

SUNDAY, JUNE 29TH, 3 P.M.

Ron Rhode at the Reddish residence

About the artist... As of 2008 Ron Rhode is beginning his 34th year as one of the most popular theatre organists. His recordings have received “**Top Rating 10/10**” from *CD Review Magazine*, and he was awarded “**Theatre Organist Of The Year – 1989**” by the American Theatre Organ Society. He has played virtually every major theatre organ installation in the world.

Ron is a native of Illinois, where he began his musical career on the piano. He quickly advanced to classical pipe organ, and in 1968 held his first theatre organ job playing for roller skating. In 1973 Ron moved to Phoenix, Arizona, to start a long association with the Organ Stop Pizza restaurants. In 1975 Ron moved to Mesa, Arizona, where he held the Featured Organist post and played for pizza patrons until November, 1986. In July, 1988, Ron again joined the staff as Associate Organist until his retirement in 2000. In Phoenix, he has been the Featured Organist for the Orpheum Theatre Silent Sunday Series, a silent movie series, since its inception in May, 1999.

Since leaving the pizza parlor on a regular basis, Ron has completed a



Bachelor of Education degree in Early Childhood Education at Arizona State University, and in 1995 he earned a Master of Elementary Education degree from Northern Arizona State University. He is currently a Media Specialist at Roosevelt Elementary in Mesa, Arizona. In addition to teaching, recording, and concertizing, Ron is the organist for the Church of the Beatitudes, U.C.C., in Phoenix, Arizona.

Although Ron is held to the classroom through the week, he still

finds time to maintain an active concert and recording career. He continues to perform professionally across the United States, Canada, England, and Australia. He is a favorite at American Theatre Organ Society national and regional conventions. He has more than twenty recordings to his credit.

About the organ... Bucky’s fantastic Walker RTO-335 Opus I is one of the two featured at Walker’s exhibit in the Georgian Terrace Hotel during our 2004 Fabulous Fox Organ Weekend. This is a unique installation with six speaker systems on each of two opposing walls with 12 additional speakers on the balcony and in a closet area on the main floor. Subsequently, this installation was modified to add a custom 2nd pedal cabinet on the catwalk and a real blower and tremolo in a closet to give a realistic pipe-organ effect. With the 21-foot high reflective wall and hardwood floors the organ voices truly blossom and the sound is unbelievable. As usual, Bucky may have a surprise or two, thanks to the Cobb County Voicing Authority.

Directions to Bucky’s

5370 Vinings Lake View Dr. SW, Mableton, GA — 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, which will be 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 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.**

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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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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**“Hess!” at the Hammond -
Mecca, Second Floor
Hamm-O-Rama at the Fox in
Joe Patten’s Apartment**

Our meeting for May was Sunday, May 18 at 3:00 P.M., at the apartment of Joe Patten, located inside the Atlanta FOX Theatre, under the great domes. A wonderful reuse of office and storage space, it is now a 3,200-plus square-foot residence that looks like it had always been part of the design of the theatre. Our sincere thanks to Joe for opening his home to a visit from over sixty-five attendees, allowing us freedom to roam and explore at will, and being a superb host.

The Instruments – a Hammond RT3 organ and a Chickering reproducing grand piano. The Hammond includes percussion, a Leslie speaker, a 32-note pedal-board, and a true 32’ pedal voice. The reproducing piano accurately reproduces the playing of a great piano artist using rolls that include variations in touch and pedal

control. Joe has a large collection of piano rolls for use with this piano.

The Artist – Mr. Lloyd Hess. A native of Canada, Lloyd studied piano at the Toronto Conservatory of Music, laying the foundation for his organ and accordion proficiency. While living in Texas, he played accordion for several German restaurants. He has been a church organist here in Atlanta for a number of years.

To begin the program, the three selections - *Cabaret, Who Will Buy and When the Saints Go Marching In* gave hints of the variety to come.

Next up was a stop in Italy for *O Sole Mio*. The Hammond seemed to have a voice singing along with the rest of the orchestra backing up in fine fashion.

Then a wide selection of ballads, thoughtful tunes and favorites – *Summertime, Smoke Gets In Your Eyes, You Don’t Have to Be a Baby to Cry, Wait ‘Till You See Me and I’m So Happy*. The last reflected on the artists’ joy of performing for a gathering of friends old and new, and some new fans as well!

Having a real love for gospel styling, *Peace in the Valley, Come With Me and Have You Any Time for Jesus* had all looking in earnest for the collection plate to be passed! Great stylistic arrangements and even a convincing chorus of birds adding to the songs showed the versatility of artist and instrument.

A nod to the classical capabilities of the Hammond, *Tell Out* demonstrated the high-church Hammond sound and also that the artist knew his way around a classical organ.

Now, a special treat – Lloyd moved across the room to the piano and revealed listeners with a dream-like, flowing *Liebestraum*, a jazz club presentation of *I Left My Heart in San Francisco*, and a lively and energetic *I Got Rhythm*.

Returning to the Hammond, we were reminded of Lloyd’s accordion days as he announced that he was pretending the Hammond was actually a large accordion, just

laying on its back and treated us to some German favorites - *Jah, Jah!*, and *In München*.

A well-deserved call for an encore gave us the *Lichtenstein Polka!*

After the program, great snacks and open console and piano featured Danny Brooke at the Hammond, followed by Bob Fountain. While Bob stayed on the Hammond, he was joined by Rick McGee at the piano for a couple of Helen and Jesse Crawford duets.

Jeff Harbin, a friend of the Brookes, and also a friend of the chapter, manned the Hammond. Rick returned to the piano for a couple of good-ole’ ‘Baptist’ duets.

Jeff remained at the Hammond and Larry Davis then manned the piano for some gospel duets.

A one-of-a-kind setting, great instruments, a more than capable artist, and really good socializing made for an afternoon that will be hard to forget!!

All comments and observations provided courtesy of **Biz E. Body**, a completely unbiased ear — remember, the walls and onion domes have ears!

Welcome New Members

Paul R. Gelsleichter
4815 Autumn Leaf Lane
Charlotte, NC 28277

James Nord, Jr.
2249 Cumming Road
Augusta, GA 30904

Danny Ray
4327 Holland Avenue #102
Dallas, TX 75219-2855

Floyd L. Snyder
1507 Redland Court
Lawrenceville, GA 30045



Photos by Chris Barr



Tom Hoehn

“The King and I” at the Rylander theatre.

By John Tanner

It all began very innocently enough, John McCall and I were at the Rylander theatre for a performance of the Sumter Players. The next day after the performance we were talking to Brooks Nettum, who is the director of the theatre, about upcoming events. Brooks mentioned that the Sumter Players were going to perform the *King and I* in March of 2008. We asked her what kind of orchestra she was going to use to provide the musical accompaniment. Regrettably, Brooks sighed and said that they would probably have to use pre-recorded or "canned" music. At almost the same time John and I ask her if she had heard the recording on the organ of Simon Gledhill performing a *King and I* medley that he recorded in 2002 while giving a workshop on the organ. She said that she had not. Well while I got the organ set up to playback the medley, John escorted her to a seat out in the auditorium.

As the music began to play you could see the wheels turning in Brooks' head. All during the playback she would ask if she could use that section here or there. Unfortunately, we had to explain to her that this was only a medley and that the music would not really go with the action that the performers were doing on stage. What would be needed, would be an organist to play while the performance was going on. In other words, the organ would

substitute for an orchestra. Brooks seemed to be sold on the concept right from the beginning but that she would have to sell that idea to Sumter Players (she's a good saleslady by the way). Of course, now that John and I got the idea going we would have to come up with someone to play the music.

It wasn't too long before Brooks called John McCall saying that the Sumter Players were open to the idea, and would be very interested in using the organ with the play. Right off the bench, John had several organists in mind to play, but as we thought more about it, it became very clear that whoever was going to do this, would have to devote quite a bit of time and effort to the project.

This would not be for one performance only, the organist would have to be available for almost a week and a half. There would be four performances Thursday thru Sunday, plus a full dress rehearsal on Wednesday, then the rehearsals leading up to the dress rehearsal. Also the organist would have to realize that this would be no ordinary organ performance, but that their job would be of the orchestra for a Broadway musical.

After several months John McCall called me and said that Tom Hoehn of Clearwater, Florida had agreed to do the project. After Tom agreed on the terms with the theatre, he acquired the conductors score for the *King and I* and immediately began to work out the instrumentation for the score onto

the organ.

In Nov. 2007, Tom came to the theatre to get familiar with the organ and began setting combinations. After a brief lunch, Tom sat down at the organ and played through the whole score. This performance was recorded on the organ and on audio so that the actors could begin to get used to the idea of the organ providing the music.

Tom came again in January for more rehearsal on the organ.

A week before opening night Tom came to Americus and started rehearsals with the Sumter Players.

I arrived Wednesday morning and found Tom practicing. After listening to Tom practice for a while, I began to realize just how hard Tom was working to make this a success. The organ was truly sounding more like an orchestra than an organ.

When the dress rehearsal started, the question of whether or not this was going to work would finally be answered.

As Tom ended the overture and sank back into the orchestra pit the curtain went up and the actors began to appear on stage, the organ quickly changed from a solo instrument to an orchestra. Tom had crafted his registrations so well that it really did sound more like an orchestra in the pit and it quickly became obvious throughout the rehearsal that this was going to be something really special.

One of the concerns that I had

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from the beginning was going to be how well the actors on stage could be balanced with the music coming from the organ. That concern was quickly put aside. As the rehearsal continued it was obvious that Bill Fields (the theatre's Technical Director) had done an excellent job of balancing the microphones on stage so that the actors were heard and great credit has to be given to Tom for balancing his playing to the action on stage.

As with any dress rehearsal there are a few minor items to take care of, but at the end of the night it was considered a good rehearsal.

You would think that Tom would rest up the next morning to get ready for the opening night. However, when I went down to the theatre the next morning, I found Tom practicing. After the rehearsal the night before, Tom had gone back to his room to listen to a recording he made, so that he could see where he might need to make some minor registration changes, to better balance out the organ with what the actors were doing. He also solicited my opinion of the dress rehearsal and I told him where he may need to hold back a little more because a particular actor's voice did not carry as well as others, either because of their voice projection or position on the stage.

Tom would repeat this process after every performance, so that he could make music one with the actors on stage.

Since I was very close to the production, I felt that my review might be a little biased. In that several of our chapter members came down to Americus, I thought I would ask one of them to give their view of the performance that they attended. Larry and Karen Davis have graciously offered their perspectives.

"Karen and I have shared the enjoyment of Broadway musicals

from the time that we first met, so we were pleased to hear that the Rylander would be presenting the *King and I*. We have always loved the story and the music and we had the privilege of seeing it live at the Fox Theatre on Yul Brynner's farewell tour. We also love the Rylander Theatre and naturally I was thrilled to hear that the Möller would be the resource for the live accompaniment. When we arrived at the theatre on Saturday evening, it was wonderful to see the large audience. Then we settled down to enjoy a totally delightful event. From an organist's perspective — and one who has experience with that instrument — it was fascinating to hear the registrations that Tom Hoehn used to support the vocalist.

"Avoiding loud registrations kept the volume down and made the organ sound more orchestral than I had previously heard it. The Möller was a true unit orchestra for the evening, and even the percussions had their place. But when Anna and the King began to dance, the Möller swelled to full volume and not even the rousing applause of the audience could overwhelm it.

"With Tom Hoehn's support, the actors and actresses rose to the highest musical heights. Richard Nettum faced the greatest challenge of all — to create his own version of the role owned by Brynner, but he did so with great effectiveness. Christi Barr (Anna) with her clean soprano voice was perfectly cast in her role, Elizabeth Turner as Lady Thiang, electrified us all as she sang "Something Wonderful," the magnificent aria worthy of anything from the great Italian composers.

"The ovation at the end, in which Karen and I enthusiastically joined, indicated how well the Sumter Players and Tom Hoehn at the great Möller had brought the best of Broadway to Americus."

Karen and Larry Davis

I would like to add to Larry and Karen's thoughts, since I was privileged to witness all the performances.

Tom's performance was outstanding and I consider myself fortunate to be able to work with an organist who really took this project to heart.

As for the Sumter Players; I would also especially like to mention Lisa Montrose (Tuptim) and Ken DiNella (Lun Tha) for their beautiful heartfelt performances as the ill fated lovers.

When one thinks of this musical one has to think of the children in the cast. This could be a nightmare for any director but I don't think I have seen a group of children from the oldest to the youngest who did as fine a job as they did in these performances. They all hit their marks and knew their lines. Darian Breaux (Prince Chululongkorn) and Quinn Hanson (Louis) were completely delightful.

This production has a tremendous number of performers involved and in my view they all did an outstanding job. Along with the performers there are the people backstage. From stage hands, makeup artist, and many more, who worked to make this a memorable musical experience.

For those members of the chapter who were able to attend the *King and I* production at the Rylander, not only did they get to see a fine Broadway musical performance but were also treated to a different use of a theatre organ, which showed just how, under the right hands, it can be so versatile an instrument.

If you like Broadway type shows, don't waste your time going to New York. Americus is a lot closer and the Sumter Players are an exceptional theatrical company.

A Month of Triumph for the Theatre Organ Part 2 – Christmas in Americus

As reported last month, the month between Thanksgiving and Christmas was a wonderful time for the theatre organ, beginning north of Atlanta with the organ of the Tivoli Theatre in Chattanooga, then in Atlanta for the second annual “Larry, Carols, and Mo” at the Fox. The third event occurred south of Atlanta at the Rylander Theatre in Americus, with John McCall at the console of the Frank Sheffield Memorial Möller Organ and Dayle Harding at the keyboard of the Rosalyn Carter Steinway Piano.

John opened with *Jingle Bells* and followed with a medley of tunes from *Meet Me in St. Louis* and continued with *Little Christmas Tree*, *Christmas Island*, and *Let It Snow*. Then John debuted the latest of his own compositions, *Windsor Wonderland*, in honor of the

historic Windsor Hotel in Americus. Then Dayle took his seat at the piano for an eclectic series of songs, from *Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree*, to *I Saw Three Ships*, to *White Christmas*, and then changed to the Roland keyboard for an orchestral solo of *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*.

Following a brief intermission, the program resumed with John and Dayle playing *The Christmas Waltz*. The console descended as the curtains parted to reveal the opening frames of Edison’s *The Wrong Santa*. After this entertaining interlude John resumed with *Christmas Day*, and then a medley of quiet Christmas tunes. With *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, one of the most entertaining programs of the year came to a conclusion. It was another wonderful program by our own John McCall and our new friend Dayle Harding in one of our favorite venues.

Larry Davis

Chapter Begins Fund Raising Campaign for Strand Organ

Hopefully, all chapter members and friends have received their personal donation letter, brochure and auditorium rendering of the Strand Theatre. In this newsletter we have included these three important documents for your review and as a reminder that we need YOUR HELP in raising funds for this most important project. The Friends of the Strand have stood by their commitment to provide everything we need in the building to install the organ so as we pledged several years ago we now need to step up to the plate and fulfill our commitment. Please complete the contribution/pledge portion of the brochure and send your donation now!

Ron Carter

President’s Message...

It’s not too late to register to attend the National ATOS Convention in Indianapolis this July! If you are not a member of National ATOS, you may not even know about it.

Where else can you hear concerts by Simon Gledhill, Richard Hills, Ken Double, Clark Wilson, Walt Strony, Mark Herman, Scott Foppiano, Jim Riggs, Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Martin Ellis, Jelani Eddington, and others. The cost to register is \$325. It also includes several seminars and special events. Please give me a call or visit the website at www.atos.org. This Convention is going to be very special. Talking about National, in the May-June Issue, there is a survey for National Members to fill out. They want our input. We all need to Support the National ATOS and join. If not for



them we would be just a local-interest Club. For your dues of \$40, you get the fantastic bi-monthly Journal, which tells what's happening all over the country in the Theatre Organ World, a look back at things from the past, and where we are going next. Ask anybody who is a National Member and they will tell you it is well worth it. In fact one of our own local chapter members Ken Double is National President. Look at the website, talk to National Members and then join!

Bucky Reddish

Thanks for the Donations

Bucky Reddish
John Tanner

In Memory of John Sheffield

John & Gina Skelton
David Tuck

In Memory of Charles Walker

Keith Vansant

Come say Goodbye to the Brooke Family...

Sadly, we report that the Lori and Danny Brooke family is moving back to their old stomping grounds in Texas. We appreciate their efforts and years of service to our Atlanta Chapter and hate to see them go.

Come say a fond adieu and wish them well at Bucky’s home on Saturday night, June 28th beginning at 7 P.M. (the night before the June program) courtesy of the Cobb County Voicing Authority.

Imperial Wurlitzer Project Update

The Imperial Wurlitzer organ has been relocated to the Imperial Theatre from its former warehouse location. A newly reconstituted organ committee led by Imperial Theatre Board Member and historic preservationist Mike Deas met for the first time in March. The Atlanta Chapter was represented by Larry Davis, who gave a detailed presentation on the history of the organ, Bob Polglase and Mike Mixon. The new committee is composed of board and community members interested in reinstalling the Wurlitzer.

Fundraising plans are being formulated now. In September, Mike and Larry will give a presentation entitled "The Imperial Theatre and Its Wurlitzer" at Saint Paul's Church in Augusta, location for one of the Augusta Organ Weekend Concerts.

Bob Polglase

Including The Atlanta Chapter in Your Will

Many of us are now retired or reaching retirement age and have heard the horror stories of persons who wanted to leave something to an organization or cause they felt deeply about but just never got around to making the legal provisions to do so. If we want to perpetuate the wonderful sounds and use of the theatre pipe organ it must have a future financial commitment to keep it alive for years to come. Donna and I are currently updating our Wills to make sure those causes that we love so dearly and the people we care about receive and use the assets we worked so hard for in our lives in the manner we wish. Please consider leaving something substantial to the Atlanta Chapter and notify Wanda Carey Fields, our Chapter Treasurer, in writing of that decision so that we can have it on file.

Ron Carter

Upcoming Meetings & Events (*Mark your Calendars*)

- June 28th, 7 P.M., Farewell reception for the Brooke family at the Reddish residence
- **June 29th, 3 P.M., Meeting, Ron Rhode at the Reddish residence**
- **July 20th, 3 P.M., Meeting, Stephenson High School, Chapter's Page Organ - mini-performances and open console**
- John McCall in Concert at the Music House Museum Wurlitzer, 7377 US 31 North, Acme, MI, July 17, 7:30 P.M., 231-938-9300; www.musichouse.org
- **August Meeting — In Planning**
- **September — Augusta Organ Crawl**
 - Thursday, September 18 (pre-glow) - Imperial Theatre, *The Three Faces of Eve*, featuring "Eve" — Chris Costner Sizemore in person and the 1957 Academy Award winning film.
 - Friday, September 19 - Sacred Heart Community Center - Ron Carter accompanying the silent film *Pandora's Box*
 - Saturday, September 20 - St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Keith Schafer in Concert on the Casavant Organ
 - Sunday, September 21 - Dolton McAlpin in Concert on the GW4 at the residence of Bob and Amanda Polglase
 - Sunday, September 21 (afterglow) - visit Randy Magnuson's home-installation pipe organ in Sylvania, GA
(IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO ATTEND THIS EVENT, CONTACT LARRY DAVIS
SO RESERVATIONS CAN BE MADE AT SACRED HEART)

Atlanta Chapter , ATOS - Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/ZIP _____ E mail _____
 Do you own an organ? _____ If so, description _____

Annual membership dues \$35 (Student \$17.50). Please make check payable to *Atlanta Chapter, ATOS*. Meetings are held monthly, usually on the 3rd Sunday afternoon. Mail this application and your check to: Wanda Carey Fields, 413 Concord Road SW, Smyrna, GA 30082-4509