

October 12, 3:00 pm, John McCall at the Burud residence in Sharpsburg

Directions to the Burud residence on Page 2.

***A new venue for our
October meeting***

Thanks to the hospitality of Lori and David Burud our October meeting will be at their home in Sharpsburg on October 12th (2nd Sunday) at 3:00 pm showcasing the artistry of our own John McCall on their Allen four-manual GW-IV.

About the artist... John Clark McCall, Jr., a native of Vidalia, Georgia, got his first taste of the theatre organ through the HI-FI recordings of George Wright in the mid-fifties when the audio boom spotlighted a rebirth of the theatre organ because of its comprehensive sonic characteristics and “stereo” format. By the time his family relocated in Moultrie, Georgia in 1960, he had a fairly extensive library of theatre organ recordings and was hopelessly “hooked.” Early sightings of silenced organs in Georgia’s Albany and Fox theatres heightened his interest in movie palaces and their musical “soul.” In 1969, he finally heard his first theatre organ live at the Atlanta Fox with Bob Van Camp at the console of the then-recently restored 4/42 Möller. He promptly joined the Atlanta Chapter of the *American Theatre Organ Society*, later serving as its president for two terms.

McCall’s theatre organ training has been self-taught. His teaching tool was a two-manual pipe organ console graciously supplied by Atlanta ATOS members Edd and Norma Simmons. This console, *sans pipes*, helped McCall to develop organ technique. Along the way, the artist was involved with the “Save the Fox” campaign and authored a book on the Atlanta theatre that raised more than



\$70,000 toward the effort. He also produced the *Keyboard Colossus* at the Fox featuring Eugene List, the piano faculty of Georgia State University’s Department of Music, and organist Bob Van Camp at the biggest “keyboard” of all. This concert, designed to show the public just how versatile the Fox could be, contributed another \$9,000 toward the landmark’s salvation.

In 1986, McCall played for his first real audience prior to a screening at Chicago’s Music Box Theatre. Shortly after, he was invited to play for an American Guild of Organists’ cocktail reception at its national convention in Charlotte, NC. His second appearance in a theatre was not until June, 2000, playing for a screening of *Singin’ in the Rain* at the Rylander Theatre, Americus, Georgia on its newly-installed Möller pipe organ which the artist was instrumental in locating to the theatre. He has since appeared at the Rylander in concert with ATOS members Fred Boska, James Thrower, and Ron Carter.

In addition to his concert work at the Rylander, McCall has played at the Alabama Theatre, Birmingham, in Sarasota at the Forker Memorial Wurlitzer, and concerts for the Orlando and Atlanta chapters of the American Theatre Organ Society. In May, 2004, McCall co-produced the *Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend* in Atlanta — a celebration of the

greatest theatre organists at one of the world’s finest theatre organs. In conjunction with the Fox’s Seventy-Fifth Anniversary in December, 2004, the artist was featured in a documentary about the Fox produced by Georgia Public Television.

His first commercial recording, *A Paramount Idea*, received a “highly recommended” rating in a review appearing in *Theatre Organ Journal*. He subsequently released *A Capitol Idea*. In 2002, McCall was awarded first place in the ATOS National Hobbyist Division competition.

McCall is president of John Clark McCall, Jr., Design Consultant, Inc., Moultrie, Georgia.

About the instrument... The organ, an Allen four-manual GW-IV, was acquired a year ago from a private residence in the Houston, TX area. The easy part was finding and shipping the organ. The difficult part was figuring a way to get this instrument and 16 speakers into a quant Georgia house. With the assistance of Ron Carter, plans were devised for a room addition, allowing for double doors for the console. An additional closet was added upstairs to allow for a second speaker chamber, along with front room chambers to complete the third percussion chamber. Final room dimensions are 28’ x 14’ x 13’ high, with a very simple, clean décor (wooden floors, minimal furniture) to maximize the sound. The organ offers 33 ranks, with an added Smart Recorder and external rhythm unit. A digital toy counter and 4 additional toe studs were also added.

Lori and David humbly welcome all to this inaugural event.

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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

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**STRAND THEATRE
RENOVATION UPDATE**

Things are moving quickly at the Strand. The Proscenium is finished and they have begun digging



Photo by Ron Carter

out the orchestra pit. The scaffolding has been removed from the auditorium and the painters are busy. The indirect lighting on the side walls and in the auditorium ceiling is complete. (This really adds to the



Photo by Ron Carter

appearance of the auditorium side walls). The only items left in the completed organ chambers are the overhead lighting and electrical outlet installation. The chambers look fantastic! HVAC final is being performed to include the installation and testing of the various HVAC Zones. This system is quiet! The main elevator installation is almost finished. All floor tile for the restrooms and catering kitchens has been installed. The dressing room dressing tops have been installed and doors throughout the theatre have been painted and hung. Carpenters have been working adding various trim designs (underneath the balcony, proscenium, and in the various common areas of the theatre). The concession stand, gift shop, restroom, and catering kitchen cabinetry has been set. The metal blower room louvered doors and all four organ chamber doors have been hung.

The Theatre is set to open with the Atlanta Lyric Theatre Company performing Beauty and the Beast on December 5, 2008. Donor Seats and Bricks are still available. We need your financial support to complete this project! Please go to our web site at www.friendsofthestrand.org to make a contribution or mail your checks to Friends of the Strand at P.O. Box 4186, Marietta, GA 30061.

**STRAND ORGAN
FUNDRAISING SLOWED**

Only two contributions to the Strand Organ Project were received this past month and there are still two outstanding pledges of \$3000.00 that we hope will be fulfilled by the end of this year.



Photo by Ron Carter

We have a dedicated crew of volunteers who are working three to four days a week and we are ready to purchase various parts for the Lucas Wurlitzer console and other supplies and materials to begin the restoration but we have only approximately \$10,000 currently in the fund. Rick believes he can get the console completely restored for approximately this amount. This is a BARGAIN when professional organ companies would charge over \$50,000 for this to be done.

Another 35 to 40 thousand dollars will be needed to restore and install the rest of the instrument. Of course this figure is based on our Chapter volunteers doing all of the labor! We do have several parties interested in purchasing the Robert Morton console and some duplicated percussions and hope that will come to fruition shortly. We hope to sell these excess parts for \$5 to \$7K.

WE NEED CHAPTER MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT CONTRIBUTED TO HELP US!! THIS IS YOUR PROJECT and will mean so much to our chapter and theatre organ music lovers in the Atlanta area. I continue following up on leads for possible donors. If you have not contributed, or could do more, please send your check to Atlanta Chapter, ATOS, P.O. Box 426, Marietta, GA 30061-0426 and specify "Strand Organ Project" on the memo line. ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

**Directions to the
Burd Residence
11 Parlor Circle,
Sharpsburg GA,
770-463-1222**

Head south on I-85 towards Peachtree City and Newnan. Take Exit 56 – Collinsworth Rd / Palmetto (about 15 miles south of the loop, on I-85). At the top of exit ramp, turn LEFT and go over Interstate. Immediately on the other side (just past the northbound exit) turn RIGHT on Canongate Rd.

Travel 2 miles to first stop sign. Turn LEFT on Palmetto-Tyrone Rd. Drive 1 mile and French Village Subdivision will be on your Left.

Turn into subdivision and road will become Frontier. Third side street will be Parlor Circle. The house is on the corner (look for signs).

For those who like to use Mapquest.com, address is 11 Parlor Circle, Sharpsburg, GA 30277.

Ron Carter

Ron Carter

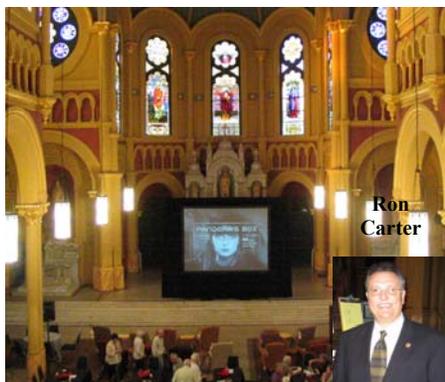
Breaking New Ground in Augusta by Larry Davis

The Atlanta Chapter of ATOS has never been a chapter to only “color inside the lines” of what is ordinary. Over the years, the chapter has been involved in a number of unusual endeavors, and this year, more than two dozen chapter members and guests came together to participate in Augusta’s first-ever Westobou Arts Festival.



Larry Davis

The first event was on the opening night of the festival, as the Imperial Theatre presented the 51st Anniversary celebration of the 1957 World Premiere of *The Three Faces of Eve*. The program was a benefit for the Imperial’s organ fund, and featured “Eve” herself, Chris Costner Sizemore, and Emily Remington, organist for the premiere at the Miller Theatre, who also played the Imperial Wurlitzer. I was privileged to be able to open the program by telling the story of the Imperial Wurlitzer, announcing the Friday evening silent film at Sacred Heart, and by introducing the evening’s master of ceremonies, legendary Augusta broadcaster Jim Davis, who hosted the 1957 premiere. In addition, the chapter had a display table with information about the Imperial Organ and the Atlanta Chapter.



Ron Carter

On Friday evening, Ron Carter presented a masterful silent film accompaniment to a sold-out audience at Sacred Heart Community Center. The auditorium filled early, and there were people waiting outside hoping that places could be found for them. The film was the extraordinary *Pandora’s Box*, a very dramatic and very different silent, and Ron’s music certainly brought it to life. The standing ovation that followed indicated the appreciation of the audience for the artistry they had just witnessed, both on the screen and at the console of Sacred Heart’s Allen Organ.



Keith Shafer

On Saturday, our chapter presented the program that we sponsored as part of the Westobou Festival: a classical organ concert at Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church on the mighty Casavant Organ. Bob Polglase had both proposed and organized the program, but both he and I were surprised and delighted as our audience – chapter members, church members, festival participants, and people off the street – streamed into the church, almost 250 strong. The program, by Saint Paul’s Music Director Keith Shafer, was a demonstration of high musical artistry, and was at the same time immensely entertaining.

Because all classical programs should include Bach, Keith opened with *The Prelude and Fugue in E Flat Major. Andantino in D Flat* by Edwin Lemare followed, the formal composition of the melody that became known later as *Moonlight and Roses*. Then Keith announced the Mayor’s proclamation of September 20, 2008, as Bernard Carpenter Day, in honor of the late, legendary Augusta musician who had served as the Imperial’s organist and as one of Keith’s predecessors as music director at Saint Paul’s. Mrs. Martha Scroggs, daughter of Mr. Carpenter, received the proclamation in the

company of her children and grandchildren. Keith then announced that he would play one of Mr. Carpenter’s favorite compositions, Mendelssohn’s *War March of the Priests*, which he had learned for our program. We hear that he also played it as the recessional for the 11 A.M. service the next morning at Saint Paul’s to great enthusiasm from the congregation.



Michael Adams

Then came *The Battle of Trenton*, composed by James Hewitt, the very first music director of Saint Paul’s. This composition traces in music the various stages of the battle, and Keith was assisted in his presentation by a Revolutionary War re-enactor, Michael Adams, in full militia uniform and with his musket. Following Pietro Yon’s *Humoresque*, Keith concluded his most interesting program with Norman Cocker’s *Tuba Tune*, which he described as the greatest of all such compositions and which made use of the mighty Casavant Tuba rank on 15” of wind.

On Sunday morning, Mike Deas, chairman of the Imperial’s organ committee, and I presented a program at Saint Paul’s on the history of Augusta’s theatres and the Imperial Theatre Organ. It was well-attended by very interested and informed people who were able to share their memories and add information to our presentations.



Dolton McAlpin

On Sunday afternoon, our “official” chapter meeting took place at the beautiful home of Bob and Amanda Polglase

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BALDWIN Model 630 (circa 1976). Two manuals and full AGO, 32-note pedal. In excellent working condition. It has internal speakers plus built-in amps to connect external speakers (not included). Reverb, celeste, vibrato, 45 stops, 6 pistons. Would make a good practice instrument. 54" long x 30" wide. Tech manuals included. Owned by professional organist as home practice instrument. Call Randy Magnuson at 281-488-2055 and make offer.



Thanks for the Strand Theatre Organ Project Donations

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Mike Knight

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Total given & pledged to date: \$12,853 (5.17% of Goal)

(Continued from page 3)

on the Allen Renaissance GW4, in the most capable hands of our chapter favorite Dolton McAlpin. Dolton opened with *Così Cosa*, a favorite of the late Dan Bellomy, and certainly a showpiece of theatre organ technique. Other highlights of the program were Lyn Larsen's *There's a Place in My Heart for You*, Billy Strayhorn's *Take the 'A' Train*, and a series of radio tunes used in the shows of Bing Crosby, Vaughn Monroe, Roy Rogers, and Amos 'n' Andy – I challenge you to remember the names of the tunes. Following an extended Gershwin, the melody, Dolton concluded with *Is It True What They Say About Dixie*, and came back for an encore, taking us on the *Comedian's Gallop* by Katchaturian. The compositions and the performance were the best of theatre organ, and everyone was thoroughly entertained.

Following the program, a handful of members made the hour-plus trek to the Sylvania, Georgia to the home of Randy and Kim Magnuson, which is also the home to Randy's hybrid theatre organ that he calls Figaro. There we joined a group already there, including organist



Larry Jones, for a delightful evening of making music on this most unusual, well-balanced, and beautiful instrument. As remarkable as the organ is, Kim's restoration work on the 1905 residence is equal to it, so it was not only fun to make music, it was fun to tour the home. We were joined by the local organist for the Baptist church, who just couldn't stay away and came back after evening services. We were finally able to coax her up on the console and – I think we have a convert. If you're in the area, don't miss the chance to see and hear this organ.

This was a remarkably successful weekend in terms of the quality of the programs, the quality of the music, and the overall interest in theatre organ that was generated by our chapter's moving outside the normal channels to bring theatre organ to a new audience.

Upcoming Meetings & Events (Mark your Calendars)

- **October 12, 3:00 pm, John McCall at the Burud residence in Sharpsburg**
- October 18, 10:00 am, Robin Hensley, organ, Children's Organ Day celebrating the International Year of the Organ at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church
- October 19, 2:00 pm, John McCall in Concert at the Forker Memorial 4/23 Wurlitzer, Grace Baptist Church, 8000 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota, FL, open to the public. See <http://theatreorgans.com/mtos/>
- October 25, Ron Carter accompanying the silent film *Pandora's Box* at the Rylander Theatre in Americus, GA
- October 28, 7:00 pm, Stephen and Susan Talley organ concert at Central Presbyterian Church, 1404 North Boulevard, Anderson, SC. See September newsletter for details
- November 2, 4:30 pm Recital, 5:00 pm Evensong – William Krape, organ in the Sanctuary / The Feast of All Saints at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church
- November 9, 2:00 pm, Tom Alderman with the Southern Adventist University Orchestra at Atlanta First United Methodist Church
- **November 16, 3:00 pm, meeting at the Carter residence, artist to be announced**
- December 3, 7:30 pm, *Holiday Pops* with Jonas Nordwall at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Midtown Atlanta, more info to follow in November newsletter. Tickets \$10 adult, \$5 student/senior. See www.allsaintsatlanta.org—click on Music, then Concert Series