

***SUNDAY, AUGUST 24TH, 3 P.M. — MEETING AT STEPHENSON H.S.
OPEN CONSOLE ON THE PAGE***

Since our last meeting at Stephenson High school, much has been accomplished. The process to re-wind the Solo side of the organ from the high-pressure outlet on the blower is in progress, Rick McGee has begun an inventory of the pipes so that the existing ranks will be complete and correct, and the workroom has been reorganized. Most important, the 4-manual Page console has been repainted, the new stoprails and keyboards are now installed (as well as other components), and wiring of the console, under the direction of Bob Haag, is progressing rapidly. In



organ played by our chapter members in a jam session and open console that you are welcome to join.

addition, a new platform for the Page console and security doors for the garage have been engineered and built by Jack Sandow.

Come and see all of these changes. For those of you who like the exciting, the console alone is worth the trip, and for those who like the technical side, you'll enjoy seeing the wiring harnesses and interior of the console. And of course, you will be able to hear and a real theatre pipe organ played by our chapter members in a jam session and open console that you are welcome to join.

Short History of the Page Theatre Pipe Organ formerly of WHT Radio, Chicago by Rick McGee

This famed Page theatre pipe organ was built in Lima, Ohio by the Page Organ Company. It was originally installed in the Chicago studios of WHT Radio, located in the Wrigley Building, in 1927. It was the first of only three four-manual organs built by the firm, the other two located in the Avalon Casino Theatre, Catalina Island, California (also owned by William Wrigley, Jr.) and the Embassy (originally Emboyd) Theatre in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The organ was used for broadcasts twice daily, played by Al Carney, popular theatre organist of the period. Al also performed at the famous Chicago and McVicker's Theatres. One recording is known to have been made of this instrument while at WHT. It is reported that Mr. Wrigley enjoyed the sound of this instrument, prompting his purchase of the Page for the Catalina Island location.

Here is an excerpt from some of the WHT radio history concerning Al Carney and the Page Organ:

"In 1927 and 1928, Carney was broadcasting from radio station WHT located in the Wrigley Building in Chicago. Because of his experience in broadcasting from many pipe organs, he drew up the specification for the kind of organ he wanted for radio broadcasting. The organ itself was built by the Page Organ company of Lima, Ohio. It was a

four-manual instrument which was quite unique in that it had the new Pageophone to imitate the Vibraphone, pizzicato touch on the Accompaniment and Solo manuals and double-touch on the Great, Accompaniment and Pedal. The console was finished in bright gold and rose with beautiful wood carving, although it was built to be heard and not seen."

The organ was sold and relocated to the Michigan Theatre in Flint, Michigan, where it played for shows and entertained until 1950. At this time, the organ was purchased and removed by Bob Howland and installed in his residence. Later, the organ was sold to James Widdis. James installed the organ in his residence, where it played until it was sold to Richard Weber (an Atlanta Chapter member) for a proposed pizza restaurant in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1977. A different organ was ultimately installed in the restaurant, and the Page organ was stored in the warehouse of Winn Sound on Miami Circle, Atlanta, Georgia. The common question at that time was "What's a 'PAGE'?"

An offhand comment was made that "the organ probably would take up less space put together, rather than in its dismantled state." This led to the installation of the organ in the warehouse. As a result, the organ became the center of activity for the Atlanta Chapter of the A.T.O.S. and was played by numerous nationally-known theatre organists. The dedicatory concert was performed by

Dennis James. Lyn Larsen, Tom Helms, Carlo Curley, Kurt Von Shakel, and others played the instrument. Saturday night jam-sessions were well attended and featured Atlanta radio station WSB personality and Fox Theatre house organist, Bob Van Camp. The organ was also used for special holiday gatherings and in some productions of the local amateur theatre group "TrisPro."

After a couple of moves to other warehouse locations for Winn Sound, the organ was purchased by Walt Winn (owner of Winn Sound) and donated to the Atlanta Chapter, A.T.O.S. on May 19, 1991. The organ was removed from the warehouse and placed in storage until a suitable home could be found. When DeKalb County announced the proposed construction of the new Stephenson High School, including a 445-seat auditorium, an agreement was reached for the installation of the Page organ, complete with a lift for the console.

In its current home, the organ is getting a complete digital relay and combination system, replacing the electro-pneumatic units that we could not install in the school because of electrical code updates. The console is now all electric - no air needed - making the console moveable and greatly reducing the wiring needed.

**Directions to Stephenson H.S.
on Page 2**

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

P.O. Box 426
Marietta, Georgia 30061-0426
770-948-8424

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

*AC/ATOS is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under
Section 501.c.3 of the Internal Revenue Code.*

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*Ads or announcements for this newsletter:
Contact Elbert Fields at 770-435-7340 or
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Dear Fellow Members of the Atlanta
Chapter, ATOS:

I would like to thank all of you for
the many calls, cards, prayers and
flowers that you sent during my
mother's recent stay in the hospital
and passing on. Your concern really
meant a great deal to me and the rest
of my family. Again, thank you.

John Tanner

STRAND RENOVATION UPDATE

Things are really happening at the Strand. The organ chambers have been completed and work has begun on the Proscenium Arch. The four swell opening dimensions will allow us to use the four sets of Wurlitzer swell shades that are a part of the Clay Holbrook/Robert Morton organ. The inside of the chambers will be plastered to a glass like surface and the corners will be coved. The chambers have been built out of 8 inch filled cement block with 6" solid cement floors and ceiling. Our instrument sound will really get out!! The 14" wind line will now be continued directly into all four chambers.

Sheetrock and plaster repair is now being installed throughout the building since the rough-in inspections for plumbing/electrical and sprinkler have been completed. The auditorium wall designs have been completed and will incorporate an LED cove lighting system that can change colors, which will add a new dimension to the interior — WOW factor.

The organ pit is completed but WAIT— there is a possibility that we may have an orchestra pit with an access door from the basement dressing room. This is currently in the design stages and depends on funding from a source that cannot be announced at this time. The organ lift will be in the center of the orchestra pit. The second set of stairs is being installed this week.

The stone wall design at the bottom of the auditorium walls is finished and looks very similar to the walls in the FOX. The outside roof deck will be finished this week and the stucco has finally been removed from the front marble facade. The marble will be "pointed up" and cleaned. Parts of the building are now air-conditioned to begin removal of the excess humidity that has been present in the building for years.

If you haven't contributed to the Strand Organ Fund, please do so as soon as you can. We are shooting for a December opening!

Ron Carter

Closing Chords

- Marvin Pollock of Lebanon, MO, father of Neil Pollock, passed away on June 19th. Neil says his dad was his biggest supporter of his music endeavors.
- Frances Tanner, 91, mother of John Tanner, passed away on July 1st. She was a native of Atlanta and a member of Brookhaven United Methodist Church. She was preceded in death by her husband Frank in 1989.

We extend our sincere condolences to both families.

Wesleyan College Organ Restored and Re-Voiced

Wesleyan College's 1925 Aeolian organ has undergone a \$1 million restoration and re-voicing and is now reinstalled in Porter Auditorium, 4760 Forsyth Road, Macon, GA. There will be a dedication ceremony on Thursday, October 2nd, at 7:30 P.M. with Guest Organist Peter Richard Conte, Grand Organist of the world-famous Wanamaker organ at Macy's Department Store in Philadelphia, home of the world's largest playing organ. Free and open to the public.

For information call 478-757-5171.

Directions to Stephenson High School

From I-85 N - Turn South on Jimmy Carter Blvd. which changes to Mountain Industrial Blvd. and then Hairston at Memorial Dr. Go to the 3rd traffic light and turn left on Rockbridge Rd. When you cross the railroad tracks, continue two miles and turn right on Stephenson Rd. Go 1 mile. School is on the right.

From I-285 - Exit on Memorial and turn East toward Stone Mountain. Turn right on Rockbridge Rd. and continue. When you cross the railroad tracks, continue two miles and turn right on Stephenson Rd. Go 1 mile. School is on the right.

From I-20 West Side - Take Exit 74 and go north on Lithonia Industrial Blvd. Turn left on Stone Mt. Lithonia Rd. Go about a mile and turn right at the light onto S. Dishon Rd. Proceed approximately 1.25 miles (past a church on the right) and turn left on Alford which dead-ends into Stephenson Rd. Turn left. The school will be about 1/2 mile on your left.

School address is:

701 Stephenson Road, Stone Mountain

**STRAND ORGAN FUND PROGRESS
REPORT FOR JULY**

By Ron Carter

Since our first report last month the Strand Organ fund has received an additional \$2220.00 in contributions. Please see the listing of contributors since the July newsletter. This is only for the period from June 30th to July 26th. Note that of the 22 contributors, 8 are not current Atlanta Chapter members. We have had only 14 current members make a contribution! Surely, we can do better than this!!

As of July 21, 2008 there have been 225 donation letters mailed, 155 e-mail donation requests sent, and two grant request applications made. There are 126 Foundations listed in Georgia by the Foundation Center. I have researched 60 of these and found that we would qualify for a submission to only 8 so far. Hopefully, as I continue down the list we will come up with more!

If you have not contributed, please give generously and send in your contribution or pledge today. If you know of any organization, business or individual who could help us, please ask them, then send me the contact information and I will follow up by sending a donation request letter and Organ brochure. **We can raise the money but it is going to take ALL OF US working together. We have committed to the Strand to have a theatre pipe organ playing in the theatre in three (3) years!! Also, the Chapter has committed to providing some type of digital instrument in the meantime. This is a more pressing issue with the theatre's opening scheduled in the next four to five months.**

WE CAN DO IT BUT NOT WITHOUT EVERY CHAPTER MEMBER'S SUPPORT!

**Thanks for the Strand Theatre
Organ Project Donations**

SILVER CIRCLE (\$2500 to \$4999)

Bradley & Anne Hale

VIP (\$500 to \$999)

John G. Nelson

PATRON (\$250 to \$499)

James A. Loftin
George Damergis
Don & Susan Eckles
James Buttram
Virginia R. Carter
Joanne O. Brehm
Elbert O. (Bert) Allee

LISTENER (\$100 to \$249)

Cruz & Associates, PC
Judy & Mark Cunningham
Dan & Martha Hardin

FRIENDS (up to \$99)

Mike Knight

Additional Sponsorship Levels Available

BRONZE CIRCLE (\$1000 to \$2499)

GOLD CIRCLE (\$5000 to \$9999)

DIAMOND CIRCLE (\$10,000 +)

ORGAN-NAMING RIGHTS AND WORLD CLASS CONTRIBUTOR (\$100,000 +)

Total given to date: \$8,650(3.46% of Goal)

Remainder of Robert Morton Moved by Dedicated Crew



Phillip Allen, Ron Carter, Ted Barnett & Don Ekles

On Saturday July 19, a dedicated ATOS crew met in Griffin to load the remaining 8 crates of pipes, huge 15-hp Spencer blower and some miscellaneous, but large, flute pedal pipes. Now, the entire Robert Morton is in storage at the Marietta warehouse. A big thanks to Phillip Allen, Ted Barnett, Ron Carter, Don Eckles, Elbert Fields, Rick McGee and John Tanner, for getting this done.

Everyone met in Griffin at 10 A.M. for the 2-hour offload to the rental truck. By 4 P.M. that afternoon everything had been placed in the Marietta warehouse.

As soon as it cools off some, we will begin going through the organ to determine what we want to keep and what we want to sell!! Chamber space is going to be at a premium so we hope to use the Wurlitzer tuned percussions that the chapter bought several years ago with the four manual Robert Morton console. These percussions are in very good shape!! If you would like to be on the Strand Organ crew please contact Ron Carter at ronhcarter@msn.com.



Rick McGee photo

John Tanner, Don Eckles, Ted Barnett & Ron Carter

September Organ Crawl Advisory

In the enclosed insert, you will find a schedule of what will be a wonderful event: the September Augusta organ crawl. Historic theatre and film, silent movie, classical organ concert, theatre organ concert, open console on a newly-completed home installation; all during a first-class arts festival in one of Georgia's beautiful cities. This program has it all.

For the Friday silent-film program, the Chapter is reserving tables for our members to be together. You **MUST** contact Larry Davis to be included in this group before the tables are all claimed. Otherwise you will be responsible for your own ticket and seating. Here is the list of people who

have already notified me that they will be attending. If you are not on this list and planning to attend, contact me as soon as possible:

Dale & Susan Parrott, Harold Parrott, Mike Mixon, Paul Renard, Robert Leftwich, Bob & Amanda Polglase, Bucky Reddish, Mike Knight, Ron & Donna Carter, Svetlana Satterlee, Tom & Alice Robertson, Dolton & Martha McAlpin.

On the enclosed Augusta program, four hotels are listed. You are urged to make your reservations as soon as possible since the hotels may fill up due to the Westobou Festival in progress.

Larry Davis

Richard D. "Dick" Weber

by Rick McGee

Richard D. "Dick" Weber passed away February 13, 2008 at 9:55 A.M. There are so many memories and stories that a whole book would be needed. For me, Bob Fountain, Jay Mitchell, Walt Winn, the Winn Sound Warehouse crew, and countless others in the Atlanta area, a great friend is gone.

I played at the Music Grinder and Excelsior Mill restaurants in Marietta and Atlanta, learned much about the construction and maintenance of theatre pipe organs and an expanded love of the history and personalities involved with these instruments. Bob Fountain said that, if it were not for Dick Weber, he never would have had a chance to earn a portion of his living actually getting paid to play a theatre pipe organ.

Visits to Dick and Audrey's home in Lula, Georgia were always a wonderful event – great conversation, fascinating photo and historical information – really great food (thanks for a gracious hostess – Audrey) and just a great way to spend the day. On one of these visits, Larry Davis (then Atlanta Chapter President) had the chance to meet Dick as we delivered him a lifetime achievement award from the chapter. He could not wait for a chance for a return visit.

Dick purchased the former radio station WHT Page organ and brought it to Atlanta as a backup to Winifred at the Music Grinder in Marietta should anything happen to it. The instrument was stored at the warehouse for Winn



Dick Weber at his custom Allen in his Lula, Georgia home.

Sound run by chapter member Walt Winn. An off-handed comment was made that "you know it takes up a lot less space assembled than in crates." Walt's comment – "What's a 'PAGE'?" History tells the rest. The Page was installed in the warehouse by Walt, his wife Donna, and the rest of the crew. The installation became known as "the Warehouse" and featured regular Saturday night jam sessions (many national and international artists visited and played) and many chapter programs were held there. Even performances by a local theatre group featured segments using the Page as the orchestra and even as a set piece for the production. This instrument was donated to the Atlanta Chapter and is now being installed in Stephenson High School near Stone Mountain, Georgia. Had Dick never been in our midst and moved the Page to Atlanta, many wonderful events, memories, careers, and friendships would not have happened!

Here is a remembrance from Dennis James, international Theatre Organ concert artist:

"How well I remember Dick Weber

and my visit to his first home Wurlitzer installation that was located somewhere near to Schenectady, NY ... for it was the very first theatre pipe organ I ever saw and played. At the age of seven (in 1957) and then a newly budding accordionist, I was on a family visit up from New Jersey taken there by my aunt Phyllis who was acquainted somehow with Dick living then in her vicinity. I well remember several things:

1. I was so small at the time that I came up to only eye level with the great manual pistons (3-manual console) and saw only the undersides of those flipping colored stop tabs.
2. I kept falling between the split non-attached halves of the Howard seat so had to sit perched awkwardly on only one side - and my feet didn't reach to the pedals.
3. The shutters had pine paneling facings so the appearance was the entire wall of the room flipped open when the shutters moved. and . . . it was loud!

"I LOVED it. Dick was a great guy.

Dennis James"

The Weber family has posted a MySpace page with a considerable amount of interesting information about Dick and his history. Go to <http://www.myspace.com/dickwebermusic> and learn more about Dick Weber.

Upcoming Meetings & Events (Mark your Calendars)

- August 24, 3 P.M., Meeting at Stephenson High School, open console at the Page.
- September 18 - 21, Augusta Organ Crawl. See insert for details.
- October 2nd, 7:30 P.M., Wesleyan College, Macon, organ rededication with Guest Organist Peter Richard Conte.

**SEPTEMBER SPECTACULAR
AUGUSTA ORGAN CRAWL
SEPTEMBER 18-21**

PRE-GLOW

Thursday, September 18 – 8 P.M.

“The Three Faces of Eve”

The Imperial Theatre

745 Broad Street

2-6 P.M. – tours of the Miller Theatre

\$15 (see reverse side)

Friday, September 19 – 7 P.M.

“Pandora’s Box”

Silent Film with Ron Carter at the Organ

Sacred Heart Community Center

1301 Green Street

(advance reservations required – contact Larry Davis)

Saturday, September 20 – 4 P.M.

Keith Shafer in Concert

Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church

605 Reynolds Street

Sunday, September 21 – 2 P.M.

Dolton McAlpin in Concert on the Allen GW4

Residence of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Polglase

3696 Inverness Way

Augusta, GA 30907

AFTERGLOW

Sunday, September 21

Residence of Randy and Kim Magnuson

Sylvania, GA

Open console on *FIGARO*, the hybrid pipe-digital home theatre organ

Westobou

Our September program will take us to Augusta for four days of very special events. The Augusta Arts Council is presenting the first-ever Westobou Arts Festival, patterned after the famous Spoleto Festival. The Atlanta Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society has joined these efforts with public and private events as the festival opens. (www.westoboufestival.com)

The Three Faces of Eve

The success of last year's 50th Anniversary presentation of "The Three Faces of Eve" has led to many requests for the event to be held again this year. The screening of the film will be enhanced by the appearances of Chris Sizemore, the patient who was the "Eve" of the book and film and Emily Remington, the organist for the 1957 World Premiere of the film. Admission is \$15. VIP admission is \$50. 75% of the proceeds of this event will be set aside for the restoration and reinstallation of the Imperial Mighty Wurlitzer.

Ron Carter at Sacred Heart

Ron Carter accompanies the silent film "Pandora's Box" as part of the Westobou Festival. His silent films at Sacred Heart are an ongoing series that have been exceptionally successful events.

Keith Shafer at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church

The Atlanta Chapter is sponsoring this program as part of the Westobou Festival. It is free and open to the public. Keith Shafer, long-time organist at Saint Paul's will present a program on the great Casavant organ, the premier classical instrument in Augusta.

Dolton McAlpin at the residence of Bob and Amanda Polglase

Bob and Amanda Polglase have graciously invited the chapter to visit their home once again for a wonderful afternoon of music. Dolton McAlpin presents the best of entertainment on the magnificent Allen Renaissance GW4 Theatre Organ.

Open console on *FIGARO* – Randy and Kim Magnuson's home, Sylvania, GA

For those who wish to make a side trip, there will be an informal late afternoon gathering at the home of Randy and Kim Maguson and an opportunity to hear and play Randy's beautiful home installation hybrid pipe/digital theatre organ with its striking Möller console.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hampton Inn, 3030 Washington Road (at I-20), \$112/night, discounts for AAA/AARP, #2-rated hotel in Augusta by TripAdvisor. www.hamptoninn.com or 1-800-HAMPTON.

Marriott Riverfront Inn and Suites, 2 Tenth Street (downtown Augusta), \$139/night, \$119 senior discount. Upscale hotel on the river. www.marriott.com or 1-800-229-9290.

Hilton Garden Inn (brand new), 1065 Stevens Creek Road (just off Washington at I20), \$111 (senior discount), \$119 w/o, www.hilton.com or 1-800-HILTONS.

Country Inn & Suites, 103 Sherwood Drive (off Washington Road near I-20), from \$99, www.countryinns.com, no national number on website, local: 706-736-8988.