

The Pine Piper



Newsletter of the Pine Tree Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

Third Quarter 2016 Edition

What's News:

There are some pretty significant changes taking place with the Friends of the Kotschmar Organ ("FOKO"). Kathleen Grammer, long-time Executive Director of FOKO has announced her retirement. She has in fact retired as of late August 2016. Ray Cornils, the also-long-term and very popular municipal organist for the City of Portland has also announced his retirement at the end of 2017. Ray will spend time traveling to South America, a part of the world that he enjoys and knows well. He expressed a desire to make room for younger organists to "spread their wings" when asked about a choice for his successor. We appreciate his important work introducing students to the pipe organ and his annual performances at Loranger on the Wurlitzer.

Our own member Seamus Gethicker was the winner of the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition at the annual ATOS convention this July! This was Seamus' second appearance at this prestigious event. More on that and the rest of his busy summer in a separate article in this issue.

Summer Outing:

Traditionally, our August meeting has been an offsite to pat ourselves on the back for the work we've done and to get out of that hot and sticky school during the hottest month. This year we held our August offsite social at the home of Pete Haskell. Pete has a very nice Marr and Colton 2/5 installed in "Haskell Hall". Actually, the console is in the living room and the main chamber is in an adjacent bedroom. The door to the bedroom is the swell shade with a clever motor to open and close it with the console swell shoe. Despite the very warm day, the organ sounded great! And the hall was nearly full to capacity, which is about ten, I think. A pipe organ takes up a LOT of space in a house that wasn't really built with one in mind. In addition to the M&C console in the living room, there is a beautiful reed pump organ, and a piano. Pete

also had a very old and unique typewriter on a small table. And, in the next room, Pete demonstrated his recently-built 1/1 direct-electric action organ with MIDI interface. It has one small but heavy rank of 24 pipes and a small keyboard (only 21 keys) that plays them. He can also play it from his laptop computer via the MIDI port, which can play all 24 pipes. The whole thing, including the blower, runs off a 12v car battery. It looks like it should be portable but, for such a small instrument, it must have 100 pounds of lead in the pipes. I could barely lift one end! What a neat contraption it is though. It resembles a calliope in appearance and sound.



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We thank Pete very much for hosting our gathering and for sharing his fascinating collection of musical and mechanical machines!



PTC-ATOS at "Haskell Hall" (Pat Burkard photo)

Recent Events:

"Orgelfest" 2016 is in the books. The *Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ* hosted a series of performances in August, one of which was a fantastic show by Dave Wickerham. The second half of the program was made entirely of audience requests, taken at intermission. What a show!

At Loranger School in Old Orchard Beach, we completed reinstalling the primary pneumatic motors for the offset chests that were removed in the winter. There is some adjusting left to do and a few stripped screw holes to repair, but that project is nearly complete. Were it not for a freak thunderstorm which knocked out power to OOB for our September work session, those stripped screws would be holding fast right now.

EMCATOS held a social event on Sunday, October 2 at Babson College at 2pm. Our own (and also EMCATOS's own) Seamus Gethicker was the artist.

Upcoming Events:

On Saturday evening, October 29th, Jonathan Ortloff will accompany the silent film *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* on the mighty Kotzschmar at

Portland City Hall. Showtime is 7:30pm. A costume show will be held at 6:30pm. There will be no pre-show talk for this performance. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$13 for seniors, \$10 for students. Ages 12 and under are free.

Also on October 29th, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is playing at 6:30pm at the Zeiterion Theatre in New Bedford, MA, accompanied by house organist Bernie Anderson, Jr. Tickets are \$7.50.

Tuesday, December 20th is the date for "Christmas with Cornils" at Portland City Hall. Ray Cornils will host and perform his well-loved Christmas program accompanied by the Kotzschmar Festival Brass, the Parish Ringers, and Musica Filia. The show is at 7:30pm. Tickets: \$41, \$35, \$23 -Reserved seating - senior discount \$2. Students: \$10. Tickets are on sale now.

What Are Our Members Up To?

Bob Kroepel is one of the pianists at Tavern 27 in Laconia, New Hampshire and also the organist for The Chocorua Community Church in Chocorua Village, Tamworth, New Hampshire. Jim is working on his house. Dwight is working on his barn. Pete is going to car shows with his cool Ford Model A. Everett is sailing again and Charlie is driving again.

What has Seamus Been Up To?

Our youngest member, Seamus Gethicker, has had an amazing year as he transitioned from his junior to his senior year at Morse High School in Bath. Since his accomplishments absolutely eclipse all of the rest of ours combined, he certainly warrants his own column!

On his way to the convention in Cleveland, Seamus stopped by Rochester, New York to play the fabulous 4/23 Wurlitzer in the Auditorium Theater of the Eastman School of Music. Just a warm-up...

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This was Seamus's second year as a competitor in the American Theatre Organ Society's "Young Theatre Organist Competition". And he WON!!! That competition is held during the annual ATOS convention, which this year was held in Cleveland during the week of July 4th – just squeaking in before the RNC convention. The competition was tough, the judges all very experienced theatre organists themselves, and the organ used for the competition was suffering some from the heat tuning issues. We are so very proud of Seamus's performance, stage presence, and of how quickly he has mastered the instrument and the music. Seamus is also a member of the Eastern Massachusetts chapter of ATOS, so we aren't the only chapter to be so excited about his progress. See "Hit the Links" below for a link to the 2016 YOC performances.



Seamus is named **WINNER** of the YOC! (Charlie Briggs Photo)

Next, he went on to the ATOS-sponsored Summer Youth Adventure, held this year in Chicago. Seamus got some good one-on-one coaching there and also the opportunity to play some fantastic instruments including the amazing Sanfilippo 5/80 Wurlitzer, the Mundelein 4/20 Howell-Wurlitzer (made famous by John Seng), the Grande Barton at the Rialto Square Theatre, and an Allen 5/55 TO5Q Digital. Wow!



Seamus at the Sanfilippo Wurlitzer (Shawn Gethicker photo)

In August, Seamus traveled to San Diego to play a concert on the famous Spreckels organ in Balboa Park. This is the world's largest outdoor organ and a close cousin to the Kotzschmar in Portland, ME. [Here](#) is a link to a recorded live-stream of that performance. Seamus is introduced by Jon Ledwon (ATOS) about 10 minutes into the recording.



Seamus at the Spreckels Console

On to Hawaii for some R&R and, of course, to play a huge 4/114 Skinner there.

He's back in Bath at school now, where there aren't any organs to play. ☹ Can't wait to see what next summer brings!

For more info on the YOC and SYA, see <http://www.atos.org/>

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Prez Says:

Here is our 2nd digital version of the Pine Piper. We received some nice feedback on the first “adventure”. Our readers were pretty easy on us. I am really excited about the summer that Seamus just experienced. He really embodies the future of our group, our hobby, and the art of theatre organ performance. I wish we could take some credit for his success, but in truth, he really did it on his own. We helped clear a path and provided him with something to play, and then got out of the way and watched him take off. What an exciting thing to see! Seamus, congratulations from all of us on your tremendous achievements this year! And my thanks to the Pine Tree and Eastern Mass chapters for their encouragement and support of Seamus as he has professionally honed his talent.

Hit the Links:

ATOS (National):

www.atos.org

ATOS Radio (Streaming organ music):

<http://www.atos.org/radio/>

ATOS Young Organist Competition 2016:

<http://atosradio.org/TOWR2016/YOC>

Eastern MA Chapter ATOS:

www.emcatos.com

Pine Tree Chapter ATOS:

<http://theatreorgans.com/me/pinetree/>

Contact Us:

We are the Pine Tree Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

Our website can be found [here](#).

[Visit us on Facebook](#) 

Or contact Dwight Burkard at jburkard@megalink.net for more information or with your feedback.