

Chase House, Skytrails and Red Barn, on Hammonds and Gulbransen "Rialtos" (his favorite plug-in).

During this period he found time to make some fine recordings on the then Joe Kearns 3/26 Studio Wurlitzer, notably "Excursions in Hi-Fi" and "Love Moods" for Liberty Records. He also recorded the gone Columbia Square Wurlitzer ("Autumn Leaves") and made several plug-in records, among them "The Look of Love" on an Allen. Curiously, a record he thoroughly disliked, "Giant" on the Sunset label, remains his best seller, perhaps because of its youth orientation.

After six children, Johnny's marriage went on the rocks, and he "batched it" until he met Ruth about eight years ago. Ruth became his wife in 1966.

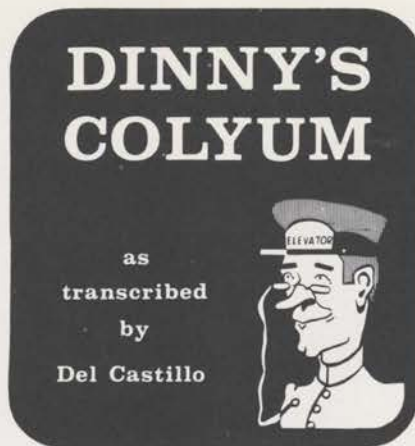
Four years ago Johnny quit smoking after being a "3-pack-a-day" man for many years. On February 29 of this year, a surgeon removed a malignant tumor from Johnny's brain successfully, but continued tests toward locating the cause of the malignancy. It was traced to a lung and on April 11 a nicotine-sodden cancerous lung was removed. That was expected to stop the generation of tumors and Johnny was anxious to get back to work. But then he went blind — until a second brain tumor was removed on June 15.

The three operations took their toll. Johnny's weight was way down but he was still full of fight. By telephone he told the writer that he had no intention of "taking off and leaving Ruthie. These are my happiest years."

But he put his affairs in order just the same. He told his wife that if the worst came he wanted to be cremated and his ashes scattered over the ocean. The worst came; a third brain tumor developed and the hardy constitution that had survived so much was too weak to undergo more surgery. Before he lapsed in unconsciousness, he warned his wife away: "I don't want you to see me like this."

Johnny was still stalling death. He managed somehow to survive in his hospital bed for three weeks of coma before the end came on August 5th. There was no funeral service.

On the next day a bi-motor plane winged out over the Pacific and all that remained of a unique musicianship and a truly wonderful person was consigned to the sea. □



I guess maybe one of the reasons I hang on to the coat tails of these here organ players and organ clubs is that I always wanted to learn to play the organ my own self. So I got some of these here organ method books but they all seem to sort of shoot off in different directions and they wind up be gettin me all mixed up. Like they start usin letters for the rite hand and then they give the fingers to use and when they say put your thum on C which is to the left of the two black keys then they give you the fingers to use and you go One, One, Two, Three, Three, Four, Five, go up one more for Five, come down again for Five, Three. Well, OK, I reckernize the toon, so I think well maybe it'll be easy to learn to play.

But then the next time they give me the fingers but dont give me the letters so I put my fingers where they was before with my thum on where it says middle C is, but it dont come out rite on account the book didnt say I should of moved my hand up and down. So pretty soon I get on to how I have to find where the letters is on the lines and spaces, and I can belt out Home Sweet Home OK except the

second part where I have to move my hand up to a noo place. And then when I get the toon down it still dont sound rite because the notes they all run together sort of. So the next thing I find out they is different kinds of notes that has different lengths like the ones with the holes in them is to hold on longer, and the ones with the line acrost the top is quicker, and the ones with the dot after them is longer except that if the dot is on the top then they is quicker. I ask you!

So by now I have to find out how to use the left hand and then I am really in trouble. One book says all you have to do is put your index finger on the letter it says for the chord and then the thum and the little pinkie will fall on the right place. Which is all rite except that I have to keep jumpin my hand up and down and pretty soon they is a cord that dont sound rite on account it should have had some of the black notes that nobody told me about. So then I try another book and it has a big chart with about 500 cords on it that I have to try to memorize and they all have the letter for the cord on the bottom note and I aint much better off than I was before on account my hand is jumpin up and down like one of these here Mexican jumpin beens.

So by now I am gettin kind of desparate on account every book seems to tell me something different and so I go to another book that says I have to learn all the different keys and the scales and then the cord will be 1, 3 and 5 of the scales for a Majer cord, and lower the 3rd for a Miner cord, and raise the 5th for a Oggmented cord, and lower the 7th for a 7th cord, and lower the 3rd and the 5th and the 7th for a Diminishing Cord, and I think what in tunket am I a-gettin



Larry's dramatic style is captured in tunes such as:

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into. So I throw that away and I try another book and it says to count up and down on all the keys includin the black ones and for a Majer cord all I have to do is count 4 and 3, and for a 7th cord count up 3 more, and by now I am a-gettin so punchy I couldnt even count the number of toes on my foot without comin out different every time.

But then somebody tells me they is books where every piece has little pictures that shows you where the fingers go for the different cords and so I try that and durned if it dont work pretty good. So I been tryin that and I come to the conclusion that now I am a organ player. And the only trouble is that the only pieces I can play is the ones in the books that has these little pictures for the cords, so how enybody ever learns to play the organ with three sets of lines for the two hands and the feet and no pictures is beyond me. □



*Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.*

*Address: P.O. Box 1314  
Salinas, Calif. 93901*

Dear Friends:

Noticed in the August issue that someone was looking for music used in the original *Phantom of the Opera*. The main theme was Victor Herbert's "Karma Overture" — particularly for the flight through the sewers of Paris. The love theme used was "My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice", from *Samson And Delilah*, —neutral scenes in the opera house used the "Faust Waltzes".

Since I was too young to ride the subways alone (honest!), I induced my mother to take me to the B.S. Moss

Broadway Theatre to see *Phantom*. I believe that this was the first run showing.

This was not the present Broadway theatre (also B.S. Moss) which was originally called the Colony — but a big old vaude-film theatre I believe between 40-41st Streets. I understand this was the theatre which opened with the first stage version of *Ben Hur*, — had horses racing on treadmills, etc.

I could never understand why there were (I believe three) remakes of *Phantom* since none surpassed the original.

Elsewhere, I have read a couple of times that the Brooklyn Paramount was the second largest theatre in N.Y. Huge as it was (4,500 seats), this was never true.

The three largest theatres in N.Y., all had the same capacity 6,200 seats, they were the Hippodrome, Roxy, and Music Hall. The Capitol which opened in 1919, had 5,000.

The present second largest theatre in N.Y., is the Academy of Music on 14th Street.

Another picture with interesting music was *Beau Geste*.

Regards,  
Oscar Roed  
Highland Park, N.J.

To whom it may concern:

For as long as I can remember, you continually refer to electronic organs as "plug ins". It seems to me that a pipe organ must have its blower plugged in to an electrical source or we would not know the instrument as we do today.

I have a very fine Rodgers Organ (33-E) custom installed in a "pipe" chamber above my living room ceiling. I find it quite as satisfying to play and listen to as many pipe organs that I have played over the years, and far superior to most of them, especially in home installations. Concerning my Rodgers organ, a minimum of 30 hours were put into it in voicing, etc. which is more than plugging a cord into an outlet.

Could you please find another term for "plug in"? I find the term obnoxious and hope you will take my suggestion in good faith as that is the way it is meant. Also, I am sure that the Rodgers Company as well as other electronic organ manufacturers who advertise in your magazine deserve better credit for their ads than having

their instruments referred to in this fashion.

I am sure that if it were not for the interest and contributions of the electronic manufacturers, the interest in the theatre pipe organ would not be what it is, and most of the famous old instruments would still be rotting in their pits.

Most Sincerely,  
Steven A. Malotte  
Littlerock, California

## OOPS...

Some of our sharp-eyed readers discovered some errors in the August issue. We apologize for not being correct, but hope we can set the record straight.

At the bottom right of page 29 our photo caption had Eddie Weaver congratulating the wrong person. The correct name of the young man in the photo is LYN LUNDE. The photo is reprinted here with the proper caption.



Eddie Weaver congratulates his student, Lyn Lunde, after Lyn's cameo appearance at the Mosque. He is currently staff organist at Loew's Richmond.

We gave credit to the wrong person as being staff organist at the Virginia Theatre, Alexandria. The actual organists at the Virginia are JIMMY BOYCE and JEAN LAUTZENHEISER.

In listing Cameo performers we neglected to mention the name of DR. C.A.J. PARMENTIER, who gave a masterful performance.

We are sincerely sorry for these errors and omissions, and thank those who brought them to our attention. □