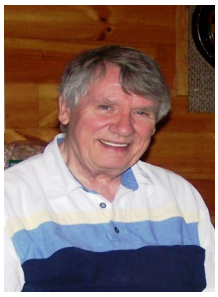
Jay Mitchell Plays the 4/22 Grande Page!
Stephenson High School
Sunday Afternoon, January 21st at 3:00 PM

We can't think of a better start to the New Year than the return of a familiar face to showcase our "pride and joy" instrument! While he hasn't professionally performed in recent years, Jay Mitchell is no stranger to the theatre organ – having entertained many thousands as house organist at the Alabama and Atlanta Fox Theatres. Jay has been more focused on the technical side of pipe organs as of late, but we are excited to bring him out of performance "retirement" and reunite him with the Grande Page (in a much different form and setting than he last encountered the instrument in). A wonderful artist and a wonderful instrument will combine for one very special afternoon of music and entertainment at Stephenson High School on January 21, and we look forward to seeing you there!



About the Artist

A native of Alabama, Jay Mitchell, took early coaching lessons from Stanleigh Malotte, a business client of his grandfather and famed organist at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. While the experience would certainly aid in his later years, this also provided Jay his first opportunities to sit at the console of a big theatre organ and make music. Not just satisfied with music making, Jay's mechanical passions were also calling him, and he took up a summer job as an apprentice with Norville Hall & Associates, a pipe organ maintenance contractor based in Alabama.

After attending the University of Alabama, Jay operated two organ teaching studios, one in Huntsville and the other in Birmingham. He also joined with the Southeastern Chapter ATOS (now Atlanta Chapter) and helped Mack Watson and Clay Holbrook refurbish the Wurlitzer in the Alabama Theatre. This led to his first house organist position as a theatre organist, where he played the 'movie breaks' each weekend. As the "golden age" of the home electronic organ hobby began to fade, the organ studios were closed. Jay was diverted from another career path by Atlanta Chapter member James West who encouraged him to apply for an organist position with the new Music Grinder Pizza Parlor in Marietta. Jay was hired immediately and spent the next several years entertaining audiences there.

Shortly before the restaurant's closing, Jay was able to secure a position with Reuter Organ Company, as a Georgia and Alabama territory service representative, and he began the career that has supported him for the last 35 years – maintaining an average of 55 church organs throughout Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. Not long forgotten, however, Jay was called by another Atlanta Chapter member, Joe Patten. Bob Van Camp was retiring and the Atlanta Fox Theatre needed a new house organist. Jay was able to organize his own business schedule around the few events the organ was used, and he showcased Mighty Mo at the Fox for the next 13 years.

In 2001, the Fox announced plans for using the organ at all events, and it became evident that Jay could not maintain his business activities and play the new Fox organ schedule, too. With great reluctance, he decided to retire from the job at the Fox. Since that time, he has not played again as a professional theatre organist, but has continued his service business with occasional bursts of organ building activities here and there. Only recently he has begun to volunteer as an organ technician with the crew at the Tivoli Theatre in Chattanooga and also with John Tanner and his crew at the Grande Page in Stone Mountain.

President's Message...

Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society

P.O. Box 426
Marietta, Georgia 30061-0426
404-725-1155
www.atosatlanta.org
www.facebook.com/ATOSAtlanta

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

Chapter President - *Larry Davis*
Vice President - Ken Double
Treasurer - *Rick McGee*
Secretary - *Ted Barnett*
Newsletter Editor - *Elbert Fields*
Chapter Correspondent - *Larry Davis*

Ads or announcements for this newsletter: Contact Elbert Fields at 770-435-7340 or elfields@charter.net

Let me start this message Georgia and the South and inspiring others to do the same. An exciting aspect of the silent film culture is to see institutions like the Strand, the Rylander, Sacred Heart Cultural Center, and others who institute their own silent film programs because they have seen the enjoyment that people derive from the art and the success such events can bring.

We have hosted the AGO Pipe Organ Experience for young people the past two summers and next summer, we will host the ATOS Summer Youth Experience, which promises to be a very special opportunity indeed for young theatre organists. We hope to sponsor a student or two from Stephenson High School to attend this event.

Looking ahead, we have secured an additional 20-year extension of our lease agreement with Stephenson High School which has been approved by the school board and signed by Superintendent Green. We're secure until 2037 – can you imagine? So we now need to have a plan to keep this organ in good shape through the decades.

If that's not enough, there are always other possibilities waiting in the wings that we are keeping in mind, far more than we can discuss here – but ask and we'll tell you. So we are, I think, doing well, but always with the potential of doing more. What do we need? We need your help, your advice, your participation as audience members, technical crew (you don't have to know anything because I sure didn't when I started), and staff for our public events. Be a part, be a participant, and we will experience continued success and enjoyment.

Larry Davis

A Carter Family ThanksFest !!

Sunday, November 12th, 2017, at 3:00 P.M, members of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society and guests of the Carter bunch gathered at the residence of members Ron and Donna Carter for one of their well-presented showcases.

Larry Davis, President of the Atlanta Chapter, greeted everyone and provided information on our artists and hosts, and told of upcoming events. Then Larry introduced our host, Mr. Ron Carter !

Ron took his place at the Allen GW -4 and sent us "Flying Down to Rio" which led right into "Fly Home, Little Heart" with a vocal solo by a returning favorite – Catherine Moulton.

"Love Is a Many Splendored Thing" – and as Ron presented it, he meant it !!

A new performer this year, Mr. Mel Rossi, Jr. (and boyfriend of Abby Carter) offered the "Concerto for Clarinet" (W. A. Mozart K.622.) Who'da thunk – classical music at a theatre organ program !!

Young Jake Carter, a returning favorite and rising star of the Carter Family, led us on a galactic adventure with a "Star Wars Medley" and we all went willingly !!

"There But For You, Go I" a selection from the great musical "Brigadoon" was presented as a vocal by local Marietta Strand favorite – Travis Cottle and Ron Carter backing him on the GW-4. A well-performed presentation, indeed !

Next, "The Way You Look Tonight" was presented by Catherine Moulton with Michael Rossi, Sr. on drums and Ron on the organ. Pure Broadway all the way !

"Opus One" came along next with Ron manning the Allen and Michael Rossi, Sr. on drums. A great dance ensemble – someone should have danced !!

"When Day Is Done" was offered by Ron and had all of the heart-tugs for the occasion – the loss of Ms. Elsie and Bob Fountain. Done only here – they are both busy now in other posts !!!!

Abby Carter, assisted by Ron on organ and Michael Rossi on trumpet, and with Michael Rossi, Sr. on drums treated us to two new selections of the James Bond library - "Skyfall (theme)" and the "Spectre" theme from recent films. We now have our very own 'BOND GIRL !!'

A great throwback number "Whiter Shade of Pale" was faithfully re-created by Travis Cottle on piano, Michael Rossi, Sr. on drums and Ron Carter on the Allen GW-4 (a really BIG Hammond !!!) Well styled and presented !!

A surprise feature, the "Hymn to the Fallen" from the film "Saving Private Ryan" was offered with video and accompaniment track and Ron adding with the Allen GW-4. This had everyone transfixed, and was a fitting tribute to all who have given for all the rest of us !!

Catherine Moulton returned with a great Gershwin classic, "The Man I Love" and Ron accompanied with a great presentation of the Gershwin arrangement. A real treat !

"Look for the Silver Lining" closed the show and the entire cast joined for solo moments and a grand ensemble.

A wonderful showcase and talent to match ! No wonder we keep coming back each year.

The magic of Donna Carter was everywhere with all of the great food, the door-prizes, and the warm, holiday spirit of the house!! Bravo Donna !!

Offered by **Biz E. Body**, a completely unbiased ear! Remember, the walls / kitchen / and cats have ears!!

More on Carter Family ThanksFest on Page 5.

Christmas in Fort Payne

John McCall and Larry Davis traveled to Fort Payne, Alabama to present a Christmas organ and piano duet concert at the historic Fort Payne Opera House, built in 1889. The Opera House is now home to the Kilgen Theatre Organ originally from the Birmingham Pantages Theatre, though it has been much altered. The community has expressed interest in working to make this instrument a working theatre organ once again and this concert signaled a beginning of that effort. The program, consisting of organ and piano solos, duets, silent film and a sing-a-long was enthusiastically received by those in attendance.

A Gift of Music

Ms. Doris Guidry recently contacted us offering to donate her mother's sheet music collection. This turned out to be a real treasure of historic sheet music of the type that we theatre organists play, and Bob Fountain would be pleased to see that the introductions and verses are included. There are three large bound volumes of music in mint condition in plastic sheets and an additional box. Some of this music could be used to draw themes for silent film accompaniment. These will be temporarily stored in the organ room at the Strand Theatre but Larry Davis promises to make them available upon request at our meetings. Ms. Guidry is not a member of the chapter but found us online and we're glad she did. Our thanks go to her for this wonderful addition to our musical resources.

Unrepeatable Offer …….

At this time of year, for some of us, there can be a tax advantage to making donations to non-profit organizations. If any our wonderful ACATOS members can do so, your financial support for this work would be greatly appreciated. If it is time to renew your membership, perhaps a "little extra" with your check will work.

And if you have the means to donate $500, $1,000 or even more, it will go toward solving one troubling issue for the Grande Page, the overall sound of the percussions. If you can be generous, we will be most grateful.

Atlanta Chapter, ATOS - Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State/ZIP _____ Email_____

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

Membership Category (check one): ____ Patron ($300 and up) ____ Sponsor ($200 - $299)

____ Contributor ($100 - $199) ____ Donor ($36 - $99) ____ Basic ($35) ____ Student ($17.50)

Send Newsletter via email: ____ Yes ____ No Please make check payable to ***Atlanta Chapter, ATOS***

Mail to: Atlanta Chapter, ATOS, Attn: Treasurer, P.O. Box 426, Marietta, GA 30061-0426

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS (MARK YOUR CALENDARS)

- January 21, 3:00 p.m. – **Monthly Meeting/Annual Meeting** – Jay Mitchell featured in concert on the 4/22 Grande Page organ at Stephenson High School, 701 Stephenson Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30087.

- January 28, 3:00 p.m. – Silent Film – *The Merry Widow* – the 1925 classic, accompanied by Ron Carter on the Mighty Allen GW-IV organ. Tickets $10 online or at the box office.

- February 24, 3:00 p.m. – **Monthly Meeting** – the ever-popular Hammorama returns, with new artists and an all new location – Canon Chapel at Emory University, 515 South Kilgo Circle, NE, Atlanta, GA 30322.

- March 25, 3:00 p.m. – Silent Film – *King of Kings* – see the 1927 masterpiece on the big screen, accompanied live by Ron Carter on the Mighty Allen GW-IV organ. Tickets $10 online or at the box office.

- April – **Concert** – David Gray makes his debut performance on the 4/22 Grande Page at Stephenson High School. Additional details coming soon!

THE KIDS ARE COMING TO ATLANTA!

By Ken Double

It struggled to get started, and now, it could be termed the most important program in ATOS. After a couple of "jump-starts" misfired, the ATOS Summer Youth Adventure (the"SYA") officially began with a week-long event in Chicago 11 years ago. Would it work? Could it be successful? Would it draw young players to the theatre organ?

The answers to those questions are simple: Donnie Rankin; Nathan Avakian; Justin LaVoie; Dan Minervini; Seamus Gethiker; these are just five names that are graduates of the ATOS SYA program who happen to have achieved the status of high-level touring concert-level SPECTAULAR performers, who spent a few of their summers with the SYA.

Mind you, it's not just about concert players. Nearly 80 young people have attended the SYA events, normally about 13-16 each summer ranging in age from 13 to 24 years old. Some play theatre organ. Some play classical organ, having never touched a theatre organ before. Some are pianists having never touched any kind of pipe organ before. And after one busy, lessons-filled week, they all walk away loving the instrument, and having learned a lot.

Some will only play for their enjoyment. Some will go back to piano or classical organ. But those that "gel," those who have it in their genes will become the next level of great concert artists, and we are seeing this happen before our eyes.

Starting July 15, 2018, the "kids" will descend on Atlanta, and play the Grande Page at Stephenson High School; the GW 4 at the Strand in Marietta; residence organs at the McGee house (5-manual Allen), the Carter home (GW 4) and the Burud house (GW 4); and of course, ***Mighty Mo*** at the Fox Theatre.

Under the tutelage of our best teachers of the art form – Donna Parker, Jonas Nordwall, Jelani Eddington, Chris Elliott and Martin Ellis – the young people coming to Atlanta next July will have a thrilling experience that we hope will catapult them to stardom! Or at least, a love of the theatre organ they will carry the rest of their lives.

For our ACATOS members, look for the call to assist in some way as we host these wonderful young players. Is there a future for the theatre organ? The ATOS Summer Youth Adventure proves the answer to that question is a resounding YES!

More of the Carter Family
ThanksFest !!

Catherine Moulton - Soloist
Travis Cottle - Soloist and pianist
Michael Rossi Sr. - Drummer
Ron Carter – General Factotum and Organist
Abby Carter - Soloist
Michael Rossi Jr. - Trumpet
Jake Carter - Organist
Mel Rossi- Clarinetist

For Sale

Conn 653 (3 manual) and Conn Caribe 635 Theatre Organs
Organs are currently not playing. 653 includes owner's manual.

Make an offer on one or both.

Lynne Hart
(404) 241-2360
(404) 786-0190