

# Metrolina News

METROLINA THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY  
CHARLOTTE NORTH CAROLINA  
A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

## Wood Memorial Fund Grows 2011



After the death of our President Brent Wood it was suggested that we set up a memorial fund in his name. Brent was instrumental in suggesting to the MTOS board that we needed a means to fund concerts each year. The board did not want to take funds

from the general fund to pay concert artists.

Through Brent's efforts we now have the means to fund about two concerts per year for the next few years. How do we continue after this?

Over the last few years members have been making tax deductible donations to this fund allowing us to have 5 concerts by outside artists starting with our 20th Anniversary Concert with ATOS President and CEO Ken Double. Since then we have had two *Spring Flings* featuring John McCall on Gil Parsons' 3/56 Walker Theatre Organ. (See related story on p.3)

In addition we have had 2 concert performances by Scott Foppiano, one in Mills River following the first annual picnic at the Mallett's. After the Mallett's hospitality, we caravanned to the home of Steve Alhart and Rob Flores. Their beautiful white Allen had been recently voiced by Walt Strony. A year or two later Scott entertained us on the Parsons' Walker in Gil's Music Room.

Your Board is hard at work lining up artists and venues for 2012. Three or four venues with interesting instruments have become available. We will let you know as soon as dates are firm.

Let us know if you have program ideas.

## Spring Fling March 11, 2 pm March 2012 Mark Herman in Davidson



Mark Herman was born in August of 1987 and currently resides in Indianapolis, Indiana. He has been studying the piano since he was seven years old and began classical organ lessons at the age of twelve. His first introduction to the theatre organ was when

he was in fourth grade and was at the Embassy Theatre in downtown Fort Wayne. In 2001, he began theatre organ studies with John Ferguson of Indianapolis, who is recognized worldwide for his skills as a teacher.

In the summer of 2003, Mark was given the opportunity to play a cameo performance at the American Theatre Organ Society's (ATOS) annual convention in Oakland, California. The following year, he won the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition in Milwaukee at the Riverside Theatre. During the summers of 2006 & 2009, he toured for six weeks or more in Australia and New Zealand. Over the past few years, he has played dozens of solo concerts in theatres and venues from coast to coast. He is a graduate of The Theatre School, DePaul University in Chicago where he received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Arts with a focus in Theatre Management. In addition to playing the organ, Mark plays the piano, and has composed some original compositions. Mark is a proud endorsee of Hammond Organs and Leslie Speakers for Hammond Suzuki, USA.

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## *President's Message*

It has been a rough year for your President and all the officers. Brent Wood was a "hands on" kind of guy. That was great while he could do it, but as his illness progressed he spent more and more time in the hospital or ill from the chemo.

Still he was reluctant to turn over the reins to someone else so things would progress. After his death we all had to do some scurrying to reconstruct the website, get a newsletter going, and keep up the meetings.

We seemed to keep the events moving, having meetings and concerts, but the website needed attention and we needed to get someone to do the newsletter. The board elected me President, but I did not count on having that include editing the newsletter.

True, Brent did do the newsletter, but that was by choice. And being in the IT area at the bank he was able to catch on to desktop publishing quickly. This has not been the case here. So if any of you would like to help the club by taking over the newsletter responsibilities, I hear there is an opening!

*2012 Dues* are due in January each year. Help us save money by sending your dues in without a reminder. That money saved can be put into a future program. Thanks for your help. Find me that editor, will you? *PG*

## MTOS Board

**President & Treasurer: Paul Gelsleichter**  
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**Past President: Don Macdonald, MD**  
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704-552-2690

**Vice President: Gary Schwartz**  
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**Secretary: Gilbert Parsons**  
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704-786-5592

**Member at Large: David Bieri**  
dbieri@webtv.net

### **MTOS Membership Application** *Renew your membership for 2012 now.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own an organ? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, description \_\_\_\_\_

Yearly membership, \$20, Amt. enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Wood Concert Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Newsletters are sent via email, check here for postal delivery \_\_\_\_\_*

*Please make checks payable to MTOS. Contributions to the Wood Fund may be tax deductible.*

*Mail to: Paul Gelsleichter 4815 Autumn Leaf Ln Charlotte NC 28277-8648*

## Friendship Experience



On a Saturday morning in late November, 10 brave souls met at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church for an introduction to their Ruffatti. Member Dave Nelms who is curator of this organ as well as the Möller at Calvary Church met us at the back door and we were ushered past reception and security up the stairs into the sanctuary. Our host for the afternoon was Nathaniel Gumbs, Friendship's new organist.

David asked Nathaniel to start by showing us what the organ was capable of. Nathaniel sat down at the console and almost blew us away with a full organ classical piece to set the stage. He seemed right at home at the instrument and demonstrated its power to open the meeting.

Nathaniel admitted he did not play theatre organ, but Don Macdonald had some suggested theatre organ registrations in hand and he and Nathan spent some time

setting pistons so those playing did not have to deal with the myriad of draw knobs available on the console.

Don Macdonald followed Nathaniel with Jack Sawyer patiently waiting his turn. Don admitted he felt a little ill at ease at this huge console. Next Jack sat down on the bench and found some nice combinations. He was followed by Vice President Gary Schwartz who, try as hard as he could, could not make this organ sound like a Hammond B3 jazz organ. Gary pointed out that he need not, because the church had a Hammond adjacent to the console if necessary!

Frank Dunhuber followed with some unmentionable numbers. He seemed to have no problem finding his way around as he frequently assists organ tuners in the Raleigh/Wake Forest area servicing and tuning local instruments. Frank is no stranger to church organs.

Next Dave Nelms invited us to tour the chambers. Everyone was impressed with the size and space available. Dave pointed out the different ranks and the beautiful workmanship of the individual pipes. The wood pipes were finished on the inside and out and the metal pipes were beautifully finished. Jack Sawyer played quietly as we toured the chambers. What a treat! Thanks David for setting this up!

I must admit there were other members there beside myself who did not play. Perhaps these member will work up courage to "have a go at it" (as they say in the UK) at a future meeting. (cont'd p. 4)

## Friendship, continued from page 3

Our Past President, Don Macdonald adds his comments from an organist's point of view.

For the average organist the experience of being seated on the bench of the 5 manual Ruffatti organ surrounded by more than 225 stop knobs is an awe inspiring and humbling experience. The majestic ornamental façade of gleaming pipes rising high above the console seems to convey a warning to the would-be player as if to say, "All right, go ahead with the Widor Toccata but none of that Teddy Bears' Picnic!" The organ however in reality makes no such demands. It is a beautifully constructed and tonally refined orchestral pipe organ, which lends its myriads of tone colors to music of all types. It had in fact been agreed prior to our visit that as theatre organists we would do our best to summon realistic Wurlitzer sounds from its vast resources.

When it came my turn to elicit if possible some theatrical registrations I was impressed and a little taken aback to discover on the 4<sup>th</sup> Solo manual a bevy of stops which would not have been out of place on a Wurlitzer horseshoe console. They included among others a Saxophone rank, Gamba Celeste, Orchestral Flute, English Horn, French Horn and to my delight an entire Tibia extended rank from 16 ft. through 8 ft., 4 ft., 2 2/3 Twelfth, 2 ft. Piccolo and 1 3/5 Tibia Tierce complete of course with Tremulant.

The Swell manual yielded such treasures as a Vox Humana with its own Tremulant,

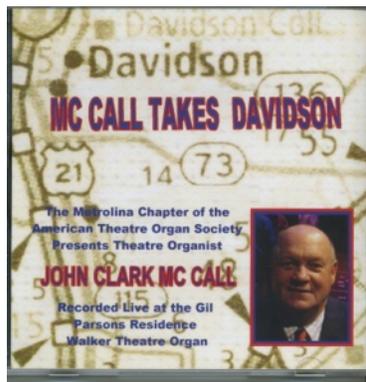
Oboe and Clarion. After some experimentation the Solo stops played against an appropriate selection of Swell stops serving as an accompaniment manual gave us the satisfaction of coaxing some fine theatrical sounding registrations complete with warbling Tibias from the cooperative keyboards.

Editors note: Yes Don loved those Tibias. He could not get enough. It took 2 members to pry him from the bench while he remarked, "I love that tibia."

Thanks David, Nathaniel and Friendship Missionary Baptist Church for a great afternoon. We hope to visit again. Thanks for sharing your gifts with us.

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## Mc Call Recording Released



A live performance of John McCall at the Parsons' Walker was recorded during our last *Spring Fling*. Gil and Gary worked diligently to record a great

sounding CD. We know you will be pleased with the result.

Members can order the CD for the special price of \$15. This price is only available to MTOS members, a savings of \$5 off the regular price. For more information contact Gil Parsons 704-786-5592 or email him at the address in the club directory.

## Strony @ Barham Place



On a beautiful Saturday afternoon this fall a group of MTOS folks and those from as far away as Chesterfield VA and Maryland joined recent members Bob and Vicki Conroy at their beautiful home on Barham Place in Wake Forest.

The Conroy's picked this house as they thought the living room with high ceilings and a balcony would be perfect for the installation of a theatre organ and they were right.

After a series of problems with builders and contractors chambers were installed for their new Allen Lyn Larsen 3 manual 24 rank theatre organ.

These chambers were built high above the console for speakers. In addition there are a set of speakers on the balcony for reverberation. The sound mixes well and can be heard throughout the large open area.

Walt played an hour long concert showing the beautiful voices of the instrument.



It was a good time to get acquainted with old friends and make some new ones. The Conroy's went out of their way to make everyone welcome with Valet Parking and a buffet of sandwiches, quiches, pies, cookies and other delicacies. All enjoyed the fellowship, music and the food. We hope there will be more invitations in the future.



*Walt Strony at the LL 324. Strony spent a week or more voicing this Allen but the concert showed it was time well spent. The room with a balcony and high ceilings works beautifully to show off the Conroy's fine instrument. It sounded great!*

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## 2012 Concert Fund

**PATRON (up to \$25)**

**VIP (\$25 to \$49)**

CD Sales

**BRONZE (\$50 to \$99)**

**SILVER (\$100 to \$149)**

Gil Parsons

**GOLD (\$150 TO \$250)**

**PLATINUM (\$250 plus)**

## Bits & Pieces

**Membership directories** have been emailed out. Check your listing to see if all the info is correct. If you find errors contact our Vice President Gary Schwartz so corrections can be made. Let us know if you like the directory. Remember members thought this was a great idea only if this info was kept within the membership. Do your part and do not circulate to non-members. We want to protect our members privacy.

Some of you have been to **Roger Dayton's in Greenville**. Roger has a Link Theatre Organ and a Aeolian Home organ in the studio behind his home. Roger tells me Randy Anderson and Randy Magnison have been working to augment the Link instrument with Hauptwerk software.

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