

Meeting August 19th, 3 P.M.—Tony Childers Organist First United Methodist Church of Carrollton

(Directions on Page 2)



Photo by Tom Robertson

About the Artist...

Tony Childers is the organist of First United Methodist Church, Carrollton, a post he has held for over 18 years. Prior to Carrollton, he held organist positions in Waycross, Georgia; Gainesville, Florida; and Palatka, Florida. He studied organ with Paul Jenkins while attending Stetson University where he earned a B.S. in chemistry. While in Waycross, he continued his study of the organ with Dr. Ruth Sisson at Valdosta State University. He began service to the church in Carrollton in 1989. One of the milestones while in Carrollton was the planning and completion of the new A. E. Schlueter pipe organ that we hear today.

Mr. Childers is married to Cheryl Griffin Childers formerly of Waycross. She studied organ and piano while attending Virginia Commonwealth University. She served as organist of churches in Waycross prior to their move to Carrollton. The Childers have two children - Anna and Ryan. Anna will begin Reinhardt College this fall where she plans to major in music education with trumpet as her principal instrument. Ryan will be a senior in high school.

In addition to being organist, Mr. Childers is the principal of Central Elementary School in Carrollton. He is currently working on the Doctor of Education degree at University of West Georgia. He has been with the Carroll County School System for over 18 years. In his leisure time, he

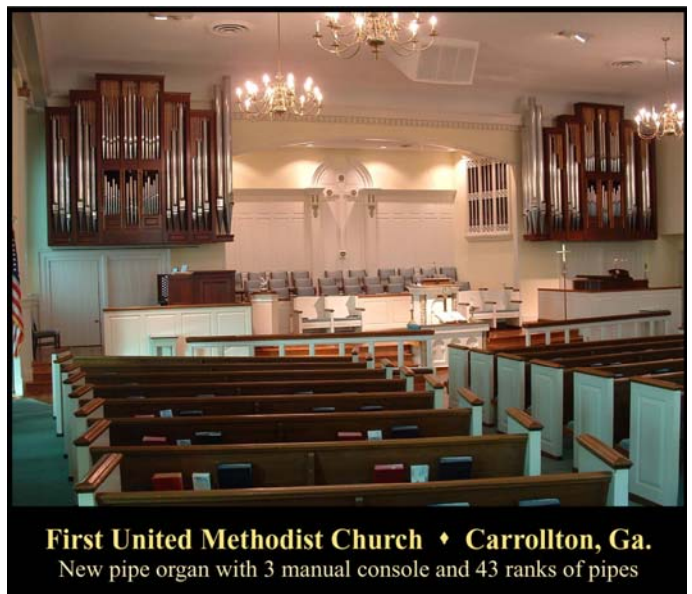
enjoys gardening - especially growing roses.

During the program Tony and his wife, Cheryl, will play two pieces written for "4 hands on the organ."

About the Church and Organ...

The First United Methodist Church of Carrollton was recognized as a congregation in 1834 although the first church structure was not erected until 1847. The present structure, which is the third building to house this congregation, was built in 1904. Two additions have been added to the original sanctuary building.

The first pipe organ, built by the John Brown Company in Wilmington, Delaware, was installed in 1906. This was the first pipe organ in Carrollton. In 1948 the organ was replaced by a Reuter organ. This organ remained until the present organ was installed in 2007. The new organ incorporated about 75% of the Reuter organ and was completed and installed by A.E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company. The specification is from the French school with a traditional style drawknob console. The organ boasts twin façade cases on either side of the chancel. The 8' Montre speaks from the facade. The console is driven by a state-of-the-art console control system with MIDI and digital record/playback capabilities.



First United Methodist Church ♦ Carrollton, Ga.
New pipe organ with 3 manual console and 43 ranks of pipes

**Atlanta Chapter,
American Theatre Organ Society**

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*Ads or announcements for this newsletter:
Contact Elbert Fields at 770-435-7340 or
elfields@yahoo.com*

Directions to Carrollton 1st UMC From Atlanta, go West on I-20 to Exit 24. Turn left on GA-61 and proceed straight for approximately 8 miles, bear right when it joins GA-166 then continue straight on Bankhead through the intersection with the GA-166 Bypass (do not turn) for about 4 miles. Street name changes to Newnan Street and the church is a white brick building on the right just before you reach the square. Turn right just past the church for the parking lot.

Suggested reading

When one is doing research in a particular area one often comes across other items related to that research and some that parallel areas of research. Two books have recently come into my library and I would like to pass them on as suggested reading.

The first is a book by Rick Altman called "Silent Film Sound." I would recommend this book for anyone interested in how sound was developed and used during the silent film era. This book is more on the academic side and at some times makes for some very heavy reading. If you are interested in silent film and how sound was used it is a valuable insight into that era.

Many people who are familiar

Updating some things...

By John Tanner

Although I have completed the first series of articles on Atlanta theatres and their organs, one still finds new information either from continuing research or from just cleaning up a lot of existing materials and find something you overlooked and also correcting something that maybe you got wrong, either from not having enough material to make a correct conclusion or fighting to meet the editor's deadline. In any case, here is a little of all three.

In June of 1927, Anne Mae Norton was appointed as the organist for the Georgia Theatre (Roxy). She replaced George Hamrick (not Hambrick as I have stated before). Anne Mae Norton had played at the Metropolitan and the Howard.

When the Paramount closed in March of 1931, the "Singing Ushers" duo of Hal Scoggins and Jimmy Beers would also close down. I don't know what happened to Hal but Jimmy walked up Peachtree Street to the Capitol and was appointed organist at the theatre's Robert Morton. One of Jimmy's first jobs was to accompany Bert Parks (later of Miss America

Fame). After playing at the Capitol for several months, Jimmy Beers moves on to become organist at the Fox.

In May of 1930, Gladys Lyle was billed as "The Tiny Tot at the Mighty Wurlitzer", at the Paramount. Very little is known of Gladys but in the July/August 2007 issue of "Theatre Organ" page 43, Brian Jensen has submitted some information and a photograph of her when she was playing at the Newport News Paramount.

There is photograph of a lady at the Atlanta Paramount who I thought might be Gladys, but in comparing the two photos I don't think it is. However, the mystery lady does seem to resemble Anne Mae Norton from a photograph that I have when she was appointed to the Georgia, another possibility is Julia Dawn. Further research will tell.

Recently a program of the Howard theatre came to light and under the Staff Organist it had listed Anne Mae Norton, who I know played there at the time, but also a Jane Wetzel. Anybody ever hear of her? This is from a November 24, 1924 program.

with silent film accompaniment with the theatre organ will be surprised that our perceptions on how it was done way back then was not exactly the way it was really done.

This is no small book, 462 pages and is an expensive book. List price of the book was \$60.00 but I got mine on Amazon.com for around \$40.00. There may be a paper back available now. If you are a serious student of silent film and its music you need to read this book.

The second book is more local and although it does not specifically relate to the theatre organ, it does offer an insightful look into how the music scene in Atlanta had its beginnings. "Highbrows Hillbillies & Hellfire": Public Entertainment in Atlanta 1880-1930, by Steve Goodson, published

by the University of Georgia Press. Retail price \$19.95.

In tracing the history of Atlanta's theatres I was often amazed at what other groups were impacting the way motion pictures were perceived, be it religious organizations, city officials, different ethnic groups, social groups, and finally economic influences. Mr. Goodson's book vividly describes the development of entertainment in late 19th and early 20th century Atlanta, and the way that all these different groups set the directions that entertainment would take in the decades to come. If you are a serious student of Atlanta's history or just a casual observer then I would highly recommend this book.

John Tanner



Larry Davis

**President's Message
A Tale of Three Larry's**

This month I want have a little fun and at the same time highlight the achievements of two people who are special to our chapter and to the theatre organ world: Larry Donaldson and Larry Douglas Embury. Among us three we have a problem: the use of "Larry D." Among us we decided that Larry Donaldson is Larry D the 1st, I am Larry D the 2nd, and Larry Douglas is Larry D the 3rd. I can't wait to take Larry Douglas with me to Birmingham some time. There will be too many theatre organ enthusiasts named Larry in the same building. Summertime is the height of theatre organ exposure for most Atlantans because of the Fox Theatre Summer Film Festival. At the movies and at the summer musical theatre presentations, Larry Douglas Embury entertains large audiences from the console of the Möller. I have often said that he is the public face of theatre organ in Atlanta. The fabulous success of last December's Christmas



Larry Douglas Embury

concert is an indication of the love Atlantans have for the Fox and for the Möller, and of the extent of the audience that Larry has built since his arrival here several years ago. The program was so successful that the Fox has scheduled another concert for this December.

Larry Douglas and I share one characteristic: both of us are born promoters. We are always looking for ways to advance the various interests that we have, and for us, these intersect at the Fox Theatre, theatre organ, and the Atlanta Chapter. Larry was very helpful to me as we planned our chapter's return to the Fox and it was Larry who arranged the impromptu and very successful meeting between Ken Double and Fox General Manager Allen Vella. Not long ago, Larry received a call from a member of the executive staff of one of Atlanta's major corporations who has a nostalgic interest in the Fox and the organ. Larry arranged a private visit for him, which resulted in an exchange visit by Fox management to meet their executives. Larry has assisted us to host our guest artists and other visitors at the Fox, and in June, he arranged for the members of the AGO who were here for a regional convention to visit the Fox. A large group of them accepted the invitation and Larry gave them the full treatment of the thundering power of 15 inches of wind pressure. He had the AGO cheering a *theatre organ*, then opened the console for those who dared. He invited me to join him that day in order to stimulate some "cross pollination" between the groups.

Larry also welcomes visitors to his Druid Hills home. I've been there a number of times, as have other chapter members. When my friend Stephen Wilber, the classical pianist, visited Atlanta, Larry invited him over for an

afternoon at the Baldwin concert grand piano in the living room. By the way, if you want to take a look, find a copy of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* for July 5, where there was a two-page feature on his "cottage" in the Homes Section.

Over the next few weeks, Larry will conduct a couple of classes which he entitles *Playing the Stops*, in which he will demonstrate how to approach registration on a theatre organ when you first sit down to play. He is a good friend to our chapter and always innovative in promoting theatre organ.

Then there is our other long-time friend: Larry Donaldson of the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, now living in Macon. Larry has overseen the care of the mighty Wurlitzer there for decades, helped with other theatre organs in Birmingham, and continues to supervise the care of the Chattanooga Tivoli Wurlitzer. Recently, we joined him, both to grieve the passing and to celebrate the life of his father Billy Donaldson, a wonderful man and friend to many of us. It was most fitting that only days before his passing, Billy was able to rejoice when Larry received the "ATOS Member of the Year" award at the July convention in New York. It is a well-deserved tribute for all that he has done for the theatre organ world in the South for these many years. Congratulations, Larry!



Larry Donaldson

Stay in touch,

Larry D the 2nd

Closing Chords

We regret to advise that Atlanta Chapter members Larry Donaldson and Randy Anderson lost parents in July.

Larry Donaldson's father, William O. (Billy) Donaldson, passed away July 13th at his home. He had been in declining health recently and had been hospitalized for quite a while. Larry had brought him home that morning from Lakeshore Rehabilitation Hospital and they had a good day up until the time of his passing.

Also, Randy Anderson's mother, Florence M. Anderson, died on July 18th in Day Springs of Wallace, NC. She had been suffering from dementia and totally incapacitated for quite some time. Services will be held at a later date in Chicago.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to these families in this time of loss.



Yamaha Clavinova Electric Piano - CLP-560, Stereo Sampling (2 internal speakers), 6 different voices, Tonal and Reverb Controls, Headphone Jack, MIDI In/Out - capable of playing through an organ. Asking \$500. Call David Burud at 770-463-1222 or email further questions to dlburud@numail.org.



Nettum elected to GACAA Board of Directors



The Georgia Assembly of Community Arts Agencies elected **Brooks Nettum, managing director of the Rylander Theatre and the Americus Theater and Cultural Center Authority** to its board of directors. Elections were held during GACAA's annual meeting at the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center in Atlanta last week.

The Georgia Assembly of Community Arts Agencies mission is to strengthen and foster community arts organizations in Georgia - connect community arts organizations, provide professional development and technical assistance, and promote the arts.

We extend our congratulations to Brooks and know she will be a valuable addition to this organization.

Renowned organist and composer, John McCall will present "Christmas Pops" at the Rylander Theatre in Americus, Georgia on Friday, Dec. 21 at 7:30. This event will feature a new McCall composition, "*Windsor Wonderland*," the silent film, "*Adventures of Wrong Santa*" (1904-Edison), a medley from "*Meet Me in St. Louis*" and much, much more! A morning jam session at the 1928 Möller Theatre Organ will kick off this event. Tickets are \$10 general admission and \$5 from each ticket will be donated to the "Tree Project at Rees Park." Dayle Harding will join McCall in an organ/piano medley on the Rosalynn Carter Steinway and he will perform Christmas music on the piano during the on-stage reception following the concert. For more information, contact Brooks Nettum, 229-931-0001 at the Rylander Theatre.



Upcoming Meetings & Events (Mark your Calendars)

- **August 19th, 3 P.M., Meeting, 1st United Methodist Church of Carrollton, Tony Childers Organist**
- **September 16th, 3 P.M., Meeting, Byron Jones (Welsh Wizard) at the Petway/Lacefield residence**
- **October 21st, 3 P.M., Meeting, Ron Carter & James Thrower, organ & piano at the Carter residence**
- **November 18, 3 P.M., Meeting, Mark & Carrie Renwick at the Bucky Reddish residence**
- December 21st, 7:30 P.M., "Christmas Pops" with John McCall at the Frank Sheffield Memorial Möller, Rylander Theatre, Americus, GA
- December 16th, 3 P.M., - Hector Olivera in Concert at Grace United Methodist Church, 458 Ponce de Leon Avenue, Atlanta, GA, Schantz/Widener organ

Atlanta Chapter , ATOS - Membership Application

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/ZIP _____ E mail _____
 Do you own an organ? _____ If so, description _____

Annual membership dues \$35 (Student \$17.50). Please make check payable to *Atlanta Chapter, ATOS*. Meetings are held monthly, usually on the 3rd Sunday afternoon. Mail this application and your check to: Wanda Carey Fields, 413 Concord Road SW, Smyrna, GA 30082-4509.