

ference between a Wurlitzer and a Hammond. I am particularly interested in finding out where the organ is and the make and specifications. That tune and scene in the movie started my interest in the theatre organ, and quite possibly in several other people. HELP!

Sincerely,
Bruce Gentry
Organ Technician, Capitol Theatre,
Rome, New York

DEAR SIR:

May I be allowed through your publication to enlighten your readers on the comparative merits of British theatre organists.

I am an English organist now working in the U.S.A. but will never forget, as a boy of 12, being taken to the Regal Marble Arch to listen to Quentin MacLean at the Christie. At this time I had been studying violin for 5 years, but this gorgeous sound coming from one man completely knocked me out and from then on I had to play organ or bust!

Mac was a veritable giant among organists, tremendous technique, a master of registration and was probably the greatest of all time. Also, with his great sense of humor, to hear him accompany a short comedy was sheer delight. Way back when record masters were made on wax, he recorded the "Rhapsody in Blue". You could swear there was a pianist playing with him but he did this all on his own with, of course, no dubbing. The BBC has a copy of this recording which they keep in moth balls under lock and key.

Compared to Mac I am afraid all the others were as children. Of course he was offered the post as BBC theatre organist, but as the BBC was not notorious for paying high salaries, they could not meet the price this man's playing merited.

When he left Marble Arch, he was followed by Reg Foort and later by Sidney Torch. Both these players made substantial "improvements" to the organ but it never sounded as good again.

Mac's last job in England was at the Trocadero, Elephant and Castle Wurlitzer. This audience, I might tell you, was the roughest in London, but it was nothing for him to come up on the lift and play the Overture to Mr. Pickwick, or introduction to Act 3 of Lohengrin and hold the audience spell-bound. He sounded like he had four hands - we

will never see or hear the like again. When Jesse Crawford visited London to open the Wurlitzer at the Empire, they took him to hear Mac at the Trocadero. Mac played for 40 minutes to Jesse. When asked what did he think of him, Jesse replied "He's UNCANNY".

The finest theatre organist in England at this time is Gerald Shaw. He plays a 5 manual Compton at the Odeon Leicester Square with some ranks I suspect "borrowed" from other installations. Anyone going over

should make a point of hearing this player.

Of the younger school, Brian Rodwell is outstanding. Some of the jazz organists over here would do well to hear him take off on "Sweet Georgia Brown" on his recording at the Granada Tooting Wurlitzer. He realized the 8' pedals speak more quickly than 16' and put this knowledge to good effect.

Kindest regards,
Don Lorusso
Schnitzelhaus, Milwaukee, Wisconsin



ALABAMA

The last two meetings of the Alabama Chapter have featured open console with more of the members getting to know the 4/20 Wurlitzer at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. For most of us, it is a thrill just to sit on the seat of that famous old organ, and the thrill of hearing ourselves play it is understood only by other organ "nuts."

We feel particularly lucky to have as a member, Mr. Norville Hall. Mr. Hall helped uncrate the organ and was the first to play it - as a boy of only 17. I didn't hear him play it then, but he sure hasn't forgotten how.

Mrs. Lillian Truss is another of our members with many memories of the old organ. Mrs. Truss played the organ at the opening of the theatre and was the organist for the silent movies there for several years. She is preparing a program to present to us at our August meeting.

Mr. T.T. Miller, organist at the Trinity Methodist Church in Tuscaloosa, was with us for the first time at the last meeting. He had never played the Alabama Wurlitzer, but no one would ever guess it. After hearing him play, the rest of us were ready to go home. He particularly held us spell bound with his rendition of "Some-

where My Love", and the small but enthusiastic crowd shouted for "more".

Focus is on the completion of the restoration begun several years ago by members of the Southeastern Chapter. The percussion section is the object of attention at present. At the last work session, the pneumatics for the harp were reinstalled after being releathered by the Coles. The Coles have also releathered the pneumatics for the xylophone and they are to be reinstalled at the next work session.

ALLEEN COLE

CENTRAL INDIANA

The "greatest spectacle in racing" occurs in Indianapolis every May with the advent of the 500 Mile Race, but CIC-ATOS is not to be outdone by this event, and most every one of our meetings can easily compete as the "greatest spectacle" in "pipe organing", keeping the theatre pipe organ movement alive and ever soaring to new heights of accomplishment.

The May meeting reflected no competition by all the usual race-oriented activities. Despite the fact that many had to travel a considerable distance, 60 members were present at this meeting hosted by Maurice and Carol

Finkel in Shelbyville, Indiana. The Finkels have a 2 manual 5 rank Uniphone installed in a specially designed music room that easily accommodates 50 or more people. A sky light is built in one end of the room and provides a dramatic effect directly over the organ console.

Our host told a little about the history of the Uniphone. It was originally installed in the Dream Theatre in Indianapolis and was later moved to the Nazarene Church in Lawrence (Indiana) before being installed in the Finkel residence. Ken and David Finkel, ages 12 and 15, provided a delightful program. Each soloed on the Uniphone, then played several duets on the Uniphone and Hammond organ alternating instruments, each showing versatility on both. Open console time followed on both organs and the twin Steinway grands in the living room.

Announcement was made that Steve Jones, our young blind organist, had won 1st place in Yamaha's Organ Competition held in Indianapolis earlier in the month. Steve was entered in the Pro-Am Division which is the class for professionals over 16. Our congratulations to Steve. He will now compete in the Regionals at St. Charles, Illinois.

The May's meeting in June — sounds like I'm all mixed up (and sometimes I am), but the Mays, Frank and Frances, hosted the most delightful June meeting. They live in Kokomo and have one of the finest pipe organs installed in a residence in this area — if not the finest. It is a 4/18 Wicks-Barton and still growing.

No formal program was planned in order to allow more time for open console. However, an interview with Lee Irwin taped by Ken Double at the time of a recent concert by Lee at the Rivoli Theatre in Indianapolis was presented. Lee recalled many experiences in his early career in the movie theatre and later in radio and TV. It was most enjoyable and informative.

Prior to open console time Jimmy Boyer played a brief impromptu program, performing in his usual superb style. Later Dessa Byrd favored us with a couple of numbers on the May's magnificent organ. It's always good to have Dessa play for us — only wish she would do it more often.

The Mays also have a large Hammond installation with all kinds of speakers and electronic "extras". This is located in the large living room of

their home, and so completely away from the special room housing the pipe organ, that it makes open console time available on both instruments, a really ideal situation.

Our two programs over WIAN-FM Indianapolis still continue to be heard weekly. Ken Double who has worked so capably in presenting these programs *The Mighty Wurlitzer Speaks Again* is now accompanying the Tommy Bartlett Water Show at the Wisconsin Dells. The chapter is planning a trip to the Dells in August to attend the Water Show and hear Ken's entertainment. The itinerary also includes several stops in the Illinois and Wisconsin area where there are pipe organ installations in homes, restaurants, etc. Sounds like a really exciting trip — more about that later. A note of thanks here to Roger Whitehead who is doing a fine job of carrying the WIAN-FM program through the summer during Ken's absence.

RUTH D. WARD

CENTRAL OHIO

On June 17 our chapter was fortunate in having the West Penn Chapter elect to have their meeting in Columbus at the home of Tom and Ann Hamilton and later at the Ohio Theatre. Our members were invited to join them to see and play Tom's new Rodgers-Morton, as written up in the June issue of THEATRE ORGAN, and later to go to hear the Ohio's 4-20 Morton. Tom demonstrated his new instrument after which COTOS member Betsy Richard was featured as guest artist. Open console followed.

At the Ohio Theatre, manager and co-owner of the Morton, Carlos Parker welcomed the group and demonstrated the Morton's great capabilities and following a brief recital by COTOS President Mike Williams, West Penn Prexy Rey Galbraith proved his prowess at the theatre pipe organ with a delightful rendition of old favorites.

West Penn really does things up right as indicated at the luncheon preceding the day's activities when Program Chairman Bob Mitchell distributed a beautifully illustrated program of what was to be a well organized day.

The former RKO Palace 3-16 Wurlitzer, after extensive rebuilding, is about ready to be reinstalled in a new location but so far we have no suitable place for it.

The Ohio Theatre's regular summer series of dollar movies is about to start with regulars Tom Hamilton, Paul Noblitt, Mike Williams and Frank Babbitt playing for about 45 minutes before each show plus a 15 minute intermission and a 10 minute closing. Dennis James will be in town in August and has offered to do a few of the shows.

FRANK BABBITT

CHICAGO AREA

CATOE's third public concert of 1973 and its third sell out was on April 28 and featured Hector Olivera at the 3/10 Wurlitzer installed and maintained by CATOE at Downers Grove North High School.

Every word you have heard or read about Hector Olivera including "genius", "fantastic", and "phenomenal" is true. His playing technique is superb, his registrations fresh, his Spanish accent humor captivating. His pedal work is unbelievable. The melody line of "Danny Boy" was carried by both feet on nothing more than an 8' flute in the pedals. Two hands played chromatic runs on the harp while two feet played four notes in the pedals. An "American Fantasy" medley closed with Hector's trans-



Hector Olivera captivates his April 28 CATOE concert audience with his Spanish accent. (Bill Lamb Photo)



Downers Grove Principal Herb Adams (left) accepts \$600 benefit check from CATOE Treasurer Art Todesco during Olivera concert. — (Bill Lamb Photo)

cription of the Wilhousky arrangement of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic", the echoing trumpet version made famous by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. A jam session for guests from Detroit followed during which Dennis James sat in.

Forty Motor City Chapter members had bussed to the Hector show to be our guests. They also joined us the next morning for our regular monthly social, this one at the Patio Theatre. Young Walt Strojny, a recent graduate of the music program at Lane Tech High School, played a fine program at the 3/17 Barton. Walt intends to continue his musical education with a full scholarship at the Sherwood Music School, Chicago.

On May 12 and 13 some forty CATOErs bussed to Detroit. They heard Bill Thomson play at the Detroit Theater Organ Club on Saturday night. Sunday morning found the group at the Redford Theatre as guests of the Motor City Chapter to hear Rick Shindell play the 3/10 Barton with the new pit piano. After refreshments and open console time the group departed the city which will host the 1974 ATOS convention. *Blower* editor Don Grimshaw was disappointed that VOX CATOE's Tom Tibia was not on hand to play for his Detroit "fans". Surprise stops were made at the homes of Al and Betty Mason and the Stanley Albertsons to hear their Wurlitzers.

Gaylord Carter's concert at the Deerpath Theatre on May 16 was a near sell out. He reprimed a rare 3/10 Geneva (with piano) in the English guild hall style theatre located in the posh north shore suburb of Lake Forest. Three comedy shorts, a fiftieth anniversary sing-along, plus

organ selections delighted Carter's sixth Chicago area theatre organ audience.

The Civic Opera House Skinner organ is ready to play again due to the efforts of member John Peters. A local organist will play it for opening night of Carol Channing's new show, *Lorelei*.

Socials at WMBI and WGN and the Opera House plus fall shows at the Pickwick, Arcada (with stage acts), and Montclare Theatres will keep CATOE the busiest ATOS chapter, bringing more theatre organ to more people. And the big push is on to have the big one, the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer, ready for a holiday show early in December.

RICHARD J. SKLENAR

DELAWARE VALLEY

The season came to an exciting close. The bus trip to Maryland proved quite informative and a lot of fun. Not only was the day bright and sunny, so were the people we came in contact with. Peter Moller Daniels and his father very graciously guided us through the intricacies of pipe organ manufacture and allowed us to try a new instrument on the erecting floor.

Next stop was the Dick Kline estate in Thurmont, Md. Built on a lake (formerly a quarry) the home is constructed around the organ. (See June, 1970 THEATRE ORGAN, Vol. 12 No. 3) Dick, our cheerful host, allowed one and all to try their hand at the 4 manual, gold-leafed console. It's an exciting sound, it's exciting to play and it's located in a breath-taking wooded section of Maryland.

The week prior to our bus tour, Dean Robinson, from central New York state was presented in concert at

the Brookline Theatre in suburban Philadelphia. With nostalgia as the theme, Dean's program took the beautifully maintained Kimball through its paces in music from the 20's and 30's. It became evident throughout the program that here was an artist who knew theatre styling from the old days.

Sunday, May 13 was chosen as the day to recognize a decade of continuous operation of the Lansdowne Theatre's 3/8 Kimball. Bill Greenwood, who originally restored and has continuously maintained this organ with the help of numerous enthusiasts, gave us a brief background. The organ was restored in a years time and was first presented to the public in early 1963 with a concert by the late Leonard MacClain. The major event of the day was a concert by Karl Cole of Syracuse, N.Y. who commenced his program with swinging renditions of the Gershwin "Rhythms" — I've Got and Fascinating — Karl played a varied concert, including several samples of his 'dual' handi-craft; that is, the ability to play and blend different melodies with a minimum of discord and confusion. A genuine sing-along was a most appropriate part of the show, and Karl sounded like an old pro at a 30 rank organ all the way through the old chestnuts. The program was concluded with requests from the audience. A very fine concert.

The date was April 28 but the magic carpet of John Muri swished us back to 1927 with his subtle and magnificent accompaniment to Buster Keaton's *The General* at John Dickinson High School. This movie, released just a short time before the pictures began to talk, has many funny moments — all of them accented with superb timing by John on the 3/28 Kimball. In addition to the film, he included a sing-along and several surprises such as P.D.Q. Bach's "Unbegun Symphony". The climax was a thrilling finale: "Entrance and Processional of Bacchus" from the *Sylvan Ballet* by Delibes.

After this flurry of springtime activity, it'll be a relaxing summer in Delaware Valleyland but plans are already beginning to take shape for the fall. This correspondent would like to thank Mr. Bert Preston and Grant Whitcomb for their help with this column.

SHIRLEY HANNUM



Maria Kumagai at the Wiltern Kimball. — (John Nagle Photo)

LOS ANGELES

Our May concert at the Wiltern Theatre was on Sunday the 20th and featured John Ferguson, formerly of the St. Louis Fox Theatre, at the console of the 4-manual Kimball organ. His program was made up of old standards plus a good selection of contemporary popular tunes. He made full use of the tonal resources of the organ and his arrangements were interesting and had lots of variety. His versions of "A Foggy Day" and "On a Little Street in Singapore" created the proper moods for these atmospheric tunes and showed real artistry. A brief



John Ferguson — (Stufoto)

business meeting was held after the concert to vote on proposed changes to the Chapter Articles of Incorporation.

June 17th was the biggest theatre organ day of the year with a concert at the Wiltern Theatre in the morning and an "Organ Crawl" in the afternoon. Maria Kumagai was the artist for the morning concert and it was truly an exceptional event with more than 600 members and guests showing up at 9:30 A.M. to hear a fine program. Miss Kumagai is a student of both Richard Purvis and Bill Thomson and she played both show tunes and light classics with equal ease. Her playing of the Liszt "2nd Hungarian Rhapsody" and then the music from *Kismet* brought the audience to its feet in a standing ovation. Her three changes of costume during the program, including a kimono, added color to the show.

After the Wiltern concert 250 members and guests boarded five chartered buses for a tour to see and hear three of the most famous and most recorded theatre organs to be found anywhere. Mini-concerts were presented at Bob Carson's home in Hollywood, at Dick Simonton's home in Toluca Lake, and at the Lorin Whitney Studio in Glendale. Helen Dell (Mrs. Bob Carson) played the former Joe Kearns Organ in her living room. We were fortunate that she had the day off from her regular job as organist for the Los



Bill Thomson — (Stufoto)

Angeles Dodgers and was at home to callers — 250 of them. Due to space limitations the groups were kept to 50 to avoid overcrowding in the two homes and the recording studio. The organist at the Simonton Bijou was Bill Thomson who had spent the morning at the Wiltern announcing the program for Maria Kumagai. After his last mini-concert at the 4/36 Wurlitzer, Bill advised his fifth audience that he felt as if he'd played six concerts that day. As a special bonus attraction, the 4/68 Aeolian-Skinner American Classic Organ in the Simonton living room was heard in a brief concert with Richard Warne, organist and choir director at the Hollywood First Methodist Church, at the console. John Ferguson, who played for us at the Wiltern in May, was the featured organist at the Lorin Whitney Studio. It was truly a great day of theatre organ music and enjoyed by all who participated. The chapter is very grateful to its three members who graciously made their organ installations available for this tour.

SAM DICKERSON

MOTOR CITY

Over the weekend of May 12-13 we were host to a bus-load of enthusiastic CATOE members who journeyed from the Windy City to sample the sounds of theatre organ in the Motor City. On Saturday night CATOE was invited to attend a concert given by Bill Thomson at the 4/34 Wurlitzer at the Detroit Theater Organ Club.

Bright and early on Sunday morning, CATOE members were the guests of the Motor City Chapter at the Redford Theatre in northwest Detroit. On hand to play the 3/10 Barton was Motor City member Rick Shindell who

performed a diversified program which also displayed the versatility of the newly installed upright piano. Following Rick's program, CATOE members were encouraged to try their hand at the Redford Barton in an open-console session.

Ashley Miller, in his first appearance for the Motor City Chapter, was the artist for our May 21-22 public silent film and theatre organ program at the Royal Oak Theatre. Ashley played a wide variety of selections, making liberal use of our newly installed Marimba, Trombone and Salicional, which have increased the size of this Barton to twelve ranks. His light-hearted accompaniment to Jackie Coogan's antics in *Peck's Bad Boy* was enjoyed by our audience of 2,500.

More than one hundred members participated in our Round-Robin visit to three home installations on Sunday, June 24. The day-long event began at the Punch and Judy Theatre at 9:30 A.M. where Motor City Vice-Chairman John Fischer, at the 2/5 Wurlitzer, presented a slide and musical program highlighting the Hollywood musicals of the Thirties. After a short break, members took advantage of an open-console session to try out the "Little Sister" Wurlitzer.

Considerable time was spent by Betty Heffer, also Harry and Virginia Hadfield in decorations and preparations for the Punch and Judy program, and the chapter thanks them for their effort.

Splitting into three groups, members then toured the northeastern suburban Detroit installations of Herb Head (3/14 Wurlitzer-plus), Chuck and Betty Heffer (3/8 Robert Morton) and Lee Hohner (3/10 Robert Morton).

Both hosts and guests were well pleased and eagerly await the next Motor City get-together.

DON LOCKWOOD

NORTH TEXAS

Plenty more activity to report for the North Texas Chapter. It looks like this might be a really successful year, even with the usual obstacles created by "widespread activity." It's not the activity that's widespread, however, but rather the membership geographically. The Mothers' Day Concert, with Mark Kenning at the console of the Casa Wurlitzer, was a great success, and Mark did a great job of demonstrating his own musical capa-

bilities as well as those of the organ to the more than 350 members and guests present. Mark's well-chosen repertoire covered classics, semi-classics, mod, pop, nostalgia, all with his own special styling and unique arrangements. He's a versatile, capable and innovative performer on the theatre organ. Thanks again, Mark. We're proud to have you in the chapter, and really enjoy your performances.

On June 3rd, through the efforts of Stan Guy, Fred and Joye Mitchell, and our Secretary, Doris Garrett, the chapter filled up a Greyhound bus in Dallas in the morning, and journeyed through rain to the home of Fred and Joye Mitchell in Mexia. Despite the heavy rain most of the way down, things cleared off nicely just as we arrived, and we were in for a great time. Fred greeted us at the bus door and jokingly advised that we remove our shoes, since about 3 inches of rain had fallen in the couple of hours just prior to our arrival. Many of the members took Fred seriously on the shoe bit, and then proceeded to disrobe further at the poolside recreation house, don their bathing suits, and jump into the beautiful pool. Everyone enjoyed a picnic lunch on the Mitchells' ranch. Fred had a surprise for us in the form of a reed organ installed in a railroad caboose he has converted into a pleasant "guest house", without detracting from the railroad lore, but the dadburned Texas rain (everything is BIG in Texas) kept most of the membership away from that item, since neither hip boots or a rowboat were available. Fred was disappointed in that most of us didn't get to see that installation, but it's really a blessing in disguise. Maybe he and Joye will invite the bunch back again just to make sure we all see and hear that instrument.

The Mitchells have two other organs, both Rodgers theatre models, installed in their own beautiful home, and the home of Fred's mother, who lives only a few yards away from them. Mrs. Mitchell's home, we are told, is close to 150 years old, and has been completely renovated and re-decorated for her use. It's the original building, red brick, as built in the early 1800's. The white and gold Rodgers console, occupied for a good part of the afternoon by various chapter members in an open console session, is the first thing you see, looking in the front door of the building. Those in the room listening to the organ didn't

want to leave when the time came to board the bus back to Dallas. Actually, they had already had a considerable concert on the Rodgers in Fred and Joye's home, once again demonstrating the theatre organ talent in the chapter, before Fred escorted us over to the other house. The location? 7 - Oaks in Mexia (that's pronounced ma-hay - yah, ala Español, amigos).

Fred and Joye, we all really enjoyed that great Sunday. Thanks again, and please invite us back.

On June 17 we had a Sunday morning business meeting at the Fine Arts Theatre in Dallas where plans were made for more "fun activity", like maybe a bus trip to Tulsa and a visit with the Tulsa Chapter, or other such pleasant doings. After the humdrum of business, Jerry Bacon presented a brief concert on the organ he is building into the theatre. That was complete with stage lighting and special effects, run by program chairman Pat Kohl. Pat's been going great guns with his committee in keeping activities hopping, despite a sudden illness and a bad spill while on a factory tour (organ factories, that is) which put him on crutches for a while and interfered drastically with his pedal clavier manipulations.

Jerry's concert was great, with the lighting effects reminiscent of "the good old days" of theatre organ, and the chapter has shown its approval of Jerry's work, both musical and constructional, by the participation in the "work sessions" going on periodically at the Fine Arts.

What's ahead? Well, by the time this appears in THEATRE ORGAN, another Casa Mighty Wurlitzer Concert, played by chapter member Dan Bellamy, staff organist at Casa, will be history. It's scheduled for July 8th, with chapter members again hosting, ushering and handling the refreshments at intermission. The Summer Theatre part of Casa has been having some problems due to difficulties in casting commitments, but these should not interfere with organ and chapter activities, especially after the summer season is over. Dan is a very accomplished young organist from Houston, and plays that great Wurlitzer in real theatre organ style, with great technique. The chapter is helping to expand the organ with various additions such as a siren, added last month, which comes in mighty handy on silent movie bits, Casa stage pre-

sentations, and as part of the toy counter for the true theatre organists. Plans are working for other similar additions, although the organ, as re-located by chapter member Jim Peterson, had plenty already. These additions are more embellishments to an already fine theatre instrument.

JOE KOSKI

POTOMAC VALLEY

The May meeting of the Potomac Valley Chapter was held at the Rockville, Maryland residence of our Secretary, Marge Lane, and her husband Bob. The Lanes' 2/5 Robert Morton came from the Newport Theatre in Norfolk, Virginia (where Frank Lybolt played it) via chapter member Dick Sullivan. Dick refinished the console in white and gold, then decided to sell the organ. The Lanes jumped at the chance as it was only eight blocks away. The Morton is installed handsomely in the downstairs family room where it is played nearly every evening by Marge and ATOS friends. The guest artist for our program was Earl Sharits who played many years in Colorado under the stage name of Earl Sherdelle. He came to the Washington area in 1934 and recently retired from the IRS. Under Earl's capable hands the beautiful little Morton proved once and for all that one does not require acres of pipes to produce lush and thrilling theatre organ sound.

RECIPE FOR A PERFECT DAY

Assemble the following ingredients:

- 1 pair hosts
- 2 manuals, 5 ranks Morton theatre organ
- 1 family room opening into a patio



Bob and Marge Lane dedicated their Morton theatre organ to their eight year old grandson, David Gore. — (Roy Wagner Photo)



Since the Merriken studio itself can accommodate a limited number of guests a large canopy was attached to the outside of the barn-studio and additional TO fans sat in what was at one time a pasture. Larry Goodwin counts heads.

- 1 tuner (Doug Miller)
- 1 congenial organist
- 27 nostalgic melodies

Combine hosts, theatre organ, family room and tuner. Mix well, and simmer in dedication until the consistency of a chapter meeting is attained. Blend in organist and melodies. Add:

- 165 Potomac Valley Chapter members.
- 819 cookies, homemade
- 200 soft drinks, iced

Toss gently but thoroughly. Sift the following spices into an open console:

- 1 cup sweet and lovely Marge
- 1 cup Charlie Affelder
- 1 tbsp Rick Maryman
- 1 tbsp Phil Pensyl
- dash of Howard Murphy
- dash of "Stump" Miller
- 1 tsp Roy Wagner
- 1 tsp Al Worley
- 1 tsp Rolland Miller
- 1 tsp Norm Thibeault
- a pinch of Margie Bang
- a pinch of Hazel Lockwood

Mix, and bake at 78 degrees for one afternoon. Divide into two equal parts. Cover completely with sunshine, top with our pretty Marge Lane and serve.

A circus atmosphere prevailed as over 200 members and guests gathered under the big-top canvas at George Merriken's for our June meeting. The juggling act starred Jerry Cunningham who kept the multi-faceted plans in the air for several weeks, organizing and coordinating the day's festivities with ringmaster Merriken. Even open

heart surgery only five weeks prior did not deter George from guiding our vice chairman in carrying out another successful chapter meeting.

The 3/10 Wurlitzer from the Tivoli Theatre in Washington, D.C. and the 3/15 Wurlitzer from the Paramount Publix Theatre in Steubenville, Ohio were combined for this installation at the "Wurlitzer Music Hall." The Paramount console now commands 22 ranks installed in a barn in a picturesque rural setting in Maryland. The barn-become-studio houses memorabilia and furnishings from several bygone theatres and nostalgia envelops everyone entering the heavily draped and softly lit organ room.

JEAN LAUTZENHEISER



Dick Smith presented a fine concert which included many Crawford-style ballads at the special request of host, George Merriken, (left).



Mike Koons in concert at Big Bob's Pizza. — (Don Myers Photo)

PUGET SOUND

The first Puget Sound chapter meeting of the year was held on April 8 at Big Bob's Pizza Restaurant in Federal Way where we heard and enjoyed Mike Koons in concert on the 2/10 Robert Morton. At 16, Mike has developed a style which is appreciated by young and old alike, as evidenced by his popularity as one of the Big Bob's house organists. Mike's concert began with a rousing "Mission Impossible" showing off the newly-installed Wurlitzer upright piano as well as the rest of the exposed percussions and traps. His concert consisted of contemporary pieces, with a sprinkling of "Oldies", in a very modern style. His "Theme from the Summer of '42" was a beautiful example of what this organ can do, building from a soft ensemble of Tibias and Strings, to a crescendo of full organ, complete with the first public performance of the 32' metal Diaphones suspended above patron's heads.

This installation always seems to be getting bigger and better as the organ is maintained by Rainier Pipe Organ Service and is constantly being enlarged. Installed for this meeting were a Gottfried Bell Clarinet and Wurlitzer Krumet. The 32' Diaphones were installed over the past months and have slowly been brought to life. In fact, the low CCCC pipe was made playable only half an hour before Mike's program!

Many Puget Sound members turned out on May 18-19 to hear Portland

organist Jonas Nordwall in concert at the Granada Organ Loft in West Seattle. The Granada club houses the beautiful 4/33 Wurlitzer originally from Portland's Liberty Theatre.

May 20 saw the group meet for a noon luncheon at Meeker's Landing Restaurant in Kent. From there we went to Kent United Methodist Church to hear three local artists in concert on the church's Wicks classic pipe organ.

Our three artists were Mr. Bob Rank, organist at Seattle's University Congregational Church, Nancy Acheson, the church's organist, and Cliff Lenz, a local television and music personality. This Wicks organ features an outstanding unenclosed pipework display across the chancel and was a good opportunity for many members to get a firsthand look at a classic pipe organ.

Charlie Allen, the Wicks representative for the Pacific Northwest, was on hand to open the chambers after the concert and explain the details of this installation. Many thanks to chapter members Fred and Erma Gain as well as Conrad and Jean Bloomquist for arranging this fine outing.

The June meeting was held on Sunday, June 24. This gathering was billed as a "Mini Home Tour" featuring two local installations. First on the agenda was the Bob Wieland installation in Bellevue, east of Seattle. Bob has a lovely 3/6 organ of mostly Kimball pipework. Situated in a "mini theatre" in the Wieland residence,

complete with crystal chandelier and theatre-type wall decor, we heard member Don Myers put through the organ through its paces. Bob has done an outstanding job of restoring this fine instrument complete with brand new Balcom and Vaughan chestwork. It surely looks like a brand new organ. This was the first chance that the club has had to see Bob's installation.

Second stop on the tour was the residence organ of Genny Whitting in the north part of Seattle. Genny's 2/12 Robert Morton lured many members to try their hands in an open console session. The organ is a hybrid of the best of many builders all combined into a beautiful sound by Genny, Don Myers and others. A feature of the installation is an Aeolian Metal Bar Harp which is located on a stairwell landing to the left of the console. It's truly a lush sound, enhanced by the setting of a large beamed living room which really makes it sound like a theatre. On display in the Whitting basement was an exposed Kimball/Myers Trap Counter as well as a Wood Marimba/Harp, all connected to the organ, and the small "Silent Movie" console in the lower rec. room. Chambers are off of this room and many members were given chamber tours. In the far corner, there appeared to be something in the vague shape of a 5 manual horseshoe console! Hmm, what could Genny be planning next? Actually, this is the much-publicized 5 manual built and owned by Don Myers.

Plans are to schedule more home tours in the future as this is an excellent way for members to see each other's installations and make plans for their own home organs.

In Tacoma, the former Seattle Liberty Wurlitzer has been sold to a church in Spokane. This was the organ which put the Wurlitzer company "in the black" and skyrocketed them to fame in the theatre organ world. The organ was installed in a gymnasium at Pacific Lutheran University and was in poor condition due to neglect and poor installation. We're glad to see it being put to good use and it will be quite a sound in the planned church!

Upcoming is a planned chapter trip to Olympia to hear Andy Crow in concert at the Olympic Theatre sometime in late September. The Olympic is equipped with a beautiful Wurlitzer which is in excellent condition.

TERRY HOCHMUTH

SIERRA

Travel has always been a popular American pastime, be it "just to get away from it all" or in pursuit of a hobby. Theatre pipe organ lovers go to great lengths to hear their favorite brand of music. Consider the attendance at our National Conventions or at some special event like the rededication of the "Mother Wur-litzer" in Wichita. The Sierra Chapter exercises this great American pastime regularly.

Except in the San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego areas, California towns are many miles apart.

Herein lies our story.

Sierra Chapter members and guests, about 40, put on their traveling shoes for a trip in pursuit of theatre pipe organ music beautifully played. The date was Sunday, May 20 and the destination the home of John and Aurora Leininger, east of Redding, California at Shingletown. A *good* map is needed to find the exact location. Shingletown is not much more than a post office, store, bar, garage, service station and a few homes on State Route 44 enroute to Lassen Volcanic National Park. The road above Shingletown is closed every winter (as early as mid-September and



View from Leininger Sun Deck. The lake is part of a power producing reservoir system.



"Tiny" James explains one of his registrations to the listeners.

late as May, depending upon severity of the Northern California winter). Shingletown has the hospitable Leininger family and a beautifully preserved theatre pipe organ. That is what counts.

The organ is installed in two chambers, using the same dimensions as those in the theatre from whence it came. The pipe chambers speak into a "mixing" area. All of this forms one wall of the spacious Leininger living room. The instrument has not been changed from the original specifications which is a credit to John Leininger.

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its hot weather, but it had moderated making it a wonderful day to travel. The artist of the day was "Tiny" James. "Tiny" is no stranger to this instrument, having been staff organist for the Fox Oakland Theatre, the original home of the organ. He made a recording on it in the theatre (1956), which is an accurate reproduction of how lush this instrument sounded. (Ed. note: Reference is to Doric record No. DO (S) 1210). Listeners at this meeting who knew the original installation were amazed at how the "in" theatre sound has been retained. Needless to say, "Tiny" had the 235 special under his command and all those in attendance would travel anytime to anyplace for this type of performance.

This report would not be complete without mention of our hosts' home and its setting. There are no adjectives to adequately describe the superb location. It sits amongst Cedars, Firs, Oaks, and Ponderosa Pines, facing a lake with a well groomed lawn spreading from the sun deck to the lake. The home itself is gracious and impressive, designed by the Leiningers for California type of casual indoor-outdoor living. Being located above the 4000 foot elevation of the Sierra, the days are warm and clear with summer evenings air conditioned by nature. In the



The console at Pizza and Pipes holds the framed charter of Sierra Chapter of ATOS. Doorway on left is front entrance to establishment. Pipe chambers can be viewed from outside as well as in. Relay room is over entry way.

winter there is usually a blanket of snow.

Sierra Chapter does stay home once in awhile (but not for long).

The June meeting of Sierra Chapter was held in Sacramento with over one hundred members and guests enjoying Emil Martin at the Arden Pizza and Pipes 4/21 Wurlitzer. (Editor's Note: We are planning a full story on Pizza and Pipes in a future issue of THEATRE ORGAN).

By the time this is published Portland will have been history, but many,

if not most, of Sierra Chapter's membership will have been to Portland and the National Convention, and even more of them will have been to Pine Grove, California.

Pine Grove, California is home to Sierra Chapter members, Jim Welch and Jim Jr. The Welch family own a 2/22 Harris classic pipe organ. For three successive years they have played host to chapter members and the club's August board meeting. Pictures are being assembled now for a feature story on the Welch organ installation.

SOUTHEASTERN

On Sunday, May 13, Southeastern Chapter ATOS members heard organist Dolton McAlpin in his third musical performance at Atlanta's Fox Theatre. McAlpin is presently pursuing a law degree at the University of Mississippi at Oxford, which makes his artistry all the more phenomenal since playing theatre organ occupies only a portion of the young organist's time.

It is a rather warm experience under a solo spotlight perched over the Fox's cavernous pit, and (as an "organ widow" once remarked to author Ben Hall) all those "buttons and colored watcha-ma-call-its" can make even the veteran organists wince. McAlpin

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mopped his brow more than once, but his playing was smooth, direct, and his musical format was interpreted with an impressive facility. The 4/42 Moller seems to possess unique sound characteristics when various organists play — thanks to its wide tonal resources, and McAlpin has, in his three Fox appearances, established an anticipated “McAlpin sound.”

McAlpin's Fox concert closed another successful season for the Southeastern Chapter. Formal meetings will resume in the fall of 1973. Big news for Atlanta area ATOS members will be Lee Erwin's engagement to play at least three silent film scores for J. Hunter Todd's Atlanta International Film Festival to be held at the Fox Theatre in mid September.

JOHN CLARK McCALL, JR.

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

The January meeting was held at Northminster Presbyterian Church where chapter members Art Crowell and Ralph Cloos gave an explanation of some differences between a church pipe organ and a unified theatre pipe organ. Ralph played several concert selections; then on to the home of Lois Seamands, our chairman, for the business meeting. Types and designs of membership badges were discussed and the final choice is the console picture

of the Wurlitzer in the Byrd Theatre, Richmond, Virginia.

We decided to split the offices of secretary-treasurer, and Bob High continues as secretary, with Ken Fields assuming the newly created treasurer's post. Art Crowell played a short theatre organ type concert on Lois' 650 Conn, followed by open console.

The last business meeting was held on March 4 at the home of Ray and Anna Rodig. The present officers were reelected to another term. A special guest, Dr. William H. Barnes, was made an honorary member by acclamation of the membership. After a discussion of our upcoming concert, the console was “open for business”.

The first concert undertaken by SATOS which was open to the public was held on April 15 in the YMCA Gym/Auditorium which had very good acoustics. The organ was our chairman's Conn 650 with Conn pipe speakers furnished by the Broadway Organ and Piano Co. of Tucson.

Lon Hanagan, staff organist of the new National Theatre on Broadway in New York City, and ATOS member, and honorary member of SATOS, was our guest artist. After opening with “The Best Things In Life Are Free”, his program included some old songs, some for the younger generation, and an interesting improvisation from six

notes suggested by the audience.

Ralph L. Cloos, who played in the Milwaukee area under the name of Ralph Lewis, and Arthur N. Crowell, who played in the Los Angeles area also closed the Tucson Fox Theatre, were two of the theatre organists in the audience. Art also had a long contract on a Hammond in the Phoenix Hotel Lounge and is now teaching in Tucson.

Over one hundred attended Mr. Hanagan's concert including Dr. Camil Van Hulse, the composer. One comment was overheard from a non-member, “I enjoyed the music because I recognized the tunes played.”

The music stayed within the theatre organ realm of popular music, not the classics, with the exception of the “Palms” in honor of Palm Sunday.

Starting out in May 1972, we have since grown from 15 to 30 members.

BOB HIGH

SOUTH FLORIDA

SPECIAL NOTE:

Thanks to the speedy U.S. Postal Service and other unknown forces, the South Florida Chapter Notes submitted since November, 1972, have not been printed. For the benefit of our out-of-state friends, the following

— *Featured Organist on the Paul Whiteman Show* —

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Chairman Steve Fitzgerald presents Reggie Foort with an honorary membership in the South Florida Chapter.

Mr. Reginald Foort was his usual witty self at our February meeting and kept his audience captivated with fondly recollected highlights from his life as an organist. A short recital closed his program at the magnificent Trinity Cathedral.

Many thanks to our charming Queen of Harmony, Betty Lee Taylor, who proved, once again, that she is a "showman" all the way, and to Victor Tibaldeo, for hosting our March meeting. Betty Lee, who arrived in a cloud of smoke, thanks to the famous Miami River bridges, quickly captivated her audience with a varied and interesting program. She skillfully guided her listeners through several decades of nostalgic memories and left with each, a gift of inner peace. Betty Lee closed with a rousing "12th Street Rag" and when she turned to honor a standing ovation, it was the Conn organ that was smoking.

In April we attended a Miami Philharmonic Society sponsored concert featuring Virgil Fox and the orchestra. May found us in the Palm Beach Studios of Sunrise Music Company with Bob Ralston as the feature artist on the Thomas T.O.

The Jureit organ has never sounded better and our featured artist for June, John Steele, was in top form. He played selections from everyone's "book of favorites", whether mod or



Reggie Foort at the 4/52 Skinner at the Trinity Cathedral, Miami.

nostalgic, jazz or classical. The highlight of his recital was a cleverly arranged, flawlessly played, medley from *Snow White* — a portion of his convention program that he promised to do for us. Open console provided a few surprises, climaxed by an eight hand duet (quartet?) with John and Cal Jureit on organ and Art Venecia and Betty Lee Taylor on the concert grand.

STEVE FITZGERALD

synopsis of club activities is offered.

January found the chapter on a tour of Gusman Philharmonic Hall (former Olympia Theatre). Mr. Dutch Kasper, of the theatre stage crew, treated us to a demo of the atmospheric and other lighting effects. Hal Stanton, a former Florida State Theatre Manager, provided the anecdotes. This chapter is currently working on restoration of the original 15 rank Wurlitzer.

Dick Smith

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WESTERN RESERVE

The Western Reserve newsmakers, printless too long, now bring you up to date direct from the Gray's Armory in Cleveland, Ohio — where our 3/15 "Mighty Wurlitzer" resides. It was originally installed in the Stanley Warner Theatre in Erie, Pennsylvania. In the fall of 1969 when it was being readied to move to Cleveland, the original custodian of this theatre was there to see our instrument on its way!

Presented to WRTOS, Inc. by the Cleveland Grays who received it as a donation from the RKO Warner Theatres, Inc., it has been memorialized in honor of the late General Paul B. Roesch, past commander of the Cleveland Grays.

Outstanding are the two 32-foot diaphones weighing in excess of a ton. These were procured from the Loew's State Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio. They are standing with the two 16-footers on the south wall of the Armory drill hall floor and are magnificent to behold.

P.S. The Gray's Armory has been recently designated by the United States Government as an historical building.

Our Western Reservers are making history, too, with our "Mighty Wurlitzer" every first Sunday of the month. That day provides for chapter members' playing time, based on a random drawing, depending on the number of write-in requests and time available.

Appreciation wasn't reserved when our 3/15 had its premiere concert March 25, 1972, with Keith Chapman, organist for Philadelphia's John Wanamaker Grand Court Organ. Outstanding was Keith's special arrangement of the "1812 Overture" complete with sound effects by a real cannon and a combo of wires, bells and dynamite caps! And believe it or not, "Bach was beautiful" on the same instrument!

Great publicity preceded this event by way of TV coverage rebroadcast for the public "Eye" with Lou Hegybeli rendering that sweet, nostalgic sound of the theatre pipe organ. Also flyers were sent to all the schools in Cleveland and surrounding areas inviting the students to a special performance. This is well in keeping with our attitude of encouraging teaching and playing music in true theatre organ style, on either the restored theatre pipe or-

gans or on an electronic plug-in. To that end, our members are privileged to have open console at our Tuesday evening weekly meetings at the Gray's Armory and at our monthly meetings which are held in the homes of chapter members who have operating theatre pipe organs and also in various public facilities where there is an operating pipe organ. At such sessions we have theatre organists on hand to assist students with setting the desired registrations and combinations. We especially encourage youngsters who are learning organ to join us. We also actively promote technical education in the form of restoring, rebuilding, and reinstalling theatre pipe organs in suitable locations. Chapter members are currently helping each other with several home installations.

Since the March, 1972 performance, we've had three other paid lively and successful concerts, one a "return" concert with our very gracious and talented friend, Keith Chapman... and two featuring the "Silents" on our new 15-foot by 22-foot screen, presided over by outstanding Clevelanders, Virgil Bartz and effervescent Eddie Weaver from the Byrd Theatre in Richmond, Virginia both of whom presented us with some really delightful comedies, one a Laurel & Hardy feature.

As of this writing, during the past year seven new organs have been acquired by Western Reserve members, eventually totalling twenty-five in our area. Please look forward to more about some of these in another article.

BEA ROSSIN

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