



Photo by Don Schoeps

[Read all about our Wonder Trip to Raleigh on page 11](#)

Minutes of the Annual Meeting September 13, 2008

1. President **John Apple** called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM with 18 people present.

2. John read the minutes of the last annual meeting from the **MTOS News**. A motion was made to accept the minutes. This passed unanimously.

3. Treasurer **Paul Gelslichter** gave the Treasurer's report. The assets of the Society are invested in a CD that renews in December, a money market account and a general checking account. A motion was made to accept the report. It was seconded and passed.

4. Newsletter editor **Michael Johnston** stated that the club owns two items that we should probably dispose of. There is a popcorn machine at Charlie

Clayton's that was used at the Carolina Theatre. In addition, Michael and John have the video projector in their garage which was used at the theatre. This was purchased at a cost of \$1500 years ago and is probably of little value today. A discussion followed and a motion was made that we dispose of these assets. The motion passed.

5. A discussion followed of the upcoming trips to Hilton Head and Raleigh.

6. Paul mentioned that membership is at an all time high of 40+ members.

7. New member **Tom Brooks** was introduced.

8. John asked for nominations for board positions. **Paul Gelslichter, Brent Wood, Tom Brooks, John Apple,** and **Gil**
(continued on page 14)

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MTOS

Communication

Our web-site is mtos.org. Visit often and tell your friends. There are photos, slide shows, videos, history, past issues of our newsletter, and more. If you do not save or pass around your copy of this newsletter, you may read it online and ask that no copy be sent by US mail. Just email the editor with your request.

We use **Google Groups** for our email list services. This is a fast and simple method of sending emails to each member with email. This group email system is limited in use to paid chapter members. If you're not already signed up, just visit our private web page googlegroups.com/group/mtos and follow the instructions. There is also a link from our website at mtos.org. So, join us online soon!



★ WANTED ★

Our newsletter is always in need of the following items. All contributors, please step up and give us your best! We are all of like minds and we all support each other, so go ahead – contribute!

Letters: Send in comments on organs, organ music, things you've seen or music you've heard, trips you've made, things you'd like to see changed, organists and builders you admire, and so on. Everyone likes to read the Letters section!

Photos: Send in your photos of anything interesting to MTOS members. With today's filmless cameras, you don't even have to pay for developing! Email them to michael@mtos.org.

Articles: Write about an organ or organist you heard in the recent past or the ancient past. Write an essay on what you want to see happen in ATOS and MTOS. Write about a concert you attended. *Just write!*

Hilton Head Holiday & Savannah Afterglow

For those who could not attend our October trip to Hilton Head and Savannah, I would like to offer an account so that you can follow along with what we did.

The first event was a demonstration of the new **Johannus** digital OEM voices on the new **Ontko** four manual organ at **Hibben United Methodist** in Mt Pleasant, SC. Their organist, Pamela S Brunson, a Furman graduate, offered us a short recital on the electronic stops that were installed. The pipes, some from the existing **Schantz** and some new, had not arrived yet. The sound of the partially-installed organ filled the room with sufficient sound to lead the congregation without pipes.

- *Prelude in Classic Style*, Gordon Young
- *Chromatic Fugue and Fantasia*, Johann Pachelbel
- *Fantasy in A Minor*, J S Bach
- *Festival Toccata*, Percy Fletcher

The sound distribution was good throughout the rectangular room. There were mostly hard surface walls with aisle carpet and pew cushions. Overall, the speakers place in the front center of the room had a realistic pipe sound.

Individual notes sounded varied and therefore avoided that static electronic sound.

The tremulant on the Solo had not been installed but is planned. The front pipes will be placed in front of the speakers and will be unenclosed. There will be added a rear division to add color and balance.

As we heard, there was good chorus sound without pipes, and the addition of several pipe ranks can only add to the depth and realism of this modern hybrid organ.

In addition to the recital, **John Apple** played a few selections and **Lawrie Mallett** made it sound as theatrical as he could; the additional tremulant will help out in that regard! Allan Ontko gave a splendid presentation, answered every question, and demonstrated the advanced MIDI capabilities with some music he had programmed by computer, including his own organ concerto.

After spending the morning



Hibben's New Front



Hibben's New Antiphonal



Photo by Paul Gelsleichter

Gary plays his Allen 319EX for the group of ATOS and AGO members

in Mt Pleasant, we travelled to Hilton Head to the home of Gary Hysner, ATOS member and owner of the former Lyn Larsen **Allen 319EX**. Gary explained that this beautiful organ is three manuals and supposed to be 19 equivalent ranks but Lyn had extra voices added to it, so it actually has 23. Also, the EX means it has extras such as a sustain button.

Paul Gelsleichter artfully planned the drinks and food to complement the great music we heard. Bravo for this excellent job! **Ray Ackerman** brought several AGO members to hear and play the large theatre organ. There were also a couple of ATOS members from northern Georgia. We had

about 20 in the music room and the kitchen and the den. The AGO members were all open-minded and really enjoyed the music. Several of us played and some played organ and piano duets including some by Rosa Rio. My publishing Rosa's music is how I first met Gary.

Everyone was able to browse through issues of the **MTOS News** and theatre organ music on display. Gary has a terrific collection of all kinds of theatre organ music, something for every taste. We all agreed that AGO and ATOS members and everyone who loves the organ should work together to encourage others to join us. This night at Gary Hysner's was this to perfection.

Afterwards, we enjoyed a Hilton Head style seafood dinner at the nearby Crazy Crab restaurant, overlooking the multi-million yachts in the harbor. We all thanked Gary for inviting us into his house and taking over his Allen organ for the evening. He is a terrific host and a great advocate for the organ.

The following day brought the organist from Paris to Hilton Head's **Holy Family Catholic Church** to play their IV/48 **Zimmer** organ. Although you will recognize the name, this is not Cornel Zimmer's organ but that built by his family.

François Olivier is a quiet young man who serves as the organist of the prestigious Saint-Eustache church in Paris. He has won a number of prizes and degrees and is considered quite good at improvisation.

- *Hungarian March*, Berlioz
- *Pièce Heroique*, Franck
- *Chant of Peace*, Langlais
- *Prelude and Fugue on BACH*, Liszt
- *Aria* from the Third Suite, Bach
- *Pomp and Circumstance* #1, Elgar
- *Cathédrales, Nâides, and Final* from Symphony 6, Vierne
- Improvisation on a submitted theme

He is an humble performer with no great sweeping mannerisms. He expresses himself in technically clean, accurate playing. His

musicality is never overblown or showy. The quiet Bach *Aria* was as subdued as Debussy and never syrupy or sentimental.

From the start with the transcription of the *Hungarian March*, he showed that he endeavors to present all styles of organ music. **John Apple** mentioned how seldom French organists play transcriptions, much less open with one! The sheet music which he used for the Berlioz was very well worn from much repeated use.



Photo by Paul Gelsleichter

François Olivier at Holy Family Church

He was comfortable playing the Zimmer from the start. This organ and the room is about as different as could be from Saint-Eustache and other churches in Paris. He did his best to reflect his own French sensibilities through use of appropriate style and registration. In some cases, this meant adding an octave in the pedal to create a fuller pedal sound.

Lawrie and Rosemary Mallett enjoyed the performance of *Pomp and Circumstance*. I was impressed

that he would play the Vierne on this organ. The *Final* was suitably fiery, and *Naïdes* was light and playful, but *Cathédrales* was just not meant to be played on this organ.

For the improvisation, **Ray Ackerman** stood and announced that he had written a melody which François had never seen before and upon which he would improvise. It turned out to be a fragment from “Stranger In Paradise”!

And, oh how he did improvise! He began quietly with star-like shimmering and built an unfashionably long piece that treated the theme in every manner conceivable. **John Apple** remarked that he could have concluded the improvisation successfully at no fewer than three places. Perhaps all of the hearty applause during the earlier parts of the program encouraged him to give us everything he had! But this is an artist to watch. François has good technique and fine musicality.

Ray introduced the program and publically greeted the visitors from AGO and ATOS and specifically welcomed the MTOS members from North Carolina. Ray founded the Low Country Chapter and as its Dean remains the driving force in presenting exceptional concerts such as this one, October 19, celebrating the International Year of the Organ.

Afterwards, we joined Ray, François, and others to enjoy wine,

dinner, and conversation at Skillets, a nearby restaurant favored by local musicians. **Michael Johnston** made the evening’s toast, “Vive le François, vive la France!” We all thank Holy Family, the Low Country Chapter of AGO, and especially Ray Ackerman for allowing us to be a part of this.



First Baptist, Savannah

On Monday, we travelled down to Savannah to see and play some other organs. Allan Ontko was again our leader. We began at the **First Baptist Church** in the historic district. They have a beautiful E M Skinner and Allan is adding an antiphonal division. Some of us made the four-floor hike up to see the enclosed echo division. It contains some beautiful, quiet stops in a neat small room in the church’s attic. This lovely division will remain and the antiphonal positiv will be installed in front of the balcony rail so they will have the ethereal tone of the echo and the direct colors and leading of the exposed pipes.

Walking carefully in the attic of this church building from 1830s, bending low under timbers and pipes, we arrived at one of the chambers of the front organ. Here



Allan's installations are always neat

is where I learned a week's worth about pipes and organ construction. There was an original Skinner harp! This organ is a large Skinner, for sure, but I had not



Console View

seen such an assortment of pipes, from metal to wood, stopped and unstopped, some with ears, some with beards, some made of part wood and part metal, some curled around like a brass instrument — both metal and wood. The joinery to accomplish this is mind boggling! **Lawrie Mallett** carried on pipe organ builder talk with Allan and I tried my best to follow.

This organ has a wealth of sounds that any theatre organ lover could enjoy. There is no trace of Neo-Baroque or thin scaling here.

After playing on the 56 rank **E M Skinner**, we walked a few blocks to **Christ Church**. This building is the third building for the Mother Church in George. Christ Church was started in 1733 at the founding of Georgia by James Edward Oglethorpe. The current church dates from 1838 and holds two organs.

First, we heard a heavily revoiced two manual **Allen** in the chapel downstairs. Allan used Allen software to bring out qualities that were unavailable after the installation.

Then, we went upstairs to the sanctuary to meet the great III/68 **Harrison and Harrison**. Allan has made many changes, added strings, modified celestes, revoiced, and added a 32' electronic stop from Bob Walker to the pedal. John and Allan played this

large organ and filled the room with broad and varied sounds.



Harrison and Harrison at Christ Church

The combination pistons are evidently in the English style and they actually extend out over part of the keyboards. The organist must be careful not to touch one by accident!

The large facade pipes are unexpectedly different on the left and the right. The ones on the right are sounding pipes and con-



Harrison and Harrison Console

tain beards. The ones on the left are beardless dummies!

We are grateful to Allan Ontko for taking the time to lead us through demonstrations of these fine organs and for answering our questions on them specifically and on organ building in general. Allan is an expert on any-

thing French, certainly, but he gladly spoke at length on methods and styles of building from many different builders. At one point, as he changed the registration to produce a more theatrical sound for Lawrie, he remarked, "You didn't think I forgot everything I learned from Radio City, did you?"

—Michael Johnston

Hilton Head Holiday Highlights

Boy! For those of you who decided to stay home, did you ever miss a great week end in Charleston and Savannah. Rosemary and I, as well as everyone else, ate too much, slept too much, and heard too much organ.

In the Charleston area, we were blessed with a recital by the wife of the choir director at **Hibben Methodist Church** in Mt Pleasant, followed by a performance by the choir. The total time of the entertainment was about an hour and a half. Then, John and I spent another hour playing the Allan Ontko designed digital organ made by Johannus. At the time of our visit, it was purely digital electronic (but you could have fooled me), but it is destined to have an additional 25 ranks of real pipes at the other end of the church. I would like to play it when it is complete.

After our time at the church, Allan joined us at a local eatery on the Mt Pleasant harbor side before convoying to Hilton Head Island and our hotel. We stayed there at for two nights where we met up with **Paul Gelsleichter**. Paul managed to get us a super low rate at the hotel, complete with a Grecian architecture swimming pool, but it was too cold for us. After checking in, we traveled to Gary Hysner's house where a large number of the local AGO chapter were there to meet us.



We heard duets with AGO members

Gary has a specially designed **Allen** organ by Lyn Larsen. In fact, this organ was owned by Lyn when it was first made. It is a George Wright III model with an additional three ranks, and a load more presets. It is in a moderate size living room with the 12 speaker units split to each side of the room, partially hidden by a grand piano and a couch. There are 12 separate audio channels on the Allen, with a clear crisp section for the percussion stops.

Cocktails, soft drinks and appetizers were supplied by Paul

and Gary. Many of the AGO members played the Allen as well as **John Apple** and me and Gary. After it got dark, and we could not



Everyone else had left by this time

see the beautiful backdrop of the golf course behind Gary's house through the living room window, a number of us went out to eat at a local lobster eatery. I have to admit, that organ was very nice to play. It has a different computer architecture than mine, but it has many of the good features that my organ has such as the same percussion. And it has similar digital voicing, but a lot more of it.

The following day, Paul very graciously took Rosemary and me for a Cook's tour of Hilton Head Island, including one of the many harbors with lots of boats and boutiques, etc. We then went back to the hotel to meet together to go back to Gary's place for an hour or so and then to lunch and **Holy Family Catholic Church**. François Olivier, an organist from the St Eustace church in Paris, France, played a classical program of about 90 minutes that brought out everything that the IV/48 **Zimmer**

organ had to offer. After the program, we joined the AGO group and François for dinner, and then we went back to a welcome bed.

The next morning, we made our way to Savannah to meet Allan Ontko at the **First Baptist and Christ Episcopal** churches. First up was the old First Baptist and its IV/56 **E M Skinner**. Allan has maintained this organ for many years and revoiced it to a bright but full-bodied sound. John, Allan and I had a session at the console, although John pulled all those knobs out as I was playing. After we finished exploring the church and organ, including pipe chambers in the echo and solo divisions, we walked 20 miles, or maybe it was only 2 miles, to the historic Christ Episcopal Church.

A two-manual **Allen**, revoiced by Allan, greeted us with authority in a small chapel in the church, and then we all went up to explore the 68 rank **Harrison and Harrison** revoiced by Allan (all pipes except for the 32' **Walker** pedal stop). John and Allan played the organ while Rosemary and I sat down in the pews and walked around looking at the building's interior. It certainly is a very good sounding instrument.

After we had "organed out," we walked to the riverside row of restaurants where we had lunch. By this time, I was at the end of my abilities, so Rosemary and I took a

taxi back to the church parking lot, well worth the \$6.00 ride!

The anti-climax was the six-hour drive back to reality and a sleep in my own bed. You guys that didn't go sure missed a good time!! When is the next organ crawl coming up? Rosemary and I are going to sign up!

—Lawrie Mallett

Future Meetings

February 21, Saturday

Open Console on the beautiful new III/41 **Artisan** at **Brent Wood's** residence. It has 15 classic ranks & 26 theatre ranks speaking through Mackie speakers with 450 watts per speaker and a sub-woofer. Brent will provide a light lunch beginning at 1:00. Come and enjoy Brent's hospitality.

If you have ideas for future meetings, please contact Paul Gelsleichter, phone 704-502-4545 or email prgmanco@bellsouth.net.





Who Am I?

I was really a very happy girl, that's for sure. Actually, I'm still pretty happy! I enjoyed playing my **Hammond** organ and hated to have to give it up when I moved to a houseboat on the bay. Electric organs and salt air don't exactly get along! Wish I still had this Hammond; it would be worth a fortune!

I always enjoyed playing the organ and I play regularly to this day. Although I never studied with Ethel Smith, you can see that I, like her, have always favored the high wrist. Can you guess who I am?

If you have a photo of an organ or yourself at an organ, send it in and we'll see if others can guess "Who, What, and Where."

Wonder Trip to Raleigh

What a marvelous time we all had on our November 8 trip to visit **Murry Bubar** and Jim Lang at their home in Raleigh! Cutting edge electronic organs, great music, magnificent food, rollicking company – surely an afternoon to remember! Officially a joint meeting of the hosting Raleigh Organ Club and MTOS, the 21 of us listened, played, ate, and partied from 1:00 PM to well into the evening.

The organ was the centerpiece of the gathering, although it was one of seven or eight instruments in Murry's lavish music room. On the base of a large **Wersi** organ, Murry and Jim have added *thirty* additional pistons calling on full **Artisan** banks of both theatre

and classical ranks. We all enjoyed ample time, wandering through the rich caverns of sound through which these two formidable organs beckoned and tempted us to explore. It was quite a treat – one that everyone enjoyed!

Murry got us off to a great start! Before he began his introductory mini-concert, he used the Wersi's synthesizing capability to render an eyebrow raising wheeze, then roar, of "blower noise" that shook the rafters! Then we were off with "There's No Business Like Show Business!" Both Murry and Jim led us on a musical tour of the big organ, showing off its wonderful tonal range – soup to nuts, classic to torch to comic to march to hymn to spiritual to lounge to jazz!

Murray played: "There's No



Don quickly gets comfortable

Business Like Show Business," "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice," "The Stars and Stripes Forever," "September Song," "Anchors Aweigh," "Cuddle Up a Little Closer" (a Dwight Beecham arrangement), "Lapland," "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," "It Is Well with My Soul," and "The Entertainer."

Jim played: "Canadian Capers," "Andantino," "Maple Leaf Rag," a Classical Medley (on his keyboard), "Edelweiss," "Bali Hai," "Trumpet

Tune" by David German, and "Ain't Misbehavin'." He was then joined on the piano by Larry Jones who played and sang "I Don't Know Why I Love You Like I Do." They then played a duet of "Autumn Leaves."

After their marvelous demonstrations, we were all invited to the console, and many of us took a crack at it! **Larry Jones**, as ever, made it look so easy – just after I had made it look so inscrutable. **Brian Miller** took a turn at it, and **John Apple** tried once again to atone for all our burlesque by contributing some real class to the mix. And I even caught **Brent Wood**, after he thought everyone else was lost in the other room



Photos by Nancy Schoeps

John Apple plays

enjoying their banquet, sneaking onto the bench and giving it a whirl! What great fun we all had!



Brian is the transcription king

The afternoon banquet, by the way, was out of this world! Ted and Bill carried the “Prelude Potato Soup” 1.5 hours to start us off. Eleven folks from the Raleigh Organ Club brought different dishes so good it would have made any church covered dish supper inappropriately envious! We ate as well as we luxuriated in the music!

After dinner, we wandered back into Murry’s lush studio (we all fit comfortably). I was at the organ “painting the air” when Larry pulled up to a gorgeous electronic piano and started filling-in. Just as we were getting comfortable with each other, Jim sat down at one of the advanced keyboards and floated out a heavenly complex percussion carpet that wrapped the whole thing up in brushed cymbals and all that magic that driven percussion brings. Soon Larry “cut in” to

dance with the big organ and I took his warmed-up keyboard, and the three of us had a wonderful breezy session – enjoying it, no doubt, even more than anyone in the room! I kept expecting others to cut in or join us, but that didn’t happen this time. Later, Murry said the multiple keyboards had never been used like that, but I bet they will be again! It all came to an end far too quickly! If you missed this one, let this be a lesson to you: don’t go missing any more events! We all had a Great Time!

Thanks, Murry and Jim!
Thanks, Michael for getting us all together!

–Don Schoeps



Brent brings on the music

Our Host’s Comments

First, I’d like to offer a big thanks to Michael and John for organizing your end of our event last Saturday and for driving all the way east. We all thought it was a great success. We especially enjoyed the talents of the MTOS guys that played the organ. They made it sound like a theatre organ.

And, of course it is always more fun when all the instruments are played at the same time. Some of our local group really enjoys singing, so the sing-along was a special treat for them.

—Murry Bubar

2008 Annual Meeting

(continued from page 1)

Parsons were nominated and accepted. **Michael Johnston** was nominated and declined saying he wanted to continue as newsletter editor and felt there would be a conflict of interest with a board position. A motion was made by **Jeffrey Prod** to close the nominations. **Paul Gelsleichter** seconded this. The motion passed.

9. A discussion followed regarding the club organ. It was suggested that we needed a place to put an instrument where we could have concerts and show films to the public. Some expressed a need for a better instrument. A motion was made to sell the organ (or console) as is. This was seconded by **Gil Parsons** and passed unanimously. **Brent Wood** volunteered to handle sale of the organ. It was suggested that **Charlie Clayton** be given an opportunity to buy the instrument if interested.

10. A motion was made by **Brent Wood** that members who wished to receive the newsletter as an email attachment could do so.

This would save the club money by reducing money spent on ink, paper, envelopes, and postage. The motion was seconded by Paul and passed.

11. The meeting was adjourned at 2:07 PM.

—Paul Gelsleichter

Phantom of the Opera

Gil Parsons and I accepted the invitation from the Piedmont Chapter of ATOS to attend the showing of *Phantom of the Opera* on Oct 28 at the **Carolina Theatre** in Greensboro. The silent version was accompanied by Larry Keesler at the three-manual Robert Morton hybrid.

Larry has a background in organ music of more than 20 years. At age eleven, he accepted a position as church organist, playing a three-manual mechanical action pipe organ built in the late 1800s. Since then he has served as organist or organist/choirmaster of churches in his native state of Michigan, and in Illinois, New York, and North Carolina. In 2005 he retired from the position of Minister Through Music at First Baptist Church, Mount Airy, North Carolina, where he had served for 25 years.

The music started at 7:00 PM with “I Know That You Know.” After an introduction from the manager, Larry took questions

from the audience about the organ. One lady asked him that her nine year old daughter wanted to know how long it took him to learn to play the organ. His response was "I'm still learning." After several questions, he continued playing until the movie started at 7:30.

As usual, Lon Chaney again did a superb job of playing the Phantom. I am not a music critic; I play for my enjoyment and sometimes for friends. If you get a chance to hear Larry play, go and form your own opinion. Gil and I enjoyed the theatre organ music.

—Brent Wood

Who Am I?

I am **Dorothy Jones Lancaster**. This photo was taken at the house in Miami where I and my mother lived, sometime between 1946 and 1953. I had to sell the **Hammond** after I got married because we planned to live on a houseboat.



Photos by Paul Gelsleicher

Photos from the Christmas Party



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2008 has come and gone. Our chapter has had several successful events. Several of our members attended the silent film presentation at the **Carolina Theatre** in Greensboro in conjunction with PTOS, as well as the trip to Hilton Head to visit with Gary Hysner. I wasn't able to attend the later due to work commitment, but the comments from those who attended sounds like a good time was had by all. Thanks to all who helped make this event successful.

Club members were introduced to the Wersi/Artisan organ by the Raleigh Organ Club and our host **Murry Bubar**. New acquaintances, great conversation, great music, and fantastic food, what more can one ask for? The MTOS Board would like to thank Murry and the Raleigh Organ Club for a very enjoyable Saturday afternoon.

Our annual Christmas party was a lot of fun even though the organ could not be played. I enjoyed seeing and talking to everyone. Special commendations go to the Malletts and the Prods for driving the greatest distance. The Program Committee has several events in the planning stage, so stay tuned for upcoming events.

—**Brent Wood**

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