


JULY 2022

Newsletter of the NorCal Theatre Organ Society
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P. O. Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625

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

NORCAL PICNIC AT KEVIN KING'S STUDIO

Saturday, July 23rd, Noon to 4:30
Kevin King's Organ Studio
2851 Creston Road, Walnut Creek

It's been almost three years (July 2019) since we have had our NorCal summer social at the home music studio of Kevin King. It's time to get together again. You are welcome to bring your own lunch if you like, or just come and visit with friends.



Kevin King's Studio

The gates will open at 12:00 noon. At about 1:00 pm, Kevin will demonstrate the 3/20 Wurlitzer organ and play a mini program. This will be followed by an "open console" for those who wish to have a go at the Mighty Wurlitzer. Pack your

picnic basket and maybe grab a bottle of wine and catch up with fellow NorCal members and guests.

If you are unvaccinated or just more comfortable, feel free to bring a mask.

HUNTER HALL CONCERT MAY 7

David Marsh at the Mighty Wurlitzer

On Saturday, May 7th the Sierra Chapter of ATOS presented organist David Marsh in concert. The program took place at Hunter Hall in Rio Vista. In some ways, this felt like a "homecoming" since there have been few, if any live concert programs over the past couple of years. Many friends who had not visited during "The Plague" enjoyed catching up on life events. The chance to gather together again in person was very nice.



David Marsh at Hunter Hall
(C) 2022 Bob Suffel

It is always a treat to visit this venue to see what new treasures Geoff Hanson has added to his collection. Numerous musical instruments are on display along with a fantastic collection of vintage theatre artifacts and memorabilia. Hunter Hall feels like a “mini museum” dedicated to the classic motion picture era of the early 20th century. Many NorCal members were in attendance.

The artist for the day, David Marsh, presented a widely varied program of music interspersed with his unique sense of humor.

David began his program with “Bojangles Of Harlem” (from the movie *Swing Time*.) The concert featured many traditional theatre organ favorites including: Here’s That Rainy Day, I’m Beginning To See The Light, Hot Dog, Tico Tico, Misty, Deep Purple, and many more. Once the audience caught on to David’s unique sense of humor and love of puns, it was like a party among friends. Refreshments were served at intermission which added to the cordial atmosphere. David Marsh lives in the southern California area, so hopefully we will hear from him again soon.

-Kevin King

David’s playlist included:

Bojangles of Harlem
 Hungarian Rag
 Here’s that Rainy Day
 I’m Beginning to See the Light
 Not While I’m Around
 Really Not Jarvis
 Somewhere over the Rainbow
 Hot Dog
 Cheek to Cheek, Tico Tico, Never on Sunday
 Java
 Tiptoe Through the Tulips
 The Boy Next Door
 Favorite Hymns
 Unidentified Tango
 Let’s Keep It Gay
 Misty
 Chopsticks
 Deep Purple

California Here I Come

CHAIRMAN’S WIND LINE

As this *Windsheet* goes to press, Gail and I will be attending the 2022 ATOS National Convention in San Diego, July 3rd to 7th. Because of the COVID pandemic, it’s been 3 years since the last convention in 2019 in Rochester, New York. It’s great that ATOS can have a convention once again and for those of us in California, it will be a real treat to be able to attend in our own state.



CLOSING CHORD

Jack Gustafson, August 28, 1938 ~ May 7, 2022.

Dennis Scott posted the following on Facebook. Thanks to Chris Nichols for forwarding it.

I just got word from my friend John Hill, that our friend Jack died suddenly yesterday afternoon after a brief stay in a rehabilitation facility in or near Rancho Mirage, California. He recently suffered a serious back injury while moving to a new house. After a brief stay in the hospital, he was moved to the rehab. The exact cause of death has not yet been determined. He recently downsized and had sold his 3/14 Kimball organ and his Knabe Ampico piano and all of his piano rolls.

The nucleus of Jack’s organ came from the Lamar Theatre in Oak Park, IL, and was originally installed in his parents’ home in Elmhurst, Illinois. He moved it to California in the late 60’s or early 70’s. For many years, it was installed in his music room in San Jose until he and his partner Richard Quigley moved to Rancho Mirage and built a new music room for it several years ago.

Jack was a pioneer pizza organist, playing several pizza parlors in the Bay Area, most notably for Bill Breuer when he still owned the Cap’n’s Galley chain. He made several theatre organ recordings over the years and was a great host as he and Richard opened their home for theatre organ programs, bringing in many guest organists. He was

also a very talented piano and Ampico rebuilder and technician.



Jack Gustafson

Dennis also posted this link to Jack's recording "mishap". This was the Loma Prieta earthquake. The rattling of the house and organ can be heard for 23 seconds. Listen at [Organ Celebrities-JACK GUSTAFSON. 12.mpg](#)

An Incomplete Reminiscence by Your Editor

The following probably includes some errors of both omission and commission as I am working from memory and this was 45 years ago.

The 1977 ATOS national convention wrapped up on July 4. It was held in what they called "Chicagoland" and had the largest attendance of any ATOS convention, before or since – over 1,000. Lot's of venues and lot's of artists. I remember a very young Walter Strony playing up a storm in the Oriental Theatre in downtown Chicago. He ended with his famous (infamous?) "Theme and Variations on the Oscar Myer Hot Dog." It wasn't until later that we found out he was working with no combination action.

Virginia Cheshire – remember her? – invited Evelyn and me to a party at Jack Gustafson's family

home the day after the convention. His organ was installed in the basement of the family home. I think it was just two manuals at the time. The others present were quite a "who's who" of theater organ. I recall – and I may be a bit off – the guests included Warren Lubich, Tom Sheen, and Leon and Mildred Berry. I recall Jack and Leon discussing who got what out of which theatre. I was told that at that time you could go to several Chicago area theatres on a Saturday morning and pay \$25 for all you could carry away before the box office opened. Oh if only I had brought my camera.

GRACE BAPTIST SOLD

Roy Powlan forwarded the following:

The Grace Baptist Church on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Streets in San Jose has been sold to a developer. It has a 100 year old organ that has been painstakingly restored over many years. The church was built around the two-ton wood and steel instrument in 1941. The organ was originally in the Liberty Theater in San Jose. The Pastor is Rev. George Oliver. Of course, people are working to preserve the building but it has already been sold so there is probably much hope.

The instrument is a Robert Morton. NorCal had a number of concerts there.

NORCAL TOS MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Due to the pandemic, NorCal Theatre Organ Society will not have access to any venues for the foreseeable future. Therefore, the NorCal Board has decided to extend all current NorCal Memberships for one year.

NEXT ISSUE

We plan to publish next in September. It will probably include a report on the ATOS national convention in San Diego. We will publish sooner if something comes up.

OPEN CONSOLE SCHEDULE

Due to the COVID-19 virus there will be no NorCal open console sessions anywhere until further notice.

NORCAL WEBSITE

Please see the NorCal website at norcaltos.org for current & recent past Windsheets in [.pdf](#) format along with an up-to-date Calendar of Events.

OTHER VENUES

As of early July, this is the latest word we have received on the following venues:

Grand Lake Theatre - 3/17 Wurlitzer. 3200 Grand Avenue, Oakland. Intermission music played by **Gordon Pratt** (Fridays) and **Bob Reichert** (Saturdays); **Bill Coale** Relief Organist. (510) 452-3556. www.renaissancerialto.com

Paramount Theatre - 4/26 Wurlitzer. 2025 Broadway, Oakland. No organ events currently scheduled. www.paramounttheatre.com

Stanford Theatre - 3/21 Wurlitzer. 221 University Avenue, Palo Alto. Reported reopening date is July 1. stanfordtheatre.org

California Theatre, San Jose (Fox Theatre) - 4/21 Wurlitzer & 2/10 Wurlitzer. Schedule unknown. <http://sanjosetheaters.org/theaters/california-theatre>

California Theatre, Pittsburg - 3/10 Robert Morton. 351 Railroad Avenue, Pittsburg. Schedule unknown. <http://www.pittsburgcaliforniatheatre.com>

Palace of the Legion of Honor - 4/63 E. M. Skinner. Lincoln Park, San Francisco Presidio. According to their web site, the Organ Concerts resumed on November 13th at 4:00 pm. <https://legionofhonor.famsf.org/education/organ-concerts>

ABOUT NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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 contact our Membership Chair Neal Wood at:

Mr. Neal R. Wood
NorCal TOS
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Normally NorCal Theatre Organ Society dues are \$20 per year. However, if you join now they will not be due until we return to having member meetings. For an additional \$50 you may also join National ATOS per year for a full voting membership plus six issues per year of *Theatre Organ Magazine*.

HOW OFTEN DO WE PUBLISH THE WINDSHEET?

We had been publishing whenever NorCal had an event scheduled. During the Corona Virus shutdown we will publish quarterly or as copy accumulates. If you have anything to contribute, please do so. *Stay safe – hope to see you all soon!*

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 at the address shown above.

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