Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society

March 2018

March Chapter Meeting at the Rick McGee Residence
Sunday Afternoon, March 11th at 3 p.m.
This is Daylight Savings time Change—Spring Forward 1 Hour

As the March Newsletter goes to press, we're really not sure what kind of weather to expect a couple of weeks from now, but we're hoping that we won't have a repeat of what happened in early December – a prolific snowfall which prompted the cancellation of our Christmas gathering.

While the fruitcake and tree-shaped cookies have long been consumed, the musical treasures still await as we return to the heart of Vinings once more to spend time with Rick McGee and his spectacular five-manual Allen TO-5Q theatre organ.

As in years past, the program will feature "The Best of the Best" being an open console affair, with a chance for all who wish to play this magnificent instrument. So get ready for a second helping of Christmas as we gather a little late for our annual tradition and maybe even dust off a holiday tune or two!

Remembering Wanda

Wanda Carey Fields was a member of our chapter from the early 1970's. Very appropriately, there are more memories than we can share in one edition so these are the first. There will be more in our next issue and an opportunity to share memories at our March meeting at Rick McGee's home.

A memorial service for Wanda Carey Fields was held at Mount Paran Church of God – the church she served for so many decades – on Thursday, February 8. Mr. Mark Blankenship, Minister of Music, led the service and presented the eulogy. Very appropriately, he called on F.M. Moore, retired choir director, Herman Ramsey, who succeeded him in that position, and Bill Land, pianist who played opposite Wanda for so many years to share their special memories. Dr. Kent Hawkins, Associate Pastor, presented the message, and Mr. Blankenship, Rick McGee and Larry Davis played organ selections. In attendance were many people from Wanda's days at Mount Paran, others from her current church, Fair Oaks Methodist, and many from the Atlanta Chapter, ATOS. Reunions, memories, laughter – those were Wanda's last gift to us all.

Larry Davis

Wanda's passing brings to mind many memories of her in "the old days", back during Music Grinder, Ruby Reds, and Excelsior Mill times. I never knew her to be critical, but apparently, to some people, she expressed her views openly. One such time, Bob Van Camp was playing a Christmas program at the Winn Warehouse....he lit into Sleigh Ride, and right in the middle of the introduction, he turned around and said...."No Wanda, it's written in the key of B flat!"...which, of course, made the crowd just roar in laughter. So, I guess, she was a "stickler" about playing things in the right key.

Jay Mitchell

Donna and I first really got to know Wanda at our 2nd ATOS National Convention in Chicago in 1985. Both my grandmother, mother and John attended that convention with us and all of us had a great time. Wanda always had her camera ready and must have taken thousands of pictures over the years. I always remember that she sat on the first row or close to it at all the concerts.

I always wanted to know Wanda's opinion of the organs and artists that we heard. She was not "bashful" concerning the type of music she liked or the way the organs were played. I will always remember her statement to me after one particular concert where the organist played very loud through most of it. When I asked her what she thought she said "that guy really gave me a headache!!!"

I particularly remember the time while attending the Detroit Convention when the convention hotel was in the downtown area. She went with Donna, John and me on a bus over to Canada where we saw the sights and had lunch together. Those were great times and she really enjoyed herself and we had many laughs together. She had a unique and contagious laugh. Because Donna worked for the police department, Wanda surprised her with a gift of a pink pig that she treasures.

Wanda loved the color purple and we always complimented her on her appearance which she seemed to enjoy. I heard her play many times at open console and as one of the artists at a chapter program. She had a wonderful way with harmonies, touch, and always played the correct notes and chords. That was one of her strongest musical attributes. She would tell me after a program. "Well the artist didn't play the correct melodies" or "that guy knew his music".

Her best Chapter program I remember vividly was at her home on her Allen Theatre organ. Bob Van Camp was sitting right across from me and when Wanda began her first number he smiled and nodded in approval.
She will be missed!

Ron & Donna Carter Click to hear Wanda play selections on Big Bertha

President's Message

JAZZ-FILLED FEBRUARY LEADS TO CHRISTMAS IN MARCH!

Big thanks to Randy Elkins who did a wonderful job lining up not only the location, but the terrific talent on display at our February Hammarama meeting at Emory University's Cannon Chapel. And thanks, too, to all the others who participated in presenting some fun music on that "other" kind of organ.

And Christmas in March refers to our next meeting at Rick McGee's home, featuring the incredible Allen TO -5, five-manual theater organ. Since the Christmas meeting was snowed out, we gather in March instead. And remember the early date!! March 11th – the second Sunday, not our usual meeting date. And it is daylight savings time switch.

By the time we meet there, two of the three Page organ percussions being repaired will be back home. Carlton Smith completed work on the Page xylophone and Page chrysoglott, and just in time for reinstallation and the David Gray concert coming up April 14th. Read more about that elsewhere in the newsletter. And don't be bashful! Invite everyone you know who enjoys great music to hear this great artist! Click www.atosatlanta.org for advance ticket sales.

You can also hear Ron Carter at the Strand Theatre with another great silent film.
March 25th, the weekend prior to Easter, Ron will accompany ***King of Kings*** on the Allen GW 4.

At the last meeting, Treasurer Rick McGee announced paid membership totaling 54, which is well below our 2017 level. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2018, please do so. Just contact Rick about the best method to handle that, or bring your dues payment to his home March 11th at the meeting.

As the work continues on the Page, it was great to see a very familiar face normally seen at the console, working hard in the pipe chambers during a recent Sunday work session. Jay Mitchell, who entertained us at the Page in January, was huffing and puffing and grunting and groaning along with other chapter members helping to reconfigure the Main chamber. Thanks to all who assist!

As they all said in *Casablanca,* "See you at Rick's," and it's right around the corner on March 11th!

Ken Double

Hamm-O-Rama and a Cannon !!

Saturday, February 23, 2018, at 3:00 P.M, a group of the ACATOS and guests made the pilgrimage to Emory University Cannon Chapel, for a deluxe Hamm-O-Rama! A fully restored Hammond C-3 with a Leslie cabinet, a grand piano, a full trap drum set, and a Holtkamp tracker pipe organ are in residence.

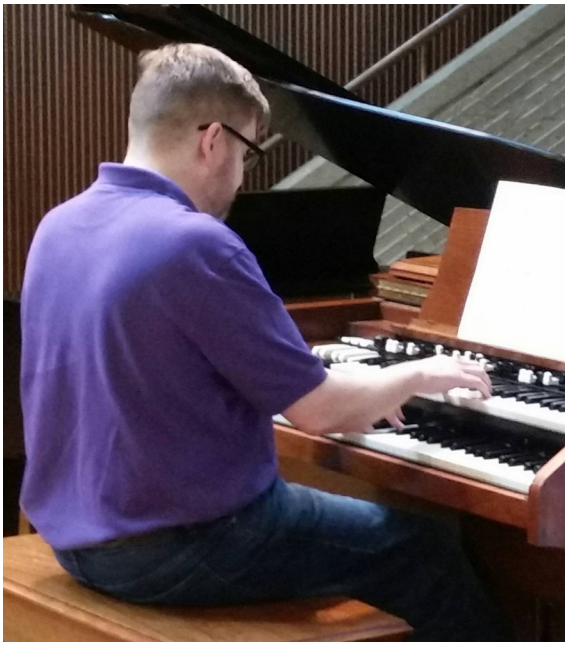
Ken Double introduced our host for the afternoon, Randy Elkins, who is a chapter member, organist at Highlands Church, and a piano teacher. Randy described the architectural style and history of the chapel and introduced our guest artists for the afternoon: Ayisha "Lady Joy" Shields, vocals, Erica DeLoney, Hammond, Marcus Larivaux, piano, Hammond, and Jeffrey Emile, drums. During open console, James Pierre joined Marcus and Jeffrey for an impromptu mini-concert.

The music began with a medley of three selections to show the various styles of the group and the versatility of the Hammond. There was a mix of soul, jazz and gospel and a special selection our on Wanda Carey Fields would have liked – "His Eye Is On The Sparrow." Another great standard was "Summertime" from George Gershwin's 'Porgy & Bess.' Great vocal stylings, a Hammond with Leslie in – Leslie out – Leslie in, piano accents and a great drummer made for listening on a grand order !!

Ken Double offered three selections showing still other capabilities of the Hammond. Randy Elkins took the Hammond on a theatrical path, and his trusty "Double-acting" combination system aiding in the transitions. Member Brady Borne then offered a selection – with the drummer assisting. Ron Carter demonstrated that he can make a Hammond sing.

Great music, extremely talented students, an acoustically live room, fine instruments – what else to want? We want to return ! Tim Stephens provided refreshments to round out the afternoon.

Offered by **Biz E. Body**, a completely unbiased ear! Remember, the walls and stairwells, and the Cannon have ears!!



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS (MARK YOUR CALENDARS)

- March 11, 3:00 p.m. – **Monthly Meeting** – Rick McGee Residence in Vinings, GA – Vinings Revisited! – a makeup of our December program featuring Rick McGee and Friends at Rick's wonderful TO-5Q theatre organ installation in the heart of Vinings.

- March 18, 2:00 p.m. CDT – Alabama Chapter ATOS Meeting – Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, AL – Ken Double featured at "Big Bertha" – the Theatre's 4/32 Mighty Wurlitzer.

- March 25, 3:00 p.m. – Silent Film – *King of Kings* – Strand Theatre in Marietta, GA – 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 14, 4:00 p.m. – **Concert** – Stephenson High School in Stone Mountain, GA – David Gray makes his debut performance on the 4/22 Grande Page. Tickets $15 in advance, $18 at the door, and $10 for students – available at www.atosatlanta.org.

- May 20, 3 p.m. – Silent Film – *Wings* – Strand Theatre in Marietta, GA – the 1927 classic film, accompanied by Ron Carter on the Mighty Allen GW-IV organ. Tickets $10 online or at the box office.

- June 23, 4:00 p.m. – **Concert** – Stephenson High School in Stone Mountain, GA – Richard Hills makes his triumphant return to the 4/22 Grande Page. Tickets $15 in advance, $18 at the door, and $10 for students.

- June 29 – July 3 – 2018 ATOS National Convention – Home in Pasadena – hosted by the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. For additional details or to register, visit www.atos2018.org.

For all of the latest events, along with maps and detailed information, be sure to bookmark the events page of our website at www.atosatlanta.org!

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Chapter President - *Ken Double*
Vice President - Tim Stephens
Treasurer - *Rick McGee*
Secretary - *Bill Thompson*
Newsletter Editor - *Elbert Fields*
Chapter Correspondent - *Larry Davis*

SMALL NUMBERS - GREAT ENTHUSIASM

Under normal circumstances, a Saturday morning at Stephenson High School for ACATOS members involves repairs, re-working or rebuilding to keep the chapter's Grande Page Theatre Organ in tip-top shape. Saturday, February 3rd was a totally different story.

The chapter played host to some residents from the Park Springs Community, just minutes away from Stephenson High School. With several chapter members on hand to play hosts, and coffee and pastries at the ready (thanks Lee Lanier and Tim Stephens), our guests arrived, sipped some coffee on the chilly morning, chatted with members and told stories of organs, organists, and of course, visits to the Fox where, back in the day, they heard Bob Van Camp perform.

At 10 a.m., all strolled into the auditorium where Ken Double provided a 30-minute mini-concert to demonstrate the Page. She sang forth beautifully, and following the program, which included a broad repertoire of music, and a healthy dose of explaining how it all works, there was a Q-and-A session.

The group was most interested in the organ, and asked about things as to how it was different than a church organ; why all the keyboards; was this the original organ from the radio station: and on it went for nearly 20 minutes.

The chapter's goal – raise awareness and interest in the more than 500 residents at Park Springs in the Page organ and our concerts. We believe there is an audience there that would enjoy coming, and judging from the reaction of our guests, we could very well be right. We certainly have our first set of ambassadors, and we will continue to make connections there ahead of the David Gray concert.