



CONNECTICUT VALLEY

AUGUST MEETING HELD AT STOCK HOME – 3/31 WURLITZER
 – On Saturday, August 9, 1969, over 100 members of the Connecticut Valley Chapter gathered to hear the largest theatre organ in Connecticut . . . Phil and Rosa Stock's magnificent 3/31 Wurlitzer.



FRANK MANION PHOTO

The instrument is the 3/19 Wurlitzer from the Lynn (Mass.) Paramount to which was added 12 ranks from the University Theatre Wurlitzer from Cambridge, Mass. The additions were not made to add to the size of the instrument, but to make it more versatile by augmenting the soft accompanimental stops. Such goodies as soft string celestes, quintadena celeste, flute celeste, dulciana and dulciana celeste were welcome additions so valuable in a home or studio installation. Other desirable ranks include the usual brass saxophone, brass trumpet, English post horn, and krumet. The organ was originally installed in the mid-30's, and incorporated the latest Wurlitzer chest and pipework improvements.

The stoplist, in addition, was modified to make the organ more adaptable to contemporary orchestral theatre organ technique by eliminating 16' stops in the Accompaniment, adding tremulants, and expanding unification on certain stops. With the exception

of the Accompaniment manual, celestes were grouped on the same stop tab as the normal rank, with a master "Celeste Off" tab provided for each celeste rank. Thus, whenever the quintadena, for example, is registered, the quintadena celeste is also brought on unless the "Quintadena Celeste OFF" stop is also registered. This idea has been used by George Wright and Johnny Seng as well as several others.

As you can well imagine, installing this large organ in the home, high on a hill overlooking the Hartford area of the Connecticut River Valley, was no mean feat. Phil, who is an architect, devised a scheme for locating the chambers in a vault beneath his garage. To do this, the concrete garage floor was removed, the ground excavated twenty feet, the chamber constructed and the concrete garage floor (chamber ceiling) replaced. The organ speaks into tone chutes which blend and direct the sound up into the living room. Since the additions were planned and acquired during chamber construction, the additional ranks were squeezed in. To describe the chambers as "FULL" is a masterpiece of understatement, yet everything is accessible.

Besides Phil, Roger Davis, Al Colton and Mike Foley put in vast amounts of time and work on the installation over the past four years, and final balancing and tonal finishing and regulation continues even to the present moment.

Mike Foley, who has been honing down the instrument, demonstrated the various stops . . . usual and rare . . . and improvised on "Climb Every Mountain" during which he used various combinations he had demonstrated, winding up with full organ.

Phil then gave a very informal concert which included many of the tunes which were popular when he played professionally (the New Haven Palace) while working his way through Yale.

Everett Bassett then dug up some of his "oldies" which he continually saves from obscurity. Ev tipped his hat, though, and let out his secret . . . he, like so many of today's young organists, picks up his music by listening to records . . . but not 33-1/3's . . . '78's!

Mike Foley returned to close the formal program with some up-tempo "now" music, and showed off the organ's "Brass." Mike then invited everyone for a late dip in the pool to cool off.

– Allen Miller

CHICAGO AREA

At a special business meeting held Tuesday, July 29th, at Kelyvn Park Field House, CATOE members listened as Bill Rieger, Charles Peterson, and Joe DuciBella told of the sudden

availability of the 3-manual 19-rank Kimball (only 16 ranks of pipes remain, but all chests are intact) from the Senate Theatre. Joe DuciBella gave a slide presentation about the Kimball organ and some humorous slides used by the famed Preston Sellers at the Senate Theatre.

Two committees were formed at the business meeting to: 1, find storage space for the organ during the interim period of removal from the Senate Theatre and its reinstallation, and 2, find a permanent location for the organ where it will be available for CATOE use also. Charles Peterson was chosen chairman in charge of finding the storage space and Bill Rieger, Clair Bass and Charles Merson will serve on his committee. Jack Smith was chosen as chairman of the committee in charge of finding a suitable location for CATOE's 'new' organ. Joe DuciBella, Alden Stockebrand and Art Todesco will serve on Jack's committee.

The Chicago Chapter has received many messages of congratulations on the success of the National Convention in July. It appears that our efforts were enthusiastically received which makes all the hard work and problems involved seem worthwhile. CATOE thanks all those who came to the convention and for the numerous calls, cards and letters sent to the officers.

DELAWARE VALLEY

On June 10th over 1600 people gathered at the Tower Theatre, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania to see and hear Gaylord "Flickerfingers" Carter.

Gaylord put on his usual top grade performance, including song slides, demonstration of silent movie accompaniment, medlies of typical theatre organ tunes, and climaxed the event by presenting "The Mark of Zorro" with proper organ cueing.

This was the first chapter presentation of a major silent classic. It proved to be highly successful; so much so that a return engagement by Carter is planned for late October.

Two weeks after the "Zorro" event, Larry Ferrari appeared in concert at the Tower and further enhanced the prestige of the chapter as well as himself in playing a thoroughly enjoyable program. Mr. Ferrari is well known in the Delaware Valley as the most active organist in the area, making an unbelievable number of appearances on both electronic and pipe organs as well as being featured on WFIL TV Channel 6 every Sunday morning.

HEART OF AMERICA

Kansas City organist, Bob Jones, presented a program at the 3/8 Wurli for our June meeting at the Russell Stover Auditorium here. As organist at both the 4/20 Robert Morton in the Midland Theatre and 3/15 Wurlitzer in the Newman Theatre, in addition to many years of radio and television appearances, Bob is well known in this area. Stover seats only about 250 but we had 'em standing in the aisles.

We thank John Haskins, music editor of the Kansas City Star (our only major newspaper) for printing an announcement of our program.

We are mighty proud of Bob Jones and grateful to him for an excellent program.

—J. Randall Charles

LAND O'LAKES

Our thanks to all who have helped with the sale of Gordon Krist's record "Just For The Fun Of It", in particular, our officers and staff at the National level. Their interest and support for a chapter project is most gratifying. Having had the opportunity of working with them—Betty and Al Mason, Vi and George Thompson, Dewey Cagle, Don Lockwood and Stu Green—we Land O'Laker's have a deeper appreciation of their efforts on behalf of ATOS.

Gordon Krist wishes to express his thanks for the many kind notes and good wishes received. Gordon's health is slowly improving.

We are still a long way from having completed the sale of the records. A change of address in placing orders is necessary because of a company transfer. Please mail orders to:

Land O'Lakes Chapter, ATOS
3213 Windgate Road
St. Paul, Mn. 55119

Orders mailed to the address listed in our ad in the August issue of Theatre Organ will, of course, be processed but please excuse a short delay.

Our thanks also go to those who have expressed their enjoyment of listening to the record. We knew you would like it!

—Irene M. Blegen, Secretary

LOS ANGELES

Our "fall" round of activities commenced early, on August 17, when we joined the local AGO Chapter for an organ crawl to hear 4 concerts by 4 different artists on 4 different organs, all 3- or 4-manual instruments. This was the third joint organ crawl, and LA ATOS participants outnumbered the AGO by about 2 to 1. In the afternoon of August 24, a jam session was held

on the Elks Building 4/58 Morton following Millie Alexander at the Wiltern.

One highlight of this jam session was a fast "Dizzy Fingers" by 13-year-old Donna Parker, who proved that the beast can indeed follow fast playing. Attendance at the last several club Sunday morning concerts has picked up sharply. Our attempts to bring theatre pipe organ to electronic organ-oriented people, and to the general public, appear to be successful. On Sept. 9 the club presented the fabulous and world-famous Don Baker in a formal evening concert at the Wiltern. See review on page 38 in this issue.

The member playing plan for the Elks Building 4/58 Morton is continuing under the able coordination of Bob and Ruth Stratton. Other clubs might consider a similar plan. The charge is \$3.00 per month for 2 hours playing time, with additional time at 2½ cents per minute. The money goes to the building and organ owners. The plan not only enables members to practice and play a giant theatre organ in an auditorium, but also keeps its non-organ-fan owners interested because of the financial remuneration. Club members are looking forward to hearing one of Australia's foremost theatre organists, Tony Fenelon, at the Wiltern on October 12. A general membership business meeting is scheduled for Oct. 3. A special event is now being planned for November, with our Annual Meeting and Election of Officers in early December. Progress on the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium 3/16 Wurlitzer installation has been steady, with completion anticipated to be shortly after the first of the year. Many club members attended The Home Organ Festival at Hobergs resort in Northern California in the latter part of September. They renewed acquaintances with NorCal and Sierra Chapter members and with many other Bay Area organ fans. The newly opened "Pipe 'n Pizza" restaurant in the San Fernando Valley, with its 2/10 Wurlitzer, has become a mecca for club members.

—Ray Bonner, Chairman

NIAGARA FRONTIER

A successful return by The Singing Organist, Lowell Ayars, proved that audiences don't tire with the annual appearance of a star. There was a standing room crowd at our June monthly Chapter concert in North Tonawanda's Riviera Theatre.

Mr. Ayars' program was composed of a great variety of showtunes from the Twenties including "Showboat," which was beautifully done.

A change of pace came about when the organist performed "Ballet Egyp-

tian" by Luigini. Mr. Ayars described this piece as "The type of thing the theatre organ was meant for." His audience was very receptive to this score, and they gave a good, long round of applause for his excellent job of presenting it.

A medley of dream songs preceded Lowell's two vocal selections for the evening. "Something to Remember You By" and "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" won high approval from the listeners. (Perhaps Mr. Ayars' cultured voice is the reason why Chairman Randy Piazza introduced him as "The Bing Crosby of the Wurlitzer circuit.")

A sing-along and silent comedy followed by a tribute to the late Judy Garland and several songs that were something old, new, borrowed, and blue closed a couple of hours of entertainment that were performed with original styling.

Lowell Ayars is a favorite of the Niagara Frontier Chapter and of the many people who come to our concerts, and it seems that he becomes more popular with each passing year. We all know why, after this excellent performance.

Things have really been humming for the Frontiersmen since returning from that great Chicago convention.

Buffalo's own theatre organist, Art Melgier, was presented in concert at the Riviera's 3/11 Wurlitzer on July 23 as a benefit to raise funds for the North Tonawanda Chapter of the American Field Service.

The capacity crowd audience was taken down memory lane with lots of happy tunes that were well received.

Mr. Melgier's first portion of the program was "Girls I Knew in the Twenties". The organist played more than a dozen songs with girls' names in the titles, including "Chloe" (but Stu Green was nowhere to be seen).



ART MELGIER at the 3/11 console in the Riviera Theatre.

Next was a group of selections from musicals which covered a variety of moods. Following our sing-along and

intermission was a historical-comical silent flick starring Rex Archer.

Closing the memory-filled evening Art Melgier played a series of tunes associated with famous people including "My Man" for Fanny Brice and "Mammy" for Jolson.

The evening's repertoire was enthusiastically applauded by his listeners, and Melgier took down the console after a five-tune Gershwin encore.

On August 3, the annual Chapter picnic took place at the Thomas Studio in Lancaster, N. Y. We were very happy to have ATOS National President Al Mason, who is a member of this Chapter, and his wife Betty present at this event. The Board of Directors meeting took place at the beginning of the picnic.

The 3/7 Wurlitzer-Marr & Colton organ in the Studio was given a real workout by many people that day, two of whom were John Muri and Luella Wickham. A jam session was in progress all afternoon, following which Harvey Elsaesser played for a sing-along; and Art Melgier accompanied a silent comedy. Mrs. Edna Elsaesser was accompanied by her husband as she beautifully sang a selection from "My



Chairman Randy Piazza, Frank Guzzetta and Mrs. Guzzetta at testimonial dinner. Note plaque and book.

Fair Lady". Slides from the Chicago convention were shown, and everyone had a grand time.

A "surprise" testimonial dinner honoring Mr. Frank Guzzetta, manager of the Riviera Theatre, occurred on August 11. The NF Board of Directors felt that a ceremony of this type would express the Chapter's appreciation for his kindness and generosity in helping us present our monthly concerts.

Chairman Randy Piazza presented Mr. Guzzetta with a gilt-engraved signature book and a pen-holder which is a replica of the one owned by Darryl Zanuck, President of 20th Century Fox Pictures.

Organ music after dinner was furnished by Art Melgier and others on an electronic organ. Those lyricists you heard at the convention, Sandy Ellis

and Shirley Cole, sang a song especially for Frank Guzzetta thanking him for his generosity, and for just being such a nice fellow.

He was deeply touched by all this and said, "This is certainly the biggest surprise of my life. I don't know what to say, except thank you."

—Shirley Cole

NORTH TEXAS

The August meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the ATOS was held August 23, 1969 in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Flannery in Garland, Texas.

A short business meeting was held in which John Beck was re-elected President; Dale Flannery, Vice President; Doxie Jackson, Secretary. John Beck led a discussion of the path the Chapter should follow in the coming year and in the future.

After the business meeting, we were entertained by Dale Flannery at his "new" 3/15 Wicks theatre pipe organ. Following Dale's beautiful selections, we were entertained by many of the members of the chapter.

New members which we welcome to the North Texas Chapter are: Mr. and Mrs. James McGill, Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Desmond and Ralph McNelly.

Our next meeting will be held in the home of Jack and Lorraine Hendrickson in Colleyville, Texas.

—Pat Kohl

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

In June, Helen Dell treated the chapter to a fine program at the Avenue Theatre (Wurlitzer-ex State Lake 3/13) in San Francisco. The event was well attended and the organist treated the audience to a well balanced, ear pleasing program.

August 16th found the chapter gathered at the Golden Gate Penthouse Theatre, San Francisco, to hear the new 3-manual Conn organ installed by John Nelson, sales representative for Conn, especially for this event. Six organists were heard at the morning concert, including John Nelson, Tiny James, Stan Koyama (age 17), Bud Iverson, Harry Weeks and Van Welch. The instrument sounded magnificent and with six distinctive styles of playing being presented it showed good versatility.

Friday night is "Old Movie" night at the Avenue Theatre with early talkies and silent features being programmed. The Wurlitzer plays an important part in these programs and public enthusiasm is increasing weekly.

POTOMAC VALLEY

Our sincere apologies are in order to Doug Bailey for not reporting his concert at our May chapter meeting

held at the Virginia Theatre. The paragraph on his performance, which was outstanding, was accidentally left out of the newsletter. Doug handled the Grande Barton with ease as he played hit tunes of the present and past. One of Doug's greatest crowd pleasers is having people call out the year of their birth and he plays the hit songs of that year. We all look forward to his playing another concert in the near future.

Among those attending the National Meeting in Chicago in July were members Woody Wise, Sherman Hjort, Frank Early, Ray Gingell, Dick Kline, Tommy Landrum, Marvin Lautzenheiser, Richard Neidich, Bob St. John, Barry Washington, Erwin Young, and Dow, Edith, and Nancy Evelyn. Also, our own Eddie Weaver was featured as one of the concert artists. A vote of praise is due CATOE Chairman Bill Benedict and his many assistants for a well run convention.

Our thanks to Chapter member Dick Kline, out-going National vice president, for his many seasons of service to ATOE.

Ray Brubacher, our editor of the Potomac Valley Chapter Newsletter, has informed this office that due to many pressing business matters and heavy teaching schedule, he must resign as editor of the Newsletter. He will remain on the national ATOE staff as associate editor, however. Our sincere thanks to Ray for his past service to the chapter.

PUGET SOUND

Approximately 75 members and friends journeyed to Tacoma on August 24th to enjoy a concert on the Liberty Theatre Organ which is now installed in the gymnasium at Pacific Lutheran University. This organ was originally installed in the Liberty Theatre in Seattle. The concert was given by George Martin of Tacoma, a member of the chapter. A dinner-business meeting was held before the concert. Reports were given and the most important was concerning the installation of our organ at Haller Lake Improvement Club. The chambers have been enlarged, a crew undercoated and enameled the inside of the chambers, the shutters, air lines and cables are in place, chests in with connections to the air lines and blown out. The xylo, glock and orchestra bells are mounted on movable stands so they may be moved out of the chambers when played and the wiring is progressing and things are looking good. Crews work each week-end and evenings when the clubhouse is available to make ready for the big day when we have open house and invite the members of the Club to join us for a view of the pro-

ject. The Haller Lake Improvement Club has decorated the entire room and the ladies have dyed the drapes to match. We are almost ready to bring the console in and hook it up. A cover was designed to fit the console with the front folding back to give access to just the key desk. It can be taken apart and removed when a concert is to be given. Genny Whitting has undertaken the job of finishing the cover to match the decor of the room. The crews have been sufficiently fed by Betty Chang and Virginia Lawrence. We all are looking forward to the day when we hear our organ play for the first time.

— Virginia Lawrence, Secretary

ST. LOUIS

St. Louis Chapter had 9 members at the convention. All agree that for overall quality and variety this was the best convention yet!

Meeting attendance has been increasing steadily when we have announced articles for the programs. The largest group was about 120 at our May Midnite meeting at the Fox. Stan Kann, John Ferguson, and Dale Zieger were the official organists of the evening. Stan opened the program with the console DESCENDING from stage level to almost hidden in the pit. This is where most of the broken cable ends meet and most of the stops work. Many members and guests also played.

Summer activity by the Chapter consisted of more rebuilding work on our organ project (manual chests now) and planning for Fall meetings and silent movies. The next meetings are the third Sunday evenings of September, October and November. Movies are tentatively scheduled for mid-month in September and October. Details will be in our monthly bulletins.

— Donald P. Ulrich, Chairman

Gaylord Carter Originals Published

A series of original organ compositions by famed organist Gaylord Carter are being made available in sheet music form. The first, "NOCTURNE", is a tranquilly beautiful classical composition in the key of D-flat and not difficult. The second composition in the series is Carter's great novelty "DUNCE DANCE" — four pages of fast and spritely sparkle in the key of G — a cutie! "NOCTURNE" sells for \$1.00; "DUNCE DANCE" for \$1.50. At the present time, copies may be ordered only direct from the publisher and sole distributor: JACK LOREN ORGAN STUDIOS, Post Office Box 1356, Beverly Hills, California 90213.

DON BAKER'S PIPING THRILLS ANGELENOS

by Peg Nielsen

Los Angeles — Don Baker's concerts on pipes are altogether too rare (they might be non-existent but for the liberal attitude on Don's boss, the Conn Organ Co., which doesn't mind having its products associated with pipe sounds). Not long ago, Shirley Cole, reporting in Niagara Frontier Chapter's "Silent Newsreel," told of Don's recent appearance at the North Tona-wanda Riviera theatre's 3/11 Wurlitzer in terms which correctly avoided the use of superlatives. I doubt that we can be as well-disciplined as Miss Cole be-

department. We approached the theatre with some apprehension because we recalled how the heat-detuned Kimball had attempted to throw a hard-riding Millie Alexander only two weeks previously. But, to the great credit of Ross Farmer and his organ maintenance stalwarts, the beast had been tamed; rarely had it sounded better.

Don Baker has a way of mastering an unfamiliar instrument which gives the impression he has played it all his life; from the start he was completely at home before the huge horseshoe of the 4/37. His announcements were brief and they were usually tailored to underline the music. Much of the program consisted of Don's "standards," intricate and compelling arrangements of evergreen selections with which Don has thrilled audiences from New York Paramount days to the present, and whatever he played turned into the kind of magic of which Don Baker is the sole dispenser.

After a rousing encore ("Buckle Down Wynsocki"), Don held court in the huge Wiltern lobby, pumping hands, greeting old friends, making new ones, exchanging small talk, autographing records (he has a new Concert Label release of his closing day concert at the New York Paramount 4/36 Wurlitzer) and generally charming his worshipers (it's no "put on"; one of Don's most popular qualities is his sincerity). His music is good, too.

The LA Chapter presented the Don Baker show as an evening concert open to the public, with considerable media ballyhoo, thanks to the promotion acumen of Chapter publicist Diana Stoney. Attendance exceeded 1000. □



IN THE SPOTLIGHT — Don's highly polished and ornate arrangements were "naturals" for Kimball pipe registrations, as was another Baker trademark — a rolling pedal bass. STUFOTO

cause there is something so buoyant in the music of Don Baker on pipes that we got as carried away as when we heard Don at the DTOC-Senate 4/34 Wurlitzer during the Detroit ATOE convention.

Don's concert for the Los Angeles Chapter at the Wiltern theatre on September 9 was no exception in the "lift"

ATOS INVITED TO ATTEND 1971 AGO CONVENTION IN HAWAII

All ATOS members are invited to attend the 1971 American Guild of Organists Regional Convention in Honolulu, July 2-8. According to Tom Norman, chairman of the '71 Convention, the 4/16 Robert Morton in the Waikiki Theatre has been totally restored and will be part of the convention activities. In addition, the 4/16 Robert Morton from the Princess Theatre has been removed and will be installed in the Hawaii Theatre hopefully in time for the July meeting.

Gaylord Carter has accepted a playing engagement so there should be much theatre organ music along with the classical programs.

For those who really love theatre organ, there will be time to attend both the AGO meeting and the ATOS Convention, currently scheduled for the following week in Seattle, Washington.

Information on the Honolulu convention may be obtained from: Tom Norman, P.O. Box 8688, Honolulu, Hawaii 96815.

The more ATOS members that are interested, the more theatre organ music could be put on the schedule so let Tom Norman know if you are interested as soon as possible.