

be seen by more people than in a week of personal appearances at a large theatre.

When a wide screen was installed to handle the 70 MM movies, part of the Paramount's decorative proscenium arch had to be cut away on each side of the stage, and some of the ornate tapestries which had long decorated the area over the stage, were removed. The resulting appearance was a very plain one. Also, the entire interior of the auditorium by this time, had begun to take on a dingy appearance.

By 1964, it was evident that the smaller audiences could not support the temples of the motion picture, and the Paramount was no exception. The final picture to show there was *The Carpetbaggers*, a testimonial to the greed and opportunism latent in Hollywood.

The house was closed in August 1964, but briefly opened for an appearance of a Soupy Sales show, primarily for the youngsters, and for a brief run of movies and rock shows in May 1965. A farewell to the Paramount Wurlitzer was held by the Delaware Valley and New York chapters of ATOS on September 27, 1964. Taking part were such luminaries as Ashley Miller, Ray Bohr, Jack Ward, Jeff Barker, Dr. C. A. J. Parmentier, and finally and fittingly so, the featured artist of the occasion, Don Baker. The number of handkerchiefs seen fluttering when Don took the console down for the last time to "Auld Lang Syne" was most impressive. The organ was removed and eventually installed in the Wichita Auditorium.

The 4/21 studio Wurlitzer had been sold in 1956 to ATOS charter member, Dick Loderhose, who has installed and enlarged it in a magnificent structure adjacent to his home in Jamaica Estates, N. Y.

When Mrs. Evelyn Sharp bought the Paramount complex, the theatre was closed permanently and it was she who approved plans to transform the cavernous interior into offices.

The Paramount Theatre is no more. The once impressive edifice has gone the route of so many Strands, Granadas, Rivolis, Tivolis and Orientals. In its place is the New York Bank for Savings. At the time of compilation of this feature (April 1973), 100-year-old Adolf Zukor was still living. Thus he survived the theatre he built, one of the greatest of all time, his beloved Paramount. □



Detroit Theater Organ Club

The console, pictured on the cover of this issue, with the Mayan decorative theme is part of the 34 rank Wurlitzer organ which is the proud possession of the Detroit Theater Organ Club a non-profit, private club, non-affiliated with any local, national or parent organization.

The Detroit Theater Organ Club is one of its kind in the world, unique in that the organ, the facility the organ is housed in, namely the Senate Theater, located on the west side of the city, and the recording equipment are solely owned by the club.

In the early sixties the Fisher Theater, a movie house, which contained this fine instrument was being remodeled and converted to a legitimate playhouse. Bids were being accepted for purchase and removal of this organ. One of the bidders was George C. Orbits, fortunately for us, his bid was selected and accepted.

To remove this huge piece of equipment constituted a big operation demanding much help. Where do you find people who would devote time and energy to handle such an instrument with delicate care and appreciation? The word became known that the giant of music was to be dismantled and from all corners of the metropolitan area organ "buffs" appeared to offer help.

Now that the organ was the property of George Orbits what were his plans for this instrument? Place it in storage and then decide it's fate was the first impulse. A crime that this fine instrument should stay dormant when it could offer the opportunity for

people to hear it's majestic sounds. Why not form a club to allow those who could play, the chance to sit at the console and thrill to the touch of the keys and the voices that would emanate from those thousands of pipes and percussion instruments. For those who were non-playing give them the privilege and pleasure of listening to the orchestral sounds.

A frantic search began to find a location to place this instrument and give it a home under the newly formed auspices of the Detroit Theater Organ Club. The Iris Theatre on the east side of Detroit was found and leased for a three year period. Near the end of that period the club gained momentum and decided that larger and more adequate facilities must be acquired.

More searching for new quarters and the Senate Theater was acquired. A gigantic task was faced by the membership for again it took a tremendous amount of effort by this dedicated group to move this giant to the new home which required in itself a large amount of refurbishing to a tenable state.

After these many years of trials and tribulations the club has reached a measure of success and this musical instrument of instruments has offered many people at the hands of talented performers many, many hours of musical pleasure. The members feel confident that the years ahead, as in the past, will be filled with the sounds of music coming from the organ chambers at the Senate Theater under the direction of the Detroit Theater Organ Club. □

TWO THEATRE PIPE ORGANS IN ONE HOME

Mark Kenning of Richardson, Texas, is one of the few organists who has two theatre pipe organs installed in his home. On January 5 Mark signed a lease to rent his 3/10 Barton to a pizza restaurant now being built in Dallas. The big ornate gold console will be the first theatre organ in a restaurant in Texas. It will be available for North Texas Chapter ATOS meetings.

Mark removed this Barton from the Paramount Theatre in Waterloo, Iowa

in 1960. It will be installed in the pizza house by Jim Peterson of Fort Worth.

The other organ in Mark's home is a 4/17 Robert Morton from the Ritz Theatre in Tulsa. Mark recently acquired another Tibia, set of tuned Sleigh Bells, Brass Trumpet and Sax, upping the Morton to 20 ranks. Mark and his wife built an addition to their home and installed the Morton themselves over the past six years. □