



RELAY CHATTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE JOLIET AREA

THEATER ORGAN ENTHUSIASTS

WWW.JATOE.ORG DON WALKER, NEWSLETTER EDITOR: JATOE.BARTON@GMAIL.COM



Find us on
Facebook

July/Aug 2020

upcoming EVENTS

Postponed

until further notice

We are sorry that we can't gather as we usually do to bring you the music and sounds you love. As soon as we receive additional information, we will let you know.



RIALTO UPDATE



While this virus has hit many businesses very hard, the ones hit the hardest are those in the entertainment industry. As the state mandate continues to keep closed those places where large crowds can gather, the income that shows, weddings, and other functions that the theater relies on has all but dried up. On June first, the City of Joliet while in a desperate state as well has cut its funding for the theater for the rest of this year. Most likely funding will be cut next year as the city tries to recover from the financial effects of the virus. The Rialto's Executive Director, Val Devine is running the day to day operations of the theater along with

one maintenance man. All other employees are laid off until further notice. The prospects of JATOE having any type of event at the theater for the remainder of this year is slim to none. Val has been rescheduling all the shows, weddings, and functions to later dates in the year. This is a difficult task when you don't know when you can reopen the theater doors. All of us on the board want to thank you for your continued patience, loyalty and support during this very trying and unusual time. We hope that we can be together soon to enjoy the wonderful sounds of the Barton and beauty of the Rialto Theater. Stay Safe!

RIALTO QUARANTINE CONCERTS A SUCCESS



Rialto Square Theatre Presents

Quarantine Concerts
on the Barton Grande Theater Pipe Organ

Starting April 24, every Friday
from 12:12:30pm on Facebook

Beginning on April 24th to June 5th, every Friday from noon to 12:30p was an especially fun time. JATOE and the Rialto teamed up to live stream to our Facebook pages, half hour concerts featuring JATOE members on the Barton Grande Theater Pipe Organ. Frank Pellico started the concert series off on April 24th. May 1st was Bev Holt, May 8th was Judy Matarelli, May 15th was Jim Patak, May 22nd was Taylor Trimby and May 29th was Carl DeSanti and June 5th was Dennis Nawracaj. The concerts are also on YouTube for those that don't have Facebook accounts. Click on the link below.

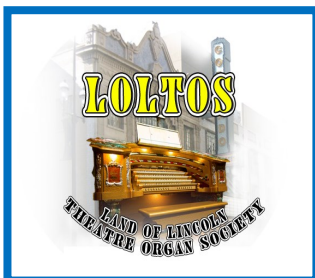


<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZR3eNtrh2Yr04OgQJVGmTA/videos>

upcoming EVENTS



Click on the icon to go directly to our sister chapters web site for their latest news and events.



Please Welcome our Newest Members to JATOE!



Steve James from East Dundee, IL

Beverly Holt from Joliet, IL

Matt Baskerville from Wilmington, IL

Mark Mackeben from Yorkville, IL

Current membership, 153



Letter from the editor

By Don Walker

Happy Summer to all of you!

I hope all of you remain healthy during this pandemic that has radically changed our way of life throughout the world. My heart goes out to those who have lost jobs and family members due to the virus and the economic shutdown of many industries in our country.

I know for me, I'm getting tired of staying home and miss the fellowship and live music that we have shared each month at the theatre and other locations. When we do meet again, precautions will need to be taken, and the JATOE Board will release information as to what our socials will look like when we can all meet again.

For those of you with internet/smartphone access, please take advantage of the many virtual concerts being presented by those in the theatre organ world, including Mark Herman, Dairyland Theatre Organ Society and others.

On Sunday, May 31, JATOE was fortunate to feature a virtual one hour concert featuring young organist, Richie Gregory from Ohio. It was very well received and we were glad to welcome Richie back again, although we wish that it could have been a live concert. Here's the link to the concert on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkxDmT9wRVA&t=782s>

Take care everyone, and stay healthy!

Please remember the following people in your prayers
Rhonda Wickerham, Bill Reynolds, Tom Wisvader, Pat Hewlett, Bill Graffis and Stan Zimmerman



1926 Campaign

Contribute to the Rialto's 1926 Campaign

Click on the picture to go to the site

Or



Mail your tax deductible donation to:

Rialto Square Theater

15 E. van Buren St

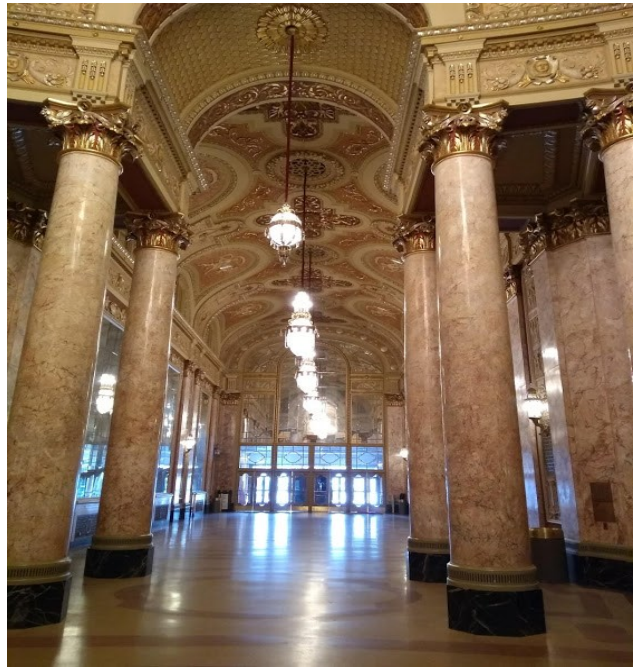
Joliet, IL 60432



Given these uncertain times, Rialto Square Theatre needs your support more than ever.

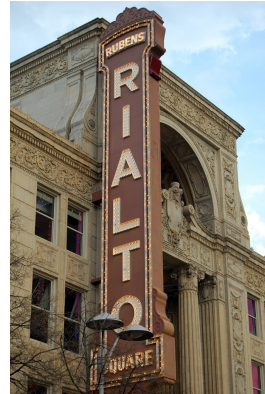
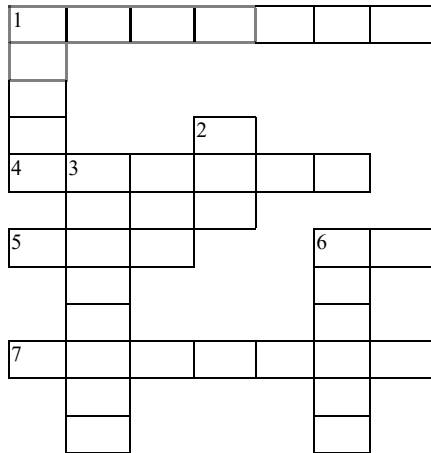
To commemorate Rialto's grand birth in 1926, we ask you to consider a gift of \$19.26 to ensure another glorious 94 years of the Jewel of Joliet.

Your gift of just \$19.26, combined with others will help us weather this mighty storm together!

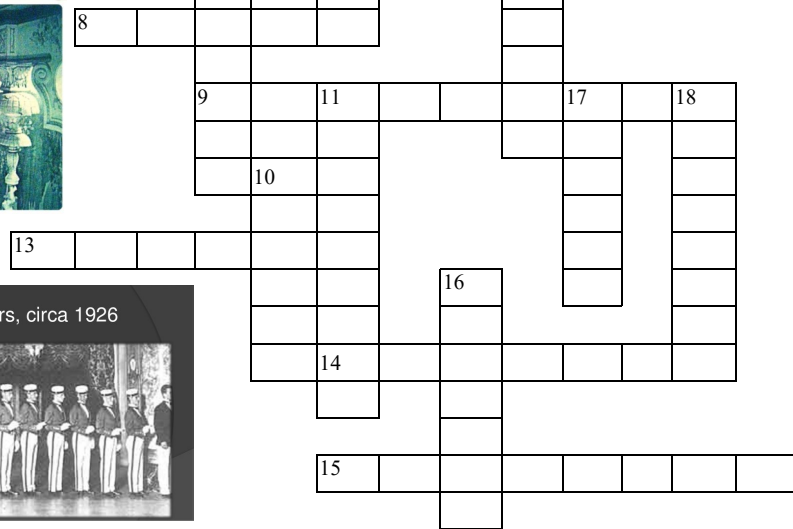


Before and after construction pictures of the lobby (The Hall of Mirrors).

Lets have some fun and see how much you know about the Rialto.



Rialto ushers, circa 1926



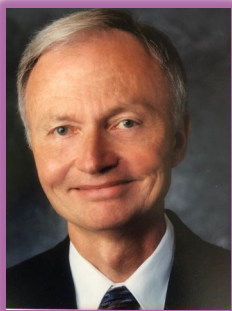
DOWN

1. Original Rank left in the Barton
2. _____ McAbee
3. First Organists _____
6. Van Buren Street Exit use to be the _____
8. Month the Theater opened
10. Construction company Kaiser & _____
11. Inner Lobby
12. His twin sister
16. Hall of _____
17. god on left side of the Arch
18. Number of columns in the Rotunda

ACROSS

1. The Grande Duchess Weighs _____
4. First song played
5. Month it became a performing arts center
6. Architects
7. _____ Wood Irving
8. Last Ruben Brother to pass away
9. Inner Lobby
13. A _____ for the People
14. Lady that saved the Rialto
15. Arc de _____

HOW DID YOU DO? Answers on page 7



JATOE member
Jim Stephenson passed away
April 9, 2020 after suffering
 from a stroke last June from
 which he never quite
 recovered. May he rest in
 peace.

[Click on the picture to read the full obituary.](#)

James
Stephenson
May 23, 1936
April 9, 2020



Lois Patricia "Pat"
Hewlett age 88 of
Lansing, IL passed
 away **April 13, 2020**

[Click on the picture to read
 the full obituary.](#)

May she rest
in peace.



A Final Good Bye to

Ken Crome and Rev. Gus Franklin



Master pipe organ
 craftsman Ken
 Crome passed away
 on May 1. It would
 be difficult to find a
 corner of the theatre
 organ world that Ken
 did not touch, from

the original installation in the Jasper Sanfilippo home,
 to the recent acclaimed installation of the original Fox
 Studio Wurlitzer in the Bandrika studio of Nathan

Barr. His stellar craftsmanship is seen in the
 numerous consoles he constructed or rebuilt, and the
 many installations that benefited from his immense
 knowledge and skill. In 1983 Ken received the first
 ATOS Award for Technical Excellence (with Ed
 Stout and Dick Taylor) and his legacy will live on in
 the many lives he touched and the instruments he
 enhanced.

[Click on the pictures to read
 the full obituary.](#)



January 28, 1938 -
May 3, 2020

The Very Reverend
Father Gus Lee
Franklin III, SSC, died
May 3, 2020 after a
 long and courageous
 battle with lung

cancer. Father Franklin was born on January 28, 1938
 in Bellevue, Kentucky, the eldest son of Ruth and Gus
 Franklin II. His brother, Gary (Joyce) of Ft. Thomas,
 KY survives as do two nieces, Melissa Franklin of
 Austin, TX and Carol Lee Barber of Columbus, OH.





Construction of the Rialto's Balcony. Using sandbags, it was tested to 110,000 lbs.



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Click on the
picture to read the
full transcribed
article from 1926
about the Rialto's
Grand Opening.

June 12, 1926

EXHIBITORS HERALD

13

"Greater Joliet Week" Heralds Million-Dollar Rialto Opening

*New Playhouse Ranks
With Country's Best;
Accommodates 3,000*

By H. E. HOLQUIST

*Theatre Opening Made
Civic Event; Business
Men Boost Enterprise*

By CHARLES RAYMOND

JOLIET, Illinois, having a published population of 38,400 today has what is unquestionably the finest motion picture theatre for a city of this size in the country. In fact, the new Rialto Square Theatre erected by the Rubens boys, Jules, Maurice, Harry, Lew and Claude, is a playhouse which it takes no stretch of the imagination to place on a par with any of the picture palaces of Chicago or New York.

First of all it cost a million dollars. In addition, it has a seating capacity of 3,000. These two facts alone bespeak the worthiness of the Rialto Square to be placed among the country's most auspicious theatres. Further, the Rialto was designed by C. W. & Geo. L. Rapp which makes it a foregone conclusion that it can lack nothing in beauty of appointment or modern comfort.

The building is an "L" shaped structure, fronting 131 feet on Chicago street and 284 feet on Van Buren. The theatre occupies the east wing but is entered from Chicago street.

The commercial section, the office building, is of concrete and of the construction with an exterior of terra cotta.

One of the most striking features of the building is the grand niche rising above the main entrance. The niche is paneled in colored terra cotta, in some of which real gold has been fused to bring out certain color effects, and is flanked by five banks of colored flood lights, concealed in coves along the sides.

Thousands of lights illuminate the marquee and the 70-foot electric sign over the entrance.

As one enters he comes first to the ornate ticket lobby and from there passes into the inner lobby which leads into the foyer grande and continues into the theatre proper.

At the west end of the inner lobby is an arch of mirrors and along the walls between marble pilasters are huge mirrors, eight feet wide and 20 feet high, three on each side. The vaulted ceiling, 45 feet in height, is paneled with figures cast in plaster from clay models made by Gene Reno, a sculptor.

All of the figures in the lobbies and theatre were made in the same manner.

The main lobby, or foyer grande, is the idea of Maurice Rubens, general manager of the Balaban and Katz interests in Joliet.

Huge marble columns reach to the dome here, and in the center space are two fountains.

Women's writing rest rooms, with maid service, and men's smoking rooms opening off this foyer on the street and mezzanine floor, will offer to the public a comfort equal to that of any theatre in the country. Separate rest rooms are provided for the employees of the theatre.

Broad staircases lead from the foyer to the mezzanine.

(Continued on page 43)



Rubens' Rialto Square theatre building, Joliet, Ill.

C. W. & Geo. L. Rapp, architects.

First off it must be realized that

2020 "Reels at the Rialto" Movie line up, tickets are just \$5, Doors open at 6pm, show time 7pm. The Barton Grande Theater Pipe Organ plays a half an hour before all shows.

These events depends on the status of the Covid 19 restrictions. As of the publication of this newsletter the Rialto is still closed by order of the Governor.



Click on the Icon Above



July 16th – The Sandlot, organist Taylor Trimby
 August 20th – Casablanca, organist Carl DeSanti
 September 17th – Toy Story 4, organist Taylor Trimby
 October 29th – Hocus Pocus, organist Carl DeSanti

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* Offset

* Color

Support the businesses that support JATOE!

Down:

1. Tibia, 2. Kay, 3. Leo Terry, 6. Roman Gardens, 8. May, 10. Ducett, 11. Esplanade, 12. Diana 16. Mirrors, 17. Apollo, 18. Eighteen

Across: 1. two tons, 4. Always, 5. Nov, 6. Rapp, 7. Francis, 8. Harry, 13. Palace, 14. Dorothy, 15. Triomphe

Gift Certificates are \$30.00 and are valid for dues and has no expiration date. See a board member to purchase one.



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Website:

www.SkateAurora.com



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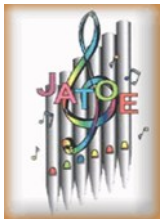
FRIDAYS 5:30PM TO 9:45* PM
 *OR LATER DEPENDING ON AUDIENCE



New Hours



The Rialto's 4/27 Barton Grande Theater Pipe Organ
rialtosquare.com/1926-campaign



JATOE
15 E. Van Buren St
Joliet, IL
60432