

Our Thanks to:

House of Blues and The Paramount Theatre Association

Paramount Theatre: **Jason Zink**

Organ Preparation: **Bob Castle, Don Wick**

RTD Senior Ride: **Patricia Jaquez, Mike Smith**

Production Coordination: **Ed Benoit, Leon Shaw**

Box Office: **Doris Beverly, Priscilla Arthur, Sandy Coulson**

Lobby Staff: **Priscilla Arthur, Twyla Landau, Mike Bryant**

Lobby Staff: **Owana Wick, Sandy Coulson, Gary Miller**

Lobby Staff: **Vera Jones, Carl Hoff, Don Bingman**

Lobby Staff: **Corky & Pat Carlson, Leon Tilbury**

Lobby Staff: **Lois Cady, Estelle Langston**

Ticket Sales: **Doris & George Beverly**

Publicity: **Twyla & Dexter Landau**

Stage Manager: **Rick Emchke**

House Manager: **Lois Cady**

Projectionist: **Mike Schuh**

Lighting: **Troy Stubby**



*The Rocky Mountain Chapter
American Theatre Organ Society*

Presents

From the Lawrence Welk Show

Bob Ralston

playing

The Mighty Wurliitzer Pipe Organ

and

The Steinway Grand Piano

The Paramount Theatre

Denver Colorado

Sunday, March 30, 2003

In the Lobby... During Intermission

Complementary Ice Water

Rocky Mountain Chapter
American Theatre Organ Society
Membership Information

Bob Ralston CD Sales

About the Artist

A Household Name to Senior Citizens

Bob Ralston is probably best known for his 39 years as pianist/organist/arranger with the Lawrence Welk Orchestra. Reruns of that beloved TV show are still shown every week in most major U.S. cities, and Ralston is currently hosting some of those reruns.

A Man of Many Talents

The Welk TV Shows feature not only Bob Ralston's fine piano and organ solos, but they frequently include Ralston's performances as a singer, dancer, and comedian!

Musically, Bob "wears many hats." In addition to his concerts for the American Theatre Organ Society (which are the mainstay of his career), Ralston continues to work as a pianist, show producer, arranger/conductor, composer, teacher, and recording artist.

From 1996 through 2000 Ralston hosted the "Gee Dad! It's a Wurlitzer!" radio show on KPCC, 89.3 FM.

Recording Artist

Bob Ralston has recorded over 300 albums, many of them with Freddy Martin, Billy Vaughn, Ray Conniff, Lawrence Welk, and other famous bandleaders. Ralston has recorded 27 solo albums, many on theater pipe organs, including those at the Senate Theater in Detroit, the Granada Theater in Kansas City, and the Paramount Theater in Oakland. Ralston's latest album, "Tulip Time," recorded at the Opera House in Pella, Iowa, has received much critical acclaim. Two new solo albums were released in the summer of 2002.

To God Be The Glory

An alumnus of Illinois' Wheaton College (alma mater of Dr. Billy Graham), Bob Ralston has been involved in Christian music all of

his adult life. For 17 years, Bob assisted in producing and directing Birmingham, Alabama's annual Festival of Sacred Music. He was also pianist, orchestrator, and guest conductor for the Alabama Symphony.

In 1989, Bob Ralston was featured as solo organist on the prestigious Hollywood Bowl Easter Sunrise Service (which is telecast worldwide each year). That performance resulted in Bob's appointment as Musical Director for this internationally acclaimed Christian celebration—a position he currently holds.

Every Sunday morning, except when he is on the road, Bob Ralston can be heard playing the 4-manual, 31-rank WurliTzer pipe organ at Founder's Church in Los Angeles, where he has been staff organist for the past thirteen years. The instrument is the largest WurliTzer theater pipe organ installed in any church in the world.

Music, Music, Music

Ralston is also a composer. He has written songs for Norma Zimmer, who has sung them both on the Welk TV Show and on the Billy Graham Crusades. Ralston's sacred cantata, "The Rising of the Sun," was premiered at Founder's Church in 1989.

On A Personal Note

Bob Ralston's mother, Marjorie Norton, was the original voice of Minnie Mouse. When she began work with Walt Disney in 1927, she was his 13th employee!

Bob received his Bachelor of Music degree from USC in 1964. While still in college, Ralston played six nights a week at the Coconut Grove with the Freddy Martin Orchestra (1959-62). Bob's career really began to zoom, however, when he joined Lawrence Welk's Champagne Music Makers in 1963.

With all of his travels, Bob finds his greatest happiness at home with his family. Bob and his wife, Fietje, now married 39 years, reside in Southern California's San Fernando Valley (just outside of Los Angeles).

Rocky Mountain Chapter

American Theatre Organ Society

(RMCATOS)

Calendar of Events

July 19th – **“Pizza & Pipeless” - 4 pm**

(an RTD Senior Ride Event)

Holiday Hills Village Ballroom

Digital theatre organ music, multiple artists, piano, singers, surprise guests, all the pizza you can eat plus a soft drink.

Tickets: **303-466-3330**

General Admission: \$8 Limited Seating

Reservations must be paid in advance.

VISA & MC

August 13th – **Silents At Chautauqua - 7:30 pm**

(an RTD Senior Ride Event)

The historic Boulder Chautauqua Auditorium

The classic silent film *“Phantom of the Opera”* with our own Bob Castle at the digital theatre organ, plus a traditional pre-film sing-a-long

Tickets: **303 440-7666**

General Admission: \$7 Seniors & Students: \$5

VISA & MC

Fall (TBA) - **Lyn Larsen Casual Concert - 2 pm**

(an RTD Senior Ride Event)

Holiday Hills Village Ballroom

Lyn Larsen at the console of his own, custom George Wright Allen digital theatre organ.

Tickets: **303-466-3330**

Adults: \$10 Students: \$5

VISA & MC

Fall – **The Mighty Wurlitzer.. and all that Jazz – 2 pm**

(an RTD Senior Ride Event)

Denver Paramount Theatre

Enjoy an afternoon of the Mighty Wurlitzer and Jazz featuring Dave Wickerham (from Milwaukee) and Denver’s own Queen City Jazz Band

Tickets: **303-466-3330**

Adults: \$10 Students: \$5

VISA & MC

Programming Note: All fall events cannot be scheduled until the Denver Broncos home game dates have been announced. RTD busses are not available for Senior Ride when the Broncos play at home.

The Publix logo projected on the curtain prior to today’s concert is from the August, 1930 newspaper ad heralding the opening of Publix’s Denver Paramount Theatre.

RMCATOS

Board of Directors

President: **Lois Cady**

Vice President/Events Chairman: **Ed Benoit**

Secretary: **Priscilla Arthur**

Treasurer: **Doris Beverly**

Newsletter Editor: **Lee Shaw**

Telephone Reminders: **Vera Jones**

Ride Coordinator: **Estelle Langston**

Youth Development: **Owanah Wick**

Historical Consultant: **Twyla Landau**

Technical Committee: **Don Wick, Bob Castle,**

Mike Schuh, Pete Peterson, Duane Searle

Publicity Chairperson: **Twyla Landau**

Ex-Officio: **Dick Coulson**

*The Paramount Theatre
and its Unwanted Wurlitzer*

by Steve McCormick

In the 1920's Denver's theatre patrons could choose from many fine movie houses. In an effort to draw more patrons, movie house chains were opening newer, more luxurious theatres on a continuing basis. The Publix chain, wanting to outdo the competition, decided a new uptown movie palace was in order. Construction on the Denver Paramount began in early 1929, only to be halted by the stock market crash.

After studying the situation, Publix officials decided to continue but on a smaller scale. One of the cutbacks was to cancel the Wurlitzer publix #1 Theatre Pipe Organ. Understandably, the Wurlitzer Company was not thrilled about this cost cutting measure and took the matter to court. When the dust settled, the Denver Paramount had its 4/20 unwanted Wurlitzer complete with twin consoles.

In order to have its main entrance on 16th Street, ground floor space in the adjacent Kittredge building was leased and the lobby with its grand staircase was installed. (This entrance was removed a few years ago when the rental cost became prohibitive.)

The grand opening for the theatre occurred on August 29, 1930. Opening night crowds lined up for blocks to see the lavish new theatre. Invitation holders were treated to an opening night program which included a feature talking picture "Going Coconuts" as well as short subjects and newsreels and featuring Jackie Kaderly and Jean Rowan at the Wurlitzer twin consoles.

Despite modernization efforts in the 1950's, movie crowds were not coming downtown anymore. Downtown movie theatres fell on hard times and most have been demolished

and their organs sold or junked. The Paramount was no exception.

Lengthy court battles over operation of the theatre in the 1970's nearly finished the old dowager. The crowning blow came in 1978 when a burglar-set fire on the stage destroyed much of the front area of the theatre. Thanks to the efforts of the Denver firemen, the organ consoles were wrapped in fireproof blankets and were saved from the disaster.

Help came from the insurance company which provided funds for rehabilitating the damaged theatre. The Historic Paramount Foundation operated the theatre until bankruptcy caused its dissolution in early 1994.

Over the years, several organ enthusiasts kept the Wurlitzer operating long before RMCATOS came into being. Later, members of RMCATOS stepped in to help as the need arose. In 1991 the Wurlitzer suffered water damage to its main relay which rendered it unplayable. Thanks to the efforts of RMCATOS, Randy Ship (theatre owner) and Zollman Pipe Organ Services (Ed Zollman, owner) the Paramount Mighty Wurlitzer has been fully restored and upgraded to continue to be part of Denver's musical heritage.

The Paramount Theatre is one of a very few movie palaces left in the Western U.S. and the only one to contain its originally-installed theatre pipe organ. The only other original Wurlitzer with twin consoles is at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. The Paramount and its Mighty Wurlitzer are a major part of Denver's history.

Want to Join ?

*Rocky Mountain Chapter
American Theatre Organ Society*

Information in the lobby or

Call: 303-771-4728 or 303-671-8333