIBLE** contribution. I want to help make the first-time-ever Annual 3-Program Theatre Organ Series a reality!

Name _____

Street _____

City, ZIP _____

Phone _____

Email _____

I'm eager to help, but prefer to contribute anonymously. Please do not publish my(our) name(s).

Thank You— from the PSTOS Board, Organ Maintenance Team, Program Planning Team, and all the others working to provide wonderful music for you!

- HERO** Sponsor level. \$ _____
- POST HORN** Sponsor level . . . \$ 1000
- TRUMPET** Sponsor level. \$ 750
- TIBIA** Sponsor level \$ 500
- DIAPASON** Sponsor level. . . . \$ 300
- KINURA** Sponsor level \$ 200
- OBOE** Sponsor level \$ 100
- SALICIONAL** Sponsor level . . . \$ _____

ALL contributions welcome to meet our goal!



Contribute online at PSTOS.org

OR

Mail your check payable to **PSTOS Organ Fund to:**

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



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

The final installment will be published in May.

PART 3

THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE MIGHTY WURLITZER

As Mighty Wurlitzers began to replace the galumphing old church organs in theatres, a whole new breed of organists appeared on the scene. No longer was it enough to be able to play "Kam-menoi-Ostrow" and gems from Tchaikowsky; you had to know your Irving Berlin, and you had to know how to hit the Jazz Whistle, the Chinese Block, and the Bass Drum buttons in proper sequence when Fatty did a pratfall up on the screen. But, above all, you had to be an entertainer, capable of doing an act on your own as part of the ever-more-elaborate presentations that were becoming the vogue in the movie palaces.

One name towers over all the rest: Jesse Crawford. This is not to say, of course, that there weren't dozens of theatre organ virtuosi who were real stars in the entertainment world of the Twenties: Eddie Dunstedter, Lew White, Stuart Barrie, Irma Glenn, C. A. J. Parmentier, Ann Leaf, Henry Murtagh, Don Baker, Milton Charles, Emil Velazco, Milton Slosser, Sigmund Krumgold and Dick Leibert were only a few, and every city had its local favorites. But Jesse Crawford, presiding at the great cream and gold console of the Wurlitzer in the Paramount Theatre in New York, was king.

"The Poet of the Organ," as he was billed, got his musical start playing the cornet at the age of nine in an orphanage band. At sixteen he was banging the piano in a Spokane nickelodeon. Then he got a job as a full-fledged theatre organist playing on a non-unified Skinner organ in Seattle's de luxe (10¢) Alaska Theatre. Shrewd Sid Grauman rescued the young "poet" and sat him before his first Wurlitzer in Grauman's new Million Dollar Theatre in Los Angeles in 1917. Then Balaban & Katz stole Crawford away from Grauman in 1921 to open their super-de luxe Tivoli Theatre, where he played until the Chicago Theatre opened the following year.

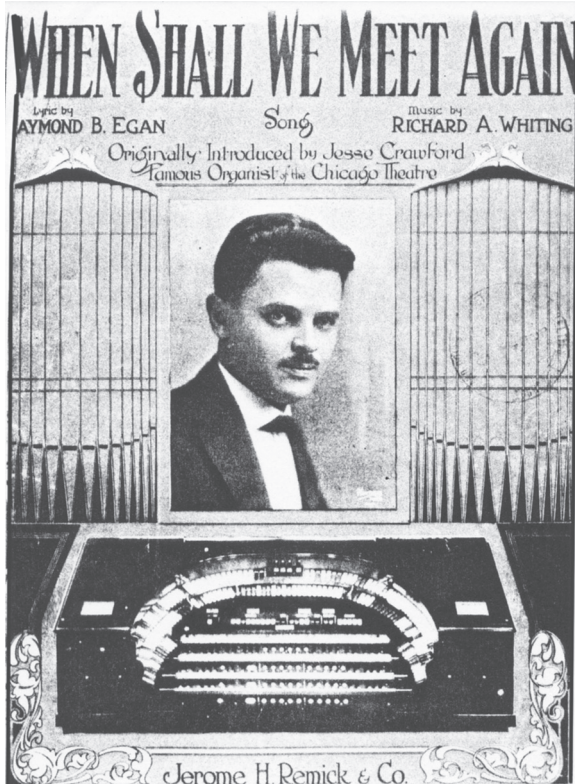
In a nearby Loop theatre, the Roosevelt, Crawford heard a dark-eyed beauty named Helen Anderson playing the Roosevelt's Kimball organ. Soon they were married and the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer sprouted another console, with Helen joining Jesse in the duets that made them one of the best-paid "Mr. and Mrs." teams in show business.

By 1926 the Crawfords were lured away from Chicago to New York to open Adolph Zukor's huge Paramount Theatre at the "Crossroads of the World," Times Square. As part of the arrangement, Jesse was given *carte blanche* in designing the Wurlitzer for the new theatre. A dream organ in every sense, it was the biggest Wurlitzer yet built—thirty-six ranks of pipes plus a complete "hardware" department, including a set of tuned timpani. Appropriately, Crawford's inaugural program on the new organ, the night the theatre opened, was "Organs I Have Played," and it must have taken considerable ingenuity to make the "Queen Mother of all the Wurlitzers" sound like the little Skinner groan box in Seattle that had set the poet of the organ on his way to fame.

Crawford's national celebrity was due not so much to his performances in Chicago and New York theatres as to the more than a hundred Victor records that he turned out between 1925 and 1935. It was an austere Victrola or Panatrope indeed that did not house one or more records of Crawford's exquisitely polished "gems of miniaturization" on the Wurlitzer. Accordingly, when he made the move from Chicago, where he had been recording on a small instrument in the Wurlitzer showroom on Wabash Avenue, to New York, where he first recorded on another showroom organ in the Wurlitzer store on Forty-second Street, he felt the need for a larger and more versatile organ to show off on. Victor's carbon microphones were not up to capturing the sound and acoustical setting of the big Wurlitzer in the Paramount Theatre; one rumbling note from the towering thirty-two-foot Diaphone pipe would send the recording stylus screeching right off the wax. So another Wurlitzer was designed by Crawford expressly for recording, an instrument of twenty-one ranks, and this was installed in a studio in the Paramount building two years later. Here he (and many other organists) made records and supplied much of the pipe-organ music that used to saturate the networks back in the tenderly recalled days of live radio.

Newspaper ads for the Paramount always featured the Mighty Wurlitzer and its mustached little master. "Hear Jesse Crawford at THAT

Pages From The Past...continued



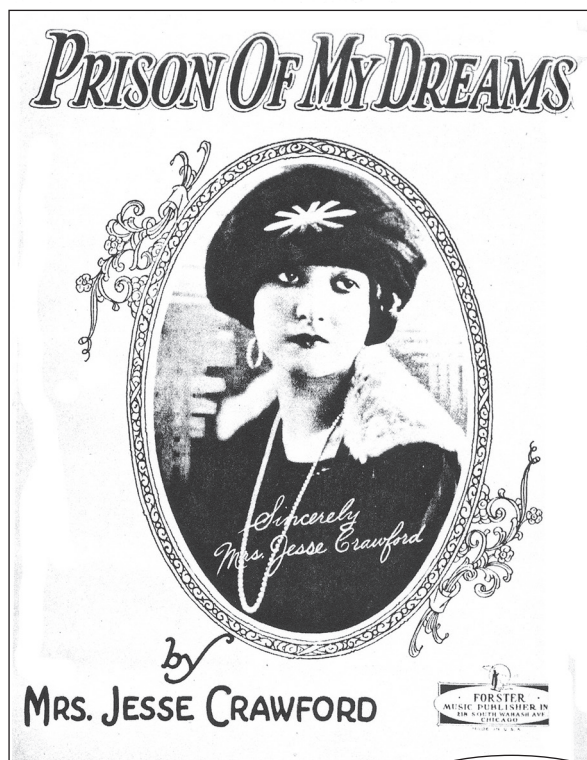
organ!" was a popular line. Crawford's forte was the ballad and the descriptive novelty; Mrs. Crawford went in for the more rhythmical sort of thing. The first time they appeared in tandem at the Paramount, *Variety* covered the event in detail, and reported that after Crawford had finished playing "Tonight You Belong to Me" and "Moonlight on the Ganges," an announcement came on the screen stating that there had been many requests for jazz music on the organ and that the greatest jazz organist in the world was about to be introduced with great pride on the part of Jesse, it being added that he ought to be proud; it was his wife.

"Mrs. Crawford took her place at the great console," wrote *Variety*, "and started with 'Black Bottom' which always brings applause, and followed with 'This Is My Lucky Day,' and finally 'Blue Skies.' For the final chorus of the last number, Jesse unfolded a small secondary console at the side of the organ and joined his wife, with the double effect being nothing short of remarkable. This concert, as presented, is strong enough to headline any vaudeville bill, no matter how big

it is if there is an organ in the house. Let's have more of Mr. and Mrs. Crawford."

Soon there was no need for Jesse to play on the little portable keyboard that had been attached to the console when Helen took over for her jazz interludes on the Wurlitzer. In a few months the Paramount installed a second console in the orchestra pit, a twin to the original one, plus two more consoles that could be rolled out on the stage, and the Crawfords were playing organs all over the place. Helen, incidentally, garnered great publicity from the fact that she was the only woman in show business who had her gowns made backward—all the decoration was on the rear, because that was what audiences saw the most of.

When John Philip Sousa's Band played a week at the Paramount, trained nurses were stationed in the aisles "to assist those overcome by the sheer magnitude of sound when the Sousa Band, the Paramount Grand Orchestra, and Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Crawford at the twin consoles of the Mighty Wurlitzer all joined together in their rendition of 'The Stars and Stripes Forever.'"



Watch for Part
4 in the May

* 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.

DRIVE DIRECTIONS to the Becvar home
11617 SE 258th ST • Kent • 253-852-2011

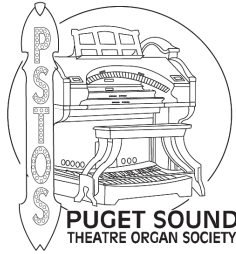
Parking is limited, car pooling is encouraged.

From the north: Use I-405 (If traveling I-5, take exit 154A on the left to I-405 at South-center), then take Exit #2 off I-405 to Hwy 167/Auburn southbound. From Hwy 167 take the 212th ST exit and drive east (212th becomes 208th) to 116th AVE SE. Turn South on 116th SE and continue to SE 258th ST. Turn left into the culdesac.

From the south: From I-5 take Exit 142A onto Hiway 18, drive approximately 3 miles to Hwy 167 and turn north. Proceed north to the 277th ST exit, turn east and drive up the Hill (East Hill). 277th turns into 116th AVE SE. Turn right into the cul de sac at SE 258th ST.

PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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



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Bothell, WA
Permit #287

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A Special Event Coming!

Paul Quarino

Playing Bill Keller's
Custom 5-Manual Allen Theatre Organ



Saturday, June 7, 2:00

Bill Keller home

9914 Hampshire Ct. SE • Olympia

It has been many years since Paul last played for PSTOS, and we're delighted to welcome him back! Paul is well known in the Portland area where he was organist at the Organ Grinder restaurant from 1974 to 1996. He has also been organist at Rivercrest Community Church in northeast Portland for over 30 years.

*Mark your calendar now and don't miss it!
Details coming in the May Pipeline.*