

"TOES" BECOME "SIERRA CHAPTER" IN A BLAZE OF GLORY

HEAR DUNSTEDTER,
JAMES and NOURSE

by H. A. SOMMER

Any meeting of organ enthusiasts that is fortunate enough to have an Honorary ATOE Organist present is bound to be rewarded with lingering memories, but then to have two such personages present, is almost beyond description.

AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING of the Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of Sacramento (TOES) at the Carl Greer Inn, both Tiny James and Eddie Dunstedter were in attendance. Eddie was in town for one of several week-end stints on the 4/16 Morton and Tiny was the featured concert artist for the event. Don and Cathy Zeller had just finished tuning the beast when Tiny and John Gallagher arrived and immediately started setting combinations. While they were doing so, and later when Tiny practiced, Eddie kibitzed and supervised the operation, all in good fun. After Tiny had practiced, Eddie played several selections and seemed to be pleased with the instrument, although between cigar smoke, crashing dishes and ice clinking in glasses, I thought I heard a comment which sounded like, "the combinations aren't loused up too badly". The concert was attended by more than 125, some coming over 100 miles. Eddie was introduced and then stepped aside while Tiny, the featured organist, was presented. Tiny was at his best and played the full range of the theatre organ spectrum. His technique was flawless, the selections delightful and the members exuberant over the fine renditions. Although the club was highly appreciative of Tiny's concert, the high point was when Eddie complimented him afterwards. George Seavers played a few selections after the business meeting and several new members signed up.

A highly successful concert sponsored by the brand new Sierra Chapter ATOE (formerly TOES), was held at Grant Union High School on March 5, 1967. Everett Nourse was the guest organist and presented a two hour concert that will be remembered for some time. Playing the Wurli 4-22 to an audience of 400, he offered some of the most meticulous and flawless renditions of music, from the theatre organ spectrum, that has been pre-



THE OLD MAESTRO APPROVES — Eddie Dunstedter (left) introduces the TOES concert artist, Tiny James.

sented in this area. The organ was in top condition, thanks to the efforts of Bob Baese, many commenting that it never sounded better. Everett's imaginative technique captivated the audience and he was treated to enthusiastic applause at the intermission, before and after the encore. An interesting note on Everett is that this was the first time he ever played the instrument although he had attended George Wright's dedication concert in 1939. The audience was divided between Sacramento enthusiasts and those from the Bay Area. After the concert a short business meeting of the members was held, the highlight being the announcement of the National ATOE organization acceptance of TOES as the Sierra Chapter of ATOE. Members then took turns at the organ. Many of the enthusiasts later journeyed to the Carl Greer Inn for din-



Everett Nourse at the Wurli 4-22. After 27 years he was pleased to make its acquaintance.

ner and to hear Eddie Dunstedter at the Morton 4-16.



From Mich., Carl Elliott writes glumly that when "urban renewal" cut a path through Grand Rapids, it wiped out five theatres, three of them operating and two with operating organs. An attempt to secure the Regent 3-7 Robert Morton for installation in the civic auditorium fell by the wayside for lack of support and went to a private party in Lansing. Which leaves only the Majestic with an organ which, Carl writes, is used occasionally. In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, it's a more pleasant story. Howard A. Burton, long a stalwart in the organ hobby, continues pushing pipe organ music with Saturday morning open sessions at the Paramount with its lone 3-11 Wurlitzer, and uncovering new talent. One recent discovery is Richard Neighbor (16) with whom Burton shared a pre-Christmas concert at the theatre. Burton, who has a 2-9 Geneva installed in his home basement studio, was a student of the Knauss School of Theatre Organ Playing in Allentown, Penna., in the late '20s. Wonder if there are other Knauss students among our readers? There's a story there . . . Seeing the list of long gone NBC radio "soap operas" which Rosa Rio supplied Hammond themes and incidental music for in these pages brought a tinge of nostalgia to Ann Leaf who was playing for CBS (New York) during the same top broadcasting years. Among Ann's "soapers" were *Ma Perkins*, *Pretty Kitty Kelly* and *Front Page Farrell*. She also backgrounded a pair of well remembered evening shows, *Easy Aces* and *Mr. Keen*, *Tracer of Lost Persons* which were supplied a few bars theme music, respectively, of *Manhattan Serenade* and *Someday I'll Find You*. . . . Bill Coffman, the organist with a quite long stretch at the Panama Hilton Bombarde Room 3-27 Wurlitzer behind