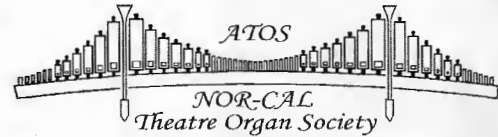

The WINDSHEET



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

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal

June 2006



Pete McCluer at his 3/17 Wurlitzer console in Shingle Springs

Annual Members' Picnic – Shingle Springs June 11, 2006

It's annual picnic time! This year, Nor-Cal members have been invited to join members of the Sierra Chapter of Sacramento at the home of **Pete and Dianne McCluer** in **Shingle Springs**, a town on **Highway 50** about 30 miles East of Sacramento. The program is a **potluck, barbecue and open console** at their **3/17 Wurlitzer!**

Each year at this time **Pete and Dianne McCluer** open their beautiful hilltop hideaway to members and friends for the big party. The McCluers have built a special gathering place just to house the ever-growing 3/17 Wurlitzer, which was originally installed in the Tulare Theatre in central California. And to think Pete caught the bug when he started helping out with the installation of the Wurlitzer at the Towe Auto Museum!

So bring your favorite potluck salad or casserole or dessert – and a hefty appetite for music.

You should plan to arrive around **12:30 PM on Sunday, June 11th**. Pete's address is **5001 Mistywood Lane, Shingle Springs, CA 95682**. If you should get lost, call Pete or Dianne at (530) 676-5922. The drive from Sacramento to Shingle Springs should take about 45 minutes. Take **Hwy 80** from the Bay Area to Sacramento. Follow signs through

(Picnic continued on Page Three)

Two Blower Incidents

Sometimes pipe organ blowers will run reliably for decades, but considering that most of the big motors were designed and built perhaps 80 years ago, it's a wonder that so many are still running.

But to have *two* local installations suffer rather spectacular failures within two weeks is quite unusual.

First, the blower for **Ray Taylor's Castro Theater Wurlitzer** burned out its windings during a rehearsal on April 27th, as the result of the blowout of the 'wind sock' that connects the blower outlet to the main wind line, causing the blower motor to overload, with the decrease in resistance to the air flow. Rebuilding the motor is a big job and is being undertaken, as we write this. **Dick Taylor** is hopeful that the instrument will be back to normal within a week or so.

Then on May 11, when **Dean Cook** turned on the organ's blower at **Angelino's** in San Jose for the evening's festivities, the **Spencer Orgo-Blo 220-V, 3-phase motor** promptly and literally blew out, knocking out the electrical power to the restaurant, and filling first the organ chamber, and then the restaurant itself, with thick, acrid smoke. Fortunately, the only customers at the time were **Cliff Luscher**, the organ technician, and his wife, Judy.

The Fire Department was called, and after carefully and thoroughly checking the chamber with an infra-red camera, they used a gasoline-powered fan to evacuate smoke from the chamber and the restaurant. Investigation of the restaurant's electrical system revealed the problem to be over-loading of the out-dated electrical circuits, caused by the **Spencer Orgo-Blo's motor burnout**. The breakers on the blower

(Blower, continued on Page Three)

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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.



Review by
Art and Evelyn
Woodworth

Our usual concert audience at Berkeley Community Theatre was augmented by a bus load of people from Santa Rosa. Lew brought the console up with the **Glen Miller** arrangement of *In the Mood*. As usual for Lew's big-band numbers, this was a true transcription, with all the solos, riffs, and accents heard on the classic recording. Lew's organ registrations for each part of the music had the same tonal dynamics as the corresponding section of the Miller band. He followed with a sassy, brassy *All That Jazz* from the Show **Chicago**. Lew then played *Because of You*, using rich blends of Tibias and Vox Humanas. Next was the novelty song Lew called "The Birdie Dance" (actually, *Dance Little Bird*). We have never heard such a remarkable use of the Wurlitzer Bird Whistle. It chirped realistically right along with the melody and gave the impression of changing pitch along with the melody, which is, of course, impossible.

During his on-going classical music studies, **George Gershwin** wrote *Lullaby for String Quartet*. It was a gorgeous, languid tango using many combinations of the organ's string ranks. From the **Joan Crawford/Fred Astaire** movie *Dancing Lady*, Lew played *Hi, Ho, The Gang's All Here* and, with very mellow reeds over voxes and strings, *Everything I Have Is Yours*. A drum cadence led us into the *Colonel Bogey March*, with whistling tibias at the right spots. In remembrance of **Tom Hazleton's** ability to get the utmost color from an organ, Lew played *Cantabile*, a romantic piece by Belgian composer **Joseph Jongen**. This was an atmospheric *tour de force*, bringing many beautiful and mysterious visions to the mind's eye. In a different mood, Lew played *Lady of Spain* with lots of castanets and trumpet flourishes. He brought the first half to a close with a powerful rendition of *Bolero*. As **Mr. Ravel** intended, it slowly built in a smoky, sensuous manner to its rousing conclusion.

Lew started the second half with another **Glen Miller** transcription. This time it was a letter perfect recreation of the Glen Miller Band arrangement of *Saint Louis*

Blues March. Next was the Chordettes' *Mister Sandman*, starting with the familiar notes of the opening chords played on the Chrysoglot and the Aluminum Bar Harp. Lew then linked together songs from two movies of a few years back. They were *The Shadow of Your Smile* and *It's A Wonderful World*.

A rousing medley from **Oklahoma!** included *Oklahoma!*, *I'm Just A Girl Who Can't Say No*, *People Will Say We're In Love*, *Oh What A Beautiful Morning*, and a bit of *The Cowman and The Farmer Should Be Friends*. This was nicely paced, with just the right amount of time allotted for each song. Next was a medley of Beatles songs including *Obli Di, Obli Da* (which became somewhat of a fugue), *Yesterday*, *Michelle* (which had that vibes/piano **George Shearing** sound), and *When I'm 64* (which had a brassy **Sidney Torch** sound).

Lew delighted us with his playing of **George Gershwin's** *Rhapsody in Blue*. It is always amazing to hear how he plays all of the piano part while also being the orchestra. He then took requests, playing *Flight of the Bumblebee* with snarling strings, a low-down *The Mooch*, a lively *Charleston*, and the *Toccata* from **Vidor's** *Fifth Organ Symphony*, a trem-off spectacular. Lew wrapped it all up with the **George Wright** arrangement of *Love for Sale*, complete with the snarling post horns. Thanks, Lew, for another wonderful musical adventure!

Theatre Organ Course at Stanford: June 26 to July 24

The course will focus primarily on the music of the Theatre Organ. We will listen to wonderful examples of theatre organ performance, from Jesse Crawford to Jelani Eddington, and discuss how the performer uses the unique sounds and features of the instrument to create such marvelous music. The course meets on the Stanford University campus for four Monday evenings beginning on June 26.

The instructor will be Nor-Cal member and Castro Theatre staff organist **Harry Garland**. Advanced registration is necessary. More information can be found on the web site: <continuingstudies.stanford.edu> or by calling the Stanford Continuing Studies office at (650) 725-2650.

Windsheet

OPEN
CONSOLE
Hosted by
Chris Nichols



This is an opportunity for Nor-Cal members to try their hand at playing the Chapter's Wurlitzer at the Berkeley Community Theatre. When the theatre is available, these sessions run from 1 to 5 PM. The next *scheduled* dates are Sunday, **June 4th, 2006** and Sunday, **July 16th**.

Open Consoles are informal and our genial host, **Chris Nichols**, ensures that any Nor-Cal member feels comfortable. He lends help and support to anyone who needs it. Depending on how many members are present, each has one or more 15-minute sessions at the console.

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

CHAIRMAN'S WINDLINE Hello Nor-Cal members!



Well, another concert season is over. I hope all of you got to at least one, if not all, of the Public concerts this season at Berkeley. If you didn't get to any of the concerts, well, I'll be blunt... shame on you. —

Maybe I'm in a grumpy mood today, but Nor-Cal really needs your support at those concerts, and don't forget: YOU are Nor-Cal!

It takes a dedicated, volunteer crew countless hours to produce every concert. It involves much more than turning on the organ and having the guest artist sit down and press keys. Aside from the usual, on-going work on the organ, preparation for the concert begins a year in advance. It all starts with the arrangement of available dates between artists and theatre. Then there are the mailers to create, duplicate, label, and mail. As concert time draws near, EVERY pipe in every rank is tested, every percussion note, and every trap and effect is checked. Any problems are corrected.

June 2006

On the weekend of the concert, the organ is tuned, lighting is set, rehearsals are scheduled, and the artist is transported to and fro. The day of the concert, additional crew arrives to set up the record table, box office, sign boards, equipment, etc. After the concert, many of these chores are done in *reverse*, putting things away and closing up production until the next time. We do all of this for the love of it and for you.

Too often I have heard people express their sorrow that the Oakland Paramount organ concert series no longer exists. I too miss going there 3 or 4 times a year to hear the best of the best in the theatre organ world. I would be even sadder to be talking about how great the Berkeley concert series was and that we wish it was still happening. Often things are not fully appreciated until they are gone.

Kevin

(Picnic, continued from Page One)

Sacramento to **Hwy 50/Placerville**. As you approach the city of Folsom, watch on your left for the *Intel* complex. As you are passing *Intel*, look at your odometer. Exactly *14 1/2 miles* from *Intel* you will come to **Shingle Springs Drive**, also marked **EXIT 39**. At the bottom of the off ramp, turn **Left**, go under the freeway and up to the gate straight ahead. It should be open, but in case it isn't, scroll through the names on the call box, call the McCluers and they will let you in. Continue through the gate to the first **Left**, which is **Tennessee Drive**, and take the next **Right** on **Mistywood Lane**. Turn into the driveway to the **Left**. Look for the mailbox with the number **5001**. Pull in and park up on the grassy knoll. Watch for the balloons and the paper plate signs with the ATOS letters on them. Get out of the car and follow the path past the main house and into the long building straight ahead.

Tom Thompson will be playing the walk-in music as you arrive around **12:30 PM**. The potluck lunch begins at **1:00 PM** with open console after lunch.

(Blower, continued from Page One)

itself cut out, preventing what could have been a much more serious situation. The Fire Department's IR camera revealed the blower motor to be "white-hot" (FD's words).

June 2006

The blower motor was taken to a repair shop, and should be back online very soon.

Dean would like to add a personal note of thanks to the SJFD, who arrived promptly and showed extreme care and respect for the Wurlitzer while working within its chamber.

[Late breaking news: the blower should be running by the June 10th weekend. pub]

Nor-Cal TOS Member Badges

You've probably seen the Nor-Cal TOS member badges; they're dark blue plastic (except for Life Members, theirs are yellow) featuring the pipework Golden Gate Bridge logo, along with the club name and your name. If you don't have one yet, you can order yours through **Bill Schlotter** at a cost of \$10. Send Bill your check and tell him how you want your name to appear. Badges will be mailed to you in 2-3 weeks from receipt of your order. Bill's address is 6203 Elderberry Dr., Oakland, CA 94611.



EDITOR'S RAVINGS

A recent study showed that if a woman were paid for the many kinds of work she does in the home, at rates comparable to what would have to be paid for someone else to do those same tasks, the average wife or mother would earn something like \$130,000 a year!

I'm sure that's completely true and we men should never forget it!

Nor-Cal TOS has some loyal volunteers who also freely give of their time and talents without pay, and this month I would like to acknowledge them.

First of all, the organ crew, under the expert leadership of our crew chief **Bill Schlotter**, are hard at work almost every Saturday, repairing, building, tuning, making our Berkeley Community Theatre Wurlitzer arguably the best maintained theatre pipe organ in the world. Every artist who plays here testifies to the joy of performing on an instrument with no missing or sour notes and which generates such rich and powerful musical tones. Rather than try to acknowledge each crew member by name and risk omitting some

who are only able to help on occasion, I will just suggest that if *you* know one of the crew, please make it a point to express *your* appreciation, the next time you meet.

Next, your elected Board of Directors and Nor-Cal officers carry out all the planning for (and execution of) the rich program of activities, as well as the routine administration of the Society's business. In addition to meeting at least six times a year, all of these folks put in additional time and effort between board meetings. The Officers of Nor-Cal are appointed by the nine-person Board, three of whom are elected each year, for 3-year terms. The names and contact information for the current officers are published at the bottom of page one of each issue of the *Windsheet*.

In addition to the officers, other members often assist with such tasks as staffing the box office, record sales and greeting the public at concerts, reviewing concerts for the *Windsheet*, conducting monthly *open console* sessions, etc.

Finally, we are most fortunate to have some generous members who make donations, either in cash or needed organ parts. We are grateful for their generosity and pledge to use their gifts for the benefit of the entire membership.

My main point here is that Nor-Cal TOS is a *volunteer* organization. Without our volunteers, we could not continue to operate. It is true that nobody serves who doesn't enjoy doing so. I think that is probably true of women in the home, too—except, perhaps, for a few who may feel trapped; but I hope that doesn't describe anyone in Nor-Cal TOS!

But volunteers can tire of carrying their responsibilities too long, and people do move away or have health problems. That's why I hope that *nobody* will take our volunteers for granted. We can nearly always use more volunteers and I encourage you to inquire how you might contribute to the success of Nor-Cal TOS. And in case you are approached by an officer or Board member and asked for assistance, I hope you will give it your serious consideration.

Nor-Cal TOS is one of the finest membership organizations I know of, and it is purely the result of our many volunteers.

THANK YOU!

Tom

Windsheet

Page Three

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 3, 2006 SATURDAY (7:30 PM) and **June 4 SUNDAY** (2:00 PM): Stanford Theatre, Palo Alto: *Winning of Barbara Worth*, organ accompaniment by **Clark Wilson**

June 10, 2006 SATURDAY (7:30 PM) and **June 11 SUNDAY** (2:00 PM): Stanford Theatre, Palo Alto: *Romola*, organ accompaniment by **Dennis James**

June 11, 2006 SUNDAY (See lead article on Page One): *Members' Picnic - 3/19 Wurlitzer* at Home of **Pete McCluer**, Shingle Springs, CA

June 17, 2006 SATURDAY (7:30 PM) and **June 18 SUNDAY** (2:00 PM) **Stanford Theatre**, Palo Alto: *Kiki*, organ accompaniment by **Jim Riggs**

June 24, 2006 SATURDAY (7:30 PM) and **June 25 SUNDAY** (2:00 PM): **Stanford Theatre**, Palo Alto: *Her Sister from Paris*, organ accompaniment by **Dennis James**

July 1, 2006 SATURDAY (7:30 PM): **Stanford Theatre**, Palo Alto: *The Rescue*, organ accompaniment by **Dennis James**

July 9, 2006 SUNDAY (*Tentative*, time to be announced): **BERKELEY COMMUNITY THEATRE: Stage Door Social — Hazleton Memorial** (Call 510/ 644-2707, listen to the recorded message to confirm the arrangements, since this is not booked as a public concert.)



August 5, 2006 SATURDAY (9:00 AM): **Grand Lake Theatre**, Oakland: *Members and Guests Concert*, **Kevin King** at the console of the 3/18 Wurlitzer.

OTHER VENUES

Angelino's, 3/13 Wurlitzer, 3132 Williams Rd, San Jose, CA. Fridays & Saturdays, 6 to 9 p.m. **Dean Cook** or **Don Croom**. (408) 243-6095.

Bella Roma Pizza, 3/16 Wurlitzer, 4040 Alhambra Ave., Martinez, CA. **Dave Moreno**, **Bob Reichert**, **Kevin King** at the console. (925) 228-4935.

Castro Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 429 Castro St., SF, CA. Intermission music played daily by **David Hegarty**, **Warren Lubich** or **Harry Garland**. (415) 621-6120. <www.castrotheatre.com>

Grand Lake Theatre, 3/18 Wurlitzer, 3200 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA. Intermission music: **Warren Lubich** (Fridays) & **Kevin King** (Saturdays). (510) 452-3556.

Palace of the Legion of Honor, 4/63 E. M. Skinner, Lincoln Park, San Francisco Presidio. Saturdays and Sundays from 4:00 to 4:45 PM. Free after museum admission. **David Hegarty** or **Keith Thompson** plays an *Organ Pops Concert* on some weekends, other artists play classical concerts on other weekends. (415) 750-3600.

<www.legionofhonor.org>

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Paramount Theatre, 4/26 Wurlitzer, 2025 Broadway, Oakland, CA. Public tours on first and third Saturdays of month at 10 AM (510) 465-6400.

Stanford Theatre, 3/21 Wurlitzer, 221 University Ave, Palo Alto, CA. Organ played nightly. See also Upcoming Events. (650) 324 - 3700. <www.stanfordtheatre.org>

Towe Auto Museum, 3/15 Wurlitzer, 2200 Front St., Sacramento, CA. Free Sunday concerts with Museum Admission (exceptions, Sierra Chapter concerts). <www.sierrachapterATOS.org>

Visalia Fox Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 300 W. Main St., Visalia, CA. (559) 625-1FOX (1369).



OTHER CHAPTERS

Sierra Chapter, Sacramento, CA
<www.sierrachapterATOS.org>

Los Angeles TOS
<www.LATOS.org>

Saturday, **June 3, 2006** *Twenty-Six Miles Across the Sea* 19th annual Silent film Benefit for the Catalina Island Museum: "Show People" featuring **Marion Davies** with **Chris Elliott** at the 4/16 Page in the Avalon Theatre. The boat leaves San Pedro 7:50 AM and Departs Avalon at 6:30 PM.

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. Neal R. Wood** at (415)861-7082 <nealwood@pacbell.net> , 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.