



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.

Tony Fenelon was well on his way to becoming a scientist in the medical field and a concert pianist, too, in his native Australia—until he heard a theatre organ. The medical electronics engineer would never be the same; the instrument intrigued him. But he didn't give up science nor the piano to go on a theatre organ binge. Instead he became a "triple threat man" and added the T.O. to his string of accomplishments. After racking up many successes in Australia (the Regent in Melbourne and the Dendy in Brighton) he decided to try his luck in the USA. Under the management of (American) Dean Mitchell, Tony has already lined up a number of important concert engagements, among them a concert at the San Francisco Avenue theatre (October 11), another for the LA Chapter of



TONY FENELON — Success 'down under' led to a foothold 'up over'.

ATOE at the Wiltern theatre, plus an engagement during the annual Home Organ Festival starting September 16th at Hoberg's in Northern California.

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The Carl Greer Inn, Sacramento, Calif., continues its "organ music while dining policy" with a variety of artists in addition to the "regulars." Clyde Derby, one of the regulars, reports that Colonel Harry Jenkins dropped in for a few sets when the circus he was "Hammond" music for played nearby, and was "at home" on the 4/15 Morton in no time. Clyde writes, "I really enjoyed Harry. He has that 'something' that just fits and makes the crowd tap their feet." Later, Bob Ralston, seen on the Lawrence Welk TVer pumping a Thomas plug-in, did a Sunday-Monday stint at the pipes. "He did a fine job," says Clyde. It might be added that there are no flies on Clyde, either, when it comes to pleasing the fans who flock to the Inn to mainline pipes.

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Things are looking up for the theatre organ in Holland according to Ian Sutherland's "Cinema Organ Society (of Britain) Newsletter." A correspondent writes in the May issue that the City Theatre in Amsterdam has spent 6300 British pounds (equivalent) refurbishing its 4/17 Standart which is played daily by resident organist Harry Klompe, who also broadcasts it bi-weekly. Also in Amsterdam, the famed Tuschinski theatre has decided to put its console on a lift for greater exploitation possibilities (after dispensing with its pit orchestra just 42 years after the advent of "talkies"). It is played by Rene de Rooy and Jan Mekkes. Radio AVRO continues to broadcast its Compton (Amsterdam) and the Vara station at Hilversum has decided not to sell its 3/13 Standart. Instead, the organ will get an overhauling. The Colosseum theatre in Rotterdam has been persuaded to put its 2/4 Standart back in use, after being silent since 1959, and the Arena theatre (Standart 3/9) may follow suit. Also, the 3/14 Standart in the Passage theatre in Schiedam is to be put back in operation as an attraction. Big news from a small country.

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A Warner Brothers "global conclave," which brought 500 movie production and distribution toppers from all over the world to the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles on June 11, was entertained by Helen Dell playing a Baldwin theatre-type plug-in.

We learn from a non-organ-oriented source that the organ in the Akron (Ohio) Loew's (now the Akron Civic) is used fairly often for special events.

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Lloyd Klos has learned some more about the fate of the 3-manual Kohl organ removed from the Monroe theatre in Rochester, N.Y., and now the property of Bob Andre in Coral Gables, Florida. It seems that Mr. Andre has a 2/5 Morton and a 2/6 Wurlitzer in his home and the Kohl made things a little crowded. So, Mr. Andre decided to do something about it and evolved plans for a 2-story office building with both living quarters and an auditorium suitable for about a 4/16 organ; he'll combine all three, and then some. Klos reports that Andre would like to contact an able finisher; he may want some voicing changes in the completed instrument.

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Al Bollington reports that he is currently on a "pipe kick" and will play for the Niagara Frontier Chapter (presumably at the Riviera theatre 3/11 Wurlitzer) around September 15th, and then on to the Toronto Orpheum (3-deck Wurlitzer) for Terry Harvey in October. And Al is dickering for a concert at Buckingham Town Hall (3/19 Wurlitzer) late in September. This would be his first trip back to Britain since he "took the colonies" single-handedly back in the late '40s.

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In the October 1968 issue of TO-B, we ran a VOX POP about the military "breaking up that old gang" who were about to embark on a restoration job in the Chicago area. And "old Uncle" has done just that to the "Theatre Organ Presentations" group. Dick Sklenar is enroute to Thailand, Mark Noller is playing a Lowrey spinet aboard the USS Columbus, a guided missile carrier now bobbing about in the Mediterranean, while Pat Chambers is an Air Force electronics instructor at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi. While he was stationed at Fort Gordon, Dick Sklenar found two theatre organs in nearby Augusta (Georgia) theatres, one in operating condition and used for special shows. It's doubtful he'll be that lucky in Thailand.

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Bill Floyd, former New York Paramount organist, likes to experiment with the musical tastes of his audiences at the Surf City hotel where he plays a 3/14 Wurlitzer nightly, according to Eric Zeliff, who reports that a most unlikely selection brought down the house one night last year—"Onward Christian Soldiers."

Bob Balfour was probably surprised to learn that he had become the manager of the Rahway theatre in Rahway, New Jersey, as stated in a previous issue. He really isn't (our goof) but he does manage the ebb and flow of organists who supply the intermission music there.

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When organist Howard Burton, who now lives in Marion, Ohio (with a home full of playing pipes), scanned our series "Where the Bartons Were," the entry about the Willard theatre, Creston, Iowa, having a Bartola "3-1/2" (Barton's original organ-like attachment for a pit piano) stirred up memories. Burton was the organist at the Strand in Creston during the "best years" and occasionally did relief work at the Willard. He recalls the little treble keyboard above the piano keys vividly, but doesn't know what finally became of the "minimal" Bartola. In 1929 he left Creston to take a course in "spotlight solos" and "sing-along playing" (the "new wave" emphasis caused by "talkies") at the Knauss School of the Theatre Organ in Allentown, Penna. He returned a year later—to total disaster. Not one organ was still in use in a Creston theatre. "Vitaphone" had wiped them all out. The little Bartola in the Willard had disappeared completely. Scratch one "3-1/2."

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Eddie and Carol May are a rare father-daughter organ duo, both as performers and teachers. In June they presented 19 of their students in concert and the instruments were theatre-style plug-ins. That's because Eddie is a former theatre organist (Rochester, N.Y.) and one of the busiest musicians around Miami, Florida, where he and Carol now live. On June 25th he opened at the Miami Americana hotel for a series of conventions (he's an old hand at playing for conventions, too), then an August stint at the Old Baldy Club at Saratoga, Wyoming. On September 5th Eddie will be back in the Cirano Room at Miami's Deauville Hotel for six weeks. "Those years of cueing silent films gave me lots of endurance" smiles Eddie, who holds down a church job to keep him busy also on Sundays.

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The Empire State Theatre and Musical Instruments Museum (whew!) presented veteran theatre organist Luella Wickham in concert on June 21st, playing the former Syracuse Keith's 3/11 Wurlitzer now in its permanent home on the New York State fairgrounds. Luella started her show with a salute to June brides then performed some patri-

otic fireworks in anticipation of July 4th. Then the lights lowered and, to Luella, it must have been like being back at the Rivoli; she cued the 1925 Western, "Tumbleweeds" and helped steely-eyed William S. Hart chase the "sooners" off the Cherokee Strip.

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Like many an organist retiring to the warm sun of Florida, Reginald Foort just can't keep away from music. The non-denominational Ocean Chapel at Fort Lauderdale ran a newspaper box ad announcing its prize "catch"—none other than Reginald Foort "F.R.C.O. and A.R.C.M., organist." Appropriately, services are being held temporarily in a Fort Lauderdale theatre, "Cinema 1, Sunrise Shopping Center."

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Ex-ATOE president Dick Schrum was in the midst of recording the Seattle Paramount Wurli when the boys from Balcom and Vaughn came and took out the Posthorn. Dick grumbled but there wasn't much he could do but complete the rest of the platter less the searing bite of Posthorn emphasis. It was all according to agreement. The Posthorn pipes were loaned to the Puget Sound chapter until they could be sold. They were purchased for installation in the LA chapter's Wurli going into the San Gabriel civic auditorium, so B&V came an got 'em. It left Dick Schrum speechless—in the Posthorn department.

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Billy Nalle credits "tomcat curiosity" for the big turnout for his Longwood Gardens (Pennsylvania) concert of improvisations on the 4/169 Aeolian (the first "pop" artist ever in that dignified atmosphere), but it would seem more reasonable to assume that it was the reputation Billy has built around having fun with music, as exemplified by his "Liebe und Hochzeit" by Jimmy Van Heusen ("Love & Marriage" in the Mozart gavotte style) and his now famous "Alles Was Du Bist" by Jerome Kern (A Bach trio treatment of "All the Things You Are").

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The Avenue theatre in San Francisco has struck a rich vein of silent films as well as the many talents of film historian Bob Chatterton. During five silent film showings in May (one each week), the house ran consecutive episodes of "The Perils of Pauline." Features run in May included the Fairbanks film, "The Black Pirate", "The Navigator" with Buster Keaton, Fairbanks "The Gaucho," and Gloria Swanson in "Man-handled." Organists appearing were Van Welch, Gene Gaynor, Bob Vaughn plus special concerts by ex-Roxyite George Robinson and young Stanley

Koyama. Bob Chatterton narrated a W. C. Fields program which he assembled.

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Niagara Frontier Chapter's "Silent Newsreel" reports a very active spring season for the Buffalonians, with concerts by Alan Ross, Colin Corbett and Lowell Ayars (all at the Riviera theatre's 3/11 Wurlitzer) supplemented by excursions to Rochester to attend the George Wright (April 19) and Ann Leaf (May 20) concerts produced by RTOS.

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Although the Hammond company doesn't subscribe to the "theatre organ" concept in designing its instruments, it did turn to artists whose names loom big as pipe organists when it planned its spring publicity campaign. 'Midst a flurry of such ballyhoo props as pre-arranged press releases and broadcast interviews at the local level, Hammond sent forth its champions during the spring months to plug the latest in its tone-wheel line, Tom Thompson to the midwest and John Seng to the south and east coast centers of population. And Shay Torrent was part of a team which canvassed the west. All three are known for pipe organ work and it was no surprise to learn that they leaned heavily on "sure-fire" devices from the silent film era to earn the sponsor's praise. A Hammond press release called the barnstormfest "their most successful tour . . . from the viewpoints of attendance, attention, and merchandising support." The "golden era" props used were the sing-along (Thompson), the silent movie accompaniment (Seng), and humorous slides and a routine called "Great Themes from Screen Gems" offered by Torrent (who was teamed with Axel Alexander). It's nice to know the ancient routines still pull in the crowds, or as Gaylord Carter puts it (with regard to his own efforts), "I'm glad that corn still pays off!"

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The loss of the Paramount doesn't leave Phoenix organless, reports a former Valley of the Sun chapter chairman, Karl Warner. Work is progressing toward the installation of a 2/11 Wurlitzer in the Phoenix College auditorium by Warren Bechhoeffer and his crew, the Max Bray residence 3/14 Wurlitzer is playing, and Bill Brown has completed the installation of the former Vaughn-Chicago Paradise 5/21 Wurlitzer in his home and is working on additions. Tom Hazleton and Jonas Nordwall have recently played concerts on it. "But the Paramount was home base to us," sighs Karl.