

parently needed the competing Capitol into importing Oliver Wallace to play the Capitol's brand new Wurlitzer style 260. But Wallace remained only a short time, then returned to his style 285 Wurlitzer in the San Francisco Paramount. Sydney Kelland, now in his eighties, recalls the events of 1927 with a smile.

The dignitaries flocked to opening ceremonies, including Mayor Louis B. Taylor — but the fate of the theatre was already sealed — a month previously Al Jolson's soundtracked Jazz Singer had been released.

After the advent of "talkies" and the demise of vaudeville, it was a slow

Sidney Kelland, who opened the Orpheum Wurlitzer, was much in demand as a theatre organist before the demise of silent pictures. Unfortunately, no photographs of Mr. Kelland at the Orpheum Wurlitzer exist.

With the coming of talking pictures, he left the theatres and was engaged as a full time organist at St. Andrews Wesley United Church for sixteen years, at the First United Church of Vancouver for four more years and at Shaughnessy United Church (Vanc.) for another seventeen years until his retirement in 1970. During these years many of his church concerts were broadcast over radio stations CFDC, CKWX and CNRV.

Now 84 years old, Mr. Kelland retains his health and vitality and still performs occasionally.

downhill journey for the Orpheum, which managed to survive the '30s with stage presentations, operettas and musical shows. But movies alone were never enough to keep the seats filled. Yet the Orpheum had its moments.

Retired Orpheum manager Ivan Ackery recalls one, the opening of *Gone With The Wind*, near the end of the '30s.

He says, "The 'Wind' premier was the first time we sold refreshments — bottled Coca-Cola — in the mezzanine. Every night of that run I wore a tux."

So much for history. Back to the present.

The appeal to the federal government bore fruit. Canada came through with two million dollars in the Spring

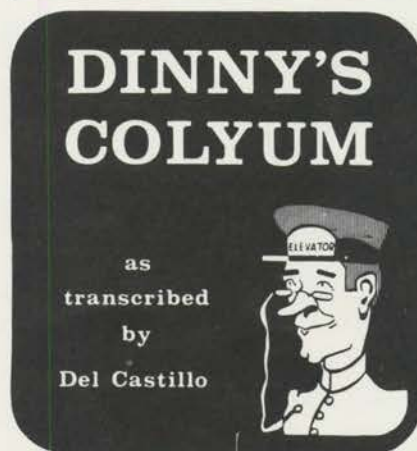
of 1974. The provincial government (British Columbia) donated \$333,000. And the lottery netted \$300,000 dollars. The City Council plans another lottery in 1975 and it is hoped that a further grant will be forthcoming from the Federal or Provincial Government.

With this much cash in the coffers, the Vancouver group has redoubled efforts to raise the difference — and chances are good because plans have been expanded. In addition to the sounds of the mighty Wurlitzer, the symphony orchestra and opera, plans are underway to include perhaps a community theatre group, ballet and youth concerts, all of which adds up to a cultural center in the Orpheum.

Of course, it's all in the future. The sale and transfer will take place in July 1975. Then the restoration/renovation will require another year.

But Vancouver is determined to see the project completed, thus setting an example for other communities with threatened theatres worth saving.

Vancouver is proving it can be done. □



I dunno where in tunket the time goes. Seems like I jest about get all the Xmas bills paid up when the ads start acomin out about get your Xmas presents early and get your Xmas cards at a discount and we start agoin through the whole danged thing all over again. Now mind you, I aint agin Xmas and I like to get presents as well as the next feller, but jest the same they's a limit to the number of hundreds of times I can hear Jingle Bells and O Come All Ye Faithful.

And they's another thing. I love California and I wouldnt live no place else if you paid me, but jest the same Xmas out here aint quite the same thing as it was in Boston where I come from. It's swell to get out and lay around in the Cal. sun with the ther-

mometer at 80 degrees, but I guess I still got enough Eastern blood in me to think they ought to be snow at Xmas time. Why, we used to get a gang together and go around and sing Xmas carols at different houses back in Boston and sometimes we'd get invited in for some punch or cookies, but that would seem kinda silly out here with people goin around in sport shirts. Seems more fittin somehow when you have to keep a muffler around your neck and blow on your fingers and stamp your feet to keep warm. Even the bells that the Salvation Army people ring to get you to put some money in the pot dont sound quite the same.

And still another thing. Seems to me when I was a kid, people really enjoyed Xmas. I aint so sure they still do anymore. You go into the big stores and they is loud speakers blarin away Xmas carols and Jingle Bells and White Xmas and Winter Wonderland and songs like that there, but the people is millin around and grabbin at bargains and everybody getting kind of mad because the prices are so high and they cant find what they want. And then you go out and start up the old bus and pretty soon some smart Alexk is blastin you with his horn or glarin at you because he wants to go faster than you do, and you wonder what in tarnation has happened to the Spirit of Xmas.

I aint much of a churchgoer but it seems to me that maybe you get a little more of the Spirit of Xmas there than any place else. The choir sings Xmas music and the organist plays Xmas music and the minister gives Xmas sermons and then they have extra services and extra music and they get a chorus together to do the Messiah and you come out feelin well maybe they is somethin more to Xmas than jest gettin presents that most everybody goes back to the store the next week to get exchanged, or else puts them in the closet sos they can give them to somebody else the next Xmas.

Well, I aint ready to give up yet. We still got the Santa Claus Parade every December, and I have to admit all the lights and decorations they look real pretty, and I even got a bang when they put up tin Xmas trees on Hollywood Bullyvard. But I guess that what I wish is that at Xmastime maybe they could be a little less takin and a little more givin. □