

MILLIE ALEXANDER

(continued from page F)

The big feature medley was the same as presented last year at the LA Chapter Wiltern theatre concert (which Millie approached with her fingers crossed) and we can't help wondering if there isn't a personal message to her husband, Bill Appleton, ill-concealed in its titles: "Bill", "The Second Time Around" and "Lover". This time she managed to perform that outrageous rightfoot pedal melody during "Lover" without losing a shoe as she did during her Wiltern performance. In fact, the subject of shoes brings up the finesse in the lady's pedal technique. Millie doesn't wear army shoes while playing, she somehow manages intricate heel and toe passages while wearing shoes with spiked heels! And small wonder that all the ATOE wolves were seated close to the console; Millie's fast-peddaling chorus girltype gams were a show all by themselves.



Mildred Alexander plays her opener as the organ rises out of the pit.
(Del Matthews Photo)

Millie's closer was one of her favorites and one which has become associated with her in recent years, "Never Leave Me" from Gordon Jenkin's paeon to Gotham, "Manhattan Tower." It's a massive, sweeping theme but with all the tenderness of young love. Millie made it come alive so that we all shared that high-up view of Manhattan with someone very dear. During the final mighty passage Millie hit the "down" button and as the console slithered pitward a great burst of applause filled the theatre. Millie came back up for a "St. Louis Blues" encore during which she used the ricky-tick piano in the pit (it plays from the console). That boogie-woogie pedal part was something to ogle!

Despite Millie's forebodings of disaster and public self-criticism (e.g. "Ah bleyew the bree-idge" (translation: I blew the bridge), she had once again proved beyond all doubt that she could still cut the mustard on pipes.

summer 1966

SCOTT GILLESPIE SHINES AT THE ORIENTAL WURLITZER

Double feature movie programs are the normal thing in theatres. However, double feature organ programs are unusual. The Oregon Chapter of ATOE introduced several innovations at the 1966 National Meeting, twin bill organ programs being one of these.

Following Mildred Alexander's top-flight program, Scott Gillespie took over the Oriental console to perform a wonderfully constructed program. Gillespie, relatively a newcomer, produced a program that proved to be much more than a pleasant surprise.

Although the listeners had been in-

formed that Scott was a former student of the late great "Gus" Farney, no one expected this young man to put on a performance equal to the finest in theatre organ style. Gus Farney had an apt student and saw to it that Gillespie would be able to use his talents in combining the 1920's style with the modern approach in a blend that is fresh but still retains the flavor of the good old days.

His introduction was "Sound of Music" tastefully done and more than well received. Each number played increased

(continued on page H)



Scott Gillespie Pauses Between Numbers during his Oriental Concert.
(Del Matthews Photo)

SCOTT GILLESPIE

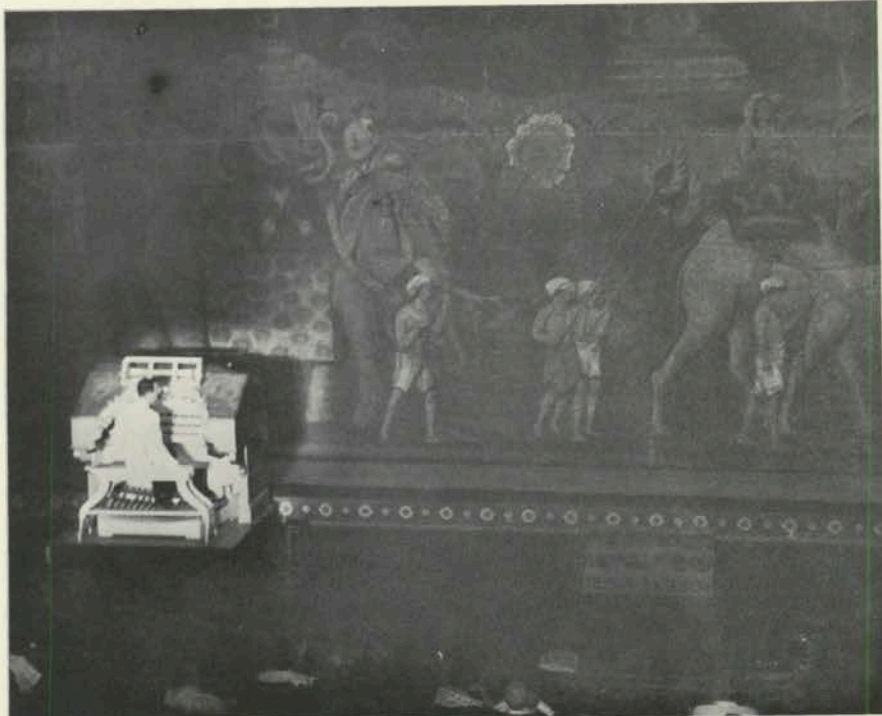
(continued from page G)

the audience respect for this fine young musician. His program ran the gamut of listenable tunes which included "On A Clear Day", "Selections from Oliver", "Birds Eye View of my Old Kentucky Home" (The old Crawford classic). "Downtown", (Rock 'n Roll style), and "More Than You Know", (In true J. Crawford form).

When Gillespie performed "Dessert Song" the asbestos curtain was dropped revealing a scenic artists version of a trip through the Orient. On the curtain every symbol of Eastern Culture was represented in typical Hollywood fashion, Buddhas', camels, elephants, princesses, temples, and slaves fanning each character with palm leaves. This no doubt served as the House Curtain in the "good old days" to keep the patron reminded that he was indeed in the Oriental Theatre.

For an encore, Scott played "My Blue Heaven" in the true 1929 style, leaving the more than 700 listeners with memories that will never fade.

The Oriental Theatre is a beautiful theatre decorated in the decor implied by the name of the house. To insure that everyone knew this, M.C. Benn Hall remarked "Welcome to Ali Baba's Cave".



The Oriental's Asbestos Curtain provides a picture back drop to fit the mood of Scott Gillespie's fine music. (Del Matthews Photo)

TINY JAMES RETIRES AS ATOE PUBLICATION MANAGER

With the completion of this first combined issue of THEATRE ORGAN and BOMBARDE, Tiny James retires from active participation in the publication of ATOE magazines. His first association with ATOE publications goes back to the time our membership was a little over 650. It now stands at almost 3000.

Tiny was responsible for starting the second ATOE publication THE BOMBARDE, by persuading an old friend Stu Green into transferring his writing and news gathering talents from THE POST-HORN to the new ATOE publication THE BOMBARDE. George Thompson, current editor of THEATRE ORGAN, and a long time friend of Tiny's was first named editor of THEATRE ORGAN while Tiny was Vice President of ATOE, and has held that position almost continuously from that time.

Following Tiny James announcement of his retirement at the Annual Meeting in Portland, new ATOE President Dick Schrum announced that Bill Peterson, Chapter Chairman of the Oregon Chapter, would be the new ATOE Publications Manager, and that Stu Green and George Thompson would remain as co-editors of the new combined publication THEATRE ORGAN and BOMBARDE.

H

Dewey Cagle was re-appointed Advertising Manager.

Tiny has said that he wishes to thank all the members of ATOE for their fine cooperation in furnishing material for the two official ATOE publications, as without them the magazines would never have attained the popularity they now enjoy. In particular he wishes to thank Lloyd Klos, Ray Brubacher, Laura Thomas, Dean Robinson, Peg Nielsen, Margueritta Burke of Wheeler Printing, Bill Lamb, official convention photographer, and last but not in any way the least, Judd Walton, George and Vi Thompson, W. Stu Green, and finally his wife Ida James, without whose help he never would have been able to keep up the pace.

STRIKES AND ILLNESS CUT RANKS OF CONVENTION STARS

The major airline strike raised considerable hobb with the travel schedules of all out-of-town artists playing for conventioneers, in either their arrivals or departures.

Bryan Rodwell was stopped short by a shipping strike which paralyzed passenger liners leaving London. Even if the well known British organist had taken a plane he would have gotten only as far as New York due to the subsequent airline strike.

John Muri, scheduled for stints at both the Oriental 3-13 Wurlitzer and Bill Blunk's 5-24 Marr and Colton, never got out of Detroit although he kept in touch with non-striking carriers in hopes of a cancellation over the four days.

Leonard MacClain bowed out earlier due to illness so he was spared the almost impossible chore of obtaining air passage from Philadelphia to Portland.

Don Baker and Mildred Alexander arrived before the strike hit but were due in Chicago the day after their respective concerts to concertize for the brand of electronic with which they are affiliated at the big event of the musical instrument maker's year, the National Association of Music Manufacturers' Convention. Don Baker got passage at seven the morning following his concert, after standing in line at the airport most of the night. And Miss Alexander was seen heel-and-toeing in spiked heels on a Hammond at the NAMM bash although how she made it is something of a mystery.

Most artists cancelled in time for the Convention Committee to make other arrangements. However, John Muri tried to book passage right up to the last moment and thus created something of a "cliffhanger." The artist vacuum was filled when Dick Schrum was corralled by the Committee and told that he had just "volunteered" to sit in for Muri at the largest console ever made by Marr and Colton, Bill Blunk's 5-24,

theatre organ - bombarde