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# The WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY  
PO Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625 510/644-2707

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal  
October/November 2009



**Scott Harrison**—organ



**Mark Page**—piano

## George Wright Memorial Concert

This year's Annual Concert – the 12<sup>th</sup> one memorializing the great **George Wright**, will be held Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM at *Grant Union High School* 1400 Grand Ave, Sacramento where Wright was a student.

Many NorCal members attend these concerts, and with **Chris Gorsuch** as the artist it would be a good time for more to start. [Maybe NorCal could arrange a bus for next year—Pub.]

see *Upcoming Events on Page 4* for details

Our November 1<sup>st</sup> Concert will again feature Australians — **Scott Harrison** and **Mark Page** playing both Organ and Piano. These performers are well known in Australia and becoming increasingly popular here in the US.

**Scott Harrison** began performing on Theatre Organs in 1987, when he was appointed 'City Organist' for the City of Moorabbin (now Kingston) on the city's magnificent 4/21 Wurlitzer. He also presided over TOSA's prize 3/15 Dendy Wurlitzer.

Scott has toured not only his native Australia, but New Zealand, England and the USA. He studied in the States under **Father James Miller** in Fenton, Michigan, so is well acquainted with our country. ↑

**Mark Page** was actually born in England, but Australia has been his home since childhood.

While the piano is Mark's main interest in music, he studied classical guitar and plays the bagpipes with the *Australia Highlanders Pipe Band*. Mark's full time profession is as a Dental Officer with the Royal Australian Navy.

Since teaming up together, Scott and Mark have recorded a CD titled '*Kingston Keys*'.

This unusual combination of talented artists is sure to be a highlight of our Concert Year.

## John Giacchi Concert September 20, 2009

Review — Don Ravey

After enjoying the young Australian Lawyer's first concert at Berkeley Community Theatre since almost exactly seven years ago, I can't imagine why we haven't had **John Giacchi** back sooner. His command of the Wurlitzer, his varied repertoire and his stage personality are among the best.

Although I was late to arrive, I heard most of his rousing up-console number, *All's Fair In Love And War*, a **Joan Blondell** and **Dick Powell** number. For the first item on his program, John played a wonderful orchestral transcription of Tchaikowsky's *Waltz of the Flowers* with what I thought was perfect expression and tempo, somehow producing all the contrapuntal parts that are so familiar to us all.

That was followed by an old **Perry Como** hit, *Black Moonlight*, that John learned by

## DONATIONS

NorCal gratefully acknowledges donations from:

- Mr. John W. Elliott
- Mr. and Mrs. Scott A. Gardner
- Mr. and Mrs. James F. Parker
- Ms. Carol S. Zerbo

## A FINAL NOTE

Dennis Fertitta

(1948 - September 23, 2009)

**Dennis Fertitta** passed away on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. He was riding his motorcycle when he was hit by a car.

Dennis was an ardent supporter of NorCal and a student of **David Hagarty**.

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listening to **George Wright's** rendition. It was very *bluesy* and melodious.

We were then treated to a **Sidney Torch** composition, *On A Spring Note*, which was new to me, and was something of a knuckle buster.

To round out the first half of his concert, John put together a half dozen songs in a medley from the 1947 movie, *Good News*. It included several **Buddy DeSylva** songs like *The Best Things In Life Are Free* and *Varsity Drag*. I couldn't recognize all of them, but I noted John's great talent for blending from the end of one tune into the beginning of the next, which is called a *segue*.

After the intermission, John presented an interesting song called *Serenade For A Wealthy Widow*, whose title he didn't fully explain to us.

Then we enjoyed a fine treatment of *Waltz In Swing Time*, written by **Jerome Kern, Robert Bennett** and **Hal Borne** especially for **Fred Astaire**, for the 1936 movie, *Swing Time*. This is the movie which introduced such other Kern classics as *Pick Yourself Up*, *The Way You Look Tonight*, and *A Fine Romance*. As John remarked about the waltz, it was easy to visualize Astaire and Rogers dancing to this clever mix of waltz and swing rhythms.

In a major change of mood, we then heard our thoroughly theatre style Wurlitzer perform an **Edward Elgar** transcription, with gradual crescendos and decrescendos, mostly hand-registered by John. Even though he pointedly used tremulants, the music would have been appropriate for any concert hall or cathedral.

A short, snappy number from the 1920's called *Dainty Miss* by **Bernard Barnes** picked up the tempo.

To finish a wonderful concert, John gave us a powerful orchestral rendering of **Richard Rodgers' Victory At Sea Symphonic Scenario** that employed effects such as the *surf machine* and other effects John created with his adroit fingers. *Victory at Sea* was written as background music for a documentary TV series of the same name about naval warfare during World War II, which was originally shown by NBC in 26 half-hour segments on Sunday afternoons, from Fall 1952 through Spring 1953. The score identifies passages in the music as *Song Of The High Seas* (main theme), *Submarines In A Calm Sea*, *Beneath The Southern Cross* (the tango that became popular as *No Other Love Have I*), *Theme Of Growing And Building*, *Fiddlin' Off Watch*, *The Sunny Pacific Islands*, *The Approaching*

Page Two

*Enemy, The Attack, Death And Debris* and the *Hymn of Victory*.

John was brought back for an encore by a delighted audience. Starting off quite solemnly, it took a few bars before most of us recognized that he was playing Australia's *unofficial* national anthem, *Waltzing Matilda*. It didn't stay solemn for very long, though, giving way to the energetic pace that one associates with the land down under. Wikipedia reveals that the song is a folk tune for which words were written in 1887, and the song even has its own museum, the *Waltzing Matilda Centre* in Winton, Queensland! Just when we thought he was finished, John segued into *Never On Sunday*, which drew many laughs.

I feel sure we won't have to wait another seven years to hear John play our Wurlitzer again. Of course, those of you who bought one of his CDs or who will do so, may enjoy his talented approach to theatre organ music whenever they wish.

OPEN  
CONSOLE  
Hosted by  
Chris Nichols



This is an opportunity for NorCal 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 **1:00 to 5:00 PM**. The next scheduled dates are:

**Sunday, November 8**

**Sunday, December 6**

**Sunday, January 10**

Open Consoles are informal and our genial host, **Chris Nichols**, ensures that any NorCal 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, in rotation.

**I** **Important:** CALL THE NORCAL VOICE MAIL at (510) 644-2707 on that Sunday morning to confirm that the theatre is available. If there will be Open Console, enter via the backstage door at 1930 Allston Way. If you would like an emailed reminder, email Chris your name and email, to:

[theatreorgans.com/norcal/emailus.asp](http://theatreorgans.com/norcal/emailus.asp)

Windsheet

## CHAIRMAN'S WINDLINE



It is NorCal concert Iseason once again. I hope you had a chance to catch the season opener. **John Giacchi** gave us a wonderful performance. I especially enjoyed his rendition of *Victory at Sea*. It was unfortunate that the theatre's public address system died once again. For those of us that couldn't hear the artist comments, you can check out **Don Ravey's** review herein for all the song titles. By the way, **Bill Schlotter** found the problem with the PA system and it is now fixed, fingers crossed. Thanks, Bill.

It is also Nominating Committee season again. **Kevan Lesch** has graciously volunteered to chair the committee. He will be working with **Bill Schlotter** and **Warren Lubich** to seek out nominees.

Following is an excerpt of the section of the By-Laws pertaining to the nomination process:

Members may suggest in writing to the Nominating Committee the names of Active Members for consideration. [Chair Kevan Lesch's address is: **Kevan Lesch**, PO Box 4520, San Mateo CA, 94404-0520-Neal].

Nominations for the office of Director may be made by Active Members of the Society, [*'active' means a member of both NorCal and ATOS-Neal*] with the consent of the Nominee and his or her agreement to serve, if elected. Such nominations shall be submitted in writing, including each Nominee's consent and agreement, to the Nominating Committee no later than November 10, signed by no fewer than two (2) Active Members. Nominations shall close on November 15. No later than December 1, the Nominating Committee Chairman shall submit the names of all nominees to the Chairman and to the Secretary. If, after the close of nominations, the number of people nominated and qualified for the Board is not more than the number of Directors to be elected, the Board may declare, for the record, that those nominated and qualified to be elected have been elected in accordance with this section. No later than December 15, if there are a greater number of nominees than positions to be filled, the Secretary will prepare ballots listing the names of all Nominees...

(The By-Laws go on to discuss the balloting process and the voting process by the members. Balloting is required if there are a greater number of nominees for the number of positions to be filled. Currently, there is only one position available.)

So much for business. I'm looking forward to our next Concert November 1<sup>st</sup>. I think you will enjoy this grand piano and organ performance by **Scott Harrison** and **Mark Page**. Neal

October/November 2009

# Picnic at RON and GAY BINGAMAN's, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, Grass Valley

*This was a real nice clambake,  
We're mighty glad we came.  
The vittles we et  
Were good, you bet,  
The company was the same.  
Our hearts are warm, our bellies are  
full,  
And we are feeling prime.  
This was a real nice clambake,  
And we all had a real good time*

This verse from **Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Carousel*** captures the spirit of our picnic at **Gay & Ron Bingaman's** house August 23<sup>rd</sup>.



Gay & Ron in front of their fireplace



Ron announces the day



View from Living Room Deck



Kevin King



Stream that feeds Power Plant 90-feet below  
&  
12 KW Hydro Electric generator

About 40 people came, including a number from Sierra Chapter as well as some of Gay & Ron's friends.

The Bingaman's house made a perfect setting with Gay's beautifully designed interior, the many porches overlooking the beautiful valley, and, of course, Ron's wonderful organ.

Quite a few of the guests played the organ, and the rest of us enjoyed listening to the music. Although technically a 'bring-your-own-food' picnic, Ron and Gay supplied soft drinks and snacks, and others shared extra food.

Several of us made the trek down to the water-driven power house. Some rode the tractor down, while I joined the walkers.

Ron's hydro-power plant supplies almost all of the electricity he uses – and then some. The men especially enjoyed Ron's explanation of how it worked, and why his water is measured by the 'Miners' Inch'.

On the way back up the hill I got to feed the Bingaman's four llamas, and found them both bigger and friendlier than I had expected. And I learned the llama called 'Dolly' last month is really named 'Dalai Llama' – a colorful and fitting name.



Jan feeding one of the Llamas

A big vote of thanks is due Ron and Gay for their hospitality!

— Jan La Fetra



Frank La Fetra photos

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Sierra Chapter

Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> 8 PM

*Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde (1920)*

Paul Quarino at the Organ

California Auto Museum, 2200 Front St,  
Sacramento

[sierrachapterATOS.org](http://sierrachapterATOS.org)

### Los Angeles TOS

Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> 2:30 PM

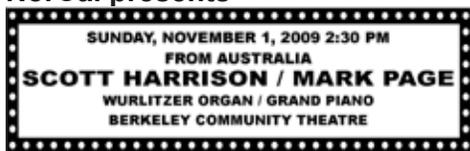
*Phantom of the Opera (1924)*

Russ Peck at the Organ

San Gabriel Mission Playhouse,  
320 Mission Bl, San Gabriel

[latos.org](http://latos.org)

### NorCal presents—



### Sierra Chapter

Sunday, November 15, 2009—2:30 PM

*12<sup>th</sup> Annual George Wright Memorial Concert*

Chris Gorsuch, Artist

Grant Union High School, 1400 Grand,  
Sacramento

\$10 General Admission, Students under 21 free.

For advance sales and/or directions go to:

[sierrachapterATOS.org](http://sierrachapterATOS.org)

## NEXT YEAR (2010)

### Sierra Chapter

Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup> 2010—2PM

Nathan Avakian ATOS's Young Artist of 2009

Fair Oaks Community Center

7997 California Av, Fair Oaks, Sacramento

[sierrachapterATOS.org](http://sierrachapterATOS.org)

### NorCal Chapter

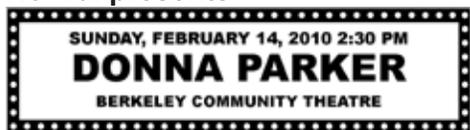
Sunday, January 24, 2010

Concert at 2 PM - BCT

artist TBA

Annual Business Meeting follows

### NorCal presents—



### NorCal presents—



### Sierra and NorCal Chapters

Saturday, April 17, 2010

*Morton Madness*

Kautz Ironstone Winery, Murphys, CA

artist TBA

Midday Concert & Buffet Lunch

### NorCal presents—



## OTHER VENUES

Castro Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 429 Castro St. SF, CA. Intermission music played daily by David Hegarty, Warren Lubich, Mark Putterbaugh or Harry Garland. (425) 621-6120.

[CastroTheatre.com](http://CastroTheatre.com)

Grand Lake Theatre, 3/18 Wurlitzer, 3200 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA.

Intermission music: Warren Lubich or Gordon Pratt (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 plays an *Organ Pops*

*Concert* on the first full weekend of each month, other artists play classical concerts other weekends. (415) 750-3600.

[LegionOfHonor.org](http://LegionOfHonor.org)

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

Stanford Theatre, 3/21 Wurlitzer, 221

University Ave., Palo Alto, CA. The organ is played before and between films.

(650) 324-3700.

[StanfordTheatre.org](http://StanfordTheatre.org)

Visalia Fox Theatre, 4/22 Wurlitzer, 300

W Main St., Visalia, CA.

(559) 625-1FOX (1369)

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome:

Janet Mullin of Walnut Creek.

Gary L. Youngs of Santa Clara

## EDITOR'S NOTES

—Jan La Fetra

One of the joys of being a long time lover of Theatre Organs is watching bright young performers grow into mature and wonderful artists.

John Giacchi, whom NorCal just heard, is a case in point. We first met him at the ATOS Convention in 1997, where he played at the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, Ind. While planning an extended trip to Australia's TOSA Convention for April, 1999 we wrote a number of people, including John, for ideas of what to see on our trip, and especially any Theatre Organs that might be playing.

Australians are a friendly folk, and most wrote back with ideas. John's note was especially gracious and we were glad to meet him again and hear him play at the TOSA Convention. Frank and I both remarked at the time that this was truly an artist to watch, and those of you attending his concert will certainly agree he has more than lived up to our expectations.

ATOS's Young Artist of the year, Nathan Avakian of Oregon will be the artist at Sierra Chapter's January 10<sup>th</sup> concert. While I can't confirm it at this point, I am told that he is a student of Donna Parker's and has been coached by Jonas Nordwall. In any case, this is a young artist worth watching.

(See Upcoming Events)

A tip when traveling—Check the local Organ Societies to see if there are any programs you want to hear while there. You can find out about Chapter Events at [www.ATOS.org](http://www.ATOS.org) and clicking on 'Find a Local Chapter'.

I try to provide information on other chapter's events, but sometimes there isn't room in the Windsheet or the dates don't fit with our print schedule. Sometimes I just goof – and have to admit that was the case in missing Bob Heil's concert for the Sierra Chapter on September 27<sup>th</sup>. I hope some of you got the word and went.

## FOR SALE

Two Allen MDS-17 3-manual Theatre Organs owned by member Dennis Fertitta (see Page 1)). Priced at \$20,000 for the larger & \$18,000 for the smaller, or best offer. Go to: [barton.theatreorgans.com/AdSearch\\_1.ASP?%5BType%5D=Sell](http://barton.theatreorgans.com/AdSearch_1.ASP?%5BType%5D=Sell)

(Within Internet Explorer, select EDIT, then FIND ON THIS PAGE, type RENO in the FIND BOX, then click NEXT; The Reno items will be 'highlighted.')

Contact Damien Fertitta at (775)287-4988 for more details.