



Readers are encouraged to submit interesting sidelights on the organ hobby (exclusive of chapter news items), material they believe will be of general interest about local organ activities and installations and the people who work at the hobby. We know "there's VOX POPS in them there chapters" and it only requires a 5c postcard to get it to The BOMBARDE, Box 5013 Bendix Station, North Hollywood, Calif. 91605.

Theatre organ buffs in the Rochester, N. Y., area were treated to a rare film sequence on a recent Jack Douglas TV travelogue. As part of a "pot luck" tour of the United States, a sequence filmed in the Leon Berry residence in Chicago concentrated on what was appropriately described as "The Beast in the Basement." The film showed Berry as he demonstrated the various effects of his Wurlitzer, some original, others of his own ingenuity. The three-manual console, toy counter and pipe chambers were adequately shown as organ music played in the background.

An ATOE member who thinks young is Dan Barton. Dan is currently recovering from a combination of ills. The famed organ builder will be 85 years young on May 30th (also Memorial Day). No one in the trade has devoted more loving care to the theatre organ than Dan. It has been his life. So, let's all send him birthday cards timed to reach him on May 30th. His address is 736 Scott Avenue, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901.

Remember Milton Charles who once played the big Wurlitzer in the Philly Mastbaum theatre, and also taught at a school for theatre organists and broadcast from Chicago? (We still have a Columbia "78" of Milton playing on a practice organ in the Gunn School of Organ, Chicago). In Hollywood he's now playing a Rodgers plug-in on a syndicated TV game show called "Beat the Odds." The show is taped on Fridays (several stanzas at a time) and

often runs over the scheduled time. Sitting in for Milton at his posh beaery job at the Toluca Lake (Calif.) "Kings Arms" is his regular "night off" relief organist, Harry Jenkins. Harry opens and plays the Hammond spinet, conducts sing-alongs, and acknowledges requests until Milton shows up.



BOB GARRETSON, PIZZA SALESMAN—He found the 2-7 quite different from the Gulbrandsen plug-ins he has been playing. Note percussions mounted high on the wall beyond the console.

Speaking of relief organists (the name given the guy who played the 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. "supper show" to give the guy who had been playing since noon a chance to recover for the long night shift), the recently opened "Monk's Musical Pizza" in Covina, Calif. is currently enjoying the music of Bob Garretson at the 2-7 Wurlitzer. Bob is sitting in for regular organist Bud Taylor, while Bud is recovering from a siege of illness. Bob pointed out that we goofed slightly in listing the stops of the Wurlitzer "style 170." In the theatre, it was equipped with a Trumpet, Diapason, Vox, Flute and Dulciana. It still has all of those plus an added Tibia Clausa. When we described it we slipped in a non-existent string and omitted the Diapason. Actually it needs such a string because the Dulciana, while "stringy," is very soft and easily lost under more powerful stops. Incidentally, the Brass Trumpet has replaced the original Trumpet and gives a bright reed sound for solos and riffs. A Clarinet is still to be added. It was a Saturday night and Bob was playing such requests as "William Tell Overture" and selections from "Carmen" for a delighted, mostly juvenile audience which finds the windblown box "groovy."

The San Diego Fox theatre was scheduled to hold its first public concert on the restored 4-31 Robert Morton on March 25 with a concert, sing-along and silent feature ("The Mark of Zorro" starring Douglas Fairbanks) with veteran console entertainer-star Gaylord Carter doing the initial honors. In preparation for the event, the Morton's manuals were rearranged so



Dick Lewis — a "digger"

accompaniment could be played on the bottom manual (it was originally an orchestral manual with solo stops) and the console was moved from the left side to the center of the pit. The "magnificent seven" organ restorers were digging a pit furiously as we went to press in a valiant attempt to get the console elevator (moved from another theatre) installed in time to hoist Gaylord and console up into the spotlight. According to C. R. Lewis, spokesman for the group, the theatre handled all promotion for the concert. The Carter performance is the first in a series of concerts by top artists which the Fox plans to spotlight during the year. The possibility of concerts by George Wright and Eddie Dunstetter loomed brightly as we neared our April issue deadline.

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The working crew charged with the task of installing the LA chapter's 3-14 Wurlitzer in the San Gabriel civic auditorium, enjoyed a rare treat just before the existing Aeolian classic organ was turned off prior to removal. The group's technical advisor dropped by to see how restoration work is going on the Wurli, and Irving Cosgrove invited him to try out the Aeolian before they turned off the power. Later, foreman Neal Kissel said that it was quite something to hear George Wright going to town on about 20 ranks of straight organ. Although it had to go to make room for the Wurli, the future doesn't look dark for the 2-deck Aeolian; it has been purchased by the originator of weird audio effects ("Mood Synthesizer,") for films, organist Paul Beaver.

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There is quite a difference in space requirements between a low pressure instrument and a theatre organ; although the Aeolian has about 25 percent more pipework than the Wurlitzer, it required far less space. Therefore the chambers are small and getting the Wurli in may be a tight squeeze. Irving Cosgrove has already volunteered to serve as "shoehorn dispenser." Our Irving Cosgrove (we last saw him dozing beneath the console at the Elks Temple Morton on page 6 of the Feb. '68 issue) — the "Gunga Din" of the shoe horn!

From Britain we learn that the ex-Trocadero theatre organ, owned by the Cinema Organ Society and being installed in a town hall for safe keeping, had a close call when the building caught fire in the area where the chambers had been built to house the Wurlitzer's pipework. Luckily, no organ parts had been moved into the new chambers but the damage to the building has set the installation project back months, while the structure damage is repaired.

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Also from England (via Ian Sutherland, Editor of the Cinema Organ Society Newsletter) comes the news that British organ fans are hopping sore about the dearth of T.O. music and BBC airwaves. Ian writes, "We are going through the worst period we have ever had for organ broadcasts on the BBC. Therefore, one of our members has decided to organize a massive nationwide petition to the BBC for the reinstatement of organ broadcasts — whole programmes devoted to theatre organ. He aims to collect at least 100,000 signatures." This was the result of the BBC cutting down to two organ selections in each broadcast day. They still have it better than USAers with few exceptions, US radio station policy is "no theatre pipe organ" — although they allow plug-ins when used in combos. Wonder what effect a petition with 100,000 signatures would have on, say, one of the "top 40" type of "rock" stations? Even two theatre organ tunes a day would be a luxury on this side of the pond.

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We note that at last the music of Chic Herr at the Lamplighter Inn Kimball, Olmsted Falls, Ohio, has been grooved and is available by mail. We would like to make one small correction in our reviewers observations: it's a 3-11, not a 3-10. It was originally installed in the Variety theatre in nearby Cleveland and has been entertaining Lamplighter guests since 1958.

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A "floater" giving the "coming events" scheduled for San Francisco's Avenue theatre for March was loaded with goodies, including Gaylord Carter doing his thing (March 16) at the 3-14 Wurlitzer while his venerable prop, "The Gold Rush," cavorted about the screen, all for ATOE's NorCalChaps. Later, the house showed some rarely seen silent films, some dating from 1903. Among full-length features shown were "The Cat and the Canary" (mystery melodrama) and D. W. Griffith's "Orphans of the Storm" (historical drama). Console chores were divided among proprietor Vern Gregory, Bob Vaughn and a newcomer

named Gee Robinson who, stated the floater, is a former chief organist at radio station WMCA, New York, and a former staffer at the New York "Roxie" (sic), San Franciscans are indeed fortunate to have this facility in their midst. There's nothing quite like it West of the New York Beacon theatre.

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The Beacon was doing fine in the nostalgia department, too. They made contact with former film star Buddy Rogers and a raft of Mary Pickford films (she's Mrs. Rogers). Their 2-night stand was on Feb. 24 and 25. It included Buddy's commentaries on the Pickford films shown, some musical reminiscences (Buddy was a top dance band leader at one point in his career), Lee Erwin at the 3-19 Wurlitzer, a Pickford documentary film and a remembered Pickford-Rogers feature, "My Best Girl" with a musical score composed and played by Lee Erwin. It was a production of the New York Theatre Organ Society which is like saying "New York Chapter, ATOE."

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Bill Wright, organist-manager at the New Eastland theatre in West Covina, Calif., must hold some kind of a record for "stick-at-it-iveness." Except for vacations and a month in a sling with a broken hip, Bill has been playing organ in theatres without pause since 1921! When silent movies went down the drain, Bill went into the management end of the theatre business, being careful to be assigned to houses with organs. After a fruitful career with the Midland and Loew's circuits in Missouri and Kansas, Bill came to California and spent the next 20 years (1943 to 1963) managing the Raymond (now Crown) theatre in Pasadena and playing its 3-11 Wurlitzer. Now he's playing a Conn theatre plug-in during intermissions at the Eastland. In fact, Bill just released his first recording. It is played on the Conn theatre model.

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Bay area organists Bud Iverson & Pliny Allen almost opened up their new Conn store in Oakland—right next door to the Allen Organ Co. showroom. What a chance they missed! They coulda put up a sign "Allen Organ Co. —Main Entrance."

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Dave Junchen's pipe organ service in Sherrard, Illinois, is a going concern, thanks partly to many theatre organ installations which the young organ expert has undertaken. Besides the 4-25 Wurlitzer he's set up in Stan Todd's Shady Nook restaurant (near Cincinnati), he has agreed to install a Wurlitzer church organ (opus 2100) in the Caneva home at Lockport, Illinois,

a 4-28 Wurlli on the west coast and a 3-17 Wurlli in the midwest. Then there's Kay McAbee's studio organ which he works on in his "spare time" (it's about 80 percent complete) and he hopes to assemble a church organ for himself. As Dan Barton once described the heavy demands of several simultaneous organ contracts, "I was desperate with success!" Hi, Dave!

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A prominent Syracuse, N.Y. architectural firm has been asked to investigate the possibility of developing a year-round museum at the nearby N.Y. State Fair grounds.

The study is directed toward the future of the Empire State Theatre and Musical Instruments Museum organization, the group formed around the ex-Keith's 3-11 Wurlitzer now installed in a building on the fair grounds. Fair Director Bernard W. Potter believes expanded museum facilities would bring more people to the Fair and help make it a true showcase of New York State.

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The Syracuse ESTMIM group enjoyed a rare treat on March 8th when Don Baker sat his tall frame down at the 3-11 Wurlitzer-on-the-Fairgrounds and gave one of those performances he's been thrilling generations of organ fans with since silent movie days. A Baker program is a series of moods quite unlike anything else in the annals of organ music. Don wasn't disappointed that he didn't receive any birthday cards this year. He isn't expecting a birthday until Feb. 29, 1972.

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Nov. 21, 1968, was a "red letter" day for New South Wales division of the theatre Organ Society of Australia. The club held its opening concert on its very own 3-10 Wurlitzer, which was relocated from Sydney's Prince Edward theatre (the steel ball was hovering) to a more secure berth in the nearby Marrickville Town Hall. It was a gala occasion and a number of Australia's fine organists played during the first set of concerts. Among them were Ian Davies and Charles Tuckwell. But it was a time of deep emotion and good spirits for Noreen Hennessy when she stepped to that very familiar console after the official opening by the mayor of Marrickville. It was quite fitting that Noreen should be chosen to play the first selections on the rescued organ; she had played it daily for 20 years (1944 to 1964) at the Prince Edward. Now the beloved instrument was safe and Noreen opened with a triumphant "El Relicario."

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TOSA's opener at Marrickville had a purpose beyond saving theatre or-

gans. The proceeds went to the Children's Medical Research Foundation which investigates unsolved medical problems of childhood. We haven't said it for some time, but we repeat a long-standing observation: one meets the most wonderful people in the theatre organ hobby!

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While visiting England Dick Simon-ton was able to tape record an interview with some of the knowledgeable residents who live at Birkenhead where Robert Hope-Jones constructed the organ which has since become known as "H-J No. 1," the initial electro-pneumatic organ with some of the then new Hope Jones developments in organ voices. Dick loaned it for playback at the LA chapter's recent "ATOE 14th Anniversary" celebration.

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There's a wonderful spirit abroad among Detroit Theater Organ Clubbers. The Senate Theater, which houses their 4-34 Wurlitzer, recently suffered some water damage. The only way we knew about it was because of the brief letters accompanying voluntary "repair" contributions of \$25 and \$40 published in the DTOC Newsletter. The damage didn't silence the Wurlitzer and during late February the members enjoyed concerts by youthful Maureen Lyon, wonderful Don Miller and handsome Lee Erwin, with Ray Bohr set for April 26 and Ann Leaf for May 24. A livewire organization.

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George Wright was set to return to the 4-22 Wurlitzer in the Auditorium Theatre for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society on April 19 and in May Ann Leaf would play for RTOS. They had a good session with Lee Erwin in March. Something of a concert circuit seems to be developing among many in-demand organists.

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Bill Field and Bill Coffman, the Los Angeles lads who maintained a mighty Wurlitzer in an ex-woodcarving shop for many years, have found a home for their slumbering giant in a dormant El Segundo theatre. When the racial unrest of 1965 threatened their 4-20-plus mostly Wurlitzer in the woodcarving shop, they regretfully removed it and put it in storage. Thus their continuing program of making pipe addicts of those whose exposure to organ had been through loudspeakers came to a temporary halt. They had conducted regular Sunday afternoon demo-concert sessions, aimed especially at members of plug-in dealers' clubs, ever since they completed the woodcarver installation in the early '60s.

Now they'll be able to do it again, when the organ is installed in the former Star Theatre in El Segundo,

Calif., a short distance from Los Angeles. They've taken a 10-year lease on the dark theatre and work is well underway.

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In Van Nuys, Calif., organist Randy Sauls was dourly celebrating his second year with a broken neck. Actually, it had to be "rebroken" when the first knit didn't take properly. It all started when Randy was involved in an auto mishap back in 1966. He says, "Some part of me — mostly my neck — has been in some sort of sling ever since." But that doesn't stop the stream of "Golden Era" remembrances of Randy's vast repertoire. This time he recalled his 1930 sojourn at the Capitol Theatre in Miami, Florida. The style D Wurlitzer console was so beat and bruised that the manager hired some decorators to make it presentable under the spotlight. When Randy saw the results, he couldn't believe his eyes. The workmen had built a fiberboard cover around the console and given it a wild green, blue and gold treatment. To top it off, they had added a novel trim, green neon tubing framing the entire visible side of the little console. Randy marched up to the manager's office to sound off, but the obvious enthusiasm of the boss silenced his planned outburst. "Just think on the marquee — 'RANDY SAULS AT THE NEON ORGAN!'" And now they use that same neon to key plug-ins. Prophetic? No — just coincidence.

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Pearl White reports that her December concert in Chicago's Patio Theatre "went smoothly — no upside-down slides and nary a cipher from the 3-17 Barton." Pearl ran the gamut for her enthusiastic audience with silent movies, a sing-along and a wealth of musical memories. One other thing; Pearl wants it known that she never starred in that classic serial cliff hanger, "The Perils of Pauline." Must have been another Pearl.

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Former ATOE national "Prez," Dick Schrum is set to play a stanza on the 4-22 Wurlitzer for that lively bunch of Rochesterians on February 15th. Besides his RTOS concert in the East, there's a Hammond X-66 disc for Concert Recording in the mill and also plans being made for a platter played on the big Seattle Paramount Wurlitzer. Between times there's that "gin mill" X-66. Looks as though the ex-Pres is moving right along.

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A group of amateur filmmakers shot a movie of the interior of the Oriental Theatre in Portland, Oregon, when there was some doubt as to the future of the house. They named it "Before the Dark," anticipating that the steel

ball might be around the corner. But the house was saved by becoming a commercial movie house. In the film, the camera wanders about the bizarre interior of the super-gaudy house while a voice on the soundtrack interviews, among others, Glenn Shelley, the organist who opened the theatre in the '20s. They even restaged the "opening" of the theatre and the only giveaway is the different types of glasses people wear now. Seen are the strange "oriental" statues, the many-hued curtain design, and the console of the 3-13 Wurlitzer which was restored by ATOEer Dennis Hedberg.

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Up in Yakima, Wash., ATOEer Bob Wilson did some travelling during his vacation. In Salt Lake City, he visited Larry Bray's Organ Loft. Bob reports that the console has been repainted in purple, lined with gold and "is quite a sight." Larry was most co-operative in demonstrating the various traps and percussions and he played a piece for his guest. In Bozeman, Montana, Bob dropped in at the Ellen Theatre where there is a 2-7 Wurlitzer. The manager was out of town, so didn't get to hear the instrument, but did see the console during intermission. In Eugene, Oregon, Bob visited ATOE member, Ed Maas, a true theatre organ enthusiast as well as a steam railroad lover. In Ed's basement, the 3-9 Wurlitzer is the center of attraction. The entire end of the chamber is hinged and swings open, allowing easy access to the pipework and percussions. A new addition to the organ is a roll player, mounted in a recess in the wall near the console. It uses regular piano rolls or the rolls now made by Kimball for their player organs, writes Bob.

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In Riverside, Calif., organ fan Ron Mitchell was moving his 6-rank theatre organ (mostly Wurlitzer) from his parents' home in Arlington to his own pad in Riverside, after setting up two chambers to receive more of the ranks he has accumulated, with a probable top of 12 sets. Ron is remembered as the lad who did so much to get the 2-8 Wicks in the Orange Theatre, Orange, Calif., going after the years and vandals had taken their toll.

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We have learned that the "H-B-G Enterprises" which staged the highly successful John Muri and earlier Bill Dalton concerts at Loew's Ohio Theatre in Columbus (4-22 Morton) consists of ATOEers Tom Hamilton, Frank Babbitt and Neil Grover. The shows were held under the H-B-G banner and were not Central Ohio Chapter-sponsored, as a number of correspondents assumed. Hope that clears up the sponsorship question.

Need a brand new bass drum action, surf or wind machine, shuffle effect — or even a complete toy counter, ready to wire in? Then ATOEr Bruce E. LeBarron is your man. His shop is in Lakeville P. O. (Lime Rock RFD), Connecticut (06039), and he has a goodly supply of used organ parts to browse through in his little shop behind the Rectory. Yes, Rev. Bruce is an organ enthusiast in his spare time, his first duty being to the Boss. But being a working pastor only seems to whet his interest in pipes — no, not THAT kind — theatre pipes. His specialty is building exact replicas of theatre organ effects and percussion actions. He even has a brochure which a business envelope, stamped (6c) and addressed, will fetch.

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While we're on the subject of stamped (6c), self-addressed envelopes, here's another goody which such an object will secure. Send a standard business-size envelope to Carsten Henningsen, Ye Olde Pizza Joynt, 19510 Hesperian Blvd., San Lorenzo, Calif. 94541. Henningsen, masterminder of the famous "dough and Wurlitzer" establishment, is handing out beautiful color brochures to customers covering the story of the 3-12 theatre organ, from movie house to Joynt. He's willing to mail one to anyone who sends him an envelope with "I read about the brochure in the BOMBARDE" written on the back.

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In Cinnaminson, New Jersey, Jim Carter reveals that he has completed installation of seven of a proposed 17-rank T.O. installation in his home. He says that the organ has no "home ground." It's built from Wurlitzer parts from all over the U. S. A.

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Each year Christmas cards continue to pour in "from the four corners" all through January. We can't possibly acknowledge them all but we TO-B staffers are most grateful for the remembrances. Easily the most novel card this year came from Britisher Michael Candy. On his card was mounted a 3x4" set of 8 postage stamp-size photos showing progress made in his Opus 1199 2-8 Wurlitzer home installation. There's Mike pouring foundation, Mike laying bricks, and Mike hoisting roofing timber. A man of many talents. And the specially designed building is well along.

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Remember who played B. F. Keith's theatre Wurlitzer in Grand Rapids, in the old days? One of the most prominent was Russell Thrall. We have located him and a story is in the mill.

DISC SQUEALS



WOW, WHAT A SOUND! Eddie Dunstedter and TOB Associate Editor Peg Nielsen react to a particularly bright passage heard during the mastering of Eddie's forthcoming "your request" platter. Location is the Sunset Recording Studio in Hollywood.

Eddie Dunstedter's forthcoming recording for an independent label will present the "Fast Freight" Eddie, the organist whose radio programs gave the theatre organ a nation-wide status over coast-to-coast radio links in the '20s and '30s. It's solo organ, with no assists from additional instrumentalists or rhythm sections. About two years ago we published an invitation to readers to send in requests for the numbers they would most like to hear Eddie play. This recording — "Eddie Dunstedter Plays Requests" — is the result. It is played on the 4-15 Robert Morton in the Carl Greer Inn, Sacramento, Calif., an instrument on which Eddie is able to recreate the characteristic "Dunstedter sound" of his broadcasts on Wurlitzers and Kilgens. Fans selected some old favorites associated with Eddie's illustrious musical past, some more recent ones and some show tunes. Included also are medleys from "Porgy and Bess" and "Kismet" and such singles as "Girl from Ipanema," "Holiday for Strings" and "Bali Hai." Of special interest is Eddie's first recorded grand opera selection, Wagner's "Pilgrim's Chorus." For the old timers Eddie has included his radio theme, "Open Your Eyes" and for the "now generation," a rocking "Can't Take My Eyes Off You." Watch for the release date in this column . . .



Chuck Davis — his organ records are something else.

Record producer Chuck Davis, who released the current 21-year-old Ken Wright 4-14 Kilgen record, operates in an area of the organ recording field which makes

his output immune to the fickle fingers of temporary popularity, distribution problems and retail sales.

He contracts with the manufacturers of hi-fi equipment to provide records to demonstrate and help sell phonos and components. He has developed a talent for picking tunes and musical arrangements which tend to cause a potential buyer to reach for his checkbook when Chuck's records are heard on the floor model. Much to our chagrin, Chuck informs us that some tunes on our "index expurgatorius musica" (over-recorded, over-exploited tunes) such as "Somewhere My Love," "Winchester Cathedral," "Alley Cat," "Exodus," "Laura," and "Born Free," for example, tunes no organist depending on popular sales could wisely risk now, are top-pers for clinching sales among prospects giving a phono a listening test.

Not organ hobbyists, we assume . . . "Mastering" is the word used to describe the various processes (e.g. equalizing, dubbing, transferring sound to stamper disc) performed to process a recorded tape to a pressing ready to seal into its jacket. Bill L. Robinson has been doing just that for Hollywood branches of major record companies (e.g. Capitol) for 20 years and likes to tackle the special problems of organ records (he mastered the aforementioned Dunstedter disc). Bill explains that the "rasp," which distorts the sound of far too many current recordings, is caused by a combination of too-heavy modulation (volume) and too many grooves to the inch. High modulation is desirable within reason (the limit being the point at which the grooves overlap) to reduce surface noise and electronic "hiss" (white noise), but too many grooves to the inch is the result of trying to get too much music on a side. The cutting needle excursion caused by the ample bass of the organ makes fewer grooves and carefully controlled volume maximums both "musts." . . . Do people read jacket notes which accompany records? Some apparently do not, judging from the comments of a few Concert Recording customers who complained about the "canned applause" following most selections on Billy Nalle's "Wizard of Organ" release (see FOR THE RECORDS). Had they but consulted the jacket notes they would know those selections were recorded during live concerts. There's no delaying applause from a theatrefull of live-wire organ enthusiasts when they're hearing music that turns them on. Read the notes, folks!

— Elmer Fubb