

RTOS Blower

Official Newsletter of The Rochester Theater Organ Society Inc.
Published monthly September through June (exc. Jan.)



2005 ATOS Young Theatre Organist of the Year Makes RTOS Debut

David Gray was born in Glasgow, Scotland in 1990 and first showed an interest in music at the age of four. He taught himself how to play the piano by ear, and his first lessons followed a year later.

At the age of 13, David began attending St Mary's specialist music school in Edinburgh with a principal focus on piano, but also started studying classical organ in St Mary's Episcopal cathedral with Simon Nieminski. It was around this time he had his first encounter with theatre organ, and the first instrument he ever played was a 3/8 Compton organ in Glasgow.

With the help of Duncan Sinclair from the Scottish Cinema Organ Society, David began to learn to play the instrument, and won the 2005 ATOS Young Theatre Organist of the Year competition. This led to great acclaim internationally, and he has since completed 2 concert tours of Australia and New Zealand. He has made



David Gray

Auditorium Theatre
885 E. Main St

Sunday, June 29

2:30 PM

(Doors open 45 min early)

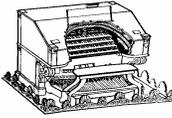
many appearances in the UK, and was the recipient of the Ian Sutherland Award from the Cinema Organ Society and the Dean Herrick Memorial Cup from the ATOS London chapter.

Towards the end of his high school studies, David discontinued classical organ activities, as there simply was

not enough time to do everything. However, he continued theatre organ as it is just too much fun and enjoyment to ever let go of!

Since 2008, David has been studying piano at the Royal Academy of Music in London on a full scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music in London. His teacher is renowned pianist Hamish Milne, and he is now pursuing a Master of Arts postgraduate degree, having graduated in 2013 with a first class honours undergraduate degree and the highest mark in the piano department for his final exam. In 2013 he won joint first prize in the Academy's Patrons' Award, which is between selected students from all departments, and held in London's Wigmore Hall.

Between lessons and exams, David remains as active as possible on the theatre organ scene, and will make multiple appearances across the USA this year following his successful debut last year at the ATOS convention in Atlanta, GA.

**Rochester Theater Organ Society
(Founded 1964)**

PO Box 17114
Rochester, NY 14617
Concerts & Info: (585) 234-2295
<http://www.rtosonline.org>

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Ken Veneron
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Nunda, NY 14517
(585) 468-1052
423rtos@rochester.rr.com

Membership (from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31)
Full: \$50.00

Associate: (50+ miles from Roch): \$35.00
Student (age 18-24 with ID): \$35.00

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CLASSIFIEDS

Wurlitzer Model 4059-4060. Dimensions are 44" w, 22" d and 36" h. A matching bench is included. Both the organ and the bench are in very good condition. Located on the 1st floor of a home with easy access. The only requirement is that it be removed by the buyer. Free to a good home. Please call Len at (585) 586-5375 or email him at lenspat@prodigy.net.

Estey Parlor Organ circa 1873. Dimensions are 3' 10.5" w X 1' 11" d X 5' 10" h. Fancy walnut case, original finish, brackets for candles. All stops work, bellows are good, all reeds cleaned. You pump. Asking \$145. Call Ron at (585) 889-3249.

**A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT**

Last month, three of us drove to Brooklyn to hear our May artist play at the former Brooklyn Paramount Theater. This was one of New York City's grand movie palaces of days long gone by. A 'sister' theatre to the famed Times Square Paramount, it had 4500 seats and a 4/26 Wurlitzer organ. The building has been owned by Long Island University (LIU) since 1962. Converted for use as classroom space and a gymnasium, the building retains much of the theater's original decorative detail. The good news is that the organ was retained and plays into a marvelous acoustic environment. The hardwood gym floor creates much reverberation. Recently, new owners announced plans to rebuild/restore the space to create a theater of about 2500 seats. They love the organ, so we think it is safe.

Richard Hills played a marvelous concert to an enthusiastic crowd, some of whom had travelled significant distances to hear this well-known organist and organ. On Memorial Day weekend, we were privileged to hear Richard play an equally marvelous show for us. We also welcomed attendees from at least 6 States and Canada.

A big thank you to Craig Heslor, Production Manager at WHAM-TV Channel 13 (and a long-time RTOS member) for arranging for WHAM's recent donation of a large video projector to RTOS. It had its first 'outing' at the Richard Hills concert to project a close-up 'birds-eye view' of the keyboards. Our experience is that this adds much to the visual impact, especially for those in the center section where the performer blocks the sight line. Richard Neidich engineered the camera placement and hook-up to the projector. In the future we hope to use it for presenting silent films as well.

Please join us on June 29 for our final concert of the 2013-2014 season as we welcome **David Gray** from Glasgow, Scotland.

Remember that RTOS turns 50 this year and we are planning an active weekend in October. More details will be available soon. Have a wonderful summer.

Paul Law

OBITUARY: JANE VENERON

Jane Veneron, wife of 45 years to Ken who is our current RTOS Board Treasurer and Membership Chairman, passed away on May 13th at age of 88.

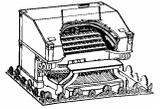
A familiar face to everyone at RTOS concerts, Jane could always be found in 'her' seat just inside the right-center aisle door.

Outside of RTOS, Jane vol-

unteered for many years at Henrietta Volunteer Ambulance and was a member of Good Shepherd Altar Society.

Jane is survived by 7 children, 15 grandchildren, and 31 great-grandchildren located all over the United States.

We at RTOS extend our deepest sympathies to Ken and family and friends.



LIBRARY NEWS

by Greg Spring

I am sorry we haven't had anything in the *Blower* for the past couple issues, but we have been very busy at the Library, nonetheless!

We have added capacity for 280 more CDs and have rearranged the cabinet for more space. With the passing of Jim Stetts who made our covers for our Library CD copies of our concerts, I'm taking on that part of the job, which is finally starting to take shape.

Our last season concert will be in June, at which all Library material will be due back for summertime inventory. I'm sorry to give such short notice, but I have been very involved with Chris Van Stean and the rest of the Ways and Means Committee to keep our organization healthy and strong. We take our future very seriously so folks can continue to enjoy what RTOS has to offer our community.

See you at the June concert (with your borrowed materials in tow for return)!



OLCOTT BAND ORGAN RALLY

by Dan Wilke

"The Happiest Music On Earth" will resound from the town of Olcott Beach, NY (Routes 18 and 98) when the Carousel Organ Association of America (COAA) presents a Band Organ Rally on Saturday July 26th and Sunday July 27th from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm each day.

Sponsored by the Olcott Beach Carousel Park as part of the annual "Old Olcott Days" celebration, the Band Organ Rally will feature over 50 antique and newly built merry-go-round organs, European-built fair-ground organs and street organs in a wide variety of sizes, sounds and colors. These self-playing mechanical pipe organs will be performing classical music and rock and roll and almost everything in between!

Several of the larger instruments that will be on display were built in nearby North Tonawanda, NY. From the 1890s through the 1930s, North Tonawanda was the capital of band organ production in the United States. Over those 50 years, "The Lumber City" was home to five band organ producing companies, the largest being the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company.

In this day and age, many people find it hard to believe that a machine constructed mainly of wood and leather can create such complex music without the use of any electronic components. Band organs were built before any type of electronic amplification had been invented, and their main purpose was simply to make music! Once considered standard equipment on any carousel or merry-go-round, they were also used in skating rinks and as musical entertainment on fairgrounds. These days it's quite rare to find any of these fascinating music machines still in public use. Most surviving examples are now prized possessions of collectors and hobbyists worldwide.

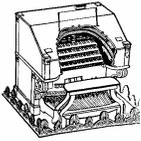
The COAA is the only organization in the United States devoted solely to the enjoyment and preservation of band organs. Its members know that much of the joy of owning such a rare machine is being able to share "The Happiest Music on Earth" with others. That's why the COAA presents several organ rallies each year, simply for the joy and camaraderie of gathering together and being able to share their music with the public. Organ owners from as far away as Maine and Florida will be bringing instruments to the rally.

Organs will be located in Krull Park and throughout the town. There is plenty of free parking in the town and no admission charge to come and enjoy the rally! For more information, contact Rally Organizer and RTOS member Dan Wilke of Buffalo at 716-825-7266 evenings after 6:00 pm.

CHECK OUT THE RTOS WEBSITE!

Our Webmaster, Richard Neidich continues to refine and expand our new website. New content is added frequently and information on membership and all of our upcoming activities may be found there. Please find us using our URL: www.rtosonline.org or by typing "rtosonline" into *Google* or by using the barcode reader app on your tablet or smartphone to scan the QR symbol.





**Rochester Theater
Organ Society**
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Tim Schramm, *Director*
Greg Spring, *Director*
Christine Van Stean, *Director*
Roger Wood, *Director*
Russ Shaner, *Past-President, Programs*

RTOS EVENTS

Auditorium Theatre, 885 E. Main St.
All artists and dates subject to change

David Gray	Jun 29	2:30PM
Jonathan Ortloff	Sept 14	2:30PM
Clark Wilson	Oct 4	7:30PM
Simon Gledhill	Oct 5	2:30PM
TBA	Nov 9	2:30PM
TBA	Dec 7	2:30PM

Rochester Museum & Science Center
Eisenhart Auditorium, East Ave. & Goodman St.
Open Console
Sundays from 11:00 AM to 4 PM

**June 15 - George Eastman House
900 East Avenue**

Jul 20	Oct 19
Aug 17	Nov 9
Sep 28	Dec 21

“Open Console” is when members are given a time slot to play one of the Society’s theater pipe organs. Come to play, or enjoy the sound.

OTHER WESTERN NY ORGANS

The Niagara Frontier (Riviera Theatre & Organ Preservation Society) 67 Webster St, N Tonawanda, NY. Box Office (716) 692-2413. www.rivieratheatre.org/organ.html

Capitol Theatre (3/7 Moller, 1928) 220 W. Dominick Street, Rome (315) 337-6453 www.theatreorgans.com/ny/rome/

Empire State Theatre & Musical Instrument Museum (3/11 Wurlitzer) 581 State Fair Blvd., Syracuse (315) 687-3580 jrjunction.com/estmim.htm

Binghamton Theatre Organ Society (4/24 Morton) P.O. Box 1353, Binghamton (607) 773-1495 www.theatreorgans.com/btoc

Clemens Center (4/23 Marr & Colton/Wurlitzer) 207 Clemens Center Pkwy., Elmira (607)-733-5639 www.clemenscenter.com
(The organ is back in service following a complete restoration)

Please invite your friends and acquaintances to attend this month's concert by giving them one of the discount coupons below:

Pops “Theater Organ” Concert

at the *Auditorium Theatre*, 885 E. Main St, Rochester, NY
Sunday, June 29 @ 2:30PM

David Gray



On the Mighty Wurlitzer 4/23 Pipe Organ

Presented by the Rochester Theater Organ Society

\$10 admission per person with this coupon (regularly \$15)
(Coupon may be copied and is valid for Bearer & Family)

Name:
Address:
Email:

THIS BOX MUST BE FILLED IN FOR COUPON TO BE VALID!

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