



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.

Colonel Harry Jenkins, our genial guide through the "Silent Movie Music" features, was having the time of his life last month doing the type of "close cueing" that is so dear to the heart of a former film accompanist. In effect, Colonel Harry ran off to join the circus — The DeWayne Bros. Circus touring West Coast towns and villages, not the big cities. Harry's job was to perform the duties of a circus band, using an ancient but well-amplified Hammond. It's a complete 2-ring circus, presented under a real "big top" tent. Harry says that it's like old times, following (and sometimes leading) two hours of jugglers, a trained dog act, aerialists, rope artists, trapeze artists, clowns, an elephant act and "Jargo" the ape impersonator, whose appearance and manner-



Colonel Jenkins and friend. Playing for the circus wasn't unlike cueing silent movies.

isms are so realistic that during one performance when he "broke loose" and ran into the audience to sling a confederate over his shoulder, a horrified lad, taking the whole bit seriously, stood up and planted a haymaker on the "ape's" jaw — knocking Jargo cold. The brave lad got a "hand" says Harry, but it sure scotched Jargo's performance.

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In Rahway, New Jersey, Rahway theatre manager Bob Balfour was having a problem early this year — not enough organists to keep his well-kept Wurlitzer audible at all intermissions, reports Eric Zeliff. He once had seven New York Chapterites rotating at the console but early this year he was down to four — Tim Hoag, Roy Sharp, Eric Zeliff and Jinny Vanore. But the faithful four were not always available and Bob knows only the "Paramount News" theme from memory. Rather than subject his paying customers to 15 minutes of that, Bob was increasingly forced to resort to records — which brought beefs from those patrons accustomed to hearing the organ. How to enlarge his circle of competent organist-enthusiasts was the manager's problem as we went to press.

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Rochester, N. Y. has a "new" theatre organ. Although it's a Rodgers 3-manual electronic, the installation has created much local interest through stories published in the daily press.

The alumni association of Charlotte High School worked for months to raise the \$7,000 necessary for the organ's purchase and installation.

On March 28, former movie organist, Margaret Culp Morrow, accompanied several silent comedies and a set of song slides. The audience, mainly teenagers and parents, was most enthusiastic, and plans are being discussed for a feature-length silent film presentation.

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The 3-19 Wurlitzer from the RKO-Albee theatre in Cincinnati has been removed to its new home, Emery Auditorium at the Ohio College of Applied Science. The Ohio Valley Chapter is directing the removal and restoration efforts under the supervision of Herbert Wottle and Bob Ridgeway. Emery Auditorium has two balconies and seats 2200 people.

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Former Ohio Valley Chapter Chairman Ed Wuest has been relocated from the Cincinnati area to Galion, Ohio. In the process of the big move Ed's 2-5 Wurlitzer pipe organ had to go. Gary Shipe of Athens, Ohio, is the proud new owner and he plans to install it in his new home now under construction in Akron, Ohio, in a 30' by 40' basement music room.

After seven years in storage, the former Oakland (Calif.) Fox 3-14 Wurlitzer was ready to play in the Shingletown, California, home of its purchaser, John Leininger, who reports that it was in very good shape despite the long storage period. The only re-leathering that had to be done was in the console, and about thirty magnets were replaced after being rewound. There remains only the piano to get going, and then a rededication concert. Who'll do the honors? Naturally, Tiny James, the organist long associated with the instrument when it was in the theatre, and the only one to record it commercially.

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Paul Mickelson, an organist you'll be reading about and hearing from (via the new "Reader's Digest" record release), was off to Australia and New Zealand on a concert tour in March with a return date set for June. Reminiscing about his experiences while playing the "Digest" sides, he says, "I certainly enjoyed doing the record on the Wanamaker organ, and also on the organ in St. John the Divine. But that Wanamaker instrument! It was quite a challenge. I could almost write a book on it."

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Recently, "Old Prospector", Lloyd E. Klos and RTOS photographer, Tom Lockwood, looking for organ memorabilia searched the abandoned Cameo Theatre in Rochester, N. Y., in the hope that all or part of the original 2 manual Kohl organ could be found. But the chambers were bare. Enroute to the basement, a rotting step gave way, and the total result was a bruised leg, a hurt dorsal region (Lloyd's), and no trace of the organ.

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Paul Fleming, who was deeply involved in the relocation of the Syracuse (N. Y.) Keith's 3-11 Wurlitzer, reports that he has latched onto a 2-4 Link which he intends to refurbish and install in the Empire State Musical Instrument Museum on the State Fair Grounds there. Paul is employed in Missouri, but hopes to be back to Syracuse before too long. Two organs in one building would be quite an accomplishment for this enthusiast and his devoted associates.

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How do you install a 4-25 Wurlitzer console on a lift without digging a pit into the ground to bury screw drives or hydraulics? Ohio Valley Chapterite Stan Todd solved the problem for his Shady Nook restaurant installation by using the front chain lift section from a fork-lift truck. Enormous lifting capacity and no wasted space. Neat, huh?

On March 1, the University of Washington Board of Regents announced that it had approved the sale of the 4-18 Wurlitzer organ in the Fifth Avenue Theatre in Seattle to William H. Breuer of Palo Alto, California. This created a stir on the part of Seattle Theatre Organ enthusiasts, led by ATOE's former president, Dick Schrum. Dick stated that the Puget Sound Chapter had a contract with Fox-Evergreen Theatres to restore the organ, and the chapter was not given the opportunity to bid on the instrument. Spokesman for the Regents said that it was not necessary for bids to be asked for disposal of the instrument, valued at \$10,000 by C. M. Balcom, who has maintained the organ for several years. Breuer, who operates the pipe organ-equipped "Captain's Galley" restaurant at Santa Clara, California, has removed the instrument, it is now in storage in Palo Alto, Calif.

No less than four 4-manual Wurlitzers are awaiting installation in homes or beaneries in the Bay Area, reports this mag's ad manager, Dewey Cagle. "Mr. Pizza Joynt," Carsten Henningsen, still has the 4-20 extracted from Loew's State in Syracuse, N.Y., stashed, waiting for just the right location for a second "Joynt." Steve Restivo already has himself a 3-15 but his dad has the 4-20 from the Oakland Paramount in limbo. And Doug Erdman sold his 4-20 console to a Mr. Samut, who will use it to control about 20 ranks of pipework he has acquired for his Bay Area home. And Bill Breuer has the 4-18 from the Seattle 5th Avenue theatre to make a home for — somewhere.

And should any of the gentlemen listed above decide to throw in the sponge, there's a ready market for his instrument; still another man is frantically seeking a four-decker to put into yet another Bay Area pizzeria. What hath Carsten wrought?

Then there's the organist with a popular Latin dance band who is seeking a large instrument to install in a San Diego theatre, for an operation similar to San Francisco's Avenue theatre and its policy of frequent silent movies with pipe organ accompaniment.

Central Ohio Chapter members Carlos Parker, Jr., and Tom K. Hamilton are proud of their new possession, the 4-19 Robert Morton organ from the Loew's Ohio theatre in Columbus. Until the fate of the theatre is settled the two plan to leave the organ installed in the 3000-seat flagship of the Loew's circuit in Columbus and continue to play and record the great sound of the organ, which was heard on the Concert Recording disc, "The Mighty Morton," featuring Roger Garrett.

The big theatres are being demolished at an ever-quickening pace. Some are being "twinned" (the balcony closed off to make a second theatre) such as the Oriental in Chicago and the Saenger in New Orleans (long a "twin"). Although this process of "cell division" leaves the house drastically altered, it's more desirable than a session with the steel ball. It isn't happening only here in "business first" USA; word has been received that both the Regent (4-19 Wurlitzer) and Plaza (2-12 Wurlitzer) in Melbourne, Australia, are going dark, leaving two instruments in fair shape up for grabs.

But from Canada via Britain (from the Cinema Organ Society's Newsletter) comes an encouraging word from Terry Harvey; the Orpheum theatre in Vancouver has dropped immediate plans for "twinning" and the style 235 Wurlitzer will not be removed, after all. But there's another obstacle. Terry added that the Orpheum management is negotiating with the AFM local for removal of a virtual ban on use of the instrument; it can be played only by a union member after 11 other musicians, including a leader, have been hired, insists the local. That ruling, harking back to the early days of "talkies" when theatres were firing pit orchestras with discouraging regularity, has been relaxed by most AFM locals, which are glad to see organs back in use in theatres.

From Olean, New York, Doc Bebko (Eddie Baker) made his annual Easter pilgrimage to his old haunt, Radio City Music Hall, and reports that Jack Ward made the 4-58 Wurlitzer sound superb. "Both consoles were exposed, with the right one playing. Organ is magnificent in tone, especially the pedals", says the former Music Hall organist.

The RKO Palace 3-16 Wurlitzer in Columbus is moving from its old home on West Broad Street to its new home on East Broad Street, the Center of Science and Industry. The organ will ultimately be re-installed in a proper setting reminiscent of the Roberson Cultural Center in Binghamton, New York, with its Link organ. The Palace Wurlitzer was unusual in that it was installed with a single "Echo" division consisting of one solo scale Vox Humana, available at 16', 8' and 4', in a chamber over the proscenium arch which spoke through a grill in the dome of the auditorium. The rest of the organ was rather conventional 260 style with a Piano, brass Saxophone, brass Trumpet, and a console with 5 expression pedals. The Palace Wurlitzer was installed in 1927 and in recent years was extensively rebuilt by William and Jim Hunt and Robert Ridgeway with help of Central Ohio Chapter members.

In Kansas City, Ken Wright read our April VOX POP about Bill Wright (no relation) and the nostalgia started: "I used to work with Bill way back, at the old Midland theatre in Hutchinson, Kansas. He was No. 1 organist and I was No. 2 in this silent movie house — and guess what we played — a 3-manual, 13-rank Austin! Someone, in an attempt to give it a theatrical sound, had added a set of bells, a Xylophone and a loud Kinura. But it still was Austin — all over the place." Ken is still thrilled by the encouraging sale of a recently released record he taped 20 years ago on the WKY (Kansas City) studio Kilgen.

In Cincinnati, ATOE Jack Doll, Jr., will have to bid his Wicks/Casavant pipe installation (3 manual-12 ranks) goodbye for a couple of years while he serves Uncle Sam. Jack who is a professional organist played the night club circuit regularly in the Cincinnati area before the military departure. The basement pipe installation will not hunger for attention in his absence; Jack Doll, Sr., is a topnotch pro with the Baldwin Company in Cincinnati.

From Sherrard, Illinois, pro organ tech Dave Junchen, taking note of a last issue VOX POP about his many installations, has the following to add about the Stan Todd Wurlitzer he's installing in the Shady Nook restaurant near Cincinnati. The instrument, a 3-16 Wurlitzer (one of the WLW radio organs), is to be equipped with a completely solid state relay developed by Peterson Electro-Music (Tuners). Dave believes this to be the first application of the solid state relay system to a large unit organ, although the device is now on the market and is being used by several builders of church organs, Aeolian-Skinner, for one. In place of the bulky, clicking relay racks are small modules with circuit boards bearing electronic parts. All modules are the plug-in variety for easy service. Dave lists some of the advantages:

1. It is compact in comparison with conventional relays.
2. It has no moving parts to wear out, and, considering the well-established reliability of solid state, there is very little which can go wrong with it.
3. It will operate any number of unifications and couplers from only one contact for each manual key.
4. The modular plug-in design makes future expansion of ranks comparatively simple; just plug in additional modules.
5. The solid state relay is compatible with existing organ relays, so that an instrument with conventional relays may be expanded via the solid state route.

So far as we know, there are fewer than 10 organs existing with all solid state relays, all of them "straight" instruments. We would venture to state that Dave is in on the start of something good.

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In Lafayette, La., teenage organist Lew Williams wandered into a music store and noticed a man with a familiar face fingering a harpsichord. It was Guy Lombardo. Lew struck up a conversation with the visiting celebrity and as always, where Lew is concerned the subject turned to the organs. He asked Lombardo if he had ever known Crawford. The reply was something like this: "Jesse? Sure, we were often on the same bill at the (New York) Paramount, Jesse and his wife, Helen. Boy, Helen was some organist, too. She played jazz, y'know. But Jesse — you couldn't top him. Nice guy too." Lombardo continued about organs "In the '30's we made a record of orchestra and organ with a Charles . . . yes, Milton Charles. . . 'When the Organ Played at Twilight' for Columbia. That record turned out to be one of our biggest hits." Okay, Guy!

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Organist Frank Lanterman is the owner of the former San Francisco Fox 4-36 Wurlitzer which he is installing at considerable expense in his La Canada, Calif. home. Frank is also an Assemblyman in the California Legislature at Sacramento, where one of his jobs is as overseer of the taxpayer's dollar. As guardian of the public purse he talks tough and plays the tightwad when other legislators seek state funds to finance pet projects. Conversely, he lavishes his own money on his mighty Wurlitzer. The bachelor-lawyer mells when he speaks of the organ. He told an LA Herald-Examiner reporter, "I have an appreciation of the dollar when it applies to everything but my pipe organ — it's my one indulgence."

Frank was a prominent theatre organist in the '20s and '30s but he's found far greater security among his satisfied constituents. They have been re-electing him without surcease for 18 years.

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We keep finding out things about Bill Johnson, the moving force behind Concert Recording and its "Organ of the Month Club," little tidbits which tell us much about the mettle of the man. For example the RCA legal eagles are still talking about the ease (they used the word "grace") with which he excepted Billy Nalle from his Concert Records contract to do a one-shot Readers Digest album. They had expected the usual bared fangs and Bill

disarmed them with "Sure—go ahead." Now we have evidence of a well-concealed "good Samaritan" side to the Johnson psyche. We learned that he sends gratis pressings and tapes of his best organ releases to Rod Yarbrough, the Texas organ builder, who became totally immobilized in an auto crash. Time hangs heavy for Rod and Bill's thoughtfulness not only keeps Rod's interest high but also his morale. Bill will probably be furious with us for leaking his well-kept secret.

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ATOEer Sylvan Ketterman, Muncie, Indiana Conn dealer, built his first small pipe organ at the age of 12, which marks the start of more than 40 years of pipe enthusiasm. He now builds model steam calliopes in miniature.

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The "organ in a pizza palace" idea seems to be catching on also in the Los Angeles area. First it was "Monk's Musical Pizza" in Covina with its 2-7 Wurlli and now plans have been announced for a similar eatery in the San Fernando Valley, north of Hollywood. The instrument is a Wurlitzer style 215 (2-10), long in storage but originally from a Beverly Hills movie house. The location is already under lease and installation is progressing with veteran organ man Buster Rosser at the soldering iron. Harvey Heck was recruited to re-leather chests for all 10 ranks. The project was undertaken by organ enthusiast-business man Ed Waters, who hopes to open during the summer.

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The Detroit Theater Organ Club monthly "News" now features a full-page photo of a well-known organist in each issue. Initial pix of Don Miller with Billy Nalle, and Ray Bohr in a later issue, were top quality.

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In Sacramento, Calif., Major H. A. Sommer, is readying a series of articles, plus a partial installation list, on the much-neglected Kilgen theatre organ.

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We trust that Dr. Mel Doner, ATOE's first publications editor, is enjoying his new job as a biology professor at Winona (Minn.) State College. Just don't try that "birds and bees" stuff on today's kids, Doc!

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In reply to an inquiry, the console which controlled the late Truman Welch's 2-12 Wurlitzer-Smith home installation in Downey, Calif., was originally installed in Grauman's Million Dollar theatre in Los Angeles. It was the pipework, chests, etc. which came from the Arlington theatre, Arlington, Calif., not the console.

In Miami, George Gerhart read the VOX POP (Dec. '68) about the purchase of a 3-deck Kohl console, originally from Rochester, N. Y. by a "Mr. Sudre" of Miami. It all stacked up except for the name. That console had to be the one Bob Andre of Coral Gables brought down from Massachusetts, so he put us straight. Exit Sudre, enter Andre — with a 12-ranker at home now due for a larger console and possibly 4 manuals.

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Eddie Dunstedter probably wondered if he was being pursued by a Stu Green-like banshee. He heard a youthful voice in the rear of the Carl Greer Inn (Sacramento, Calif.), call out "Chlo-eee!" just after he had finished his famous "Deep Purple," during a recent engagement at the Morton-equipped beanery. Eddie gave out with his entire conception of the old swamp-juice ballad just as recorded on his "Pipes & Power" disc. Then he turned around and said "All right, Stu — where are you?" Instead teenager organist Gary Konas stepped forward to thank Eddie for his blockbusting musical search for "Little Eva of the Everglades." It was Gary's first encounter with the living Dunstedter and he was somewhat speechless. Eddie observed that Gary had a couple of things in common with the portly TOB editor, ". . . a passion for 'Chloe' and a tendency to 'clam up' the first time we met."

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A Delaware Valley Chapterite (who prefers anonymity) suggests that, at intervals of about four years ATOE publish a "Quadrennial Book" similar to those priceless high school year books we all relish. It would contain photos of each chapter's elected officials (perhaps in a group), and, as far as practical, group photos of chapter members. It would state ATOE objectives and review accomplishments, list organ "transplants" during the four-year period, summarize trends in the hobby and generally paint a more leisurely and thoughtful picture of the hobby than the task of publishing a bimonthly magazine permits. Purchase would be by reservation in advance, to insure recouping publication costs. The writer feels that such a publication "would give a tremendous shot in the arm to the already great pride one has in being a member of ATOE."

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Another member wants to know why this mag is called THEATRE ORGAN BOMBARDE; the title often puzzles newcomers to the organization. Well, Dorothy, once upon a time ATOE published two magazines, THEATRE OR-

GAN and BOMBARDE. They were quite different in content and approach. THEATRE ORGAN (originally TIBIA) has always been the official journal—straight—factual—serious—reliable and slick. Then came BOMBARDE (on rough paper) which saw the humorous side of the hobby, took pokes at human foibles encountered within the TO world, published biographies of organists illustrated with outrageous cartoons and generally lived up to the claim that it was “the only theatre organ publication with a sense of humor.” But running two magazines got too expensive. Rather than call for a dues increase, the Board of Directors decided to combine the best elements of both publications. Thus THEATRE ORGAN BOMBARDE—two for the price of one.

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The Theatre Organ Society of Australia, New South Wales division, opened its 1969 season on Feb. 19 with a concert on its own Wurlitzer in the Marrickville Town Hall, played by veteran console artist Reubert Hayes. On March 30, it was a concert played by Denis Palmistra on the John Clancy residence Wurlitzer in Wentworthville. During March, American Don Kingston was playing the plug-in concert circuit, plugging Conn organs, writes “TOSA News” editor Frank Ellis.

The “TOSA News” for February runs a cartoon showing BOMBARDE editor Stu Green crying huge tears, while standing next to a teacup in which a violent storm is raging. It’s Stu’s “confession” for the crime of misquoting a TOSA News item about the number of theatre organs in Australian theatres, an error which touched off a wave of claims, counterclaims, catcalls and innuendo among those who seem always ready to throw a damper on a fun hobby. “It’s all my fault!” cries the sketch of Stu, thus getting TOSA News off the hook. He might have added, “And a pox on the spoilers.”

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While going through Atlanta, Billy Nalle stopped to catch Lee Erwin’s presentation of his original score, accompanying Valentino’s “The Eagle” at the Atlanta Fox 4-43 Moller. It was the first time Nalle had heard Erwin accompany a film and what he saw and heard really turned on his “southern enthusiasm.” Billy states, “Erwin played the finest accompaniment ever I’ve heard to a silent film. It was done with complete professionalism, a first class presentation all the way. Guys like Lee and Gaylord (Carter) should have classes, or some means of showing fellow aspirants how it’s done.” Lee, why don’t you send Billy \$2.00? Where else can you get such glowing public rela-

tions material from a guy who really knows the (musical) score?

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In Sacramento, Calif., “our man” in that area, Major H. A. Sommers, assembled a Xylophone (from parts of several) for Dave Schutt’s 3-14 Robert Morton in San Jose. And Dale Mendenhall was looking forward to the arrival of the 3-manual console from Loew’s Theatre in St. Louis, which he purchased through the St. Louis chapter.

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Farther north, in San Francisco, the Avenue Theatre noted, with some relief, that business was picking up, which means life insurance for the 3-14 Wurlitzer. During April (on Fridays), the Avenue ran the Douglas Fairbanks starrer, “Robin Hood” with Van Welch doing the accompaniment, plus a special concert by youthful Stan Toyama; a silent documentary gathered from many sources by Martin Kearns, entitled “Hollywood of the ‘20s” with Bob Vaughn at the organ; a presentation of the Harry Langdon silent comedy, “Tramp, Tramp, Tramp,” with Bob Vaughn doing the cueing, plus a concert by former New York Roxy organist George Robinson. On the final Friday in April it was a concert by Gene Gaylor and a presentation of the early Garbo film, “Joyless Street” (better known as “Street of Sorrows”). Gene is a newcomer to the Avenue staff but is a real oldtimer in the TO hobby.

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From England, Editor Ian Sutherland’s “COS Newsletter” issues a plea from Ken Butterfield for greater support of the nationwide petition being circulated among British enthusiasts with the aim of forcing the BBC to put cancelled TO programs back on broadcast schedules. In the same issue of the Cinema Organ Society’s Newsletter, James Ward Stuchlik, sparker of the campaign, states that over 3000 had signed (by March) and that the goal was 100,000 signatures. Interest appears to be picking up; even (get this!) Hammond Organ Clubs have offered to sign and circulate the petitions.

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The chapters and clubs have put on some stunning shows since our last issue. The New York Chapter scheduled veteran silent film cuer Larry Leverenz for its May 18 concert at the Beacon Theatre with its 4-19 Wurlitzer. He also studied with famed radio organist Ralph Waldo Emerson (the son of the poet). The same issue of the NY Chapter’s Newsletter announced a theatre-sponsored concert at the Tower Theatre in Upper Darby (near Philadelphia) where Bob Lent and crew keep the 3-17 Wurlitzer in top shape.

The Tower scheduled Gaylord Carter accompanying a silent movie for June 10. The Empire State Theatre and Musical Instrument Museum celebrated the 75th anniversary of the birth of the movies April 27th with a showing of the Douglas Fairbanks “Arabian Nights” adventure, “The Thief of Bagdad,” with, naturally, Carleton A. James doing the cueing at the 3-11 ex-Keith’s Wurlitzer. Admission free to ESTMIM members and only \$1.00 to non-members. And we trust that attendance was such at the Detroit Theater Organ Club’s May 24th Ann Leaf concert that reviewer Ben Levy this time didn’t find it necessary to invite clubbers who missed it to butt their noggins against a stone wall—as he suggested last year when attendance was a bit off. And on June 7th, DTOC was enriched by both a morning workshop and an evening concert by the one and only Don Baker, made possible by the enlightened attitude his employer, the Conn Organ Co., takes toward pipes and the TO hobby.

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The “underground” press has at last discovered the theatre organ hobby. In Los Angeles a May edition of the hippie-rebel-oriented weekly “Advocate,” in an article obviously written by someone close to the hobby, explained ATOE with amazing restraint and no four-letter words, although it couldn’t resist alluding to sexually-oriented symbols it says are inherent in certain physical aspects of organ pipes. The article reflected a measure of admiration in the way we do our thing. Peace, brothers!

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Sorry to hear of the dissolution of the Valley of the Sun ATOE chapter. A large factor was the loss of the 3-13 Meisel and Sullivan-Wurlitzer organ in the Phoenix Paramount Theatre, long a meeting place of the chapter. When Paramount sold the theatre to Netherlander (of Detroit), the new owners decided to remodel it immediately as a legit house but less the organ, which was put up for quick sale. It was purchased by a young couple, Allen and Vicki Tury, members of the defunct chapter, and is now in storage. The Tury’s hope to place it in a suitable public building when one can be found and the necessary arrangements made.

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We’ll SHOW you around
July 3-7