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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 19, No. 8

August 2008

A Chapter of American Theatre Organ Society

**Have you reserved? Don't put it off—seating is limited to 60!**

## Don Feely

**Inaugurates Bill Keller's new 5-manual Allen theatre organ!**

Don will put this one-of-a-kind instrument through its paces with lots of your favorite music. Bill's lovely home in a semi-rural area near Olympia is the perfect spot for a summer afternoon of delightful theatre organ music.

**Music! Refreshments! Fun!**

**Open Console Will Follow**

**Saturday, August 9, 2:00 PM**

9914 Hampshire Ct. SE, Olympia

**Admission \$10, Age 15 and under free**

**Seating limited to 60, Reservations, please!**

Reserve by email—[tibia8and2@comcast.net](mailto:tibia8and2@comcast.net)  
Or by phone at 360-438-1341—leave message



**DON FEELY** began playing the theatre pipe organ as a teen and for two years he performed on the 5/24 Marr & Colton in the Sherwood Oriental Theatre. Following college he traveled for two years across the country as a music director for the Miss Teen America pageants. He was a featured organist at the Organ Grinder Restaurant in Portland for over 10 years, performing on the 4/51 Wurlitzer. He and his wife Heidi are in the process of installing a 3/20 Wurlitzer in their home.

**DRIVE DIRECTIONS— Please save!**  
**Or refer to your favorite internet map site,**  
**Mapquest, Google Maps, etc.**

9914 Hampshire Ct. SE, Olympia

**I-5 Southbound:** Take exit 116 - Mounts Rd/Old Nisqually, turn left onto Nisqually Rd/Old Pacific Hwy. Continue to follow Old Pacific Hwy about 7 miles to Hwy 510 (Not signed). This is an intersection with a stop sign and sharp hairpin left turn. Turn left onto Hwy 510, go a half mile to Meridian Road SE (A "Y" to the right). Go .4 mile and turn left at Hampshire Ct. SE. Go to the end of the street. (White fences)

**I-5 Northbound:** Take exit 111 for WA-510 E/Marvin Rd toward Yelm. Straight through the round-about and follow signs for Marvin Rd N. Turn right at Marvin Rd NE/WA-510, drive 1.6 miles. At the round-about, turn left onto Pacific Ave SE and drive about three miles to Meridian Rd SE (a "Y" to the right). Drive .4 mile and turn left at Hampshire Ct. SE. Go to the end of the street. (White fences)

**A good place for lunch**

The best restaurants are either the Hawks Prairie Restaurant or the Hawks Prairie Casino Restaurant. The casino is behind the restaurant at Exit 111 on the northbound side of I-5. They have good food at reasonable prices.

## Who wants to go to Clute, Texas?

During a Paramount Theater string chamber restoration session at the end of February, Tom Blackwell posed this question to the group.

It seems that The 7th Street Theater in Hoquiam had located their original Wurlitzer down in Clute, and were asking for assistance bringing it home. They had contacted Tom via the PSTOS website, and the push was on to get their organ back. Time was of the essence as the owner made clear it would be headed for the dump if they did not move immediately.

Ken Double and Dick Wilson had taken the time to drive one hour south of Houston to take a peek at the instrument and buy us some time to assemble a crew. They pronounced it in good shape, at least what they could see of it.

At the next work session, Tom asked the same question, and since nobody else seemed interested, I volunteered. I was put in touch with Tom Quigg in Hoquiam, who provided the particulars and also financed the operation. There would be five volunteers (including myself) flying down March 10 to disassemble and pack the organ for a truck trip home.

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Dave Luttinen removes the organ bolster

## PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society  
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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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### Listing of non-PSTOS events in the Pipeline

PSTOS, upon request, will list non-conflicting non-PSTOS theatre organ events in the "Other Events" column of the two Pipelines immediately preceding the event, providing Pipeline editors receive sufficient prior written notification. Venue, artist, type of event, date, and contact information will comprise the included information.

### Advertising in the Pipeline

Classified-type ads for member-owned electronic, electric, or pipe organs, and/or pipe organ parts, will be published at no charge. Please limit copy to include brief description, contact name and phone number. Prices will not be listed. Ads may be edited for content and length. Mail ad copy to address above. Other advertising is not accepted.

**Joining Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society is quick and easy!** For a one year membership, send a \$20 check payable to PSTOS together with your name(s) as you would like them to appear on your name badges, your address with complete 9-digit ZIP code, and your email address (optional) to:  
Bill Keller, Treasurer, 9914 Hampshire Ct. SE,  
Olympia, WA 98513-4241.

## PRESIDENT'S Message

### Hello everyone, Paramount Update

At the recent American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) annual convention in Indianapolis, we received the good news that PSTOS will receive an additional \$3,000 award from the ATOS Endowment Fund to support our restoration work at the Paramount. Together with last year's award of \$2,000, our total from ATOS is now \$5,000 and we have been encouraged to re-apply next year. This brings our total raised for the Paramount, from all sources, to nearly \$45,000! With a target of \$105,000, we are hard at work with the Paramount Development office to raise the remaining \$60,000. Theatre managers have agreed to host a visit by ATOS Adult Summer Camp participants, August 11-14. The camp, based at Wurlitzer Manor in Gig Harbor, will include an afternoon visit to the Paramount to see and play the original Publix 1 Wurlitzer. Participants will also get a special tour of the theatre with instructors Charlie Balogh and Patti Simon. If you are interested in attending the camp, please apply now at: <http://www.atos.org/front-desk/forms>. Space is limited. In other Paramount news, over 80 volunteers, including Clint Meadway, Larry Mayer and Kurt Morrison from PSTOS enjoyed a special recognition luncheon on board the ms Oosterdam cruise ship on Saturday July 12. This luncheon was provided by Holland America Lines as a way to thank the Paramount for their business partnership. According to Larry, "...there was no pipe organ on board, but they did have one acoustic piano, and four grand piano-shaped digital pianos."



### Scholarship News

16 year old PSTOS member Kat Brightwell will be attending the ATOS Youth Summer Camp held in the Chicago area, July 21-25. Her attendance is supported by a \$650 award from the PSTOS Scholarship Fund. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this fund over the last year. It's great to see the monies put to such good use for someone as enthusiastic as Kat.

Seattle ATOS Convention Update - 23 months and ticking!

With over 550 attendees, the recent Indianapolis ATOS convention was a rousing success! Next year, Cleveland, Ohio

## PSTOS Coming Events

### ◆DON FEELY will inaugurate Bill Keller's exciting 5-manual Allen Theatre Organ in Olympia

**THIS WILL BE WORTH THE DRIVE!**

Don Feely is well known among northwest theatre organ aficionados. He was a featured organist at Portland's former Organ Grinder Pizza Restaurant, has performed for several organ conventions, is music director for St. Andrew's Church in Portland and teaches band and choir in Canby, OR. He and his wife Heidi are busy installing a 3/20 Wurlitzer in their home.

**Saturday, August 9**

### ◆CHRISTMAS PIPES AND HAND BELLS

Keep the afternoon of Sunday, December 21st, 2008, open for a terrific Holiday concert at Calvary Christian Assembly! Seattle theatre organist Mark Anderson teams with colleague Lynn Anderson on bells to present a wonderful concert featuring the rarely heard Calvary Wurlitzer organ.

**Sunday, December 21**

## FOR SALE Organ Stuff

Three-rank organ, Fotoplayer, with flute, string, vox humana, chimes. Complete with console and blower. Blower has vacuum unit. It has no player mechanism. Crated. For more information contact Richard Warburton, 360-677-2254.

hosts and then we'll have our chance to welcome theatre organ fans the world over to Seattle in 2010 when PSTOS hosts the convention. Your PSTOS Board is busy at work with planning. If you have programming ideas you would like to share, or have an interest in helping out with lodging, transportation, catering and special events, please contact me at [tom@pstos.org](mailto:tom@pstos.org) or (206) 784-9203.

**Tom Blackwell, President**



# Other NW Theatre Organ Events

## ◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at [www.kenyonhall.org](http://www.kenyonhall.org) or by email at [kenyonhall@earthlink.net](mailto:kenyonhall@earthlink.net)

## ◆ Lincoln Theatre in Mt. Vernon

Hear the Wurlitzer every Mon/Tue at 7PM & Fri/Sat/Sun at 5PM.

## ◆ Columbia River Organ Club

For info and latest news go to [www.croconline.org](http://www.croconline.org)

## ◆ Bellingham's Mt Baker Theatre

The Mt. Baker is closed for a few months for upgrading the heating and air conditioning system. Watch this column for reopening date and events.

## Clute, Texas...

My task was to keep them on track and identify the parts for later reassembly.

Having helped move one Kimball theater organ hardly makes me a crew chief, but many of you who have been around for a while learned from being put to the test in the field. So with a great deal of trepidation I began a rapid exchange of information regarding what tools to take, packing materials we would need, and passed along Tom Blackwell's magnificent formula for pipe crates.

In addition to Tom Quigg, Lane Youmans (my roomie), Mark Izatt, and Marv Hammell took time out of their week to trek to Texas on this worthwhile adventure.

Clute is about an hour south of Houston, and the route Mark and Marv would take home covered 2700 miles. They opted not to go the shortest route but the most weather and hill friendly route. It was mid-March and nature had been known to put up roadblocks on the straight line home in the past.

Opus 789 was sitting in an enclosed front porch for the last twenty something years, and had not played since its last move. Unfortunately, a windstorm dropped a tree into the porch and rainwater poured into some of the pipes for some number of years. The damage is repairable, but it will take skill and labor to get it back to designer specifications.

We arrived at SeaTac airport within moments of each other and had a quick cup of coffee and pastry to discuss how the process would work. Since we were arriving in the evening and had some distance to drive,

we decided to eat upon arrival and start the next morning once we knew what we had.

Arriving at the residence early March 11, we were welcomed by the owner who showed us around. The console and most of the pipes were assembled on the porch, but the console was not wired in. There was no wind connected. The diapason offsets were in the hallway inside the house. The relay and blower were in a shed out back, along with extra parts.

The rental truck was acquired after a list of lumber was assembled. Lane laid out tools on a makeshift bench while materials were purchased. A production line was put together and we built the crates in a few short hours. We were able to acquire spare lumber for free from the local Home Depot, which came in handy when packing. One morning we spent dumpster diving for cardboard to protect parts from chafing.

The day we removed the console was quite an event. The media showed up as well as the entire Clute Volunteer Fire Department. They were called (in advance) on a non-emergency call where muscle was needed, so fire trucks showed up and they used their strength and agility to remove the console from the front porch. There was exactly 0.125" clearance without the



screen door frame and not one scratch was put on the console. They put it all the way to the front of the truck in no time flat. It was a blessing beyond belief to have their help.

When the newspaper reporter asked to hear one of the pipes, I selected a suitable trumpet from the chest, made a circle with my finger to keep my mouth off the toe and blew. Nothing happened. So I took a larger breath of air and blew harder. Nothing happened. I looked at the reporter and one of the work crew with a quizzical grin, examined the opening of the pipe which did not display anything untoward, took a HUGE breath and blew.

Foom! Sputter. At my feet lay a perfect cone of dead crickets, beetles, spiders, and cock roaches. They sat in a perfect pile with sails of dust radiating from the center. Once again I created my blow hole and out came

a representative F#. Thankfully, the reporter did not write the episode for the local news.

An older gentleman came to help and he built the most magnificent pedal board box you have ever seen. Not one finger was touched in the entire process. The inner blocks held it from moving both sideways and forward to rear.

Without the console, we had room to work. The chests were straightforward; one was custom made and lightweight. Every set of parts that would fit in a bag was labeled and its spot marked with blue tape.

All the relay wiring's insulation had been eaten by critters. The shed was floor to ceiling in pipe-organ related parts, but it was unclear whether they were original or not



as the organ had been expanded over time. The floor of the shed used to be plywood, but it was deteriorated so most material sat on the dirt. With two work areas, it was quite a process to keep everyone busy. We finished late on March 12, but wanted to make sure the truck was balanced and solid. Early in the morning March 13, at the Day's Inn where we stayed, we were given permission to off-load nearly everything and repack the load. It was spread over their parking lot and lawn and everything was inspected one item at a time. It was quite a panorama of items.

Talking about six degrees of separation: the owner of the pipe organ in Clute, Texas knows a close friend of mine in Tacoma as both were pastors of churches in the area.

The short story is that the truck arrived in Hoquiam to a media frenzy and quite a bit of fanfare. Not one item shifted!

The 7th Street Theatre has their organ back in the basement in its entirety. Well, except that when I returned from my recent trip, I found a plastic bag that said "Console Cover Screws." So I sheepishly wrote Lane Youmans my confession who replied "THAT'S where they went."

This is an ongoing story. The arrival of WurliTzer Opus 789 in Hoquiam was the completion of a journey, but the beginning of a new life in its magnificent home.

...Dave Luttinen

# Pages From The Past... 1966

Reprinted from *The Seattle Times*, January 11, 1966

## Midnight Music on the Pipes

By Byron Fish

If the time for pipe organ concerts here seems to be set with Walpurgis Night in mind, it is due only to circumstances. Organ music fans turn out at midnight and go home when the roosters crow simply because the graveyard hours are when the theatre is available to them.

The American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts are sponsoring another concert at the Paramount Theatre Saturday at midnight. The organist will be Don Baker, internationally known recording artist. Tickets are on sale at Sherman Clay, or can be obtained at the door.

Last fall, members of A.T.O.E. devoted about eight weekends of voluntary labor to reconditioning the Paramount's pipe organ. Then they presented Larry Vannucci, San Francisco organist, in a public recital that lasted until 3 AM because nobody would go home.

The purpose this time, as then, is to raise money for parts to put the Fifth Avenue Theatre's pipe organ into good repair. It may end up as the only big instrument left in a Seattle theatre.

Maintenance of a pipe organ is a continuing expense, whether or not it is used. Leather bellows grow brittle or come unglued with age, and instruments played by remote control from the keyboard need tuning.

If A.T.O.E. members know how to repair pipe organs, it is because so many of them have installed one in their own home. At least one of the organs is bigger than the Paramount's.

Robert C. Jones, a banker, has a four-manual 20-rank combination Wurlitzer and Morton in the basement of his Edmonds home. The Paramount organ stops with 20 sets of pipes.

The Kimball from the Palomar Theatre, recently torn down, ended up at Martha Lake in the possession of Jim Collier, a machine-shop owner. Collier converted the lower part of a barn into a home. The upper half is a dance floor, complete with pipe organ.

The Wurlitzer that once roared in the Rolladium Roller Rink went from the

University District to the Tukwila basement of Bill Carson, a machinist at Boeing.

The Embassy Theatre had a Kimball organ which is now in Edmonds, installed in the home of Harold Shawver, an insurance man. Howard Burr, 2202 N. 60th, also owns a Kimball.

Bill Morrison, who is in construction work, made sure his Robert Morton pipe organ would transplant comfortably. The instrument went from the Roxy Theatre in Tacoma to a miniature theatre, balconies and all, in Morrison's home at Mukilteo.

Thirty years ago, when live programs originated in radio stations or came directly from the production studios of the networks, major stations had their own pipe organs.

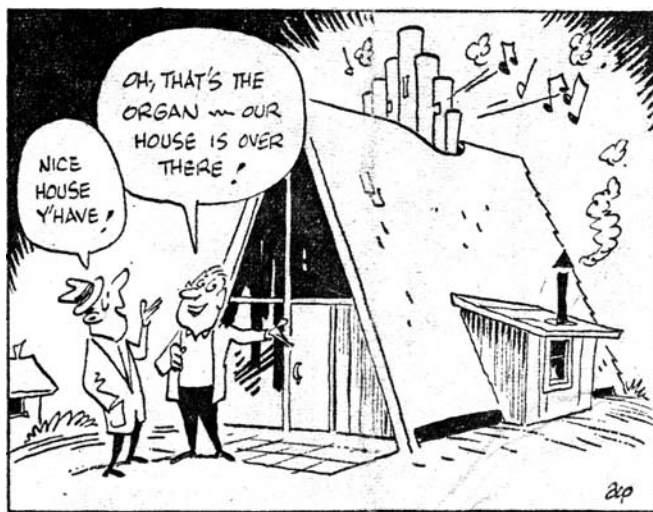
They furnished background music for local productions and for late evening musical programs. If a network breakdown interrupted a program, a standby musician rushed to the keyboard and kept the station on the air.

The Wurlitzer from the KOMO studios is now owned by Bennett Fisher, Jr., who installed it in his Des Moines home. Since the Fisher Flouring Mills family owns KOMO, this organ has something of the status of an heirloom.

Russ Evans, Lake City grocer, went pipe-organ hunting in Los Angeles. He found a Kimball and gave it to the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church at 145th and 20th N.E. Evans has a Wurlitzer in his home.

Dan Adamson, 4225 Eastern N., put together a Wurlitzer and a Morton operated by one console. Adamson is a teacher but also a pipe organ technician, so he knew how to go about the mechanics of it.

Ray Whelpley of Bellevue has an organ he calls "Mostly Wurlitzer," Woody Presho, 16837 Fourth S., owns a purebred of that



brand. Ed Stern, 4210 48th S., latched onto one of the original roller rink organs in the Northwest, a Wurlitzer from King's in Tacoma.

Numerous other A.T.O.E. members own large pipe organs as yet unassembled. Dick Schrum's Morton, for example, came from the Orpheum Theatre in Portland. He may have to build a new home to house it.

Obviously pipe organ fans have instruments to which they themselves can listen. They feel that in sponsoring public concerts such as the one Saturday night, they are acting for the general welfare.

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The following 1922 article from an Astoria, Oregon, newspaper is typical of the writings of a reporter who wasn't listening carefully to the facts! All misspelled words have been reproduced for your amusement. The organ was a 2/4 Morton. The theatre was later renamed the Blue Mouse.

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### Organ Installed in Real Arts Theatre

Installation of the big \$15,000 organ in the new Real Arts theatre on Commercial Street was practically complete yesterday under the efforts of C. M. Balcom, superintendent of construction with Sherman, Clay & Co., of Portland.

It has been under erection for three weeks, that time being necessary to install



# Pages From The Past...continued

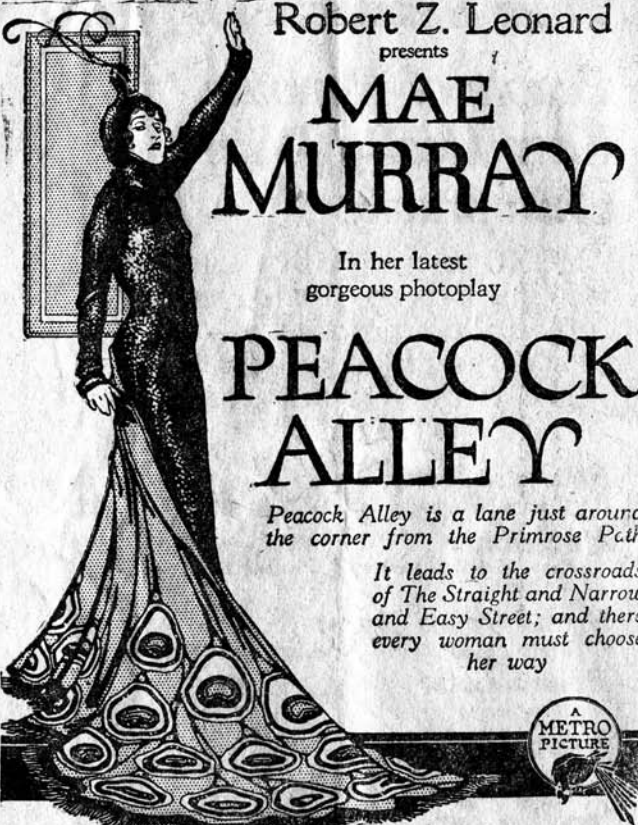
Advertisement from an Albany, Oregon newspaper, March 1922

## GLOBE THEATRE

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presents  
**MAE MURRAY**  
In her latest  
gorgeous photoplay  
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*Peacock Alley is a lane just around  
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It leads to the crossroads  
of The Straight and Narrow  
and Easy Street; and there  
every woman must choose  
her way*

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Based on a story by Ouida Bergere  
Directed by Robert Z. Leonard



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The addition of this fine instrument gives Albany  
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the music.

The feature picture for the opening days is in keeping  
with the occasion—

Evenings: Doors open 7 p. m., Concerts 7:15-9:15  
Matinee on Friday at 2 P. M., Concert, 2:15 P. M.  
Prices - - - 25c and 50c

the many complicated parts, such as hundreds of electric magnets, valves, pneumatics, pipes, cables, contacts, chests, tremelos, etc.

The instrument has its own generating plant furnishing 10 volts, 20 ampere current. As the action of the organ is electric throughout and so much depends on a quick response to the organist's touch at the keyboard, the generator really plays an important part in the correctness of the playing.

The wind used to supply different

pipes, effects, etc., is supplied by a large blower driven by a 3 hp. motor, turning 1300 revolutions per minute, delivering approximately twelve pounds to the square inch at the organ.

It is voiced strictly orchestral, giving absolute imitations of such instruments as Orchestral Oboe, saxophone, French horn, flute, piccolo, violin, cello, bass viola, cornet, drums, xylophone, chimes, tom tom and others. Special attention is called to the string harp in this instrument known as the harp celeste. It is also

equipped with the Vox Humano pipes for the reproduction of the human voice.

Mr. Balcom, who for the past few weeks has been here installing the organ made a special trip to the Robert Morton organ factory at Van Nuys, California to design the many different parts operating the tones and mechanism.

Mr. Balcom says the acoustics in the Real Arts theatre are absolutely the best and that this condition is a wonderful aid in the voicing and tone regulation of the instrument.



## An Orgbiography

by Genevieve McMahan

In last month's Pipeline you read of the recent visit to Haller Lake by McMahan family members to again see the Wurlitzer that had earlier been owned by their parents. After her husband's death in an auto accident, Mrs. McMahan sold the organ to PSTOS, and it was installed at HLCC.

In 1966, Mrs. McMahan submitted to *Theatre Organ Journal* a humorous recounting of the family's experiences restoring the instrument. Reprinted here is the first of two parts.

Never, but never, have I been swept away with any wild daydreams of being owned by a theatre pipe organ. My exposure to them was limited to the gilded console with the golden voice accompanying the silent flickers. So it was quite a revelation a few short years ago to discover the organ itself is a conglomeration of tin, wood and leather concealed from an unsuspecting audience.

My routine as an Ohio wife and mother was sometimes nudged a little off course by a spouse who frequently imparted juicy little tidbits about pipe organs. Fulfilling his lifetime interest in pipe organs, he followed indirect leads to uncovering forgotten instruments, gathering information about their locations and playability, and advising, to whoever would lend an ear, whether or not they could be salvaged. The outcome of my husband's visit to an Eagles board meeting in a converted theatre set up for bingo, completely altered our joint family activities. Acting in an advisory capacity of aiding them in disposing of a pipe organ, he ended up buying the contraption. This in itself was an astonishing development, but eeh gad, we didn't even have an organist in the family. Our joint repertoire was limited to monotonous renditions of "Love Letters in the Sand" and the first four measures of "American Bolero." It didn't take me long to realize that our lives were about to revolve around a Wurlitzer opus 1432, of 6 ranks—divided: (Main) Flute, Open and Salicional; (Solo) Tibia, Vox, Trumpet, and the Toy Counter, a nonsensical but lovable accessory.

We were catapulted into a feverish world of activity when the project of removal was underway. Four nights a week, with a borrowed station wagon, three dubious youngsters of our own, plus any more we could coerce into helping, we tiptoed through the auditorium of bingo players, trudged up four flights of steep stairs into sooty organ chambers and loaded up the outstretched arms. Parading back through the bingo

## PUGET SOUND THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Russ & Jo Ann Evans, Newsletter Editors

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Kenmore, WA 98028-3453



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Receipt dated April 4, 1959 for \$50, payment in full for the Wurlitzer pipes now installed in Haller Lake Community Club. The console and blower were missing and replacements had to be located.

party, leaving a trail of grimy footsteps, we pretended to ignore the startled expressions on the players' faces as the game came to a faltering halt. We are past masters at doing everything the hard way, so although we reached a hasty decision to make a base-ment installation, the organ had to be stored in the attic. The carting of pipes and boxes up to their temporary quarters was executed with a minimum amount of grumbling and fumbling, but maneuvering the chests over banisters and around corners was quite a strain on some beautiful friendships.

Most hobbies are pursued in a logical sequence of steps, but ours was a mish mash of planning, hunting for a console, blower and motor, and starting a complete restoring job. Some of my husband's ideas were quite a stumbling block but we finally resolved his insistence on a three manual console by locating a Marr & Colton 3/7 in Toledo. The console weaved and sagged due to tired glue, as it was transported 125 miles in a trailer, so we decided to give it our immediate attention. In the renovation and reassembly, a revised combination of

glue and screwed joints produced a console capable of being knocked down, a feature proving invaluable to us at a later date. It was placed on a caster bearing platform so it could be horsed around like any other abnormal piece of furniture, requiring little more than the standard wifely supervision.

The restoration included a complete wood refinishing, renewal of all felt, re-cementing the lead tubing and the indoctrination of leathering. The art of releathering can best be accomplished with a pot of strong coffee, pipe organ records grinding full blast on the hi-fi, and a semi-awareness to the tedious ritual of strip, sand, dip, brush, smooth, press, dry and trim. The fabulous organ buffs we were beginning to meet generously permitted our brain picking, accelerating my apprenticeship so I was soon graduated to a journeyman. Allowed to dismantle the offsets, relay and two main chests, I toiled with the speed of a snail and was overwhelmed to face a mounting display of pans, casseroles and soup plates filled with discs, gizmos, thing-a-ma-bobs and doodads.

Part two will appear in the September Pipeline.