

BLOWERS GALORE
Stann Kann Mixes Pipes,
Pizza and Vacuum Cleaners
for Northern Calif. A. T. O. E.

The Northern California Chapter of ATOE conned Stan Kann, the popular St. Louis personality, into presenting a concert while in town for an appearance in San Francisco on the "Gypsy Rose Lee Show" this past August.

To those who had not been exposed to Stan, they didn't know what they were in for. As a matter of fact, neither did Stan. When approached about presenting a concert on the Wurlitzer at the Pizza Joynt in Hayward, California he remarked, "the what in where?"

To those who have never heard or seen Stan Kann perform, a brief explanation: Stan is the staff organist at the St. Louis Fox Theatre. He can be heard there three or four times daily playing the 4-36 "Crawford Special" Wurlitzer. He also conducts a show in St. Louis on the NBC affiliate, KSD-TV, called the Noon Show because it starts at 12 o'clock. In addition, he plays nightly in a St. Louis Italian eatery on his own Wurlitzer pipe job. Now if this were not enough, he collects vacuum cleaners. About 240 to date, a few of which he demonstrated to Johnny Carson on the "Tonight" show last June. Immediately after Stan's appearance on the "Tonight" show, Johnny Carson left for a six week recovery period. With all this in mind, you might realize why absolutely no one was quite sure what was going to happen at the Pizza Joynt when Stan Kann took over.

First, the afternoon affair began with the showing of the film made from Stan's appearance on the "Tonight" show. Visualize the sight of a room full of organ buffs sitting in a place which serves pizza and beer and a beautiful white 3 manual console placed to the right and viewing a television film of a guy demonstrating vintage vacuum cleaners on a Sunday afternoon. That was the setting for Stan Kann's pipe organ debut in Northern California.

Stan Kann's performance was one which thoroughly delighted his audience. His style is quite different from the majority of organists who have concertized in this area. His knowledge of the theater pipe organ is easily recognized and he exploited the orchestral qualities of the organ extremely well without making the organ sound like a calliope.

After his opening selection, "This Could Be the Start of Something Big," he went into a medley from "Sound of Music." For this he almost received a standing ovation and from that point to the conclusion of the program he could do no wrong in the eyes and ears of the audi-

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JUST LIKE A MINIATURE ORGOBLO — Note the "are you for real?" expression on guest Jane Van Austin's face as Stan points toward the "reservoir" and skeptical Gypsy Rose is left holding the bag.



VACUUM CLEANERS EVERYWHERE! The hostess tries vainly to understand a guy who collects vintage vacuum cleaners as a hobby and makes his living operating another air-driven device in the St. Louis Fox—a 36-rank Wurlitzer. It happened during the "Gypsy Rose Lee Show" which originated at a San Francisco TV station. Stan Kann looks quite self-satisfied and well he might be; on the previous day he had won the acclaim of the Northern California ATOE chapter with a fine performance at the "Pizza Joynt" 3-12 Wurlitzer.

ence. For the remainder of the afternoon he was continually coming up with new sounds from the instrument, some many had never heard before from the Pizza Joynr Wurlitzer. Midway through the concert he conducted one of those "tour through the organ stops." He got lost! After all, how many second touch stop-keys activate color wheels?! The program consisted of a wide variety of selections running the gamut from "Alley Cat" to a progressive "Sophisticated Lady" to a sparkling treatment of the music from "My Fair Lady." His program was described by one as "a breath of fresh air."

Stan is a most marvelous comedian. It should also be mentioned that Stan's virtue lies in the fact that he is a fine musician first, a comedian second. He does not attempt to hide his musical ability behind a shield of comedy. If you want to see Stan in action, look for him on the "Gypsy" show, at the Fox St. Louis and also he will be making an appearance on the "Pruitts of Southampton" with (get this!) Phyllis Diller. Don't be surprised about the organ you see him playing. It may be a vacuum cleaner.

*Allen White, Chairman
Northern Calif. Chapter*

Lowell Ayars Thrills Audience

by Alan Schmidt

An astonishing variety of sounds, effects, tempos, registrations and musical eras were created for an appreciative attendance of 300 theatre organ buffs at the Skatehaven Roller Rink, Lackawanna, N. Y., on Monday, June 27th.

While nearly every theatre organist of repute can be credited with technical proficiency, a wide repertoire and a good grasp of an organ stoplist, these are only parts of Mr. Ayars assets. He displayed the most fundamental talent of all — a solid musicianship, best exemplified by a virtuoso rendition of the J. S. Bach "Prelude and Fugue in E Minor."

Mr. Ayars had prepared a lengthy program, ranging from Broadway Show Tunes by Berlin, Porter and Gershwin to "Movie Cathedral" standards such as "Dizzy Fingers" and "In a Monastery Garden." Of special delight was the hilarious arrangement of "The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down." His several encores included the nostalgic newsreel march, "The Eyes and Ears of the World."

It is much to the credit of the Niagara Frontier Chapter that the fine old Wurlitzer was brought to peak condition for this excellent program. We anxiously look forward to future performances by Mr. Ayars, perhaps at the soon-to-be renovated Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

HAPPY HOOSIERS TAKE REVERSE ROUTE

Install Organ in Theatre

Eight Central Indiana Chapter members in the Indianapolis area are the owners of theatre organs, four perking and four being readied. One of the more recent to acquire a pipe job was Tom Ferree who talked a Terre Haute Tabernacle out of a Louisville "Uniphone" theatre pipe organ — with the help of some money, of course. Tom later learned that he'd beat the junk man by only a few days. With the assistance of several chapter members, the organ was removed from the Tabernacle and after much cleaning and refinishing, arrangements were made to install the 8-ranker in the Rivoli theatre in Indianapolis, in chambers which once boasted a Barton. It's a neighborhood house which operates only on weekends so the work crews organized among the Indianapolis have weekday evenings to get the organ ready for an opening set for October 15. A concert and silent movie is planned. Naturally, there is much curiosity about this offbrand instrument. It may be the only one in captivity.



★
Tom Ferree,
"Uniphonist"
★

Theatre owner Forest Kraning has been most helpful and welcomes the idea of having ATOE Chapter events at the Rivoli in the future. Meanwhile the chapter meets as often as possible at the Paramount theatre in Anderson where members Lew Hodson and Rex Hoppes rebuilt the 3-7 Page (recently recorded by John Landon, Ed.). This Page is used often during intermissions and has aroused much favorable audience comment.

A joint meeting with an AGO Chapter has been arranged for March '67 stanza at the Rivoli. This could be one of the Chapter's most exciting programs.

—from material submitted
by Neil V. Dykins,
Chapter Chairman

Dunstedter Recuperating

Burbank, Calif., July 22 — Organist Eddie Dunstedter was in surgery for five hours today at St. Joseph's Hospital. It was his second trip to the hospital, the first being for ulcers. This time the operation was to correct progressive circulatory trouble which had handicapped Eddie's legs during most of 1966. An examination last week resulted in the grave decision to operate, otherwise amputation later was a distinct possibility. This morning Eddie waved to wife Vee and to his children, Eddie Jr. and daughter, Mrs. Jack Sauer, and was wheeled off to surgery.

Late in the afternoon it was known that the operation had been a success. The vein-scraping caper had saved Eddie's legs. He said he felt the first pulsebeat in his "gambi" in many a week. However, his recuperation may take a long time.

NEW JERSEY THEATRE CELEBRATES

On May 25, 1966, the Broadway Theatre in Pitman, New Jersey, celebrated its 40th anniversary. It was a private party to which the May, town officials, civic organizations, service clubs, and businessmen and their wives were invited. The festivities started with Lowell Ayars of Bridgeton, New Jersey, taking over the Kimball 3/8 with lively tunes from the Twenties — "Desert Song," "Carolina in the Morning," "Carolina Moon," "Ain't She Sweet" and many more delightful tunes. Esther Higgins of Collingswood, New Jersey, took over the console doing "Tip-Toe Through the Tulips," "When the Red, Red Robin," "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," "In the Good Old Summer Time," "Student Prince," "Thanks For the Memory," "Anniversary Waltz," and "Auld Lang Syne." George Miller of Philadelphia, house organist, took over and played until picture time. George did an outstanding arrangement of "Me and My Shadow." After the movie, a delectable buffet was served on the balcony in the large lobby. The organists took another turn at the Kimball. Owner Ralph Wilkins was highly pleased with his anniversary party and said, "We have many, many converts to our organ." It is interesting to note that lots of big stars played Vaudeville here at the old Broadway years ago including Bob Hope. This exquisite little theatre is the last remaining of a chain of six throughout South Jersey owned by Mr. Wilkins. The organ is played every Saturday evening between shows and is in excellent condition due to George Miller and David Miller.