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# The WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NOR-CAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY  
PO Box 27238, Oakland, California 94602-0438 510/644-2707

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal

September 2004

## Nor-Cal's "Solo Stringer" Dean Cook plays the Johnson's Alexander Valley Winery Robert Morton, Tuesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>.



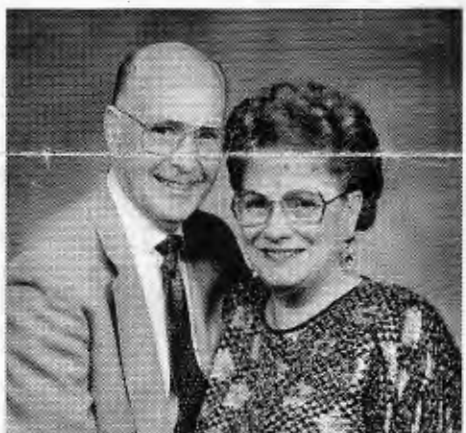
This September 21, at 7 PM, our frequent club concert reviewer Dean Cook plays for the Sonoma Valley OC at Johnson's Alexander Valley Winery, Route 128, Healdsburg.. As an open venue, we're welcome to join and partake—it promises to be a fun time.

Dean is an able writer, and I thought I'd let him reveal a small example of what a Theatre Organ Artist goes through in the 'blind date' phase of getting acquainted with a new instrument. What follows is Dean describing his first impressions as he is trying out this Robert Morton in its winery setting, and thinking about what will work for the upcoming concert.

"Just returned from a trip to Alexander Valley, to practice at Johnson's. The place did not in the slightest resemble the mental picture I had conjured up. To call the place "rustic"  
*(continued on Page Three)*

## Closing Chord

We sadly report the passing on August 31<sup>st</sup> of Ray Warner, a long-time Chapter member and former Board member.



Ray will be remembered by BCT concertgoers as the friendly man whose lapel pin showed a moving marquee message of greeting. Ray and Mary, his constant partner and wife, made every concert attendee feel welcome. Our thoughts are with his family, especially his wife of 59 years, Mary. (Because they were such a team, we are using a picture of them together, not just Ray alone.)

While Ray's bright smile and happy disposition reflected his love of life, life was not always easy. Polio as a child meant a long struggle, but he recovered to serve in World War II, and to become an outstanding dancer with Mary.

Ray retired from Pacific Bell after 35 years in order to care for the youngest of their three children when he became terminally ill.

Although Ray was involved in more activities than we can mention here, his love of music, dancing, and organs will always be remembered by Nor-Cal.

## Nor-Cal Chapter Picnic Sunday, September 26

Plan for a happy time to enjoy the company of other Nor-Cal members. Ron Bingaman and his wife have kindly invited Nor-Cal to have a picnic at their home in Blackhawk on Sunday September 26<sup>th</sup> at Noon. They have asked that members bring some folding chairs if possible and to car-pool when possible as parking is somewhat limited. They do not have barbecue facilities, so cold food will have to be the menu for the day with guests bringing their own picnic lunch. They live in a gated community, so as guests enter the area, a guard will be at the gate. Those attending are to tell the gate keeper that they are here for the "ATOS Nor-Cal Chapter Picnic". After lunch there will be open-console at Ron's "George Wright Series" Allen Organ which he has just acquired. If you

have any questions, Ron's phone number is: 925-736-4512. Ron and his wife have their home in Blackhawk, a community in Danville near the Mount Diablo State Park. Directions: From 680, coming from either the north or south, exit at Sycamore Valley Rd. and head East. (see map, next page.)

After a mile or so, the name of the road changes to Camino Tassajara - continue on Camino Tassajara for about another 5.3 miles. At the intersection with Crow Canyon Road, turn left (North) onto Blackhawk Rd. Go straight through two stop lights, and at the next stop SIGN, turn right into the gated community. This road into the Blackhawk community is Blackhawk Drive. Continue past the stop and up and then down the hill.  
*(continued on Page Two)*

<b>CHAIRMAN</b> Donald G. Siefert 1129 Augusta Pointe Ct Ripon, CA 95366 209/599-7480 dsiefert@sbcglobal.net	<b>VICE CHAIRMAN</b> Kevin J. King 3106 Sheffield Ave. Oakland, CA 94602 510/532-9345 kevjking@juno.com	<b>SECRETARY</b> Arthur Woodworth 600 Coventry Road Kensington, CA 94707 510/524-7452 awoodworth@bigfoot.com	<b>TREASURER</b> John H. O'Neill P.O. Box 2741 Oakland, CA 94602 510/632-9177	<b>EDITOR</b> Robert K. Shipley 1734-9 W El Camino Real Mountain View, CA 94040 650/968-3290 bshipley1@atmc.net	<b>PROGRAM</b> Warren P. Lubich 2950 26th Avenue San Francisco, CA 94132 415/566-2623 lubie65@aol.com	<b>TICKETS/MEMBERSHIP</b> John H. O'Neill P.O. Box 2741 Oakland, CA 94602 510/632-9177
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When emailing, include ATOS in the subject line. Otherwise, if you are unknown to the recipient's computer, its SPAM filter may divert your mail.

## Nor-Cal Chapter Picnic

(continued from Page One)

bottom of the hill is Redwood Drive where you turn left (not a cross street - watch for signs). Ron's house is 837 Redwood Drive and is on the left. Plan to park on the right side of the road.

Many thanks to Ron and his wife for opening their home and offering the opportunity to try out their new Allen.



## Memories of Everett Nourse Jeanne Nourse

My father, Everett Nourse, was staff organist at the Fox Theatre in San Francisco from 1944 until its closing in 1963.

Born in Chico, CA, and raised in Oakland, his musical journey began with piano lessons about age 7. He was composing short piano pieces by age 9 and played his first theatre organ at age 18. From then on he was hooked, and managed to play many of the organs in the Bay Area in the next few years.

The other love of his life was Louise, the girl across the street, whom he married in 1936. During my childhood I remember many times watching him play an informal concert, seeing Mom walk by, and hearing him segue into a version of "Louise." After her passing in 1992, he did not play the song again. I was pleased to find it among those selected for this recording.

A few years before his death, he called me to say he'd been listening to some early Fox recordings and was amazed by their vibrancy and beauty. Knowing him to be an extremely humble man, I was surprised to hear him wax so eloquently about his own playing. Then he said, "I played with such lushness and fire, I must have been really feeling in love."

For me this characterizes so much of his music - his capacity for love, humor,

## New Members

We welcome David C. Dillon of San Jose and David Dalton of San Francisco to the ranks.

## Donations

We thank Darrell K. Fluehr of Lincoln, Nebraska, for his donation. We mis-identified him in the previous issue.

## Board Meeting

Our next Board Meeting will be Tuesday, October 12, 2004 at 7:30 PM at the home of Art and Evelyn Woodworth 600 Coventry Road, Kensington, CA 94707, Phone 510-524-7452. All members are encouraged to attend. Please contact the meeting host so there can be sufficient chairs and refreshments.

## Open Console

Open Console for members will be held on both Sunday Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> and Sunday Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> from 1-5 PM. at Berkeley's Community Theatre.

**Important**—Call the Nor-Cal voice mail at (510) 644-2707 on Sunday morning to confirm theatre availability. If there will be Open Console, enter via the back stage door at 1930 Allston Way.

## Editor's Notes

We are again not announcing a *Windsheet* deadline, pending definite information on the next Chapter event following the Picnic. Please feel free to send me material for inclusion. I can be contacted by email at [bshiple1@atmc.net](mailto:bshiple1@atmc.net), by phone (650) 968-3290, or by US mail 1734-9 W. El Camino, Mountain View 94040.

strength, beauty, and generosity. He was a gift to all who knew and loved him. I would like to thank Dick Clay and Frank Bindt for all their help in the sharing of his music.

## Help Nor-Cal Become a Major Bay Area Institution

(Dave Goggin, who has been part of the BCT organ crew, has been working with the Nor-Cal Board on starting a new program to involve chapter members in efforts to use personal contact to boost awareness and appreciation of our marvelous BCT Wurlitzer. What follows is a "prospectus" on how those of us who have pride in our Chapter's instrument can team together to make the community at large aware of what we have given to the Bay Area music scene.)

As we enter the new millennium, the Bay Area is increasingly seen by locals as well as people from all over the globe as a major technological, and cultural center. On any given weekend you'll find groups dancing tango, practicing aikido, playing the zither, building boats, painting murals, faceting gems, making movies, and 'doing many other' interesting things. And, our region boasts an incredible ethnic diversity and a larger than average proportion of smart, energetic, and fun-loving people of all ages.

Only one thing is missing—widespread public appreciation for the pipe organ, its music, and its technology.

But, with your help, that can change! It's high time to start aggressively promoting our art form and giving the

Theater Organ the visibility, respect, and public adulation it deserves.

I am asking members of Nor-Cal to join me in an unprecedented publicity campaign. We'll take it one step at a time, first letting people in the neighborhood know what we're up to. By collaborating with UC Berkeley people, area merchants, and local politicians we'll become visible. We'll find out where to advertise our concerts and events where they'll grab the public's imagination, and who can help us make it happen. We'll develop an up-to-date publicity image and we'll find ways to educate thousands of people about who we are, what we do, why we are so wild about Theatre Organs and the people who build them and make music on them.

If you'd like to see Nor-Cal become a major performing arts organization and repository of organ lore in the Bay Area, please contact me (415) 567-6773 or email [dave65536@earthlink.net](mailto:dave65536@earthlink.net).

Together, we can make it happen.

For the Nor-Cal Theater Organ Society, the future is only just beginning and the opportunities for growth and excitement are boundless!



## In Memory of Everett Nourse

with the notation: "Everett Nourse Memorial Fund".

Mail to:

Everett Nourse Memorial Fund  
c/o Jeanne Nourse  
PO Box 429  
Vineburg, CA 95487

Contributions are tax deductible. If you have questions please contact:

**Jeanne Nourse** (707)996-3808; or email: [jenilu@vom.com](mailto:jenilu@vom.com), **OR**

**Greg Denney**, Associate Pastor of Worship & Music, Trinity Baptist Church (707)-448-5430; email: [trinity3@cwnet.com](mailto:trinity3@cwnet.com).

Trinity Baptist Church of Vacaville California would like to purchase Electronic Carillon Chimes for the church steeple, and dedicate them to Everett who, besides his job as San Francisco Fox Theatre organist, was also church organist for over 25 years. Some money has been raised already, but more is needed. The unit has the ability to play melodies (he would have loved this!!).

If you would like to help by contributing to this lasting tribute to Everett, who gave so much of his energy, creativity, and love of music to his friends, his community, and beyond, you may send a check or money order made out to "Trinity Baptist Church"

### A Thank-You Gift for donations over \$50:

You may, if you wish, receive a Thank-You-Gift—This is a CD of tunes from Everett's personal collection of his Fox masters which were not released on his Doric or Fantasy records. For tax purposes, the CD is valued at \$6.00.

*IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE CD, MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE A NOTE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE IT, AND PRINT YOUR MAILING ADDRESS CLEARLY.*

## Johnson's Winery Robert Morton

(continued from Page One)

so many ways, so it's fun to peer into the mind of an artist at the pre-concert first meeting between him and the instrument.

What follows is Dean Cook's would be an understatement! But inside an apparently run-down barn was a little jewel for the T.O. fanatic...a very colorful, very loud 3/10 Robert-Morton. "Loud" when played Full Ensemble, but it contains some quite pretty combinations.

"Cosmetically, it's a mess. The keytops are wearing off, leaving bare wood for most of the playing range for Accomp and Great, and the bottom octave of the pedals bounce like mad! If you have the cymbal on in the pedal, and just tap low F, you get about 4 strikes on the cymbal!

"But, it looks much worse than it sounds. Dreadful at first, things started to come back as I played, until a fairly big ensemble emerged; one that will be quite cohesive if it gets tuned before the program. The pedal problem must be addressed, however.

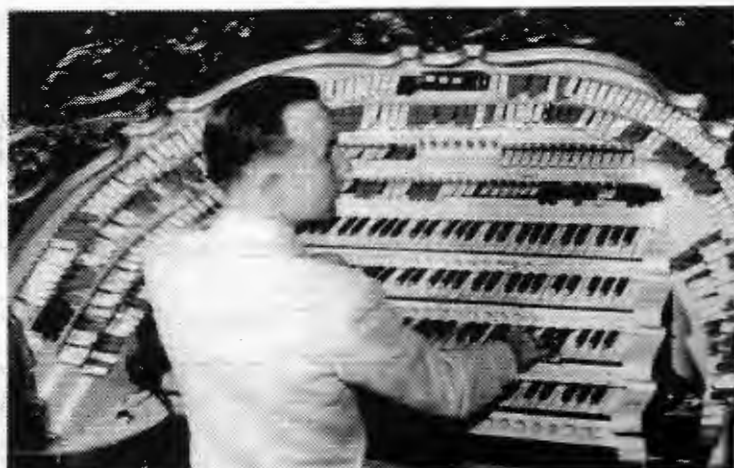
I think it liked being played; I suspect it doesn't get played often (from the console). ...These instruments are amazing,...the more I played, the more "dead" notes started to come back (that could be because of the Morton chests), and the more stable the tuning became. They're just like people,...the more you work them, the more cooperative they become! It should

### Cover Art of Thank-you Gift CD

## Everett Nourse

### "The Early Years at The Fox"

Vol. 1



#### About This Recording:

Shortly before his death Everett had finished three projects. 1. A compilation of selections on the Fox from various media which were called "Midnight at the Fox".

About 160 of these were given to friends, 2. A recording of piano and Conn organ done at Everett's Church called "Songs of Faith and Inspiration". Ramona Hinton, Everett's musical partner was on the piano and Everett was on the electronic organ. About 400 of these were released. 3. A recording that was originally done a Devtronix Organ, converted back to a file and then played back on Bob Hartzell's Robert Morton Pipe Organ at the Harmony Wynelands, in Lodi, California. Only a handful of these were released. During the time all of these recordings were made Everett kept saying that somewhere there were some "old recordings" from the Fox that he would have to dig out. He never got around to do it!

After Everett's death, his daughter Jeanne and I got all of his 10 1/2 inch, 15 ips, reels of masters together. In all reality the quality of the tape, considering that it is nearly 50 years old, is quite good. These are the results.

These recordings were made between 1956 and 1957. The earliest date is March 1956 and the latest is April 1957. As you will hear there are several mike locations used on these very rare recordings. Two names are listed as the recording engineers, Frank Killinger and Bud Perry.

I hope that you will enjoy the sounds of the Fox's 4/36 Wurlitzer and the timeless artistry of Everett Nourse.

Dick Clay

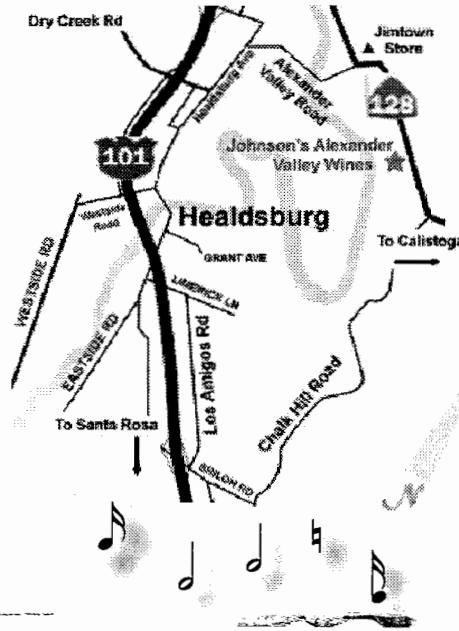
be a fun program."

Thank you, Dean. For those interested in attending, the venue location is 8333 St. Highway 128, Healdsburg, CA 95448, Phone (707) 433-2319. We've printed a map in the next column to help you find the place.

You can also hear Dean perform closer to home—he plays the Wurlitzer regularly at Angelino's in San Jose, and also plays with a band on an electronic instrument at Wooham Lounge on Stevens Creek in Santa Clara.

### Other Events

Visalia Fox—Charlie Balough, September 26, 2004. Call 559-738-1700 for more information/schedules/reservations.



### Sundries

Leon Fletcher

The word organ is from the Greek word organon, meaning "an instrument, implement, engine."

Other organs include organ gun—a musket with several barrels that fire all at once; organ of Corti—a part of the ear; organ harmonium—a very loud harmonica; organ grinder; barrel organ; et al.

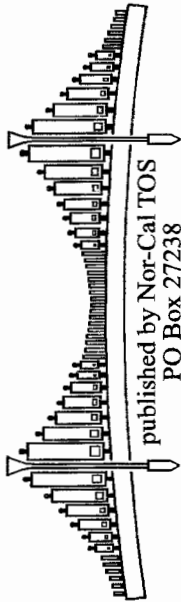
The original organ was the *syrix*, Pan's pipe

The earliest organs were hollow stems of river reeds.

Ancient organs with stops of different pitches are pictured in primitive drawings and carvings.

(sorry, out of space—to be continued).

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published by Nor-Cal TOS  
PO Box 27238  
Oakland CA 94602

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NOR-CAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, Inc.

*A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society*

ATOS is dedicated to promoting the tradition of the theatre pipe organ and public understanding and appreciation of the instrument and its music, and shall aid in any way possible the preservation of theatre organs through rehabilitation of instruments and fostering the arts of playing, building, voicing and maintenance. If you would like to join us, please write or call:

**Mr. John O'Neill at (510) 632-9177, PO Box 27238, Oakland, California 94602-0438.**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are \$40 National ATOS and \$20 Nor-Cal (\$60 total) per year. Spouse and children living at home may be included in your membership. We hope you will join us to help preserve and enjoy these great instruments.