



PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

Volume 31, Nos. 11 – 12 • Nov. Dec. 2020

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**2020 WILL BE REMEMBERED
FOR MANY THINGS, INCLUDING
NO THEATRE ORGAN CONCERTS
OR SPECIAL EVENTS.**

**WE FERVENTLY HOPE 2021 WILL
DELIVER US FROM COVID AND ALL ITS
RESTRICTIONS AND HEARTACHES.**

**MEANWHILE YOUR PSTOS BOARD
WISHES ALL OUR MEMBERS & FRIENDS
THE HAPPIEST POSSIBLE
HOLIDAY SEASON.**

*Bob Zat, Russ Evans, Jamie Snell,
Jon Beveridge, Jo Ann Evans, Jeff Snyder,
Phil Hargiss, Ellen Sullivan, Jacob Buys,
Fred Rowe, Barb Graham*



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PRESIDENT'S *Message*

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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.

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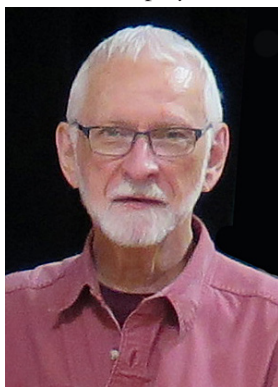
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Greetings to all PSTOS family and friends. I hope you have “fallen back” and are bundling up as the days get shorter. We are now heading toward the winter season with cooler temperatures, some freezing, and possibly snow (gasp). The best thing to do in these times of sequestration and social distancing is to put on a warm sweater, sit by the fire, or turn up the heat if you don't have a fireplace, put on a CD or select a favorite Youtube video of theatre organ music and imagine yourself in an ornate motion picture palace about to experience the huge console rising from the orchestra pit and filling the theatre's air with glorious music by one of your favorite organists. Good times!



For those of you who do not have an internet connection or computers that occupy valuable space in your home, please understand there are avenues available to acquire the music that will fill your hearts with delight. You might have a daughter, son, granddaughter, grandson, or even a friend who could help you find and secure

the music that has thrilled you and sent shivers up your spine. Reach out and you will be delighted, plus you might have enlightened someone and helped them cross over into the world of the warbling Tibias. Good for you!

The PSTOS board has been meeting through the application known as Zoom and has continued to discuss how and when, given the CDC guidelines, we will be able to once again meet, greet, and see everyone in person at a real live Theatre organ event. We can hardly wait, and the artists we have lined up are still on board whenever we get a green light.

In December we usually hold the annual meeting and elect new officers for the next few years. Since times are a bit different this year, all but one of the PSTOS officers and board members agreed to continue for another year. However we had to make an adjustment for the position vacated by Jacob Buys and we reached out to Barb Graham. Barb has been a long time active member, has held many positions on the board, and agreed to fill the one year position. Barb is now living on Whidbey Island but attending board meetings is no problem since we are Zooming our meetings via the internet.

I wish you wellness and safety.
 Bob Zat, President, PSTOS

Member Terry Perdue's COVID activities are quite amazing!



I've been passing time on various shop projects - some electronic, some made of wood. One of those was a teeter-totter that has so far run for 3 months from a D-cell battery. The idea came from swinging grocery store signs I remember as a kid. The first one worked so well that I built seven more from various wood species. The 'kids' attach magnetically, so other items can be animated for various occasions. The picture shows how this relates to organs. ;-)



Welcome to new member
JOHN FINLEY
 Anchorage, Alaska

How I got hooked on Theatre Organ – member stories

Bob Borton Eatonville

In 1974 between two Navy schools, I worked for Boatswains' Mate Second Class Ulysses Samuel Navy (USN). He asked if I ever heard of live music played ad lib, to which I said "No." So he drove me to Bella Roma Pizza in Concord, CA where I heard Dave Reese playing a 3-manual Wurlitzer with many instruments mounted throughout the ceiling, including an accordion.



Dave Reese

While playing complex songs, he would talk with customers without missing a beat or stopping! Since the organ's pistons did not work, Dave became lightning quick at changing stops. I was hooked from that moment and still am!

it wasn't much. I heard Don Baker play a concert on a Baldwin organ – which was very good, but wasn't quite what I wanted to hear. (With or without cheating, George Wright and Hi Fi Records set a high standard.)

Eventually, the folks at the Granada (with more than a little help from Balcom and Vaughan) got serious about installing the organ that Lou DuMoulin had obtained from the 1918 Portland Liberty Theatre, a 4/33 Wurlitzer that was a twin to the



Eddie Zollman playing the Granada Organ Loft Wurlitzer

instrument in the Seattle Coliseum. The organ, although large (much too large for that neighborhood theatre, actually), was quaint by today's standards, with straight chests in the Solo and Echo, and only a 49-note chest in the Solo. Still, it was amazing to me to see such a technological marvel up close, and getting my hands on an actual theatre organ upgraded my understanding from interested listener to serious technician (and critic of ill-advised organ installations – but that too is another story). I was somewhat surprised that I was the only one of the volunteers willing to take things apart to see how they worked, and able to put them back together as if nothing had happened.

I left the Granada to finish my education and earn a living. My interest in theatre organs faded into the background for a few decades as I pursued a career in software, first in California, and then around the country. Eventually, I wound up back in Seattle, retired earlier than I had expected, joined the Paramount Theatre organ crew, and was accepted as a member of the Seattle Theatre Group family. I now get to do what I had dreamed of all those years ago, and I couldn't be happier.

... ah, nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

Terry Perdue Kenmore

I first heard organ music when I was a few years old, and my mother would take me along when shopping at Seattle's Rhodes Department Store. As I remember it, there was a piano and organ duo known as Clifford and Clark that played at lunch time. I was allowed to sit next to the console, and always had a fit when it was time to leave.



Ann Leaf at the S.F. Paramount Wurlitzer



The San Francisco Paramount Wurlitzer

My first real concert was Ann Leaf at the San Francisco Paramount Wurlitzer on a double date in late 1964.

Gerald West Renton

My love for pipe organ music started at age 8 or 9 in the late 1940s when my parents purchased a 78 RPM record turntable and attached it to the phono jack of their tabletop AM radio to listen to record albums such as one that featured Dick Leibert at the console of the New York Radio City Music Hall theatre pipe organ. My favorite song was "When I Grow Too Old To Dream." I loved it. Now sadly, seven decades later, no longer do I have very many more dreams yet to dream.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtTJK1KYy-k>

Phil Hargiss Seattle

Like many other people, I became interested in theatre organs at the dawn of the hi-fi age, when record producers realized that there was nothing better for showing off their new music medium and the audiophile equipment being developed to exploit it. I spent many a high school afternoon listening to George Wright on the Hi Fi and Dot labels, trying to figure out just what I was hearing, and wondering how one person could play all those notes. (I eventually realized that some of what I was hearing involved what at the time was considered cheating, but today is just a routine part of the recording process. But that's another story.) I fantasized about becoming more involved with this remarkable musical instrument, but couldn't imagine how that might possibly happen

During my senior year in high school, I worked part-time as a technician for Cox Music, on Woodlawn Avenue, near Green Lake (when the business was still owned by Del Cox). While I was there, I (1) met Don Myers, which was an adventure in itself; and (2) heard about the Granada Organ Loft Club in West Seattle, and took the bus over there to see what was going on. At first,

Jeff Snyder Seattle

Greenwood Pizza & Pipes in Seattle opened when I was a few years old so I don't remember my first time visiting but it was one of my favorite places to eat and one that I eventually took for granted. I was mesmerized by all the sounds and could never figure out how the organist could get all those sounds by pressing what seemed



Greenwood Pizza & Pipes, Seattle

to be so few keys. As a young boy, I always liked to sit with a good view of the drums on the east wall and waited eagerly to see the mallets strike the drum head. (I can't imagine doing that today.) As I watched the swell shades open and close, I seriously thought they hid an upstairs bar --- quite the imagination.

Fast forward to around 1987, when my church, Calvary Christian Assembly, was looking into fixing the Kimball/Wurlitzer pipe organ or replacing it with an Allen organ. My dad was on the committee and I decided to tag along to hear an Allen at a nearby church. While I was impressed with the Allen, it didn't make the sounds the way I was used to hearing on our pipe organ. The committee must have agreed because work commenced on the pipe organ and I was excited to help move pipes from the chamber in the classroom behind the chambers so work could be done. I was fascinated by the pipework since I had never seen it before and didn't even know where it was located. How could I have sat in that classroom so many times and not known what was behind that door? This is where my interest started to grow. I eventually learned that the church organ was really a theatre organ minus most of its percussion stops, and I started to pay more attention to the organ music during Sunday services. I didn't hurt that the organist was one of my best friend's mom and a good friend of my parents.

Unfortunately, it took the closing of the Greenwood Pizza & Pipes to make me realize that I really loved the theatre pipe organ

and its music. Around the time I graduated from high school, I sadly visited the restaurant one last time as furnishings were being sold. I wished I had gone even more than I had, which was pretty regularly.

A bit later I happened to see that a group was having a concert at my church. It wasn't in the church bulletin but I saw it on a calendar in the church office. There was another event that I also wanted to attend that day but I decided that I couldn't miss that organ concert. Jo Ann Evans was the featured artist at the concert, and I was excited to learn about PSTOS and other organs in the area. Even though I'd lived in Seattle my whole life, I didn't even know that the Paramount Theatre existed yet and seeing it and hearing its organ began a love of movie palaces. Throughout my college years, I attended PSTOS concerts and slowly started building a collection of theatre organ CDs. In 2005 I finally joined ATOS and attended my first convention. Today I regularly enjoy listening to recordings from my collection, attending concerts, and showing off the organ at Calvary (if only I could play...). I was lucky to grow up surrounded by the theatre pipe organ, both at church and Pizza & Pipes, but it took me a while to figure out much I really appreciated and loved its sounds.

Fred Rowe Snohomish

It all started in the late 1940s when I started to take accordion lessons. I continued with lessons into the 1960s and even joined a USO entertainment group in the greater Puget Sound area. This led to an appreciation for music in general. It was the mid '50s, however, when I started working during the summer to help partially pay for my education and purchase a luxury item or two.

One item was a Hi Fi sound system. I bought a power amplifier from Standard Records and Hi Fi in Seattle and a family friend gave me a very good 8-inch speaker without speaker box. So, I proceeded to build a box for it and started collecting quality LP records. One quality LP label at that time was named "High Fidelity Records" (I think that name is correct) and they were monaural at that time.

A year or two later I bought another identical power amp and speaker and went to STEREO.

High Fidelity Records was by this time producing very high-quality stereo records, some of them direct to disc. One of their releases was an entire LP album of Theater Pipe Organ Music. I don't remember who the artist was or where the organ was located, but I was hooked. Ever since then I have enjoyed theater pipe organ music.

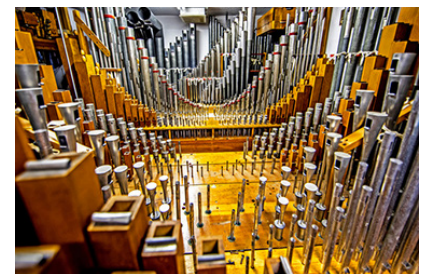
I eventually moved on, however, to other forms of music; rock and roll, folk, classic, country and western, jazz, and disco but always in the background was an appreciation for theater pipe organ music.

I don't know how it happened but about five or six years ago I became reacquainted with the theater pipe organ in its capacity as an accompaniment to the Trader Joe's-sponsored silent movies at the Paramount Theater in Seattle. After that it was a short jump to the concerts put on by, and membership in, Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society.

Jo Ann Evans Kenmore

There was never an "aha moment" when I could say, "I'm hooked on theatre organ." I grew up during WWII in a tiny town south of Billings MT, and if there was a theatre organ in either the Fox or Babcock Theatres in Billings, I never knew about it. I was, however, blessed with a mother who decided classical piano wasn't working for me and enrolled me with a jazz teacher to learn chords and how to use a lead sheet. Ah, my musical salvation!

Life moved on and in 1960, an old pump organ became my first organ experience. Even "The Darktown Strutter's Ball" sounded reasonably OK on that wheezing old treasure! Shortly a used Conn Minuet spinet organ became available, replacing the wheezer. It needed repairs, and I sought out the local dealer, joined their organ club, and soon was offered a job. Eleven years and a Conn 650 3-manual theatre organ later, I finally heard my first theatre pipe organ at the Granada Theatre in West Seattle with Eddie Zollman at the console. That was 1970. In 1984, Russ and I began installation of our 3/18 Wurlitzer in our home. I'm still hooked!



Jamie Snell
Seattle

My earliest memory of a pipe organ is from 3rd grade, a tour of the console in the church connected with my school. I was transfixed by the sound and all the gadgets. In 5th grade I started piano lessons, but they were all about notation, no room for creativity nor hint of theory. I rebelled, the lessons ended, and I got involved in electronics.

In 7th grade Heathkit advertised an organ kit, and I was thrilled! My parents agreed to buy it, on the condition I would first take organ lessons and prove my commitment. My mom found a Hammond teacher, Rudy Lewis, who taught me to play from lead sheets. I loved that, we bought the kit, and I built it. I also started listening to George Wright records.



Young Jamie playing the Roller Rink Wurlitzer in Alexandria, VA

In 8th grade I visited the roller rink in Alexandria, VA to hear the 4/34 Wurlitzer (opus 2178) and meet the organist, Jimmy Boyce. He asked if I'd like to play a tune, so I did, and was pretty sure I was in heaven – this was my first time playing a real pipe organ. Then he asked if I could substitute for him on Sunday afternoons for a few months, and I knew I'd gone to heaven! I said yes, of course, and I was hooked.



Roller Rink in Alexandria, VA

Russ Evans
Kenmore

It was Halloween 1964 and the kids were out somewhere in the neighborhood. I was left at home to greet the spooks knocking on our door. “Business” was only so-so and I started reading the daily newspaper, soon getting into the classified ads

By golly, here was a pipe organ for sale! Our church needed to get rid of its old Wurlitzer reed organ, so I informed the pastor of the possibility of a pipe organ, asking, “Are you interested?” “By all means! I’ll bring it up at the next board meeting in three weeks.”

The day following the board meeting I phoned the pastor. “Oh my gosh, I forgot to bring up the subject!” And my reply was, “Well, you just lost out on a pipe organ.”

I purchased the organ from Stan Smith, Greg Smith’s dad, and Greg moved on to a much larger pipe organ. That organ is the nucleus of our 3/18 Wurlitzer today.

Years later, I did find a Kimball pipe organ for the church.

Walt Strony
Las Vegas

“I was eight years old when my organ teacher, Al Melgard (who thought I showed promise) let me play the Chicago Stadium Barton. Up till then, all I knew was Jerry Burke on the Welk show! Life would never be the same!

Next, he sponsored me to become an ATOS member. I was only 11, the youngest ever to join CATOE. My first ATOS event was Reginald Foort at the Montclare Theatre for a midnight concert. Needless to say, I was hooked and quickly got to know many local old-time organists -- Pearl White, Reginald Foort, John Muri, Kay McAbee and then later become good friends with Lee Erwin, Billy Nalle and many others. I’ve been blessed, and it’s been a great ride!”

Thanks for asking!



Walt Strony

Alain Rhone
Seattle



As a child I took piano lessons from the music director of a local church. I was fascinated by the pipe organ and begged him to give me lessons, but he refused until I caught him teaching someone else. One day I went

to practice and two guys were tuning the organ. They told me about Greenwood Pizza and Pipes; my teacher never told me Wurlitzer used to put pipe organs in movie theaters. I went there and was hooked.

Estelle McMaster
(Age 15) Marysville

I’ve been intrigued by the organ since I was little. But I never got a chance to truly experience organs of any kind until I attended the AGO’s Seattle POE [Pipe Organ Encounter] in 2019. And I was hooked! During the POE, Jamie Snell gave a presentation on the theatre organ and offered an opportunity to visit the Paramount Theatre organ the following week. I was able to go, and I’m so glad I did!

Through Mr. Snell, my mother and I found out about Brett Valliant’s concert at the Evans’ home last summer. We were able to attend and afterward Mr. Valliant was kind enough to show me a little about the organ and theatre organ specifically. He inspired me so much!

Not long after, JoAnn Evans emailed my mother and offered to teach me theatre organ techniques and basics. I’ve been working with Mrs. Evans since last September, and it’s been a blast! Since March, we’ve been doing lessons over Zoom and Skype. I honestly don’t know where I’d be without the theatre organ and the joy that it brings me!



Estelle and Brett Valliant at the Evans Wurlitzer, August 11, 2019

Bob Zat, PSTOS President Seattle

My interest in the organ and organ music started at a very early age. I grew up in a home with a Hammond Spinnet which my father played daily. I would sit on the arm of the couch watching and listening and sometimes he would let me sit next to him on the bench and play a single finger melody while he supplied the accompaniment.

He was a HiFi enthusiast so we had a Heathkit amplifier, a Garrard turntable, Altec Lansing speakers, and even a Rek-O-Kut disc lathe and Magnacord reel to reel, plus the very early vinyl releases of Reginal Foort at the Richmond Mosque Wurlitzer and the first George Wright HiFi Records release. Needless to say those early Theatre Organ records and associated pictures on the albums got me very fascinated.



A popular George Wright Theatre Organ Album

Sadly there were no organs left in theatres in my hometown of Spokane except for the Fox Theatre whose Balcom and Vaughan Wurlitzer installation was not playable. It was sold and removed in 1961 and subsequently destroyed while in storage. So, whenever the family ventured to a wedding, funeral, or regular church service I would be on the lookout for the organ.

It wasn't until my high school years that I got to play real pipes. I attended Lewis & Clark High School which had a 47 rank 4 manual Austin installed in the auditorium. I was determined to play it on a regular basis but there was one condition, I needed to be taking organ lessons. I found a teach-



Bob as a 1965 H.S. senior playing the Austin in Spokane's Lewis & Clark H.S.

er so as to qualify to play the instrument. During my four years at LC I played the organ on a daily basis before school, during study hall, and sometimes after school, and occasionally found my way into the chambers to investigate what the whole mechanism was about. My collection of Theatre Organ records also kept growing.



Bob had a chance to play the Lewis & Clark H.S. Austin once again while attending a reunion in 1995

I didn't get my fingers on a theatre organ until I was in my twenties when I finally was able to sit at a transplanted Wurlitzer in a studio specially built for the instrument. The sounds were incredible and my playing was pathetic but I got to touch the keys of a Wurlitzer and make some sounds!

I was also given a tour of the chambers to see the pipework, regulators, tremulants, relay, and blower and that really got me hooked. Fortunately I would be able to visit this instrument whenever I returned to Spokane for a visit.

Many years have now passed and my passion for the Theatre Organ has evolved along with the instruments, the players, and the music.

Lewis & Clark High School underwent a two-year restoration during which the organ was removed and rebuilt. The school reopened in 2001 and the organ played once again in a newly renovated space restored to its original design. As time moved forward the Austin sat idle and is in need of maintenance, which I understand is happening.

The first Wurlitzer I was able to play is long gone. Now my attention is on the maintenance, care and feeding of the PSTOS Chapter Wurlitzer with guidance and help from Russ Evans and Greg Smith.

I now own two Hammond Organs, an RT3 which is in my apartment and the other, a C3, that resides in a private residence in Gig Harbor. The record collection has evolved into CDs and now lossless audio files spinning on a disc in my computer's iTunes music library.

Barb Graham, Whidbey Island

My first recollection of an organ came via my dad, Wendell Graham. While he was stationed in Alaska in the Army in WWII, he would visit Sherman Clay in Anchorage to hear and play the Hammond Organ. In the late '40s he would rent a studio at Sherman Clay in Seattle for probably an hour or two and play the Hammond. Mom and I would go along to listen.

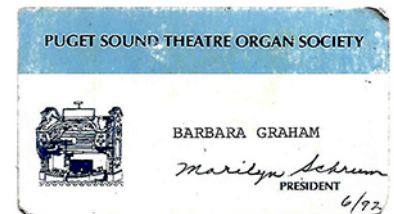
Starting when I was about five, we would go to lunch at Rhodes Department Store in Seattle about twice a year. After I'd finished my tuna sandwich, I could sit on the steps of the mezzanine and listen to Harry Reed play the pipe organ. I was mesmerized!

Dad got his Hammond RT3 in about 1961. He got the organ; I got the lessons that came with it. I took those lessons from Carl Hellander, first at Sherman Clay and then in the Fisher Studio Building, for some years.

Mom, Dad, and I belonged to the Hammond Organ Society for years. Guild meetings were held in homes and the monthly meetings were held at the Norselander Restaurant meeting room. I realize now how fortunate I was to be able to hear such wonderful organists – both guest artists and hobbyists – and listen to 'jam' sessions where good music was played.

Our family would attend pipe organ concerts from time to time. We were able to visit people who had pipe organs installed in their homes (imagine that!).

I joined PSTOS in 1992. I still have my membership card signed by President, Marilyn Schrum.



Oh, how I have enjoyed hearing theatre pipe organs being played!

My greatest moment had to be seeing the Seattle Paramount pipe organ, in the spotlight, coming out of the pit at one of the 'midnight' concerts. It was heart stopping!

Incidentally, Bob Zat now has my Dad's Hammond RT3 – I'm so pleased because Bob knew my Dad. I'm still waiting to hear Bob play it for me.

PAGES FROM THE PAST... 1928 – 1971

Brooklynites Bid a Nostalgic Farewell to the Fox

From the New York Times, Monday, January 4, 1971



Workmen starting to tear down the marquee of the Fox Theater on Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn

The Fox Theater, the movie palace that along with the Brooklyn Paramount, once drew thousands to the downtown Brooklyn area, is finally coming down.

It was not unexpected. For almost five years, its marquee told the public that it was "temporarily closed for repairs; will reopen soon." It was not closed for repairs and it will never reopen.

The marquee that once announced to the crowds on Flatbush Avenue in downtown Brooklyn which Hollywood stars could be seen on the Fox's silver screen bore the theater's epitaph until last week.

"Farewell to the Fox:

**October 31, 1928, to November 4, 1970.
Bill Gage at the Mighty Wurlitzer."**

The "Mighty Wurlitzer," a giant pipe organ that entertained audiences before films began or during intermissions, was as much a part of the Fox as the dancing lights on its marquee. It was one of the largest built up to that time.

4 Lift Chambers Needed

It required four lift chambers on the side of the theater and a large space over the main ceiling of the auditorium, extending over the stage roof, to house it.

The theater's last marquee announcement was a far cry from the first one. On its opening night, 5,000 people attended the gala inaugural ceremonies and to see the first film to play there, "Street Angel," a silent feature with a Neapolitan romance theme, starring Charles Farrell

and Janet Gaynor.

The audience was also treated to a Movietone film greeting from James J. Byrne, Borough President of Brooklyn: performances of Wagner's "Tannhäuser" and "Dance of the Blue Danube Blues," a jazz rendition of Strauss's waltz by the Fox Theater Grand Orchestra of 60 soloists.

Another Movietone film showed George Bernard Shaw doing his famous imitation of Mussolini, with a stage presentation entitled "Carnival de Naples," which featured a chorus of 40 voices. "Street Awl" closed the program, which also had George Jessel as a master of ceremonies.

Perhaps it is symbolic of the neglect the Fox had fallen into in recent years that the opening date on the marquee epitaph should be wrong. The theater opened on Aug. 31, 1928, not Oct. 31.

Original Cost \$8 Million

Laughing workmen paid no attention to this as they recently started the work of razing the theater and ripping out the insides of what was once an \$8 million movie palace.

Except for a few scattered events of a cultural nature, the theater has been closed since February, 1966. The last films to be shown there at that time were "Where the Spies Are," starring David Niven, and "Johnny Nobody," which was William Bendix's last film.

At its peak, the Fox drew as many as

12,000 people on a Saturday night but when it finally shut its doors the number had dwindled to about 100 an evening, according to John F. Burke, the last manager of the theater.

Some of the reasons for the low attendance are that the neighborhood has become increasingly rundown over the years and that crime has increased in the area.

The theater and the 12 story office building housing it were built by William Fox as a showcase for his company's films and vaudeville revues like the Sunkist Beauties, which featured 30 or more beautiful girls tap dancing, roller skating and singing their way to an audience's hearts.

The theater was sold six years later to the Fabian Corporation, the same company that closed it.

At the time of its construction, The New York Times reported that the Fox would be "almost an art museum with art treasures and rare fittings. Among other noteworthy features are a disappearing orchestra stage, refrigerating plants that sterilize the air every 90 seconds, and the most modern projecting devices."

The Fox, which could accommodate 4,061 people and which was described at various times as a wonderland of continental treasure, was decorated in the splendor that typified the movie palaces of the period.

Continued ...

PAGES FROM THE PAST... *Continued*

As an example, its entrance consisted of polished Sienna marble and it led into the inner lobby, which combined marble, teakwood and gold. Then came the block-long Grand Foyer, which had a white marble staircase and a large fountain.

In reality, the Fox was Brooklyn's answer to S. L. Rothafel's Roxy Theater in Mahattan, which had been completed the year before at a cost of \$10 million and had ushered in the golden age of movie palaces.

Casualty List Growing

The demise of the Fox is just one more in a growing list of movie palace casualties. Only a very few of these great theaters of the 1920s, such as the Loew's Paradise in the Bronx, the

Loew's Kings in Brooklyn and the Loew's Valencia in Queens, are still intact in the metropolitan area.

Other theaters have been demolished to make room for office buildings or cut up into smaller theaters.

The other major downtown Brooklyn theater, the Paramount, which was also built in 1928, closed its doors in 1962 and is now used by the Brooklyn Center of Long Island University as a gymnasium for its basketball games.

An office building, consisting of six stories and a penthouse, is scheduled to be completed on the site of the Fox Theater in the summer of 1972 as part of the Brooklyn Center Urban Renewal Project for downtown Brooklyn.

What happened to the Brooklyn Fox Wurlitzer?

The Wurlitzer pipe organ in the Brooklyn Fox was one of five Fox Specials produced by Wurlitzer for the Detroit Fox, St. Louis Fox, San Francisco Fox, Brooklyn Fox, and the New York Paramount. When the organ was removed, components literally scattered everywhere. The console ended up being owned by Terry Kleven.

About this time, in the 1970s, Ken Crome bought a pizza organ in California, with the intent of installing it in the new Cardinal Music Palace, Ft. Wayne, Indiana. With the additional pipework

that Ken planned to add, the console was inadequate, so he purchased the Brooklyn console from Terry Kleven.

When it was installed it was painted blue and the ormolu remained gold. It was designed to be quite showy in the pizza parlor.

The Cardinal Music Palace was in business only a few years and the organ was soon up for sale. The entire organ was purchased by Dick Wilcox of Gig Harbor, WA. The Brooklyn console went to Ken Crome's shop in Reno for a total overhaul, including syndyne installation

(SAMs) and was refinished in polished black as we see it today.

The installation at Gig Harbor took place in the middle to late 1980s, and in approximately 1987 or '88, Zollman Pipe Organ Service had a good portion of the main chamber playing. Greg Smith, on a visit, was most likely the first person to play the instrument using the pipes that were installed and tuned.

Dick Wilcox sold the property to the Leif & Beverly Johnson family, who later sold it to its present owners, Barbara Hammerman and Raymond Lavine.



The listening room as it appeared when owned by the Leif & Beverly Johnson family. Note the two grand pianos.