

1966 A·T·O·E ANNUAL MEETING AND CONVENTION Portland, Oregon

THE 1966 A T O E CONVENTION - "GREATEST YET!"

Observations made as the ATOers gathered at the Heathman Hotel in Portland to register, a renew acquaintances, make new friends and just "talk theatre organ."

By Carole Angle

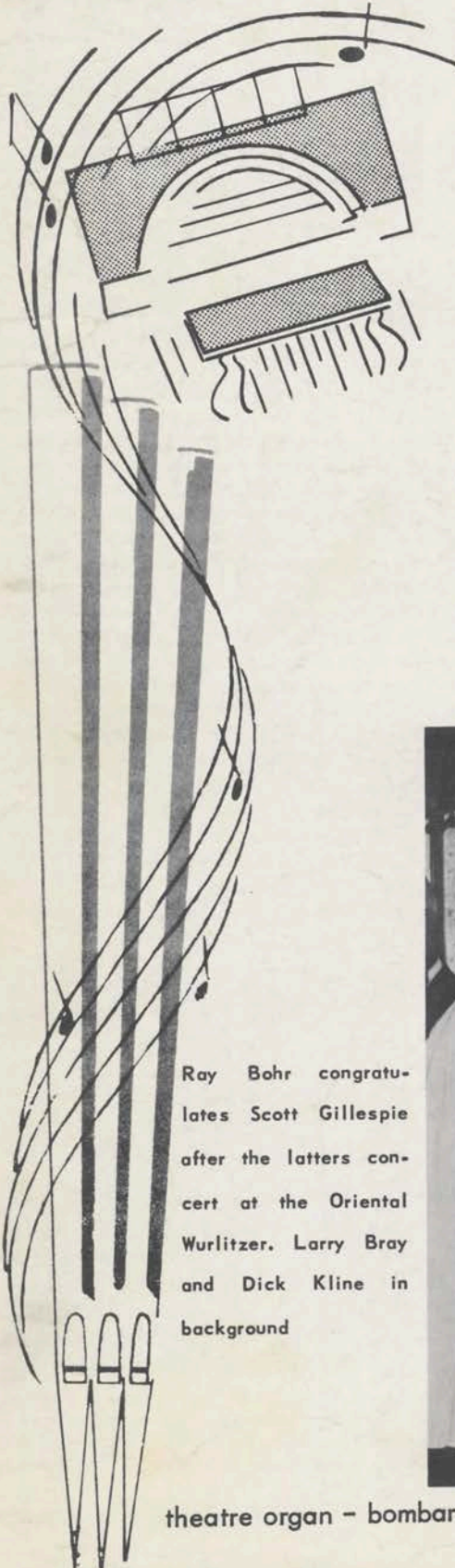
They started to arrive early this year because an airline strike was threatening. Those who did so chose wisely because the strike later cut off many who would have come from distant parts of the country. The first visitor spotted by our eagle-eyed reporter (disguised as a desk clerk) was Reiny Delzer (Bismarck, N. D.). Reiny came into the Heathman Hotel around one ayem Wednesday morning and was delighted to find out that his

reservation was in order. Even so it appeared that Reiny wasn't first because he was told that friends were waiting for him in the bar, among them Ed Pegram.

It wasn't too long before Dick and Jane Loderhose (New York) arrived. Dick, puffing furiously on a foot-long stogie, announced that his now 42 rank organ is equipped with nine manuals and 64 pedals--or two consoles.

By Thursday morning they were pouring in, Harry Jorgenson, Mr. and Mrs. Al Schmitz from Minneapolis. Al, the ATOE convention MC for the past three years, said he would be glad to just take in the convention and leave all the

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Ray Bohr congratulates Scott Gillespie after the latter's concert at the Oriental Wurlitzer. Larry Bray and Dick Kline in background



theatre organ - bombarde

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MC'ing to Ben Hall this time. North Dakota was represented also by style B Special Wurlitzer owner Eric Reeve, a "fuzz" from Minot, and by Marr & Colton owners Chuck and Mrs. Welch from Bismarck.

They gathered in little knots in the lobby and spilled over into the well-appointed bar. The talk was all on one subject, naturally, as those who had met at previous conventions renewed old friendships and asked such questions as "how many ranks have you added since we met in Buffalo?" Willis Burch's delegation from Indiana was heavy with pulchritude, female variety, his bevy including Vi Dykins and June Crews.



HONEY FROM THE MIDWEST -- Indianapolis Chap sec June Crews and member Vi Dykins relax over "Burpsiboomas" in the Heathman cocktail lounge -- er -- bar. (Stu Green Photo)

It was really something to see Lou and Katy Lynch march their 50-strong platoon of Southern Californians into the lobby. LA Chapter Chairman Lou registered his charges then gave them all "four-day passes." Among the Angelenos were Dr. and Mrs. Phil Olson. The Walt Rathmans (3-10 Barton) and 2-8 Wurlitzer owner Bob Mueller did most of the representing for Chicago, although photosnapper Bill Lamb came from Princeton, Illinois, a bit South of Chi. Bill was the official ATOE fotog this year so he had few moments during the four hectic days to relax and absorb



Bombarde Editor Stu Green and ATOE Photographer Bill Lamb head the line at the registration desk. (Gallagher Photo)

organ music. He was always busy recording events on film and the samples of his work in this issue indicate the magnitude of the project. He shot over 200 negatives, most with the aid of flashbulbs.

Occasionally Portlanders would be taken for visitors. It happened to Ted and Mrs. Marks who harbor a 3-18 Kimball in their isolated home near the host town.

One guy was forever on the move, continually walking, dogtrotting or scurrying. He ambled up and down the long curving stairway to the registration desk seven times during the one hour our reporter hovered over the incoming guests at the desk. He turned out to be a member of the Portland convention committee, Bill Peterson, and he was seen in a sitting position only once during the convention -- at the banquet for about five minutes.

Mr. and Mrs. Rey Galbraith ended a West Coast organ tour at the convention. Rey told about combining his other hobby, model trains, with organ-hunting. He and the Mrs. had knocked off reporting for the BOMBARDE from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, long enough to attend a model train convention in Southern California in June and had filled the time since visiting pipe installations.

When Dick and sister Diana Stoney arrived at the registration desk it was safe to bet that mama Anita would't be far behind--and that proved correct. The organlovin' Stoneys recently acquired a pipe job they intend to fill their home in Los Angeles with.

Speaking of the registration desk, it was located on a balcony which overlooked the lobby. The traffic on the stairway leading to it nearly wore out the carpet -- possibly because the bar was near the lower level terminal.

Sitting at the registration desk was a well organized group of Portlanders plus a gal loaned by the Chamber of Commerce, Maxine Closterman. Poor Maxine, who is used to sitting in at conventions for the chamber, must have been somewhat floored by the strange talk going on all around her. For example, when Jane Loderhose was asked whether she was an organ buff, hubby Dick volunteered a reply: "My wife says that on the day I die the first guy that backs a truck up to the door can cart away the organ--for free!" Anyone with a beady eye on Dick's 9-42 Wurli (yes, 9-24!) should be advised that Dick's health is excellent.

Chapter members assisting in registration were Helen West Cole, Virginia Swanson, Dr. Gordon Potter and Mr. and Mrs. David Markworth (Dave handled the money!) and a number of other part-time volunteers who came and went so fast that the names on their badges were blurred. That was a complaint heard



ALL PAID UP -- Ex-Texan Dave Schutt and author Ben Hall can still smile after kicking in with their best remaining bucks for the registration fee. (Stu Green Photo)

throughout the four days. "My eyes have a terrible case of 'convention squint'" as Ben Hall so aptly put it. There must have been a number of stiff necks, too, as folks who meet but once a year leaned forward and squinted to catch names on bobbing badges. The size type used to print the badges was certainly large enough -- but everyone seemed to move so fast!

Overheard in the lobby was a remark by Katherine Marks (Ted's wife) which bordered on treason so far as pipe lovers are concerned, "I play my little Conn plug-in lots more than I play Ted's 3-18 Kimball -- the music rack is at a better level for my eyes." Luckily those fighin' words were lost in the noise generated by the arrival in the hotel lobby of a group spearheaded by "smooth talkin'" Sam Dickerson of Fairfield, California who was greeted by Eddie Zolleman and Dick Chase of Corvallis, Oregon.



A SLY PAIR -- Organ expert Dennis Hedberg exchanges quips with seasoned quipmaster Dick Loderhose in the hotel snack bar. (Stu Green Photo)

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Jim Trinkle of New Albany, Indiana, told one on his wife, Lill, which resulted in some large boffs. It seems that Jim had acquired an organ and toted it home in parts. Lill had volunteered to scrub the pipes clean. Shortly after she started she called to Jim, "Say, I can't scrub the mildew off these pipes." Jim found her scrubbing furiously, trying to eradicate the natural "mottle" characteristic of pipe metal.

The delegation from San Mateo (near Frisco) was upped considerably by the arrival of the "Four Taylors" (momma, poppa and two offspring -- all dedicated organ fans) but Portland was able to top that when the "Five Myers Brothers" marched in -- organ fans all!



DYNAMIC DUO -- LA Chapter Chairman Lou Lynch and former Chairman Jack Shemick provide contrast in facial expressions. (Stu Green Photo)

Dick Kline, who is putting a novel installation into a former stone quarry, managed somehow to come all the way from Frederick, Maryland, and while we're in the distance department let's not forget former Fresnonian (Calif.) Hollis Turner who, with his wife, mused in from Alaska.

Warren Blankenship, who is assembling an organ from parts gleaned from everywhere, was probably the only rep for Pacific Grove (Calif.) He was seen exchanging data with National ATOE Director Karl Warner (who is also Chair-



TRIBE -- It's plain to see that pipes aren't Don Zellar's only hobby. Here he is with the Mrs. and four individual projects. For more about his other hobby see "A Morton Goes On and On" in this issue. (Stu Green Photo)

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man of the Phoenix, Ariz., Chapter and a BOMBARDE stringer) and Bill Field, half-owner of the famous "Wurlitzer in a Woodcarver Shop" in Los Angeles. The subject must have been tremms, judging from the hand signals.



HONEYMOONERS - Chicagoans Mr. & Mrs. Walt Rathman spent part of their wedding trip at the Convention. Niagara Falls' loss! (Stu Green Photo)

John and Lena Gallagher (Alameda, Calif.) never worried one whit about the airline strike; they zoomed in aboard John's latest Detroit "Boom Buzzard 12" to hear pipes, after a fairly steady diet of electronic sounds which emanate from John's custom Rodgers -- when he can find someone who knows how to play it. Poor guy!

From the North came Ed Maas of Eugene, Oregon (it IS North, isn't it?!) and a looker named Jennie Whitting from Seattle.

While we're on the subject of large delegations, Sacramento, Calif., was "done proud" by one registration, the Don Zellar family -- five strong. The family is waist deep in a Morton installation.

Finally came the "Andy Gump and Oliver Hardy" of the T.O. hobby, so named for their physical resemblances to the originals. But editors George Thompson and Stu Green were indulging in their favorite hobby -- arguing over who is going to cover what event and who gets to soak in the bar. This went on throughout the convention -- until one of them was finally awarded a prize of questionable meaning at the banquet -- a huge lollipop! More on that later.

These are merely the observations of one reporter who haunted the lobby of the Heathman Hotel as the conventioners arrived and who took a few notes to add to the over-all color of the ATOE's big annual conclave. Regretably, only a handful of observations can be recorded here -- so don't feel you have been neglected if your antics aren't mentioned. It's quite probable that one of the flashbulb artists caught you with his lens aflutter as he did the conventioners pictured on these pages.

DON BAKER AT THE PARAMOUNT



Following the social get together at the Heathman Hotel the ATOE'ers walked around the corner to the Portland Paramount Theatre to await the close of the movie program. As soon as the show-going crowd had departed the doors were opened and another show was made ready. This time it was to be live entertainment, somewhat unusual for present day movie palaces.

As soon as the audience settled down, Ben Hall appeared onstage to M.C. the proceedings. Ben reminded the crowd of the fact they were seeing one of the few remaining "Paramounts". He also told the assemblage that since all lighting effect circuits were still intact in the theatre, the stage and booth crew would operate them throughout the program.

Ben then announced Don Baker, at this point the spotlight shifted to the left side of the orchestra pit, then both sides of the proscenium arch seemed to open up as a thousand or more voices spoke the introduction, simultaneously the gilded console of the Publix #1 Wurlitzer slowly rose to stage height, Don swung into "Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart" which left no doubt that here again was a real live pipe organ playing in its normal environment.

Following his usual pattern, Baker played number after number without stopping, modulating smoothly from one to another, exposing his high quality musicianship. He played "Hindustan" on quinted fourths with solid syncopation, at first softly then gradually swelled to a full orchestration all the while interpolating Oriental themes including bits of "Scheherazade". Don's program exhibited the versatility of the 20 rank organ in his careful selection of tunes

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