



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.

Dave Vuckson reports from Toronto that the Loew's theatres there (2 walk-ins and a drive-in) were sold last summer to 20th Century theatres for \$2,300,000. Both walk-ins are long organless and one has undergone an identity-erasing facelift. Loew's 2,200-seat Uptown, long regarded as one of Canada's cinema palaces, closed on Labor Day. When it reopens around Christmas time it will be four theatres — 900, 600, 400 and 180 seaters, respectively. The present balcony now comprises the 900 seat auditorium and the 400 and 600 seat art houses occupy the main floor. The backstage area is the 180-seater.



Colin Corbett takes a bow. He plays one of the most recently-built theatre organs. Hilgreen-Lane built it for the Toronto Odeon-Carlton Theatre opening in 1949. Photo by Dave Vuckson

Toronto has some theatres left — the Odeon-Carlton with its 3/19 Hilgreen-Lane organ played (on a reduced schedule of late) by Colin Corbett, the caver-

nous Imperial where the 4/28 Warren organ is still undergoing rehabilitation, Loew's (at Yonge & Queen) and the old Loew's Wintergarden above it, dusty, intact and dormant since the late '20s when the advent of "talkies" closed it. Progress!!!!

Journalist Lyle Nash, author of our HOLLYWOOD CAVALCADE feature, reminds us that the column in this issue is the twenty-fifth in the popular series. Lyle, who is a working journalist involved in both the daily printed word and radio, reports a rising influx of mail concerning the silent film stars he writes about for us. It comes from all over. For example, Wisconsin, New York, Nevada, Washington, Ohio, Massachusetts, Maine and Canada.

Like most pipe enthusiasts he had always wanted his own windjammer. He spent many years of his youth taking good care of other people's pipes, but that was no substitute for owning one's own. The longing just wouldn't go away; he kept track of every possible "candidate" and he knew of some which no one else seemed aware of in the Los Angeles area. Being a sharp pipe sleuth finally paid off for Mike Cahill. Several years ago he got wind of a 7-rank Wurlitzer in a Temple City (Calif.) Mormon church and arranged a stakeout with a member of the congregation to warn him of any developments concerning the organ. It happened in October. Mike was informed that there were plans to replace the pipes with an Allen plug-in. So Mike scooped up his life savings and made for Temple City. The tariff wasn't as stiff as he had expected and by now the instrument has been removed and put in storage. Next Mike had to face up to the problems which confront all buffs who choose to wrestle with such an unwieldy monster. "Now that I've got it, where the dickens am I going to install it?" wailed a happy Mike Cahill.

In Plattsburg, New York, Dick Weber was already planning for the April 25th 1970 concert, the first full concert to be scheduled in his Strand theatre since the organ was finished (although the organ has been included in many shows given in the house). He wants the spring concert to climax his 1969-70 series of special stage and screen shows and his silent films with organ, so he is starting early. One of the earliest things he did was to hire Billy Nalle to play the concert. So, the "Casa Cielo Kid" will once again fondle "Winifred the Wurlitzer." On two occasions Billy has extracted fine record albums from her now 25

ranks, so she should be a pushover for an outstanding concert.

With very little promotion, the Ken theatre in San Diego started a late summer series of silent movies-with-organ shows, with veteran silent film organist Chauncey Haines at the console. Haines has had considerable success presenting silent film shows on college campuses, notably UCLA. The roster of films consisted of rarely viewed treasures such as Buster Keaton's "Steamboat Bill", Harold Lloyd in "Never Weaken", Douglas Fairbanks in "Wild and Wooley" and Harry Langdon in "The Strong Man." A most promising series, yet it folded after a few programs. Why? Several factors probably contributed: wrong time of year, inadequate promotion, lack of the drawing power of a pipe organ (they used a 2-1 plug-in). Whatever the reason, it wasn't Haines' fault. He's remembered as one of the best of film cuers.

In Santa Fe, New Mexico, organ buff Ollie Betancourt thought it worth a try — just for the gag. He went to his favorite 31-flavor ice cream store and made a proposal: why not merchandise a five-flavor cone named "Quintadena?" The word has a nice ring and besides "quint" means five. He wasn't prepared for the favorable response. The manager liked it immediately, and he knew why; his name is "Quintana." Ollie left the manager figuring out which five flavors would make the best blend. He didn't have the heart to tell him that a Quintadena is an organ stop, and not an ice cream store manager.

Organists visiting the USA are usually quite adept at plugging their recordings. Vic Hammett's appeal to an American audience attending one of his "enroute to Australia" concerts was "Buy my record on the way out or I go to Australia as freight!" Homegrown talent is no less adept. Years ago John Seng with tears in his eyes, begged a West Coast audience, "Please — please buy my record — so my mother can quit her paper route!" John basked in the resulting publicity for several years — until his mother spilled the beans. Mrs. Seng turned out to be anything but the "paper route" type but she stated, with a twinkle in her eye, that "John never mentioned that I have a helper. His grandmother holds the bag while I toss 'em." Recent visitor Tony Fenelon took another approach to hawk his platters: "The extra 86 cents is for import tax. Be patriotic. Support your country! Buy my record!"

Probably the most elevation enjoyed by a console on a lift was until recently in the Auckland (New Zealand) Civic theatre. The 3/17 Wurlitzer console rode an elevator which shot it upward from the pit 37.5 feet, according to ship's officer Matt Matthews who helped maintain it until the owner sold the Wurli to a hobbyist who has since removed it. Matt, whose ship sometimes touches West Coast ports on days when there are pipe concerts ashore, was deeply and favorably impressed by Don Baker's performance at the Los Angeles Wiltern recently. But we forgot to ask him whether the hobbyist also took the 37.5-foot organ lift when he cleaned out the Civic's chambers.

A correspondent recalls organ solos and sing-alongs played by an Orville Jones at the Granada theatre in South Bend, Indiana, and wants to know where he is today. Perhaps a South Bender can supply some info on Mr. Jones and the Granada.



The Thomas "Trianon" — "a Robert Morton spinet with transistors!"

On October 3rd, the Thomas Organ Company unveiled its new 3-manual spinet in an "open house" at their Sepulveda, Calif., factory. The program featured a wide range of organists (Eddie Dunstedter, Byron Melcher, Ralph Wolf and Bill McCoy). The new model plug-in is definitely a step in the right direction — toward theatre organ styling, that is, to some extent in tonality but especially in the design of the console. One of the weaknesses of the current batch of horseshoe electronics is the shallow horseshoe featured on most brands. Not so the new "Trianon 606"; it's a very deep horseshoe, well-filled with stop keys. There are the usual staggered 44-note manuals but

the top manual is a Solo manual of 56 keys! This keyboard has a set of 10 one-at-a-time solo percussions and the middle manual may be coupled up to it. However, the thing which hits the seasoned organ buff immediately is the resemblance of that newly styled console to a three-manual Robert Morton keydesk with its deep horseshoe. The plug-in boys are catching on — slowly. But they are getting there!

However it wasn't the new spinet which made the pipe organ fans do an aural double take. During the program an entirely different sound was heard from offstage. The tune was Eddie Dunstedter's theme "Open Your Eyes," played the way only he can play it. Eddie was playing an experimental model, a prototype with switches where there should be stop keys, wires twisted together and generally rough looking to the eye. But to the ear it was a thing of beauty. Never before, said many present, had they heard a more pipelike Tibia sound. The effect has been developed by Thomas engineer Lee Sundstrom and you can bet the now thoroughly pipe-oriented Thomas crew will incorporate it in coming models at the first opportunity, even though that may be a couple of years away. Meanwhile, the "Robert Morton" — style Trianon could fill the gap.

In a recent column in one of the Boston papers, columnist Jim Morse had a kind word for ex-Boston theatre organist John Kiley. He said, "Of all the organists I've heard at sporting events around the country (either in person or on TV), John Kiley does the best job of all with the national anthem."

Clealan Blakely, Canada's No. 1 theatre organ enthusiast, recently visited the John Hays Hammond Museum in Gloucester, Mass., and while he didn't hear the famous organ because of the castle's being used for Otto Preminger's filming of "Tell Me That You Love Me, Junie Moon," Clealan did pick up a schedule of events for the remainder of the year. For three days in September, Lee Erwin was scheduled for "Movies of the Silent Era" with Rudolph Valentino. Another straight organ stronghold successfully assaulted by a theatre organist!

And yet another former theatre organist has joined the ranks of the ATOS. Eddie May, well-known console artist in Rochester during the golden days, and now "Mr. Music of Miami Beach", recently joined the

South Florida Chapter, after much needling by Old Prospector, Lloyd E. Klos.

The ex-Keith's 3/11 Wurlitzer from Syracuse, was a big feature at the New York State Fair during August. According to Paul Fleming, there were capacity shows, twice a night to see silent movies with organ accompaniment by Carleton James and John Harris. Sing-alongs wound up each program, and audiences were most enthusiastic. The organ was also featured in September when Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets from the 50 states were guests.

According to Paul Fleming, a slave console, formerly a part of Link organ No. 646, is now being installed. Charlie Schubert and Tom Anderson are assisting Paul in this task, and though no additional pipe ranks are being planned, an upright converted player piano, donated by Dr. Warren Heller of Ogdensburg, will be added shortly.

Dick Kline, Jr., former ATOE director, reports from his Frederick, Maryland home that he has 24 of 28 ranks of his big Wurlitzer playing. Says "it's a pretty good sound". Dick is fortunate in that the power line of the former Hagerstown & Frederick inter-urban railway runs through the back lot, and he merely had to tap it for his electric power.

Remember a few issues back when we left organist Dick Schrumm "speechless" in the Posthorn department when the owners came to remove the loaned pipes from the Seattle Paramount, while Dick was involved with a record? The big Wurli remains without a Posthorn and with such a solid exponent of the Posthorn as John Seng signed for a Chapter concert, things looked desperate. Luckily, member Jim Coons came to the rescue with the loan of an exact replacement set of pipes which came from the old Seattle Coliseum theatre. The rank added some additional bite to the first midnight concert at the Paramount in years.

Dick Schrumm may be subjected to some "before and after" treatment with regard to coming record releases. Concert Recording is interested in releasing the recording of Dick's long ago concert on the 5th Avenue (Seattle) 4/15 Morton before it was moved south to become the main attraction at Sacramento's Carl Greer Inn. Now Carl Greer has told Dick that he can record at the Inn for an "after removal" release as a followup.

Lyn Larsen's long-anticipated return to Melbourne and the Dendy theatre Wurlitzer has materialized and he leaves January 1 for 11 weeks of "down under" hospitality.

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Hester Thorburn, former organist at the Stanley Warner Ohio theatre in Lima, Ohio, informs us that she's available for concerts, especially in the Illinois area. Hester is a veteran of many years experience in theatre, radio and television. Contact her at 730 West High Street, Lima, Ohio 45801.

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Late summer and fall were so loaded with fine concerts that we can just mention those which came to our attention briefly. August 9, Westcoaster Ralph Wolf at the Detroit TOC 4/34 Senate Wurlitzer; Sept. 23, Larry Ferrari for DTOC Sept. 27, Eddie Weaver for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society (4/22 Wurlt); Also Sept. 27, Lowell Ayars playing the 3/11 Wurlitzer of the Empire State Theatre and Musical Instrument Museum, Syracuse, N. Y.; October 4, Tony Fenelon plays for DTOC. He played concert pipes also for the Seattle and Los Angeles chapters and for the Hoosier theatre, Whiting, Indiana; October 9, Larry Vannucci at the Pizza Joynt 3/12 Wurlt in Hayward, Calif.; October 12, Dennis James at the New York Beacon theatre 4/19 Wurlitzer (ATOS); October 14, Billy Nalle plays an AGO-sponsored concert at the Canton Palace theatre (3/9 Kilgen); October 14, Gaylord Carter plays the 3/10 Barton in Detroit's Redford theatre (ATOS); October 17, Eddie Weaver at the New Haven, Conn., Paramount 3/10 Wurlitzer; October 21, Gaylord Carter plays the Tower theatre 4/17 Wurlitzer, Philadelphia; October 22, Lyn Larsen at the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Riviera theatre, No. Tonawanda, N. Y. (ATOS); October 25, Lyn Larsen plays the Detroit Senate Wurlitzer for DTOC; October 26, "Oktoberfest" for the ESTMIM group in Syracuse (3/11 Wurlt); Nov. 5, Dick Smith at the Hoosier theatre 3/11 Wurlt in Whiting, Ind.; Nov. 9, Lyn Larsen at the Old Town Theatre (Coffman & Field 4/24 Wurlt) for LA Chapter ATOS; Also Nov. 9, Jerry Mendelson at the Rahway theatre Wurlitzer (Rahway, New Jersey); Nov. 22, Ashley Miller for DTOC; Nov. 22, John Seng at the Seattle Paramount (ATOS); Dec. 9, Ashley Miller at the 4/20 Wurlt in the Oriental theatre, Chicago (ATOS). During this entire period, Shirley Hannum played almost daily intermissions on the 3/8 Kimball in the Lansdowne theatre, Lansdowne, Penna.



Directed by
Lyle W. Nash

CLOSEUP — Although his half century film career began in 1916, Edward (Jack) Earle is pleased that fans still remember his work. Earle, 85 on July 16 last, lives at 261 East 18th St., Costa Mesa, Calif., 92626. He began his screen work at Edison with Marc MacDermott. In 1924 he scored with a big role in Universal's "Jack and the Beanstalk." When he made 25 of the O. Henry stories into films he was a great favorite. Agnes Ayres played with him in that series. Then for nearly 40 years he appeared with every great cinema personality and worked for all the studios.

"SPENCER TRACY" by Larry Swindell (World) is best biography on a film character in years. Superb research, good index of 74 films covering 37 years and keen perception of the man make it choice reading.

REELING AROUND — Lillian Gish told us last month that she is pleased and surprised to see so many young people (18-34) turn out for her silent film lecture series . . . The Otto Krugers celebrated 50 years of togetherness last month proving that Hollywood marriages can and do endure . . . Singer Mel Torme is reported as owning prints of "Wings" and "Hell's Angels."

A READER wants to know if anyone out there remembers actor Malcolm Sabiston? Please advise us if you do.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS—"Jackie Coogan told newswriters his footprints at Grauman's Chinese have vanished. Is this true?" Coogan is not listed among 159 names in the official souvenir book. Historians report much trouble with the concrete slabs over the years and some prints might have been lost. I've looked over the prints many times and never found any for Coogan

. . . "No one in our cinema class could name two unknowns who became stars in their first film. Can you?" The catch word is "stars." Well, there was KOKO, the inkwell clown — Strongheart, and his successor, Rin-tin-tin — Donald Duck — KING KONG.

Guess we'll have to ask readers for names of humans who rose to stardom in one try.

IF YOU write to personalities care of the Screen Actor's Guild, 7750 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, Calif., 90046, be sure to list your return address on your first class letter. Many letters (they get thousands each week) must be returned.

WHO IS WHERE — Mrs. Thomas H. Ince, widow of the famed silent era producer, lives in Southern California . . . Kenneth Green, 61, one-time fat boy with film series "Rascals", died recently . . . People still ask whereabouts of Greta Nissen . . . Remember Butterfly McQueen as "Prissy" in "Gone With the Wind?" She lives at 241 Central Park North, New York, N. Y.

SILENT era film critics were less caustic than today but they did blast the 1927 films like this: "The mystery is why the picture was produced . . . You'll be bored to death . . . It will excite only the very naive . . . An uninteresting dish . . . A weepy story for soft-minded adults . . . If you can believe this, you can swallow anything . . . Not as bad as most . . . One of the dullest pictures of the year . . . Just as bad as it sounds . . . Forget that such a thing as this was ever produced . . . Not so much . . . Stay away . . . Blah."

AMATEUR researchers are sometimes better than the pro people. A labor of love can outshine the lure of the fast buck. In Los Angeles the Rev. H. K. Rasbach has spent nearly 20 years researching and interviewing every living person connected with Cecil B. DeMille's 1927 "King of Kings." His findings total 20,000 words. Plans for a book are unknown.

SAUL Kula of the American Film Institute reports that the 1926 Paramount epic, "The Vanishing American," has been given a new lease on life because a perfectly preserved print has been found. Expect to see the Richard Dix film in the years to come.

QUESTIONS, comments, contributions and corrections are welcomed to P. O. Box 113, Pasadena, California, 91102. And SEASONS' GREETINGS to all.