
The WINDSHEET



JANUARY 2017

Newsletter of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society
www.norcaltos.org (510) 644-2707
P. O Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625

Berkeley Community Theatre
1930 Allston Way, Between Milvia Street &
Martin Luther King, Jr. Way



P W Bowen in Concert **Berkeley Community Theatre** **2:00 PM, Sunday January 29** *Note earlier starting time!*

Enter through Stage Door at 1930 Allston Way

Continuing NorCal's tradition of combining a concert with our Annual Business Meeting of Members, we will be treated to a performance by our own Paul-Wesley Bowen at our mighty Wurlitzer. "P W," as he likes to be called, is well known for his active hand registrations and the variety of styles in his playing. His programs are always enjoyable and well received drawing from all over the theatre organ repertoire. We may expect to hear many musical styles and tempos including some great jazz arrangements including a touch of light classic.

A native Californian, P W was born with his music, playing the piano from age four, and becoming enamored of an old pump organ at age nine, then a Hammond organ, and then, when he heard a GW album on the radio that played "Quiet Village", he was permanently hooked.

During his college years, he played events for people like Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Muriel Vanderbilt Adams. He played a Rodgers for an ATOS convention lunch in Oakland in the 1960's, where he met Gaylord Carter. P W is currently

organist at the Paradise United Methodist Church in the town of the same name in northern California.

P W traveled some and ended up in in Minnesota, during which time he became a representative of the Dutch organ manufacturer, Eminent Organ Co. He played at many large churches, Republican conventions, and conferences around the states. He became friends with Reinie Delzer and played several functions at his home in Bismarck, ND. He made his only recording on the 3/27 Kimball organ at the Center Theatre in Milwaukee, *Midnight at the Center*, before the organ was removed.



Album photos by Dave Moreno

We are confident that Paul will play a great variety of music. The play list on the back of his album included Spinning Wheel (was that by Blood, Sweat, & Tears?), Poinciana, Bach's Air on a G-String, Danny Boy, Aquarius, Song of India, Green Eyed Lady, and When Day is Done. At only four numbers to the side of a 12" LP, each received a thorough, artistic treatment.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

The Annual Membership Meeting of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2017 at the Berkeley Community Theatre, 1930 Allston Way, Berkeley, California. The meeting will follow PW's concert.

**THE NOR-CAL ANNUAL MEETIBNG AND CONCERT
ARE FREE OF CHARGE FOR NORCAL MEMBERS AND
THEIR GUESTS.**

*Special Note: Due to the time of year, expect the theatre to be **COLD!***

THE MIDNIGHT AT THE CENTRE ALBUM

By P W Bowen

If you have a collection of the ATOS magazines going back to somewhere in the 1960s-70s, you will find an article by Steve Adams, our former president. It tells about a group of ATOS lovers, Steve, PW, Norm Gullixson, Karl Eilers, and a few others (even got Fred Hermes, Jr. in on it) who, when Steve had contacted the owner of Big Bob's Restaurants, Bob Wian, who also owned the Centre Theatre (before its present "re-conditioning") and asked if the group could work on the Kimball and get a recording on it. There had been some previous attempts to do so, but a mutual working relationship with the previous people who also wanted to work on it was never reached.

Long story short, the group spent many weekends there, driving from Minneapolis, MN to Milwaukee, WI, sleeping in the green rooms of the theatre and "resurrecting" the organ.

We were never able to get a really complete recording as water damage had taken out the brass chest in the solo chamber, too badly to get it working. However, the rest of the organ, and to this day we remember the famous ten ranks of Kimball strings that, when used properly, just created a shimmering effect in the entire auditorium.

The amount of time we spent would take too much space to tell, so cutting to the short version, we got it working (duct tape on the punctured swell shade motors, etc.), and the recording was made from the balcony. As the organ's contribution to the end of the recording, one of the swell motor's "duct tape assistants" in the swell let loose, and proceeded to give one of the loudest "Bronx cheers" ever heard. (No, it got cut out.) Needless to say, it is not the best, but it gives a wonderful idea of how powerful the organ was.

The really great highlight was when the astounding John Muri finished the entire time with a Silent Film Performance of "The Ten Commandments." We were not even aware, because of his skill, how the organ just made that movie come alive. Later that week, we went to Fred Hermes and did a concert on that beautiful behemoth. Wonderful time.

Sadly, a few years after the recording and Muri's concert, it was donated to the Boy Scouts but sat in crates for years. Finally, it was installed in its current home (with a lot of additions) in the Oriental Theatre.

Last Centre Theatre note: A sad note, during the work, someone broke in during the night and stole the Kinura, a reed that had the ability to "blow its nose" over the top of the whole remaining organ and was a delight to work with. Its last known presence was in an installation somewhere in a restaurant in Milwaukee but after that business closed, no one can tell where it went. I just hope it didn't end up on a slag heap - never heard such a wonderful, "snotty" Kinura before or since.

Paul Wesley (P W)

PAUL QUARINO CONCERT OCTOBER 23

Review by Roy Powlan

Paul's concert at BCT was a wonderful and moving reminder of an older style of organ playing that was designed to simply be beautiful. His arrangements, almost all medleys, were seamless and always well constructed to lead the listener gracefully from one selection to the next. His medleys were always about the music and not about drawing attention to his formidable technique which is, I believe, the goal of all artists in any media. The music and tunes he chose were, to me, old friends from past times and I was very glad to meet them again, so artfully presented.

Further for me, Paul's explanations of his music and motivations during the concert were very welcome because they were so obviously heartfelt. It is rare for an artist to open up this way which drew me further into his music and made for a very special afternoon. His style reminded me once again of the old "pizza" days when organists such as he had to create a special atmosphere which made the patrons welcomed, entertained and above all, happy to be there. I was happy to be there at BCT that afternoon. Thank you Paul.

CHAIRMAN'S WIND LINE

Dear Friends,

In our previous Windsheet, I raised the issue of the Board of Directors, and how it presents a challenge for a small organization such as ours to sustain a 9-member Board, as well as to assign a separate Nominating Committee of three members each time new Board Members are selected. The Directors discussed this issue in detail at our December Board meeting, with a general consensus in favor of reducing the required number of Board Members from 9 to 5 through attrition, and the number of Nominating Committee Members from 3 to 1. Elimination of term limits for Directors was also discussed, but was considered to be the least desirable option and not necessary at this time. To make an official change in the required number of Board Members and Nominating Committee Members would require modification of NorCal's Bylaws, and as such, will need to be approved by a majority of Active Members of NorCal in order to take effect. This issue will be discussed further at our upcoming Annual Business Meeting, which I hope you will attend, but will not be voted on at that time. Any vote on changing the NorCal Bylaws must take place by mail ballot, so that all Active Members have the opportunity to vote.

Wishing everyone the best for the new year,

Tom Madsen

OPEN CONSOLE SCHEDULE

Chris Nichols will host open console sessions at Berkeley Community Theatre on the following upcoming Sundays: **January 15th, February 19th, March 12th, and April 23rd.**

These sessions run from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Enter through the stage door at 1930 Allston Way, Berkeley. These events are a very social open house for NorCal members (both players and listeners) and their guests. Most of those playing are amateurs but some are definitely professionals. Chamber tours are available.

Here is a chance for you to play (and/or see and hear up close) one of the best (and biggest) Wurlitzers in the world! Please be sure to call the NorCal answering machine the day of the event at 510-644-2707 to make certain that the event is still on.

PARAMOUNT THEATRE PROJECT

The NorCal organ crew is continuing restoration of the water damaged 5-rank chest from the main chamber of Oakland's Paramount Theatre of the Arts (PTA). This process includes complete disassembly, replacement of the leather gaskets, replacement of the leather on many of the pneumatics, and replacement of valve parts. The final steps will be refinishing, reassembly, and delivery back to the PTA. If you would like to see the "innards" of a Wurlitzer chest and/or would like to get involved in chest restoration (no experience necessary – we will teach you how), please join our work parties which take place most Saturdays from 10 to 5. Be sure to call the NorCal answering machine at 510-644-2707 to make certain that the work party is still on for that day.

MORE ABOUT THE THEATRE IN MILWAUKEE

Geoff Hansen writes (in reference to PW's album): *As you may suspect, I have this album. It's on the Kimball from the Warner Grand Theater, Milwaukee. The album is in Rio Vista. The instrument is now a few blocks away in the Oriental Theater. Allegedly the organ planned for Radio City Music Hall when the Depression gave Kimball a knock-out blow.*

Editor's note: Mr. Rothfael ("Roxy") helped plan the Music Hall and the Center Theatre (both part of Rockefeller Center). He liked Kimball organs and had Kimballs ordered for both theatres. However, Mrs. Rockefeller preferred Wurlitzers and put her foot down which is why both houses had Wurlitzers with Kimball specs.

NORCAL CONSOLE FEATURED ON ATOS WEB SITE

In early December Wayne Joseph passed the word that there is a picture of the NorCal Center Console on the home page of the ATOS web site. We don't know how long it will be there.

ATWOOD ALLEN GOES TO NON-PROFIT FOUNDATION

As previously reported, late NorCal member (and former editor of this publication) Bert Atwood left his beloved custom GW4 Allen organ to NorCal in hopes of it finding a suitable new home. Bert's dream was that she (he called her "Gigi") would be preserved in a place where she could be heard by the public. This has now been accomplished as she has been added to the collection owned by a non-profit located in Las Vegas where she will be under the watchful eye of Phil Maloof. You can learn about Phil and this remarkable collection on his web site:

<http://unclephilmaloof.com>



Gigi goes onto the truck for a ride to her new home

PITTSBURG'S CALIFORNIA THEATRE MORTON

PREMIERES - Saturday, December 17, 2016 – As reported by Tom LaFleur, Pacific Community Services, Inc., (925) 383-1610.

Pittsburg's Robert-Morton theatre organ played to a full house at the historic California Theatre yesterday for PCT's "Home for Christmas" show. It was the first time since 1948 that the music burst from the chambers of the California Theatre before a paying audience.

Dave Moreno was BRILLIANT at the organ, playing the house in, the intermission and playing the house out, but it was his musical support of a silent Christmas cartoon that brought the greatest applause of the night.

Dave played the Morton from a 1921 Wurlitzer 2 manual console put together over the last 2 ½ weeks after we were told that the 3 manual Robert-Morton could not remain in the theatre auditorium until we constructed an organ lift for storing the console below the orchestra pit. (*Roy Powlan reports that the pedal board was a loaner from Dick Taylor.*)

Steve Restivo donated his Red Devil Wurlitzer console shell, Dick Taylor gave us the pedal assembly and our crew of Geoff Hansen, Julie Porter, Tom LaFleur and (mostly) Dave Moreno got the Red Devil in presentable playing form. The smaller Wurlitzer console performed wonderfully at Dave's hand and can be easily transported to and from PCSI's office to the theatre next door.

Much work needs to be done on the organ and organ lift and we are ending the year with \$1,400 in invoices outstanding. We are asking each of you to consider a year end donation to help us as we continue the rebuild of the Robert-Morton and organ lift. Our goal is to raise \$30,000, including \$20,000 for the organ lift for the next 6 months of the project. Pacific Community Services, Inc is a 501(c) (3) charitable organization and donations are tax

deductible. Please make checks payable to “PCSI - Organ Project” and send them to:

Pacific Community Services, Inc.
Attn. Tom LaFleur
329 Railroad Avenue
Pittsburg, CA 94565



Dave Moreno at the California Theatre

HOW OFTEN DO WE PUBLISH THE WINDSHEET?

We publish whenever we have an event scheduled rather than on a set schedule.

OTHER VENUES

All Saints Episcopal, Sacramento. Sunday, January 15 at 4:00 pm. Walt Strony will accompany the silent classic *The General* starring Buster Keaton on their large pipe organ. Suggested donation \$15.00 (children under 12 Free). Childcare provided, reception after. Free popcorn! 2076 Sutterville Road, Sacramento.

Grand Lake Theatre - 3/18 Wurlitzer. 3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland. Intermission music played by Warren Lubich or Gordon Pratt (Fridays) & Bob Reichert (Saturdays). (510) 452-3556.

Paramount Theatre - 4/26 Wurlitzer Friday, January 13 - Vertigo. Doors open 6:30, Wurlitzer 7:30, Movie 8:00. 2025 Broadway, Oakland. Public tours on first and third Saturdays of the month at 10:00 am. (510) 465-6400.

www.paramounttheatre.com

Stanford Theatre - 3/21 Wurlitzer. 221 University Avenue, Palo Alto. See their **Silent Film Schedule**. The organ is played before and between films by **Bill Taylor, David Hegarty, or Jerry Nagano**. (650) 324-3700. stanfordtheatre.org

Palace of the Legion of Honor - 4/63 E. M. Skinner. Lincoln Park, San Francisco Presidio. Saturdays and Sundays, 4:00 to 5:00 pm. Free after museum admission. **David Hegarty** plays an **Organ Pops Concert** on the first full weekend of each month. Other artists play classical concerts other weekends. (415) 750-3600.

Visalia Fox Theatre - 4/22 Wurlitzer. 300 West Main Street, Visalia. (599) 625-1369.

MEMBERS LOBBY ONLINE

For NorCal members only, there is a link near the bottom of our website home page to take you to our “Members’ Lobby.” A password is required in order to view any of the Members’ Lobby. Members who need the password should contact Neal Wood. His email and phone number are at the bottom of the last page.

GET YOUR WINDSHEET BY E-MAIL!

Would you like to receive your copy of the Windsheet by email? It will be in full color; it will be wrinkle and tear-free; it will arrive sooner; and you will save NorCal the cost of postage and envelopes. If so, please contact our Membership Chair, Neal Wood nealwood@pacbell.net.

NORCAL RECORDINGS FOR SALE

See the NorCal web site for recordings of our Wurlitzer. They will all be on sale at our next concert or may be ordered from Neal Wood at nealwood@pacbell.net.



NorCal Theatre Organ Society is a Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS). 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 call or write:

Mr. Neal R. Wood at
(415) 861-7082 or nealwood@pacbell.net
P.O. Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625

Dues are \$20 for NorCal TOS only. For an additional \$50 you may also join National ATOS (\$70 total) per year for full voting memberships in both NorCal and ATOS as well as your subscription to *Theatre Organ* magazine, the six times a year glossy journal of ATOS. Spouse and children living at home may be included in both NorCal and ATOS memberships. We hope you will join us to help preserve and enjoy these great instruments.

NorCal Theatre Organ Society Contacts:

NorCal Web Site: Current & recent past Windsheets in .pdf format, up-to-date Calendar of Events on line, and list of the CD's available: norcaltos.org

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