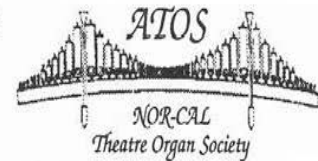


The

# WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY  
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BERKELEY COMMUNITY THEATRE  
1930 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94704

[www.norcaltos.org](http://www.norcaltos.org)

April 2015

## SCOTT HARRISON AT RIO VISTA SATURDAY MAY 2, 2015 2:00pm



NorCal Theatre Organ Society (NorCal TOS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.  
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*When emailing, include ATOS or NorCal in the subject line. Otherwise, if you are unknown to the recipient's computer, its SPAM filter may divert your mail.*

## SCOTT HARRISON

Scott Harrison from Australia will be performing on the recently installed 3/15 Wurlitzer at Hunter Hall in Rio Vista on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Tickets will be \$10 at the door. This concert is presented jointly by NorCal ATOS and Sierra Chapter ATOS. Scott will be playing several concerts in the U.S. on this tour and Rio Vista will be his first stop. Scott played a concert for NorCal at Berkeley last year which was a duet concert with his friend Mark Page who played several numbers on a Steinway grand piano, both in solo and duet numbers. He visited Rio Vista afterwards, liked the organ very much and asked to play this concert.

Hunter Hall, named for the late Bill Hunter, is located at 218 California Street in Rio Vista, very near to the downtown area. (directions on last page). The Hall is a former Masonic Hall which was dedicated in 1954 and used for many years by the Masons as their meeting hall. Due to declining membership the Masons sold the hall and after several years of neglect came to be owned by Jan and Bill Hunter who had been involved with theatre organs for many years. Through some very good timing, they were contacted by long-time Wurlitzer collector and organist Geoff Hansen and it was arranged that Geoff would install a Wurlitzer organ in the Hall.

The installation was done by Dave Moreno of components mainly from the Seattle Orpheum Theatre. With some additions the organ is now 3/15. A fine addition to the instrument recently is a large Ampico grand piano that was once a part of the fine Wurlitzer owned by the late NorCal member Aura Edwards which was installed in her home in Lafayette where many NorCal ATOS events were held over many years. With the extraordinary technical assistance of Curt Wood, this grand piano now plays again as a part of this fine instrument.

The Hall has proved itself to be an excellent venue for this Wurlitzer. The large central auditorium is 2400 square feet and has concrete floors, concrete walls, no windows and a fine open beamed ceiling so that the sound of the organ develops very well without becoming overbearing. The organ is situated in two chambers high off the floor on either side of the auditorium to take excellent advantage of the fine acoustics. The exposed 16' Wurlitzer wood Diaphones provide an authoritative bass.

The Hall is also home to a growing collection of automatic musical instruments, theatre memorabilia, antique lighting and an extremely rare Robert Morton style 49 pit organ which is currently under restoration. It was originally from The Orpheum theatre in San Francisco and was lately owned by NorCal member Warren Lubich. When restored, it will be a 2/4 with a horseshoe con-

sole and two side boxes. Research discloses that this is one of only four in existence.

Rio Vista is located in the California Delta region near the intersection of Highways 160 and 12. It was founded in 1862 and played a very important role in the early development of the Delta as one of the prime agricultural regions of the world. These days it is very quiet and family oriented with a downtown reminiscent of some sleepy mid-western town in the 1950's, Fosters, a bar and restaurant on Main Street houses a huge collection of mounted animals from all over the world and is an amazing tourist attraction worth stopping in to see.

Another great place for lunch before the concert is The Point, a recently renovated restaurant right on the Sacramento River, five minutes from The Hall with views of the river from every table.

There will be an intermission during which there will be finger food and drinks provided by the house. Parking is never a problem. Doors open at 1:30. Seating will be limited to the first 100 guests, so come early for the best seats! Further biographical information on Scott may be derived from his website at: [www.sharrison.com.au](http://www.sharrison.com.au) Scott will have many of his CD's available for purchase as well.

## EDITOR'S LOFT

Last month I asked the question, "Soooo, what does Bert Atwood have in common with Gene Autrey?" Answer: "I'm Back In The Saddle Again". I retired as Editor of The Windsheet some 19 years ago after 13 years "in the saddle". In the interim a number of Nor-Cal Devotees have take the reins. Due to the changeover of Editors, the Windsheet was only a postcard in February. I promised kudos for those who picked up the reins in the mean time. They were Gail Frey (December 1995 to January 2002), Co-Editors Rudy & Gail Frey (February to August 2002), Rudy Frey (September 2002 to December 2003), Robert Shipley January 2004 to November 2005), Don Ravey (December 2005 to April 2009) and Janice La Fetra (May 2009 to present). Jan decided to retire and a "new" Editor was needed. After a prolonged absence, I decided to take up the reins again. Knowing full well what a difficult job being the Editor can be, I can only express my sincere appreciation to those who have served before and after me.

Perhaps an even more difficult job is being the Publisher. Frank La Fetra was the Publisher when I was the Editor "back in the day". I'm unable to put an exact date on this, but he has served for at least 20 some years! Also, during this period of time he has served as Chairman and Treasurer. He has now decided to "hang up his hat" but

has graciously agreed to stay on as Publisher for another issue or two until I get back in the swing of things and we can find a new Publisher. Many, many thanks Frank!

## OPEN CONSOLE

Chris Nichols, our genial host, has announced the following dates for upcoming Open Consoles:

May 17  
June 14  
July 12  
August 16

## WHITTIER HIGH WURLITZER

Installation of an organ is planned for the auditorium at Whittier High School in Whittier, CA. Whittier is about 20 miles southeast of Los Angeles.

The organ started out at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in Seattle as a 4/18 Special. It later was moved to the *Capn's Galley Pizza and Pipes* in Redwood City and had 8 ranks added. At the Capn's Galley it had its original relay plus an electronic extension for the additional ranks. For many years it was a spectacular instrument.

It was removed from there a number of years back and has been in storage for quite a while. It will be interesting to see the details of the installation. Chris Nichols says the first time he heard the organ was in 1978. "I was living in Vermont at the time and a friend and I flew out to San Francisco to

visit friends. One day we rented a car and went to Monterey. On the way back I mentioned that there was a pizza parlor with an organ in it and we would be near it while driving. It was early evening and we hadn't eaten yet so we decided to stop in. The organ was in very good condition back then. It was a weekday night and the place was not too busy. The organist for the evening was Tom Hazleton. That was also the first time I heard Tom. It was an amazing evening."

The following is from Jim Flournoy (who lives in Los Angeles) and is a friend of Bert Atwood:

"The (Whittier) auditorium also was designed to house a pipe organ that was never installed. Chambers are there. Back when LATOS was looking for a place for the organ that is now at S. Pasadena High, I suggested to them that they consider Whittier.

Acoustics are good— it's good size and is used as the Community auditorium for Rio Hondo Symphony and Corale Bel Canto. It seems to be readily available as opposed to Pasadena Civic. I hope they are installing insulation it - needs it."

## MEMBERSHIP

Neal Wood, our Membership Secretary, reports that two former members have rejoined.

Ms. Ann L. Mariposa  
Ms. Linda Mac Vey

Welcome Back!

## DELIVERY OF THE WIND-SHEET BY E-MAIL

Some members have suggested that they would prefer to receive the Windsheet via email. This request was brought to the board by director Roy Powlan. He indicated that this program has been very successful for the Sierra Chapter, and would be a good benefit for our members at NorCal. We will be instituting this request, shortly. If you are interested in receiving your Windsheet via email, please contact Neal Wood, ([nealwood@pacbell.net](mailto:nealwood@pacbell.net)).

## ELBERT DAWSON

Long time member Elbert Dawson and his wife Regina are planning to move to Utah sometime this year to be closer to two of their children who live there now. Elbert has been a NorCal Director and was at one time the Treasurer.

He was also a major contributor to my home installation. He helped move the original pipe organ to Kelseyville and subsequently in the building of my home. (His family electrical contracting business provided all of the electrical equipment needed for the home.)

Elbert was fortunate enough to have attended a session at the San Francisco Fox Theatre where he got to hear the organ as the organist would have heard it and he actually got to play the 4/36 Wurlitzer (for which I envy him immensely).

Thanks Elbert, - and Vaya Con Dios!!!

## PROGRAM CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### Scheduled Events:

*May 2, 2015, 2:00 pm:* Joint event concert with Sierra Chapter - Scott Harrison at Hunter Hall, Rio Vista

*June 21, 2015, 2:30 pm:* Concert - Richard Hills at BCT

*July 2-7, 2015:* ATOS National Convention, Philadelphia

## RESIGNATION OF DIRECTOR TOM MATHIESEN

Director Tom Mathiesen has tendered his resignation from the Board due to his imminent relocation to Twin Falls, Idaho. With regrets, the Board accepted his resignation. Kevin King has been elected to replace Tom. Tom (and his pastries) will be sorely missed by the organ crew, open console gang and the board.

## OPEN HOUSE AT KEVIN'S

Kevin King will host an Open House at his organ studio, in Walnut Creek, Sunday July 26 from 1 to 5. Details in the next *Windsheet*.

## Driving Directions to Hunter Hall 218 California St Rio Vista, CA

From Sacramento:  
From Interstate 5 S.  
Turn RIGHT onto CA-12 West  
at exit 485

From the Bay Area:  
On Freeway 24  
Exit onto Freeway 680 N.  
Exit onto Freeway 242 N.  
Exit onto Freeway 4 E.  
Exit onto 160  
Exit onto 12 W.

## Then

Turn RIGHT onto River Rd immediately after crossing the bridge

Turn RIGHT onto N Front St

Turn RIGHT onto California St

Hunter Hall is at the corner of California St and S 2nd St.

NORCAL 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 call or write:

Mr. Neal R. Wood at (415)861-7082 <[nealwood@pacbell.net](mailto:nealwood@pacbell.net)>, PO Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625.

Dues are \$20 for NorCal TOS only and an additional \$50 for National ATOS (\$70 total) per year for full voting membership and subscription to *Theatre Organ* the six times a year glossy journal of ATOS. 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.