
The WINDSHEET



Newsletter of the NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY
PO Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625 510/644-2707

www.theatreorgans.com/norcal

June 2009



P.W. Bowen

PAUL-WESLEY BOWEN San Jose Grace Baptist Church Sunday, June 14, 2009 – 1 PM

Followed by Open Console

NorCal's own P. W. Bowen will be at the console of **Grace Baptist Church's** 3/13 *Robert Morton*. Originally installed in San Jose's *Liberty Theater* this organ retains its original theatre organ features.

Although a native Californian, 'PW' spent 30 years in Minnesota with the Dutch organ manufacturer, *Eminent Organ Co.* Known for his active hand registrations 'PW' is at home with both Theatre and Church organs.

Following the concert, members will have 10 to 15 minute turns at open console, with repeat turns as time permits.

Grace Baptist Church is in downtown San Jose at 484 E. San Fernando St.

Annual Picnic at Ron Bingaman's Home

NorCal's annual picnic (with **Sierra Chapter** members our guests) will be held **Sunday, August 23rd** at **Ron and Gay Bingaman's** beautiful home in Grass Valley. Situated on 10 acres, the house has a water powered Allen GW-4 with speakers that are way above in an angled ceiling so the sound comes down from above.

The festivities will start around 11 AM and we will eat around noon or thereafter. A grill will be provided for those who wish to 'cook out' and coffee, tea and soft drinks will be provided on-site. Please bring your own dishes, silverware and food, and if desired, beer or wine.

In addition to the organ and the on-site hydro-electric power house, Ron and Gay have 4 llamas and 3 pet chickens which you
(continued on Page Three)

Lew Williams at BCT May 3, 2009

(review by Don Ravey)

NorCal's final public concert of the 2008-2009 season got off to a shaky start when the theater sound system refused to cooperate, depriving us of our customary vocal welcome by **Bill Schlotter** and requiring our visiting artist from Phoenix, **Lew Williams**, to just start playing and bring up the console lift with no introduction. I'm sure the confusion was somewhat distracting to Lew.

When Lew's wireless microphone also failed to operate, our ever-resourceful **Kevin King** came onstage and delivered an older technology megaphone-like device that

Lew then used throughout the first half of the concert. No batteries required! But as it was placed on the console platform between uses, it gave the appearance that CalTrans was repairing pot holes on the stage!

And once, unfortunately during a beautiful rendition of the *Scherzo* from **Vierne's Second Symphony**, the sound system's speakers above the stage unexpectedly came to life and began hissing at the audience until someone backstage was able to mute it.

During the intermission, the stage crew was able to set up a portable amplifier system on the stage. And it worked! Lew is to be complimented for maintaining his composure and being a good sport about the technical problems. (I don't know if he

blew his stack backstage, but I wouldn't blame him if he did.)

Lew's performance was notable for his transcriptions from classical, big band, and Latin orchestral scores. I heard all the interplay of voices that I was familiar with in the original versions. And all played by one musician! His rhythms and tempos were also true to the original, a quality I much admire.

Alright, so much for the excitement. As we have come to expect from **Lew Williams**, we enjoyed a wide range of music; as Lew said, *a drawer of unmatched socks.*

(Playlist is on Page Two)

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When emailing, include ATOS in the subject line. Otherwise, if you are unknown to the recipient's computer, its SPAM filter may divert your mail.

(Lew Williams cont. from Page One)

PLAYLIST

Up console:

Begin the Beguine – Cole Porter

First half:

Does Your Heart Beat For Me –
Russ Morgan

Medley from **Mary Poppins** –
Richard & Robert Sherman

Harbor Lights – Jimmy Kennedy

All That Jazz from *Chicago* –
John Kander

Scherzo from *2nd Symphony* –
Louis Vierne

Lullaby – George Gershwin

Lady of Spain – Tolchard Evans

2 songs from *Dancing Lady* (Joan
Crawford):

Heigh Ho and **Everything I Have Is
Yours** – Burton Lane

In The Mood –

Joe Garland, Andy Razaf, Glenn Miller
Intermission – Second half:

Little Mermaid from the *Disney* film
– Alan Menken

Country Road – (John Denver)

String of Pearls –

Jerry Gray (Glenn Miller)

Bossa Nova Medley –

Antonio Carlos Jobim:

Girl From Ipanema,

Wave, and Summer Samba

St. Louis Blues March – W. C. Handy

Hallelujah Chorus from *The Messiah*

– G. F. Handel

Medley from **The Sound of Music** -

Richard Rodgers

(including **The Sound of Music, My
Favorite Things, Do Re Mi, Edelweiss,
Climb Ev'ry Mountain**)

Encores:

Toccata from *Symphony No. 5* –
Charles-Marie Widor

As Time Goes By – Herman Hupfeld

—Review by **Don Ravey**

Berkeley High School Music Department features NorCal's Mighty Wurlitzer



Karen Wells, Berkeley HS Music Instructor
Alexander Johnson, Music Student



Berkeley High School Symphony Orchestra

--Neal Wood Photo

It was around the middle of March when BHS music instructor **Karen Wells** visited the NorCal work party. Ms. Wells was aware of the Wurlitzer in the community theatre and hoped that some day she could use the mighty instrument in one of the Berkeley High School concerts. The date for their spring concert was April 16th. The timing was right. The organ was available, but who was going to play it?

At the next organ work party, in walks student **Alexander Johnson**, a member of the Berkeley High School Symphony. His training included keyboards, piano, and percussion instruments, however he had never played an organ.

Under tutelage of **Chris Nichols**, Alex sat down at the BCT Wurlitzer for the first time with the confidence of a pro. Chris instructed him on proper seating at the organ, registration, technique, etc. While the crew was working in the scene shop, we could hear Alex's attempt at playing the organ. As the day progressed, some interesting sounds were beginning to emanate from the auditorium. Obviously,

Alex was a quick study.

The week of the concert was quickly upon the music department. Alex needed more practice time on the Wurlitzer, and Chris was available mornings to provide support for the organ. This was to be the first time that the high school symphony and the organ played together.

On April 16th the audience entered the theater; most were seeing the Wurlitzer console for the first time. I could overhear people mentioning that they had heard there was an organ in the auditorium, but they had never seen it. A group gathered around the edge of the stage, formulating the usual questions such as where are the speakers, where did the organ come from, etc.

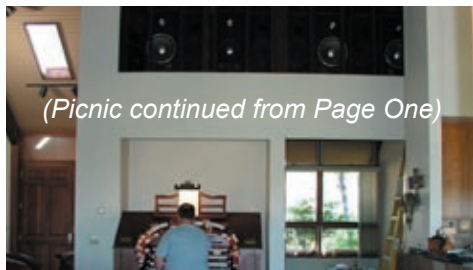
The organ was to be used in the last piece; *Symphony No. 3 in C minor*, the fourth movement, *Maestoso*, by **Camille Saint-Saens**. Alex seated himself at the console, and waited for instruction from the conductor, Ms. Wells. As the baton came down, Alex played that magnificent major chord that heralds the *Maestoso*. It was just what we were waiting to hear; the Mighty

Wurlitzer and the Berkeley High School Symphony. The piece was beautifully orchestrated. The final chord by the organ brought the house down. The audience immediately stood and cheered, yelling "Encore, Encore".

It was over. Chris and I were grinning ear to ear. The audience and members of the symphony crowded around the console to have another look. One of the students sat down and played a good rendition of **Alfred Hitchcock's** theme song. It was a good half hour of answering questions about the organ until the audience was ushered out of the theatre.

The next morning, Chris and I met with Ms. Wells' music class. We conducted tours of the organ, visiting the chambers, piano shelf and of course, the 32' Diaphones (they were a big hit). The students took interest in all of the aspects of the organ. Here's hoping that NorCal has sparked some enthusiasm in the Mighty Wurlitzer and the music we love to hear.

—Neal Wood



(Picnic continued from Page One)

are welcome to hand feed; sometimes you can see nearby wildlife including quail, wild turkey, and lots of jack rabbits. It sounds like a fun picnic!

Directions and many more details will follow in next month's WindSheet, but if you need more information now contact Ron at: ron.bingaman@gmail.com

MARK HERMAN at MORTON MADNESS —Neal Wood

Despite the navigational skills of **Chris Nichols** and my total lack of sense of direction, we arrived at Harmony Wynelands in plenty of time to visit with all those who made the trek to Lodi. The weather was like a spring day and the gardens at the winery were all abloom.

Mark Herman began the concert with the upbeat *Something's Gotta Give*, by **Johnny Mercer**; then the audience knew they were in for a treat from this young artist. I could go on and describe my impression of each song, but I think that would probably bore the reader to tears. So I would like to just move on and describe this, my concert experience.

Mark's music selections, and the style in which they were played, really showed off the sound of these two wonderful **Robert-Morton** organs. They really shine when played as jazz instruments. To be able to adapt and orchestrate music to individual organs is almost as critical as pressing the right notes at the right time. This, Mark does quite well.

Music is not only a sound experience, but it is also an emotional experience, as you are most certainly aware. I catch myself remembering experiences associated with the music in times past. Music is one part of the song, lyrics the other. My impression is that Mark, along with the music he is playing, is thinking about the lyrics, and is adding that important emotional content to the performance.

This concert was truly a memorable event. I wish to thank Mark for his wonderful performance, and I look forward to hearing more from this talented artist.

June 2009

So what more can I say, except to thank **Bob Hartzell** at *Harmony Wynelands*, for his hospitality, and *Ironstone Winery* for the wonderful buffet dinner and their hospitality as well. Thanks go to Carol, Craig, Tom, Dave(s), and the members of the *Sierra Chapter* for putting this whole event together.

Lastly, a plug for Mark's new CD, *A Kid in the Candy Store*. Many of the songs played at Morton Madness are on this CD. I guarantee you will be delighted to have this CD in your collection. You can order Mark's CDs at:

www.theatreorgancds.com

PLAYLISTS Harmony Wynelands

Something's Gotta Give—Johnny Mercer,
Atlanta, GA—Skylar & Shaftel

Spring is Here—

Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart

Brazil—Ary Barroso

When Your Lover has Gone—

Einar Aaron Swan,

Medley—Jerome Kern

A Fine Romance, Yesterdays, Who?, All the Things You Are, Pick Yourself Up,

Flying Fiddles

Intermission

When the Saints Go Marching In—

James Milton Black & Katherine Purvis

Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie Yellow Polka

Dot Bikini—Paul Vance & Lee Pockriss

I Concentrate on You—Cole Porter,

Medley from Broadway Melody of 1940—

Irving Berlin

Top Hat, White Tie and Tails, Change Partners, When the Midnight Choo Choo Leaves for Alabam, Doin' What Comes Natur'ly, There's No Business Like Show Business

My Romance—Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart

Medley of American Patriotic Music—

Anchors Away, America the Beautiful,

You're A Grand Old Flag, God Bless

America, Stars and Stripes Forever

Ironstone Winery
Spring Fever—Rube Bloom
Stormy Weather—Harold Arlen & Ted Koehler

Losing My Mind—Stephen Sondheim,

Twisted—Annie Ross

Medley of Duke Ellington Music—

Don't Get Around Much Anymore,

Caravan, I Got It Bad (and That Ain't

Good), Take the 'A' Train

Your Mine, You (*played on the piano*)—

Johnny Green, Edward Heyman,

Powerhouse—Raymond Scott

Windsheet

It's De-Loverley—Cole Porter
Intermission

Vanessa—Wayne

I'm in the Mood for Love—

Jimmy McHugh & Dorothy Fields

Medley of Julie Styne music

Some People, Saturday Night is the

Loneliest Night in the Week, People,

Everything's Coming Up Roses

On a Little Street in Singapore—

Peter De Rose & Billy Hill

Petite Waltz—Robert Schultz

Probably—Buddy Nolan

(*Organist at the Embassy Theatre*)

I Cover the Waterfront—

Johnny Green & Edward Heyman,

Roller Coaster Milton DeLugg

Encore

Deadwood Stage—Sammy Fain/Webster

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome:

Mr. Al Norman, Alamo, CA

(a November Concert 1st Timer)

Mr. Burke Fox, Foresthill, CA

DONATIONS

NorCal gratefully acknowledges a donation from **Frank & Jan La Fetra** to the *2009 ATOS Youth Camp*.

Neighboring Chapters



Carol Zerbo Mark Herman Neal Wood
Sierra Chapter Artist NorCal

While *Morton Madness* is the major joint concert NorCal and Sierra hold each year, you will always find members of each chapter at the other's concerts. In fact, Sierra Chapter often busses down members to NorCal public concerts, and each November many NorCal members attend Sierra's Annual **George Wright** Memorial Concert. Perhaps this year NorCal will charter a bus to Sacramento for that event.

Sierra Chapter routinely does silent movies with organ accompaniment—something for a number of reasons is not easily done at BCT. Frank and I took our teenage grandsons to see *The Thief of Bagdad* and we all had a wonderful time. Sierra Chapter presents silent movies on Friday night, four times each year. (SierraChapterATOS.org)

Page Three



CHAIRMAN'S WINDLINE

I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Don Ravey** for all his efforts and contributions to NorCal as the *Windsheet* editor. Since September of 2005, Don's 'Ravings' have graced the pages of the *Windsheet*. Don has decided to pursue other interests as he leaps into his octogenarian years.

Don's editorials have touched on many subjects related to Theatre Organ, from whimsical to cajoling. One of my favorite articles was in the June 2007 *Windsheet* where Don discusses the very existence of Music. Is it a second universal language, earworm, a mood regulator, etc?

Beyond the 'Ravings' column, Don has written many concert reviews as well. [I hope he finds time to continue these - Pub.]

Don, your wit and wisdom will be missed, but not forgotten. We hopefully look forward to an occasional contribution to the *Windsheet*. I know that you will be spending more time at your **Allen Renaissance Theatre Organ** preparing for an upcoming concert, perhaps?? *Neal*

Notes from the Editor Pro Tem

The very first thing I want to do as Editor Pro Tem is to echo **Neal Wood's** thanks to outgoing Editor, **Don Ravey**. All NorCal members should thank Don for his dedicated work, and I am especially grateful that he will continue writing his excellent concert reviews, and hopefully an occasional article.

This month I have received lots of material, but that won't always be the case. So I look forward to contributions as well as any comments or suggestions members may have. Just give me a little 'wobble room' as I learn this job.

Jan La Fetra

NORCAL PRESENTS ATOS Summer Adult Getaway! July 20 – 23 in Berkeley, CA

Jonas Nordwall, with assistance from special guest instructors, including our own **Kevin King**, will offer a four-day course on how to *Play the West Coast Way*.

The primary organ will be NorCal's 4/41 Wurlitzer in the BCT, but other Bay Area organs may be used. Because of our contract with the BCT, NorCal membership is required. This event is open to those over 21.

For additional information, contact Donna Parker at d.parker@atos.org or Neal Wood (See Page One or below).

OPEN CONSOLE Hosted by Chris Nichols



This is an opportunity for NorCal members to try their hand at playing the chapter's Wurlitzer at the Berkeley Community Theatre. When the theatre is available, these sessions run from **1:00 to 5:00 PM**. The next scheduled dates are:

Sundays— June 21, July 12, & August 9

Open Consoles are informal and our genial host, **Chris Nichols**, ensures that any NorCal member feels comfortable. He lends help and support to anyone who needs it. Depending on how many members are present, each has one or more 15-minute sessions at the console.

Important: Call the NorCal voice mail at **(510) 644-2727** on that Sunday morning to confirm that the theatre is available. If there will be Open Console, enter via the backstage door at 1930 Allston Way.

UPCOMING EVENTS

PAUL-WESLEY BOWEN—Sunday, June 14, 2009, 1 PM, San Jose Grace Baptist Church, . Followed by Open Console. (See page 1)

ATOS Annual Convention—Cleveland, OH, July 1-5, 2009, "**Treasures of the Western Reserve**". (See May/June Theatre Organ for details)

OPEN CONSOLE—Sundays— June 21, July 12, August 9. (See Left)

NORCAL PRESENTS—July 20-23, 2009 **Adult Summer Getaway** (See Left)

NORCAL MEMBERS PICNIC—Aug. 23, (See Page 1 for details)

NORCAL PRESENTS—



NORCAL PRESENTS—



NORCAL WEBSITE

We now have copies of the current and two previous *Windsheet* on our web site—and in color! They are in .pdf format, which requires that your computer has a copy of the *free* Adobe Acrobat Reader.

We also have an up-to-date Calendar of Events online. Be sure to visit it!

TheatreOrgans.com/norcal/

FOR SALE

Rodgers 3-manual with 3 large external speakers. Also SH2000 Roland synthesizer. Late 1970's vintage. Located in San Jose. Email for more details.

r.sardell@att.net

NORCAL THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, Inc.
A Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society

ATOS is dedicated to promoting the tradition of the theatre pipe organ and public understanding and appreciation of the instrument and its music, and shall aid in any way possible the preservation of theatre organs through rehabilitation of instruments and fostering the arts of playing, building, voicing and maintenance. If you would like to join us, please call or write:

Mr. Neal R. Wood at (415)861-7082 <nealwood@pacbell.net> , PO Box 625, Berkeley, CA 94701-0625.

Dues are \$20 for NorCal TOS only and an additional \$40 for National ATOS (\$60 total) per year for full voting membership and subscription to *Theatre Organ*, the six times a year glossy journal of ATOS. Spouse and children living at home may be included in your membership. We hope you will join us to help preserve and enjoy these great instruments.