

Saturday, April 9th at 3 pm Ken Double at the Bucky Reddish Residence

Ken Double fondly recalls his two years as the hockey "Voice of the Atlanta Knights" team back in 1992-94, and has often stated publicly "I never should have left." Last August, the Chicago native who had been living in St. Petersburg, left Florida and moved back to Atlanta and has been smiling ever since. He performs once again at the Reddish Walker Organ for the April meeting, marking an anniversary of sorts as Ken joined the Atlanta chapter after a Reddish performance in 2006, and later recorded the instrument with a CD titled *Double Southern Comfort*.

After making his career as a



sportscaster for some 32 years, Ken left that profession to take on the role of President and CEO of the American Theatre Organ Society, where he is leading the way in fund-raising, public awareness and special projects. Locally, it has not taken Ken long to get involved in the

Atlanta chapter, having been elected to the board while making many weekend trips to Stephenson High School to help with the Page project.

As a performer, he has toured the nation, performed in England and Canada, and has made four different tours throughout Australia. Ken just finished his 13th recording, *Teach Me Tonight* performed on the 4/18 Wurlitzer at Babson College in Wellesley, MA. The recording will be out in time for this summer's convention in New England.

Directions to Bucky's on Page 2

Jelani meets Fitz Gerald !!

- Saturday, March 26th, 2011, at 7:00 P.M., was the date and time.
- The Grand Theatre in Fitzgerald was the location. Dedicatory Concert was the event.
- The Grand Barton – now named 'Big Bart' was the reason !!



The instrument was originally installed in the Orpheum Theatre in Galesburg, Illinois. Thirty-eight years later (1964), it moved in with John Near and his family, near Galesburg. When the time to sell the family home came, the organ was purchased by the Grand Theatre in Fitzgerald, Georgia, for installa-

tion in the theatre. The driving force behind this was Jon Durcovic, now acting manager for the Grand Theatre.

International artist, musician, and theatre organ master Jelani Eddington arrived in town Friday to have his first meeting with an instrument he helped create – the Barton (mostly) organ installed in the Grand Theatre of Fitzgerald, Georgia. The instrument was freshly installed (as in mostly complete the day before) and the console had to be set up from scratch – none of the pistons had been assigned to the stops they would control, etc. Jelani tackled this and, in short order, had the combination action configured to his requirements.

Saturday evening the much-anticipated event took flight. Even the chickens laid low so as not to distract from the event of the day/week/month/..... !!!

A near-capacity house audience of over five hundred attendees (including Dr. John Near and his

family – the donors of the organ / members of the Fox Theatre Foundation – who provided kick-off funding and guidance in the venture / members of A. E. Schleuter Pipe Organs – who rebuilt and installed the instrument / twenty-five plus members of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society – even the CEO of the National ATOS / and certainly not least – the Mayor of Fitzgerald) were part of the great first-night attendees.

A short multi-media presentation on the organ and installation was presented, and then the artist gathered up his brushes and paints and began creating art!!

The program, presented in two parts with an intermission, provided a full demonstration of the pallet the artist has to work with. Solo voices – clarinet, violins, tubas, flutes, percussions and trap/drum selections – along with the ensembles of the organ all got their chance. The installation, being new,

(Continued on page 2)

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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www.theatreorgans.com/georgia/atlanta/atos/

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*Ads or announcements for this newsletter:
Contact Elbert Fields at 770-435-7340 or
elfields@yahoo.com*

Welcome New Members

Robert Soule
10731 Hixson Pike
Soddy Daisy, TN 37379

Organ Lessons

Larry-Douglas Embury (Atlanta Fox Organist in Residence) is now available to be your organ teacher, which might possibly include some lessons on *Mighty Mo* at the Atlanta Fox. If you are interested contact him at 404-808-7136 or email: LarryD@DuoArts.com.

Thanks for the Donations

Burt & Ann Allee
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(Continued from page 1)

performed without a ‘hick-up’ and was up to the demands of the organist for the program.

The selections that were chosen gave a little something for all. Opening the show, “If This Isn’t Love,” set the pace. Other selections, not in order, and not even a complete list, were: “Put on a Happy Face,” “If,” “Over the Rainbow” were some of the solo selections. A fully complete medley from “The Phantom of the Opera” and von Suppes’ “Light Cavalry Overture” demonstrated the orchestral prowess of the Barton. A visit to the U.K. featured music from the vast selections used in the films of James Bond – “James Bond – main title theme,” “Gold Finger,” “For Your Eyes Only,” and “From Russia with Love” were some of the titles presented.

Ethel Smith arrived to the tune of “Tico-Tico” and the organ responded in kind by showing off a unique feature of its own – a multi-color LED light show on the front cheek plates and the horseshoe stoprail lighting – changing colors constantly and providing an effect that immediately grabbed the audience attention. The final selection was a great transcription of the ‘Fire Dance’ from Bizet’s “Carmen.” Called back for a deserved encore, Jelani melded the selection into two beloved selections by all, “Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor,” and “God Bless America,” both from the pen of the great Irving Berlin.

Following the program, a reception was held on the stage of the theatre, and any who wished could inspect the console, chambers, meet the artist and

folks of the Grand, ask questions, eat, and see what the excitement is all about.

The Atlanta Chapter, ATOS chartered a bus to make the trip and thirteen members took advantage of this to have great social time on the trips down and back, dinner together before the show, and a desire to do this more often. If you missed the bus, you REALLY missed out !!

A number of the membership drove, as they were staying over ‘till Sunday, and they joined us at dinner and/or the theatre. A special surprise – Joe Patten and Bob Foreman turned up at the theatre. The FOX met the CHICKEN!



Jelani Eddington, Joe Patten, Dr. John Near (donor of the organ), and Jon Durkovic, manager of the Grand Theatre

A special item on the console – in the left effects tray – is an icon of the famous wild chickens that run free in Fitzgerald and, the organ crew has named him “Fitz Gerald !!”

This report, associated rumors, and chicken feed spread by **Biz E. Body**, a completely unbiased ear! Remember, the walls, seats, blower room and coop have ears!!

Directions to the Bucky Reddish Residence, Mableton, GA 5370 Vinings Lake View Dr. SW — 770-948-8424

From I-285 take Exit 12, US-78/US-278, Hollowell Pkwy (formerly Bankhead Hwy). Go West (outside the Perimeter toward Austell) for about 4.5 miles. Turn Right on Cooper Lake Road, which is the 2nd light past Lindley Middle School. Travel about 1/2 mile to *The Retreat at Old Vinings Lake Estates* entrance on the right. Follow the main road and the house is at the corner on the left. **Please respect the neighbors and park on one side of the street only. Please do not park on the main street into the subdivision. Carpool if possible.** Additional parking is available at the clubhouse by the tennis courts, located to your right when you reach Bucky’s street, then down the hill on the left.

A New Audience

By Larry Davis

We have musicians in our chapter who play the theatre organ in many places and for many events besides our local chapter meetings. Ron Carter has become one of the most sought-after silent film organists and has played concerts and films from the northern border of the country to southern Florida. Likewise, John McCall makes appearances all over the country and Ken Double all over the world. Rick is scheduled to play at the Grand Theatre and the rest of us play shows at the Strand and the Tivoli and wherever fortune leads us.

One of the most important opportunities that we should always take is the chance to put the music of the theatre organ in front of new audiences. One of my favorite memories is Ron Carter's performance of *Wings* in a packed-out high school auditorium in the north Georgia mountains. And Ron arranged for several of us to play organ and piano at the Gone With the Wind Museum for a special reception. It is events like these – as well as our in-theatre events – that bring the organ before people who have never ever before heard of a theatre organ.

With new audiences in mind, I'm delighted to tell you of a very special event that occurred at the Tivoli Theatre in Chattanooga on March 1. I had read that the Tivoli would be hosting a country music gala to benefit St. Jude's Children's Hospital, sponsored by Chattanooga's powerhouse FM country music station, US101. I contacted the radio station and arrangements were made for the organ to be used to "play in the house" with classic country music on the Mighty Wurlitzer. So on March 1, Bert and Ann Allee, Randy and Priscilla Hendry and I arrived at the Tivoli to make ready.

We faced some issues in locating the console on stage, since there were multiple microphones stands, guitar stands, and monitors lined up across the stage, but once settled in (and duly spotlighted), the Wurlitzer dominated the stage (and remained in place for the entire show). I began playing both as rehearsals and to ensure all was well with the organ but after a couple of hours playing and demonstrating the organ to the incoming singing groups, I was informed that the radio station was broadcasting live from the theatre and that as they promoted the concert they were announcing "and you can hear music from the theatre organ that will open tonight's show." Imagine - the Mighty Wurlitzer live on the air on an FM country music station!

At this point the inquiries begin to come, "What did you play?" Well, let's see: Johnny Cash, the Carter Family, Skeeter Davis (no relation), Willie Nelson, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Flatt and Scruggs, Patsy Cline, Hank Williams - classic country music as requested by the sponsor. I had been advised that I would play for fifteen minutes but that soon began to expand and, when there



turned out to be a delay in getting the show started and because the theatre organ is a wonderfully flexible instrument for such moments, I ended up playing for forty-five minutes.

What were the most special moments of the day? Most important was when we found out (and observed) that, with tickets costing \$30 and \$40, the theatre was sold out to the walls for the benefit of the hospital. What better cause could there be? It was also a great pleasure to see the absolute fascination of the professional musicians of the five different performing groups with the organ. They did not look down upon it as out of place among their guitars and fiddles and banjos but thought it was wonderful. However, the keyboard player for one of the groups refused to touch it: "What would I do with that? It looks like an airplane cockpit." The most fun moment, however, was when I launched into Roy Acuff's "Last Train from Memphis," just before closing and heard people cheering, clapping and shouting, "Yee-hah" to the music of a theatre organ.

One wonders how many of these 1700 country music fans had ever heard a theatre organ before, or even heard of a theatre organ, much less the thousands who were listening over the radio. It was a great day for our cause.

Member News

Long-time Atlanta Chapter member Frank Willingham passed away on Saturday, March 25th. Memorial services will be held at 2:00 pm on Tuesday, April 4th at Southwest Christian Church, 4330 Washington Road, East Point, Georgia 30344.

The Atlanta Chapter is making a contribution to his church in his memory.

Frank's Closing Chord will be published in the May newsletter.

Upcoming Meetings & Events *(Mark your Calendars)*

- April 3, 3 pm (Sunday) Ben Hur "A Tale of the Christ" silent film at the Earl Smith Strand Theatre in Marietta accompanied by Ron Carter at the Allen GW-IV, \$5 for ATOS and AGO members (see Page 2)
- **April 9, 3 pm (Saturday), Chapter Meeting & Concert featuring Ken Double at the Reddish residence.**
- April 17, 2:00 pm (Sunday), John McCall returns for "Spring Fling II" Concert on the Gil Parsons Walker, Davidson, NC; sponsored by Metrolina Chapter, ATOS
- May 8, 3:00 pm (Sunday), John McCall in Concert at the Pinellas Park Wurlitzer, Pinellas Park City Auditorium, 7690 59th Street, North; Pinellas Park, FL; sponsored by Central Florida Chapter, ATOS; 727-504-7012.
- May 15, 2011; 2:30 pm (Sunday), John McCall in Concert (with piano cameo by Larry Davis) at the Forker Memorial Wurlitzer, Grace Baptist Church, 8000 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, FL; sponsored by Manasota Chapter, ATOS; 941-922-2044.
- May 15th 3 pm (Sunday), The Silent Film SUNRISE (winner of first Academy award for artistic direction) accompanied by Ron Carter at the Earl Smith Strand
- **May 22, 3 pm (Sunday), Chapter Meeting & Concert by Ron Carter and Pam Hudson at the Hudson residence**
- July 17, 3 pm (Sunday) Silent Comedy Classics (a selection of Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton, and Charlie Chaplin shorts) accompanied by Strand Volunteer Organists at the Earl Smith Strand.
- August 28th, 3 pm (Sunday) The Silent Film The FLESH AND THE DEVIL (the film that made Greta Garbo a star) accompanied by Ron Carter at the Earl Smith Strand
- October 30th, 3 pm Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1921-horror classic starring John Barrymore) accompanied by Ron Carter at the Earl Smith Strand.
- **December 4, 3 pm (Sunday), Chapter Meeting & Concert by Ken Double on the 5-manual, 42-rank Allen TO5 at Dr.'s Petway and Lacefield residence.**

Ben Hur "A Tale of the Christ"

Please mark your calendar for the screening of **the original Ben Hur "A Tale of the Christ"** with live theatre organ accompaniment on the Earl Smith Strand's mighty Allen Theatre Organ!! This film is far superior to the 1959 Version, with two strip color scenes, and stars Ramon Navarro and Francis X. Bushman in a restored digital format. I have developed a wonderful score for this film using music from the classics, themes from the Robe and others. If you remember the great music from the Flash Gordon serials of the 1930's you will hear some of this carefully woven as themes for the Actors and to emphasize the action on the screen. Ben Hur was made at great cost, 4 million dollars and four years in production. This would be equivalent to 300 million dollars today! The blood (literally) was shed by the thousands of actors, directors, technicians, extras not to mention the horses in the chariot race. Remember there were no special effects and everything you see on the screen actually happened. Begin the Easter Season by seeing this epic film of love, revenge and redemption! Tickets are on sale at the Strand Box Office: \$7, \$6 for Students and Seniors, (Bring your church bulletin for an additional dollar off the ticket price) and \$5 for ATOS and AGO members. Tickets may be purchased at the box office, by calling 770-293-0080, or on the web at www.earlsmithstrand.org

Ron Carter

Atlanta Chapter, ATOS - Membership Application

Renew your membership for 2011 now (If you haven't paid since Oct. 1, 2010)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____ Email _____

Do you own an organ? _____ If so, description _____

Annual membership dues \$35 (Student \$17.50). Please make check payable to **Atlanta Chapter, ATOS**.
 Note "Dues" or "Membership" on the memo line and mail to:
 Atlanta Chapter, ATOS, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 426, Marietta, GA 30061-0426