



# PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 29, Nos. 1-2 • Jan.–Feb. 2018

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## Celebrate Valentine's Day with

# DONNA PARKER

at the *Mighty Wurlitzer*



**Sunday, February 11, 1:30 pm**

Haller Lake Community Club  
12579 Densmore Ave N., Seattle

*Enjoy Valentine's Day  
Refreshments!*

*Pie à la mode, coffee, tea*



### ADMISSION

**PSTOS Members \$15 – Non-Members \$20**  
**Age 16 and under FREE with adult**

***Reservations, PLEASE, to assure enough pies!***

Please reserve by Wednesday, February 7

Phone: Jo Ann Evans, **425-485-5465**

Email: [joann@pstos.org](mailto:joann@pstos.org)

*Please provide your name and the number in your party.*

DONNA PARKER has served as Official Organist for the Los Angeles Dodgers, Product Specialist for the Conn Organ Company, Organist for the Los Angeles Sports Arena. She has been staff organist for a number of restaurants including Roaring 20s in Grand Rapids MI, Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis IN, Organ Grinder in Portland, Uncle Milt's in Vancouver WA, Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix and Mesa AZ. In 1996 she received the American Theatre Organ Society's prestigious Organist of the Year Award. Donna has entertained theatre organ audiences internationally, performing in Canada, Austria, Australia, Japan and New Zealand. She has provided daily holiday concerts at the Tropicana Casino and Hotel in Atlantic City NJ. She performs regularly for groups across the U.S.

#### **Drive directions**

**Northbound I-5:** Use Exit 174 onto NE 130th St., turn left over freeway one long block to 1st Ave. N.E. Turn left (south) one block to 128th.

Right on N.E. 128th a few blocks to Densmore. Left on Densmore, clubhouse is on the right. Parking both front and rear. Handicapped entry with parking and an elevator at rear of building.

**Southbound I-5:** Use Exit 175 onto N.E. 145th, turn right one block to 1st Ave. N.E. Left (south) continuing through N.E. 130th to N.E. 128th.

Right on N.E. 128th a few blocks to Densmore. Left on Densmore, clubhouse is on the right. Parking both front and rear. Handicapped entry with parking and an elevator at rear of building.

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## PRESIDENT'S *Message*

Vol. 29, No. 1-2, Jan.–Feb. 2018

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**Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society**  
 10002 Aurora Ave N, Suite 36 #516  
 Seattle, WA 98133-9329

*Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization furthering the appreciation, restoration, and use of the historic Theatre Pipe Organs of the 1920s, through education.*

### OFFICERS

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*AMICA, POF, and AGO*—Carl Dodrill  
*Haller Lake Community Club*—Bob Zat  
*Paramount Theatre*—Phil Hargiss  
*Calvary Christian Assembly*—Jeff Snyder

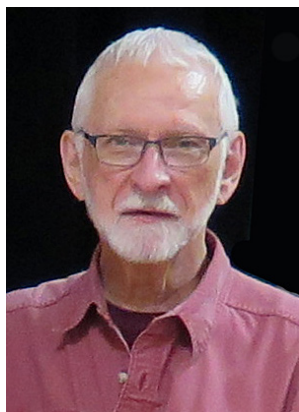
**JOINING PUGET SOUND  
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- No stamps!
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<http://www.pstos.org/membership/new-member.htm>



Greetings and Happy New Year to all PSTOS members, their families, and friends. As the new president, I would like to warmly thank all board members, past

and present, for their contributions to the organization over these many years and look forward to working with everyone in 2018.

The New Year is shaping up nicely with the 2018 Theatre Organ Pops Series already planned and artists booked. Additional events are scheduled for Haller Lake, members' homes, and Kenyon Hall. Hopefully there is something for everyone who loves the Theatre Pipe Organ.

I have stated in the past that PSTOS is a membership driven organization and it is because of the membership and associated dues that we are able to offer an assortment of musical events. However, membership dues are only a part of the equation for keeping the organization moving forward. We rely on event ticket sales, concert sponsorships, and people renewing at a level above the basic membership. We have also initiated a program making it easy for members to make monthly contributions to the organization. A big "thank you" to those who are doing so.

The 2018 Concert Series is set and will feature Tedde Gibson, Scott Foppiano, and Dave Wickerham on the 3/25 Kimball-Wurlitzer at Calvary Christian Assembly. Did you know that ticket sales for concerts don't

cover all the expenses? As we strive to bring world-class performers for you to enjoy, we are paying higher artist fees than in previous years. Add in the costs of preparing the organ, promotion, refreshments, printed programs, and sometimes transportation, lodging, and other fees, we rely on Concert Sponsors to help underwrite the costs. So, if you're able, please consider becoming a Concert Sponsor. PSTOS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, so your contribution could be a nice tax deduction. And if you wish, your name as official sponsor will be included in the program. In the past, PSTOS has received generous contributions as much as \$1000 to help offset costs. Imagine how a sponsorship of even \$500 could help. Please think about it and if you would like to explore this further, please email or contact our Treasurer, Jon Beveridge at jon@pstos.org. Thank You! Your program planning friends will be forever grateful! The 2018 Theatre Organ Pops Concert Series tickets are now available online. See page 3 for dates, artists, and price information.

The board would also like to encourage constructive "letters to the editors." We work hard and feedback would be much appreciated, and if you would like to help out at events, please let one of the board members know.

Thank you all for your continued support of PSTOS, your appreciation of the Theatre Pipe Organ, its music, and rich history. I look forward to saying "Hi" at the upcoming 2018 events, so please come up and introduce yourself if we have not previously met. Remember, a large part of membership in PSTOS is being able to socialize with like-minded people at our events.

See you in 2018!  
 Bob Zat, President



**A warm welcome to these new PSTOS members...**

- \* Carolyn Evans  
 Lake Forest Park, WA
- \* Dmitry Feldman  
 Seattle, WA
- \* Thomas Klein  
 Bothell, WA

# PSTOS

## Coming Events

### 2018 series

# THEATRE ORGAN POPS

Calvary Christian Assembly

**TEDDE GIBSON**



Saturday, April 14

**SCOTT FOPPIANO**



Saturday, June 23

**DAVE WICKERHAM**



Saturday, October 6

### More 2018 events



Sat., Aug. 11  
**BRETT VALLIANT**

Returns to the Pacific NW to play Merlyn Johnson's Tacoma Residence 3/30 Wurlitzer-Morton

Sat., Sept. 8  
**Kenyon Hall Wurlitzer on Parade!**

Watch this column for more information

Sun., Dec. 2  
**Holidays at Haller**

Annual festive Christmas celebration  
Food! Fun! Music!  
Haller Lake Community Club  
3/10 Wurlitzer



# 2018 Series

# THEATRE ORGAN POPS

SAVE \$\$! Order the three-concert series now at <http://www.pstos.org/TOP>

PSTOS Member – Subscription to all three concerts \$50 USD

PSTOS Member – Tedde Gibson	Apr. 14	\$20 USD
PSTOS member – Scott Foppiano	June 23	\$20 USD
PSTOS Member – Dave Wickerham	Oct. 6	\$20 USD
Non-Member – Subscription to all three concerts		\$65 USD
Non-Member Tedde Gibson	Apr. 14	\$25 USD
Non-Member Scott Foppiano	June 23	\$25 USD
Non-Member – Dave Wickerham	Oct. 6	\$25 USD

### 2018 PSTOS officers and directors installed at Christmas event



FROM LEFT: Jamie Snell, Past President and Director; Jon Beveridge, Treasurer; Phil Hargiss, Director; Barbara Graham, Director; Ellen Sullivan, Secretary; Bob Zat, President; Fred Rowe, Director; Russ Evans, Vice President

## AGO Programs

American Guild of Organists presents...

**Sunday January 14, 7:00 PM**  
Celebrating Mozart's birth month, Jonathan Wohlers and Naomi Shiga present a program of Mozart's Church Sonatas for organ and strings, and some works for mechanical clock. Trinity Lutheran Church, 6215 196th St SW, Lynnwood, WA 98036.

**Monday January 15, 7:30 PM**  
Nathan Laube presents a concert on the Watjen concert organ built by Fisk at Benaroya Hall, Seattle. \$19 - \$31. Laube is Assistant Professor of Organ at the Eastman School of Music.

**Friday January 19, 12:10 noon**  
Organ recital by Curt Sather on the Brombaugh organ of Christ Church Episcopal, 310 N K St, Tacoma, WA 98403, donation at door.

**Saturday January 20, 10:30 AM**  
Joint event of the Seattle and Tacoma AGO chapters featuring Tim & Cheryl Drewes playing the 1871 Hook & Hook organ at St. Matthew's Episcopal 123 L St NE, Auburn, WA 98002, ample free parking, this is an open event, no charge.

**Sunday January 21, 3:00 PM**  
Dr. Jakyung Oh, Professor of Organ, Korea National University of Arts presents a recital on the Fritts organ in the Walker Ames Room, Kane Hall, University of Washington Seattle Campus.

**Sunday January 28, 3:00 PM**  
Guest organist Julia Brown performs on the Fritts organ at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 7410 S 12th St, Tacoma, WA 98465

**Friday February 2, 12:00 noon**  
Dr. Paul Thornock will perform on the Fritts organ at Kilworth Memorial Chapel, 1500 N 18th St, Tacoma, WA 98416, no charge

**Monday February 5, 7:00 PM**  
Chapter event featuring two organ duo pairs: Wanda Griffiths and Stephen Marshall-Ward also Wyatt Smith and Sam Libra followed by open bench on the Fisk organ at Plymouth Congregational Church, 1217 6th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101

**Tuesday February 6, 12:10 noon**  
Recital, Marceau organ, Trinity Episcopal, Seattle

# Tyler Pattison Ushers in the Holiday Season

By Jamie Snell, photos by Jeff Snyder

Festive decorations were plentiful and spirits were high at Haller Lake Community Club on December 3 as Tyler Pattison entertained with a variety of Christmas favorites at the Mighty Wurlitzer. This was Tyler’s debut performance for PSTOS – not counting his first debut 11 years ago at age 14, when he and Nathan Avakian played a duo concert on the Evans Wurlitzer. Having earned an engineering degree, the adult Tyler recently rejoined our ranks, to everyone’s delight.

Preceding the program was the usual annual membership meeting, presided over by outgoing President Jamie Snell. There were blessedly brief presentations from current officers and team leaders on membership (Jeff Snyder), the treasury (Jon Beveridge), program planning (Jo Ann Evans), organ maintenance (Bob Zat and Phil Hargiss), educational outreach (Fred Rowe), and volunteer recognition (Barb Graham). The meeting concluded with the election by acclamation and installation of directors and officers, notably our new President Bob Zat, who also served as M.C. for the day.

The refreshment team then swung into action (Susan Buchholz, Halie Dodrill, and others), serving cheesecake and carrot cake to the approximately sixty attendees. All were invited to partake of coffee, tea, and punch, enhancements to the latter being provided by punchmaster Gil Drynan.

Tyler opened the program with the ever-popular “Sleigh Ride” (with sleigh bells, of course), “It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas” (by Meredith Willson of *The Music Man* fame), and the children’s favorite “Up on the Housetop.” Then came the less familiar but equally fun “Silver and Gold,” from the 1964 animated TV special *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, followed by the song of the same name, and “Carol of the Bells” by Ukrainian composer Mykola Leontovych.

For an extra treat, Tyler accompanied an 11-minute silent film of *A Christmas Carol*, the 1910 Edison version, complete with mysterious spirits superimposed using advanced techniques



Tyler explains to the audience just how they are to participate in “The Twelve Days of Christmas”—each table was assigned a day

of “trick photography.” The organ accompaniment included Christmas music as well as excerpts from several classical pieces.

The program continued with Percy Faith’s 1957 hit “Brazilian Sleigh Bells,” “Mele Kalikimaka” (possibly the only Hawaiian Christmas song?), and “We Need a Little Christmas,”

made famous by Angela Lansbury in the 1966 musical *Mame*. Tyler concluded with a sing-along of three traditional songs: “Deck the Hall,” “The 12 Days of Christmas” (each table representing one day), and the New Year’s classic “Auld Lang Syne,” the latter including organ improvisations. In response to enthusiastic applause, Tyler returned to the console to perform the final movement of Widor’s fifth symphony, known as the “Widor Toccata,” always an impressive feat, and doubly so on a theatre organ!

Many thanks to Tyler, and to everyone who worked so hard to put on this marvelous event!



With the room darkened, screen lowered, Tyler played an outstanding accompaniment to the 1910 Edison version of “A Christmas Carol,” new to many audience members

# PAGES FROM THE PAST...1908–1928

## What is a Photoplayer?

These instruments, popular for about 20 years during the early 20th century, are curiosities today

### The Peerless Orchestrion

Specially designed and created for Photo-Play Theatres on account of its dimensions



In the first decade of the twentieth century the music at a small cinema, the Palace Theatre, Tamworth, Staffordshire, in England's Potteries district, was provided by a trio and a solo pianist. In early 1908, the proprietor had a disagreement with his trio, and decided to replace it with some kind of organ. He contacted the John Compton Organ Company, then located at Nottingham, and ordered an instrument for immediate delivery. Compton provided a Harper electric player-piano, which was electrically connected to six ranks of organ pipes and drums. Thus was born the world's first photoplayer. Strangely, only two or three photoplayer-type instruments were ever used in England, but in America they rapidly became very popular with owners of small theatres.

More photoplayers were built than any other form of theatre organ, and it has been estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000

of these instruments were constructed between 1910 and 1928.

The photoplayer was suitable only for use in providing accompaniments to silent films, so its demise was complete and immediate once sound films became established. In the history of musical instruments there can have been few instruments which experienced such a dramatic upsurge and decline, for of the possible total of 10,000 photoplayers in use in the 1920s probably less than a hundred exist today. Some 99% of the photoplayers built were thrown out and destroyed in the 1930s and 1940s.

Photoplayers were installed in the orchestra pits of theatres. Unlike

unit theatre organs, all the pipework and effects were in the pit. There were no organ chambers as such. The "classic" photoplayer comprised an electric player-piano with a double roll-player mechanism, and on each side of the piano was a large case housing pipes and effects. Blower units were often

separate. Smaller organs had only a case on one side of the piano, and the very smallest had their few pipes actually housed within the piano itself. Photoplayers could contain from one to eight ranks of pipes.

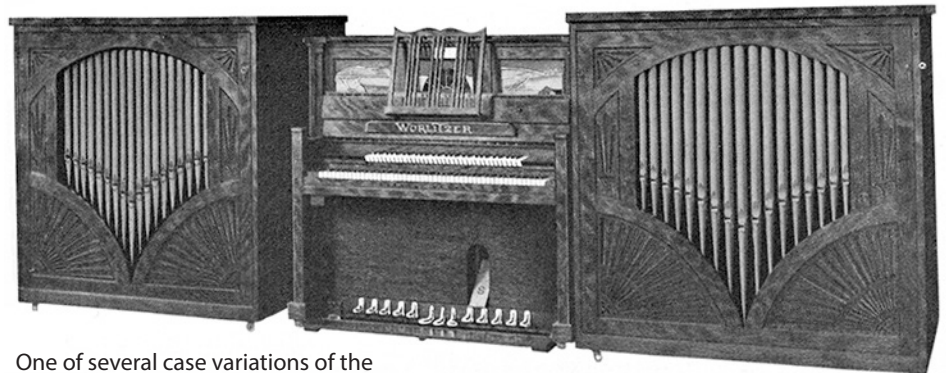
The instruments may have had a short life, but it was a busy one, as in many cases they would be in operation all day, every day. In some theatres they were played solo only for the less important shows, but they would be used also at the more prestigious shows to augment the orchestra.

The two main suppliers of photoplayers were the American Photoplayer Company, a subsidiary of the Robert Morton organ company, builders of the "Fotoplayer," and Wurlitzer, whose photoplayers were known as "Duplex Orchestras." Other American makers were Seeburg and the Marquette Piano Company (whose instruments were branded "Cremona").

When photoplayers were used to augment orchestras they were played manually. But when used solo, the roll mechanisms were mostly used, and theatre usherettes were delegated to "manipulate" them. No doubt they enjoyed themselves sounding the effects to enhance the action on the screen. In some cases, photoplayers could be controlled from the projection box.

Photoplayers were designed to be erected and serviced by persons without specialised organ-building knowledge, and detailed instruction books were provided with most instruments.

Photoplayers differ in several respects from unit theatre organs. Their chest action was usually pneumatic, rather than electro-pneumatic. Percussions and effects were often mechanically operated. On



One of several case variations of the Style H and K Wurlitzer Motion Picture Orchestras, a photoplayer billed as the *Pipe Organ Orchestra*

# PAGES FROM THE PAST... *Continued*

## Motion Picture Theatres

Operator not necessary, but may also be played by hand.

**Good Music Pays**

The Rolls which operate this piano give the bell part the effect of artistic hand playing



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Fotoplayer, many effects were operated by leather cords with wooden handles on the ends, which hung across the front of the instruments, and the effects were directly connected to these cords. For example, the train whistle effect was merely a domestic bellows of the kind once found by most firesides with a triple-note pipe at the end. Pulling the cord compressed the bellows, sending a puff of air into the pipe. The cords directly pulled the hammers of the drums and cymbals. For drum rolls, a clockwork device was often installed, which required winding from time to time.

Although the general compass of the organ stops was five octaves (61 notes), not all the stops were full compass. An example is the Wurlitzer Duplex Orchestra, in which the brass trumpet ranks were usually only of three octave compass (37 notes). Stops were often "divided," like those on many single-manual pipe and reed organs, into "bass" and "treble" sections, particularly on single-manual instruments, thus making it possible to play a solo and an accompaniment using different tones on a single manual. For example, the bass section of a flute could be drawn with the treble section of a string, thus enabling a violin solo to be played on the upper half of the keyboard against a flute accompaniment on the lower half, or vice-versa. The larger models of Fotoplayer included not only pipes but free-reed, harmonium-type, stops as well.

much to hope that the piano was in tune to start with!

Many instruments were comprised of eight ranks of pipes: Open Diapason, Flute d'Amour, Viole d'Orchestre (all three ranks full compass) and Vox Mystica, Flute, Gemshorn, Cornet and Melodia (treble only). The organ compass was 65 notes. There were often six free-reed stops (three treble, three bass), Orchestral Bells, Xylophone (31 notes) and Cathedral Chimes (5 notes), plus an impressive array of non-tonal percussions and silent film effects, including "improved" Horses' Hoofs (one can only wonder what the "improvement" was!).

The rolls used differed between the various brands of photoplayer. Fotoplayer had standard 88-note player-piano tracker-bars, which operated only the notes. Stop control was left to the operator. Wurlitzer, Seeburg and Cremona photoplayer could each also play their own brand of "orchestrated" rolls, which were the same as those used in orchestrions and other mechanical organs

The combination of piano, organ pipes, tuned percussions and perhaps free reeds as well must have been well nigh impossible to keep in tune in the non-air-conditioned theatres of those early days. Wurlitzer Duplex Orchestras were even supplied with instructions on how to tune the pipes to the piano, should a professional organ tuner not be available; perhaps it was not too

made by those companies, and which controlled the stops as well. The tracker-bar for Cremona Type S orchestrated rolls had 134 perforations.

Photoplayer could accommodate much longer rolls than the average player-piano. Duplex Orchestras could play rolls containing as many as ten tunes. The provision of twin roll-playing units meant that as one roll finished, the other would start automatically, so the instrument could be left to play for an hour or so unattended if necessary, without repeating a tune. If desired, contrasting rolls could be placed on the two units, so that the operator could change from one to another to provide musical contrasts in line with the developing dramas on the screen.

Some photoplayer with twin units had one unit for standard rolls and the other for orchestrated rolls. This gave the advantage of stop control via the orchestrated rolls combined with the far wider (and more up-to-date, not to say cheaper) range of music available on piano rolls which could be purchased conveniently at the local music store.

Special rolls, specifically designed for silent film accompaniments, were available. The Filmmusic Co. of Los Angeles produced many "Picturolls," including several cut by Eddie Horton, who later became a very popular organist in Australia and New Zealand.

... THE ...

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