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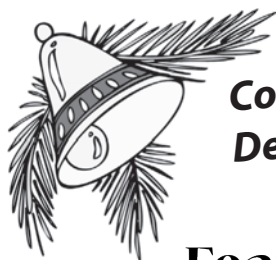
PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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. 11

November 2008

A Chapter of American Theatre Organ Society



**Coming
Dec. 21st**

Christmas Concert Featuring Theatre Organ & Hand Bells



MARK ANDERSEN

at the Wurlitzer-Kimball theatre organ

Many will recall MARK ANDERSEN's outstanding program at the Jack & Mary Lou Becvar home in June of 2006. He had just relocated to the NW at that time, joining Artisan Instruments as Vice President of Tonal Design.

Equally adept at classical and theatre styles, Mark has several theatre organ albums to his credit, and an impressive list of accomplishments including an ATOS convention performance at Radio City Music Hall. He recently recorded a video for the Capitol Theatre in York, PA, and the New Everett Theatre here in our state.

Mark specializes in the styles of Jesse Crawford and George Wright. We're happy to welcome him once again, along with his fellow musician, LYNN ANDERSEN, as our featured performers for this festive holiday event. Lynn has perfected the art of playing hand bells, and frequently joins Mark for performances such as you will enjoy at this event.



LYNN ANDERSEN
playing handbells

About the organ...

Members who attended the last two Seattle ATOS conventions will remember hearing Andy Crow and Father Miller perform on the Calvary Christian Assembly (formerly Calvary Temple) organ. The combined Kimball-Wurlitzer has a total of 19 ranks, 1327 pipes, two sets of chimes, marimba and chrysoglott. It was originally installed in 1942 at the Temple's previous "Hollywood Temple" site. The organ was based on a 2/12 Kimball from Centralia's Liberty Theatre. It was later moved to its present location, and in 1970 was rebuilt and enlarged by Balcom & Vaughan as their opus 375-A. At that time the major addition of Wurlitzer opus #697 took place. This organ was originally a Style 215

"Special" installed in the Hollywood Theatre in Hollywood, California. It was later moved to Lorin Whitney's Glendale, California residence. Whitney had the console enlarged to three manuals. Balcom & Vaughan did not use this console, but instead installed a new classical-style console. The Wurlitzer console was used for a few years at the Elsinore Theatre in Salem before the current, larger three-manual Wurlitzer console was acquired.

We're excited to once again be able to present this great-sounding organ to our PSTOS members, and especially at the hands of the very capable Mark Andersen. We look forward to seeing you Dec. 21!

Sunday, December 21, 1:00 pm

Calvary Christian Assembly Church

6801 Roosevelt Way NE • Seattle • One block east of I-5

A brief annual meeting and election of officers will precede the concert.

Refreshments will follow. To help us plan, please let us know how many will be in your party. Contact Jo Ann Evans by email at joann@pstos.org or by phone at 425-485-5465. Many thanks!

ADMISSION—adults \$10 suggested donation, age 12 and under free
Drive directions will be printed in the December Pipeline.

PUGET SOUND PIPELINE

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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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LIAISONS

AMICA & POF—Carl Dodrill • Haller Lake Comm.Club—Bob Zat
Paramount Theatre—Tom Blackwell • Wash. Center—Andy Crow

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,

2010 Convention Update

As my tenure as PSTOS President comes to a close (three years has sure gone by fast), I will transition into the role of 2010 ATOS Convention Chair. Over the last few weeks I've been encouraged by all the enthusiastic calls and e-mails I have received offering to help out. Many of you have never volunteered before and your response has truly been exceptional. That said, we still need many more members to step up and help out. The needed roles and descriptions were included in last month's Pipeline: Transportation Coordinator, Bus Captains, Venue Coordinator, Venue Liaisons, Organ Technicians, Hospitality, Banquet & Food Coordinator, Record Shop Manager, Record Shop staff, Artist Hospitality, Registration Desk, Hotel Coordinator, Exhibit Room Coordinator, Publications Coordinator and Technology Committee. If any one of these roles resonates with you, please call me at (206) 784-9203 or e-mail: tom@pstos.org. Let's talk!

I had hoped to make an announcement about our 2010 headquarters hotel this month, but the recent economic downturn has caused us to request additional safeguards in our contract to protect the chapter in the event of further worsening of the economic situation. Once this is resolved, we'll have the announcement very soon.

Paramount Update

In early October, we received the great news that STG (Seattle Theatre Group, owners of the Paramount Theatre) was awarded an \$11,500 grant from the King County 4Culture Arts program supporting PSTOS restoration work on the Paramount's Mighty Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ! This award was in response to an application that STG and PSTOS co-authored in August based on the restoration master plan developed by PSTOS.

With this new award, our total fundraising for the Paramount project is now \$65,590! That means we are over 62% of the way to our total goal of \$105,000.

In other news, the Seattle Theatre Group, in a show of support for PSTOS efforts, has recently announced that they will match all personal donations to the organ



PSTOS Coming Events

Annual PSTOS Holiday Party with MARK ANDERSEN and LYNN ANDERSEN playing organ and hand bells at Calvary Church

Our first PSTOS program at this outstanding venue in many years, it is one not to be missed.

Sunday, December 21st, 1:30PM

FLASH!

Fun events for 2009 are in the planning stage. Read all about it on page 3!

restoration fund dollar for dollar! This means that your tax-deductible donation will effectively be doubled! And, if you're a current or former Boeing, Starbucks or Microsoft employee (as well as many other Northwest companies that have a gift matching program), your contribution will effectively be TRIPLED! Please contact me at (206) 784-9203 or by e-mail: tom@pstos.org if you would like to learn more about how you can help with PSTOS's Paramount Wurlitzer restoration efforts.

Thanks to all those who have supported PSTOS fundraising efforts for the Paramount over the last several years. Strong community involvement and an impressive history of individual donations were key factors in making the 4Culture award. With your help, I'm confident we'll be able reach our total goal of \$105,000 within the next 12-18 months.

PSTOS Christmas Concert & Annual Meeting, December 21, 1:30PM

I hope you will all attend our very special Holiday program on December 21st at Calvary Christian Assembly church in the Roosevelt neighborhood of Seattle. It's been many years since we've heard the big Kimball-Wurlitzer and we are lucky to have PSTOS members Mark and Lynn Andersen performing for us in a fun, upbeat holiday concert of pipe organ and hand bells. The concert will be preceded by a quick business meeting and election of 2009 officers. Easy access from I-5 and there's plenty of free parking! Full details are included elsewhere in this issue. I hope to see you there!

...Tom Blackwell

Other NW Theatre Organ Events

◆ Kenyon Hall in West Seattle

Latest news can be found on the web at www.kenyonhall.org or by email at 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

◆ Bellingham's Mt. Baker Theatre

GOOD NEWS! After a year-long hiatus for an extensive theatre renovation, it's back to the Mt. Baker Theatre on January 11 for a program of Gershwin Music by the always enjoyable Dorothy Watson and Hal Logan playing the piano and Wurlitzer.

And on February 8, Jeff Fox will present another silent movie at the Mt. Baker.

Mark your calendar and plan to visit your theatre organ friends in Bellingham.

◆ Spokane's First Nazarene Theatre Organ Society

Ken Fuller, organizer of this new ATOS Chapter, welcomes any and all to their monthly meetings, often with open console on the historic and newly refurbished 1914 Seattle Liberty Theatre Wurlitzer. Meetings are held the first Monday of each month. For up to the minute news and events calendar, go to www.sfnatos.org

Donna Parker has openings for one or two additional students in the Seattle-Tacoma area

Donna, well-known organist and teacher residing in Portland, comes to the Seattle-Tacoma area regularly to teach. We've heard great comments about her teaching, and encourage you to contact her if you'd like more information. Good organ teachers are very scarce indeed. This is a rare opportunity to improve your skills by studying with a great teacher/coach. Contact her at donna_parker@comcast.net or by phone at 503-642-7009.

From The MAILBOX

Hello Everyone,

We have raised enough money to get started on rebuilding the Roosevelt High School Froula Memorial Pipe Organ! We still have a little bit of money left to raise, but am sure that it will come in in the next few months. So now we need volunteers! Here is the information you need to sign up for this exciting and interesting project:

The Pipe Organ Foundation will undertake the rebuilding and expansion of Roosevelt's pipe organ. Using closely guided volunteer labor, this project will be done up to professional standards but at nominal cost. Volunteers are very much needed and no experience is necessary. Volunteers will do a variety of tasks including:

- Pipe washing and polishing
- Wiring, including the sorting and connecting of hundreds of wires, and soldering (we will show you how)
- Wood working, including structural wood work and wood finishing
- Electronics for pipe magnet valves, for multiple memories, for MIDI, and for playback
- Assembling of component parts to the organ, testing, and other tasks requiring no prior experience with organs

The work will be done in an assigned space at the old Lincoln High School in Wallingford, and at the Foundation shop on Mercer Island. Daytimes, evenings, and weekends will all be utilized. The project is expected to start in October, 2008 and to last for more than a year. To ask questions and to indicate your interest, phone 206 236-3492 or e-mail carl@dodrill.net.

To get more information about volunteering, see the Foundation's website under Volunteers www.pipeorganfoundation.org.

Thanks so much for all your past support! We hope some of you will be able to volunteer....

Andrea Wilson
206-526-8120
a_wilson1125@msn.com

In Memory of John McFalls

John McFalls, husband of Cynthia, former PSTOS board member, passed away at their Bellingham home Sept. 9.

The McFalls' were loyal PSTOS supporters, frequently volunteering at events. Cynthia resigned from the board several years ago when they sold their University District home and moved to Bellingham to be near their children.

Sincere PSTOS sympathy is extended to Cynthia, her family and friends.

Nominating Committee Report

The PSTOS Nominating Committee presents the following slate of 2009 officers and board members to be voted upon at the upcoming December Annual Meeting:

President, Dave Luttinen

Vice President, Tom Roughton

Treasurer, Bill Keller

Secretary, Joani Roughton

Board members with one-year terms:

Phil Hargiss

Russ Evans (completing Tom Roughton's term)

Board members with two-year terms:

Jamie Snell

Larry Mayer

Additional nominations may be submitted to Clint Meadway, Chair, at clint@pstos.org

Most committee chairs have agreed to continue, providing very helpful continuity as a new president accepts the gavel.

Retiring president, Tom Blackwell, has accepted the position of 2010 ATOS Convention Chair, no small job indeed! He, Tom Roughton and a representative of ATOS, are working together on the agreement with a major downtown hotel. Once this is final, venues and artists will be selected, bus arrangements will be worked out, and the many details of planning a major convention will be in full swing.

Program Committee Report

The PSTOS Program Committee, headed by Ray Harris, met recently for serious brainstorming about activities and programs for 2009. Attempting to second-guess members' preferences is always a challenge, and feedback would be extremely helpful.

There is always discussion about just how many events constitutes the "right number." In years past it was thought we needed an event each month. However, attendance dwindled, and it was cut to every other month. Do members prefer concerts? Bus trips to other areas? Organ crawls such as the one in Bremerton several years ago? Home parties? Lots of food? Little food? Should programs be theatre organ only? Or would some additional variety be welcome? What about venues? How far will folks drive? Would folks use a bus if it's affordable?

Our conclusion? There's just no perfect answer! Tentative ideas for 2009 include a Valentine's Program at Haller Lake, a bus trip to Bellingham featuring their updated theatre, a colossal event at the Seattle Paramount the end of June, a home party at the Evans' home, a repeat of the popular "theatre walking tour" possibly in Tacoma, an exciting Radio/T.O. event at Kenyon Hall, and lastly, Simon Gledhill in concert at Wurlitzer Manor! Several other ideas are currently on the table and we're ALWAYS open for suggestions! Please send your feedback to ray@pstos.org. Many thanks!

Still a player after 75 years

Tacoma's Pantages Theater is an enduring tribute to a Greek immigrant who put his name on marquees all over America.

By Bart Ripp • Reprinted from *The Tacoma Tribune*, January 14, 1993.



When Tacoma's Pantages Theater opened 75 years ago [1918], Alexander Pantages declared it "by far the finest house in my circuit." Of course, he said that about a lot of them.

This photo by
Howie Clifford, 1956

The name meant magic.

For patrons of vaudeville and movies in the first third of this century, the name was as enchanting as Bijou or Rialto, Liberty or Palace, Orpheum or Paramount. While Bijou is French for jewel, and Rialto is Italian for hill and Orpheum is named for Apollo's son who sang and played the lyre, the name Pantages meant a Greek immigrant who parlayed a prostitute's grubstake into the largest independent empire of movie and vaudeville houses in America.

The name of Tacoma's 75-year-old gem of a playhouse, the name of theaters from Memphis to Vancouver, was taken from a man who never had a business partner,

never sold stock in his enterprises, rarely signed anything, for he could barely write or read, kept few records, and was said to have never, ever, bought anything on credit. His name was Alexander Pantages.

Only five Pantages Theaters survive — all in the west that he adored. It is difficult to comprehensively list the Pantages empire, for most of his theaters died long ago. Pantages built theaters in Toronto, Vancouver, Moose Jaw, Edmonton and in San Diego, San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, Chicago, Memphis, Spokane, Seattle and Tacoma.

"Many of them were lost because they were built so early," said Bill Wood,

manager of Tacoma's Broadway Theater District. "When theaters started undergoing rehabilitations in the 1970s, Pantages' theaters were already gone, or too far gone to be saved."

Born in 1864 on the Greek island of Andros, his name was Pericles Pantages. He became Alexander Pantages upon hearing of the exploits of Alexander The Great. He left Greece at 9 to wander the world.

Ship's cabin boy. Panama Canal laborer. Bootblack. Newsboy. Waiter. Barkeep. Prizefighter. Yukon gold miner. Finally in Dawson, Alaska, Pantages answered the call of the stage. He became a theater manager and booking agent.

Pages From The Past...continued

He became friendly with one Katherine Rockwell, who was known as “Klondike Kate,” queen of the Dawson dance halls. In 1902, she gave Pantages a grubstake of \$4,000. He parlayed the four grand into an empire worth \$24 million.

His first theater was on Second Avenue in Seattle. It was a storefront with wood benches and a balky movie projector. He called it the Crystal. He would later name theaters for his wife, Lois, or Savoy or Gem, but mostly for himself. Pantages.

Pantages houses booked French mentalists, Cossack dancers, Spanish tango dancers, bicyclists, jugglers, trained dogs, trained cockatoos, blackface comedians, dare-devil cowpunchers, mimes, marionettes, yodelers, boxers, ventriloquists and, always, violinists; they were the impresario’s favorite act.

In Tacoma, Pantages booked Al Jolson, who sang and did a blackface act; and W.C. Fields, who juggled and told jokes; and George Burns, who smoked cigars and cracked wise, and Charlie Chaplin, who waddled around, looking sad; and Jack Dempsey, who just appeared — he was heavyweight champion and had no real talents except for beating people up, grinning and looking good.

In 1920, one of the country’s paragons came to the Pantages to do nothing more than talk. Franklin D. Roosevelt was running for vice president — unsuccessfully — under a ticket headed by Canton (Ohio) News publisher James M. Cox. A photo survives of the strapping confident Roosevelt, not to be stricken by polio until the following year, standing under the Pantages marquee, wearing a straw boater and a celestial smile.

Like Roosevelt the politician, Pantages offered something for everyone. When the Tacoma Pantages opened 57 Januarys ago, Pantages told the Tacoma News-Ledger that the creamy terra cotta building “is splendid and meets with my approval in every detail. It is by far the finest house in my circuit.”

When Pantages opened theaters in Seattle and Los Angeles and San Francisco, he recited identical lines to reporters. In their own elegant way, the theaters were fairly similar — all designed by Benjamin Marcus Priteca, who was Scottish by heritage, Jewish by faith, architect by trade and Washingtonian by choice. Priteca designed all Pantages theaters from 1916 until 1930.

Tacoma’s Will J. Conner, longtime Puget Sound theater owner, recalled that

“all of Pantages theaters around here were alike. I could walk into the Pantages in Seattle, go in the front door blindfolded and throw the light switch over on the right wall to turn on the house lights. It was just like the Pantages in Tacoma.”

A vaudevillean at heart, Pantages viewed movies as a segue between acts. Like the



Alexander Pantages

Greek oracle at Delphi, Pantages sensed the future. It was films. In the summer of 1929, with surprising foresight, Pantages liquidated his theater empire. He received \$24 million, cash, just weeks before the stock market crashed.

Pantages became a horse owner and bettor — running and playing horses at tracks from Agua Caliente in Tijuana to the new track designed by Priteca at Renton in 1933

— the wonderful Longacres.

He visited his favorite Pantages theaters in Tacoma, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

“When Mr. Pantages came in his theater, the name had been changed to Orpheum and then Roxy, but he still walked in like he owned it,” Will Conner said. “He would give everybody a \$5 bill. Everybody on the staff, from the manager to the usher. Five bucks was like 50 bucks today.”

But Pantages was not able to enjoy his retirement. A stage-struck 17-year-old girl named Eunice Pringle alleged that Pantages raped her at his Los Angeles office. Pantages was convicted and sentenced to 1 to 50 years in prison. Freed on \$100,000 bail, Pantages appealed the case to the California Supreme Court, which granted a second trial. During that trial, Pringle, who had sued Pantages for \$1 million, dropped charges by accepting \$3,000 from him.

Pantages hinted at returning to show business, maybe buying a few theaters for sale cheap in Depression-ravaged California and Washington. But he died in his sleep at his Los Angeles home in 1936. He was 72. Cause of death was hardening of the arteries.

Pantages was buried behind the Portals of Peace, Comfort and Hope at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, Calif. Nearby are graves of Clark Gable, Errol Flynn, Lon Chaney and W.C. Fields.

Forest Lawn is generous with marble and granite statuary, not on graves, but lively scenes of children playing and cherubs dancing and musicians performing. It is appropriate that near Pantages’ grave is a small statue of a child, wide-eyed with wonder, playing a violin.

Surviving Pantages Theaters [1993]

Tacoma—Built in 1918. The earliest of B. Marcus Priteca’s Greek designs for Pantages theaters, characterized by Corinthian columns and balconies. A dreamy Tiffany glass dome accentuates the deeply ornamental interior. Restored in 1983 to its original glory, this Pantages is used as a performing arts center.

Los Angeles—Built in 1920. Gleaming white terra cotta, a rounded corner topped by a green glass dome and a classical Greek front make this Pantages similar to another Priteca design—the lost Orpheum of downtown Seattle.

Fresno, Calif.—Built in 1926. Priteca’s design features an octagonal tower framing the entry to an elaborate Spanish Baroque interior. A giant star pattern dominates the auditorium ceiling. Now called Warnors.

San Francisco—Built in 1926. A 15th century religious theme based on the Spanish Cantabrian Cathedral at Leon inspired Priteca to do this lush cast ornament front.

Hollywood—Built in 1930. Priteca’s last Pantages design. A dazzling celebration of geometric patterns outside, with fantastic golden zigzag columns and statues of aviators and movie makers inside. Host theater to Academy Awards in the 1950s.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Wurlitzer Manor again hosts outstanding theatre organ event, with Arizona's CHARLIE BALOGH at the console

PSTOS members and friends were in for a treat when they arrived at Wurlitzer Manor to hear Charlie Balogh on October 12th.

Although Charlie does little concertizing these days, he had been the main instructor at the ATOS Adult Organ Camp in August, held this year at Wurlitzer Manor. He fell in love with the instrument and was pleased to be invited back to perform for PSTOS.

Charlie plays full time at Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, AZ, and many of his numbers brought back memories of our local Pizza & Pipes days. A lifelong musician, Charlie was fully in command of the huge 4/48 Wurlitzer. Known for his rhythmic playing, he demonstrated well the solid beat heard on his many recordings.

Once again, PSTOS expresses heartfelt appreciation to Barbara and Raymond for so generously welcoming everyone to their home, decorated in every corner for Halloween. It's always such a pleasure to enjoy their warm hospitality. Many many thanks, indeed!

RIGHT: Barbara lets Charlie know how happy she is to host him at Wurlitzer Manor! Raymond enjoys the tomfoolery.



ABOVE: Charlie at the Wurlitzer Manor console at the end of the day.

