



# CHAPTER NOTES

## ALABAMA

The Alabama Chapter completed the year 1974 not on one great note, but two – great programs in November and December by Alleen Cole and Jay Mitchell and progress in the continuing restoration of the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer. Alleen Cole is the kind of member every chapter should have. She has served the chapter since its organization two years ago as secretary-treasurer and has handled the writing of our Chapter Notes for THEATRE ORGAN. In November Alleen had her chance at the Mighty Wurlitzer of the Alabama and she proved herself more than capable of handling this too. Her selections were mainly from the “good old days” but the arrangements and varied styles of the music made a most listenable program. Alleen also gave us a slide tour of the U.S. (from the Cole’s tours in their motor coach) with beautiful music to match. We all look forward to hearing Alleen again soon.

In December the talent of Jay Mitchell again left us all breathless. He is a master of the theatre pipe organ and the program (ranging from boogie to classics) showed off the Alabama

Wurlitzer at its best. Jay really knows this instrument and the two of them make a great team. (I heard comments from some older members of the audiences saying that Jay and his music brought to mind the days of Randy Sauls and Stanleigh Malotte at the Alabama Wurlitzer.)

Officers for 1975 were elected in December and Ray Straits is the new chairman for our chapter. Alleen Cole is vice-chairman, Dan Liles is secretary-treasurer and the directors are George Ferguson, Tom Hatter, Riedel West and Evelyn Jones. Our chapter is continuing to grow in strength and we look forward to a greater year in 1975 under Ray’s leadership.

RIEDEL WEST

## BEEHIVE

The Capitol Theatre was the setting for a meeting of the Beehive Chapter on Sunday, December 15, 1974. Members discussed the sad plight of the Fox Theatre in Atlanta and its pipe organ, which seem doomed. We are hoping that something can be done to save both the organ and the theatre.

We thank Dr. Rulon Anderson, of the University of Utah, and Mr. Wayne

Sinister for their delightful contribution of sound equipment, which made our meeting more enjoyable.

Dr. Anderson has taken the Laurel and Hardy silent movie “Leave ‘em Laughing” and synchronized various pipe organ recordings by Gaylord Carter, Ashley Miller, Lee Erwin and Gus Farney to the motion picture. Of course, this is not live music, but they are pipe organ selections. Dr. Anderson spends many hours showing this film with its synchronized music to people who otherwise might never hear the pipe organ sound. This is Dr. Anderson’s hobby, and he is wondering if he might have a first in this experiment.

Officers elected for the year 1975 are: Calvin Christensen, chairman; Ronald Apgar, vice-president; and Maxine V. Russell, secretary.

MAXINE V. RUSSELL

## CEDAR RAPIDS

On November 6, 1974 at Cedar Rapids, Iowa’s Paramount Theatre another “sold out” theatre audience heard and saw the phenomenal Hector Olivera perform and demonstrate how an organ should be played. From his opening number to the Bach *Cantata Finale*, our artist kept his listeners on the edge of their seats to get a better view of his pedal technique and watch his vibrant actions at the console. Great numbers such as *Cry Me A River*, *Teddy Bears’ Picnic*, *Danny Boy* (what beautiful pedal work), *Impossible Dream* and a wonderful medley of Big Band Hits were part of the program. Walter Strony, a visiting Chicago Chapter organist, was selected to give Hector the mystery melody on which to do his improvising wizardry. The Mickey Mouse theme



Jay Mitchell at the 4/20 Wurlitzer, Alabama Theatre, Birmingham.  
(Tom Hatter Photo)



Alleen Cole at the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer providing entertainment for the chapter’s November meeting.  
(Tom Hatter Photo)



was presented in every conceivable way. Along with a sing-along and a Harold Lloyd comedy, closing with the great *Hallelujah Chorus!* Some 1945 thrilled organ enthusiasts left the theatre realizing that they had attended a once-in-a-lifetime concert.

CRATOS did it again. It was number ten at the Paramount, and as we said before, it takes WORK and a lot of it. A million thanks to those who stood behind our Program Chairman Craig Stratemeyer and gave of their time and effort to make this another success. The membership sold a third of the tickets. Pat Leffingwell and Ruth Kuba co-chaired handling the mail order sales as well as ticket sales at the advertised outlets. Jim Oliver had the Paramount in the greatest condition ever and Hector Olivera had nothing but praise for the instrument.

Twenty-five members of Chicago Chapter of ATOS visited CRATOS-land on October 26 and 27. From the moment the bus arrived at the Capitol Theatre in Davenport at 9:45 a.m., until we waved good-bye to them as they headed out from Marion, Iowa at 4:00 p.m. the following day, a great group of "organ nuts" from Chicago were repaid in a small way for the two great trips the Cedar Rapids Chapter had when we went to Chicago. We hope that everyone was able to sit down and enjoy the organs here in CRATOS-land. The Davenport group are to be thanked for the nice welcome and refreshments; Pat Maynard for his music at the Capitol; the Howard Adams' of Aledo, Illinois for their hospitality; Bill Hansen who was the spokesman at the Musser Museum in Muscatine; Dr. Klein and his wife for opening their home and the Wurlitzer at Muscatine with Walter Strony playing; Dick Beaty for opening the Cedar Rapids Barton; Paul Adams for a fine program at the Paramount and Doreen Dahms who furnished the refreshments; and finally and not least — Howard and Dorothy Burton who entertained the group for a final program and organ crawl in their home in Cedar Rapids.

It was a pleasure to see this fine group having a ball and enjoying this mini-convention. Welcome back anytime you want to come.

The annual Christmas Party was changed to a Thanksgiving Party and was held on November 23 at the Legion Town Club. Sixty-nine members enjoyed a fine party that started

with pizza and beer. The Happiness Inc. singing and dancing group from Kennedy High School then performed with wonderful numbers. They were great. Then Sharon and Gayle Balhorn gave a nice accordion program of waltzes, polka and old time melodies. The tables were then pulled away and the group finished the evening dancing to recorded music of big bands and Reginald Dixon playing the Tower Ballroom organ with his toe-tapping rhythms. It was a great evening of sociability.

The Thanksgiving Party was rightfully titled as CRATOS has every right to be Thankful for a great 1974.

RAPHAEL SNITIL

### CENTRAL INDIANA

Bill Lay's Music Store in Indianapolis was the meeting place for CIC-ATOS in November. Bill is a Conn organ dealer and had set up a Conn Serenade on a rise in his display window to give the effect of a stage.

The formal program for the afternoon was presented by Ken Double, who we affectionately call our "Conn Artist." Ken, a senior this year at Butler University (Indianapolis), is official organist at the Indianapolis Sports Arena for both the Pacers (Basketball) and Racers (Hockey) teams and is also associated with Bill Lay in promoting the Conn organs. Ken recently presented a program for the Rockford, Illinois Club on the Rockford Theatre 4 manual Barton. Nice going, Ken! We'll be eyeing your future with great interest.

Our thanks to Bill and Tevis Lay, our hosts, for providing the organ and such a delightful and appropriate setting for another interesting meeting.

Some interesting things are happening in the musical lives of some of our members, but one special event, though initiated and prepared by a few, brought entertainment and a feeling of accomplishment and pride to all. This was the receiving of a Special Award from WIAN-FM in Indianapolis. This Certificate of Appreciation was awarded for the theatre organ program presented over this station twice a week for a number of months. It involved a great deal of time, preparing, searching, compiling and editing of recordings and materials for narration on many great theatre organ artists, performing on many great theatre and home pipe organ installations. Our thanks go to the

untiring efforts of Ken Double and Roger Whitehead who put these programs together.

Promoting and restoring the glorious era of the mighty theatre pipe organ is the aim of ATOS, and scarcely a month goes by that we don't fulfill in some way the purpose for which we stand. Recently, three of our members were interviewed and taped a one and a half hour show through Butler University's Station WAJC-FM on the subject of theatre pipe organs. Ken Double, majoring in Radio-TV at Butler; Bob Cox, an experienced man in recording, having been associated with WSN-FM in Indianapolis for many years; and Tim Needler, an excellent and well versed performer of theatre styling (and also classical, I might add), put together quite a program. Ken and Tim shared honors in the performance of a variety of selections to demonstrate style tonality, and the glamour of the theatre organ era.

A record 120 members and guests attended the Annual Meeting and Christmas Party in the lovely home of Chairman Tim Needler. The festive Christmas atmosphere was quite evident as the enormous white flocked tree, towering between the two grand pianos at one end of the beautiful living room, literally said "Merry Christmas" to each guest as he stepped into the foyer.

A rather lengthy business meeting was followed by a different and very interesting program. Recently, Ross and Ruth Kirkpatrick, CIC-ATOS members, joined the CATOE group for a weekend tour of Iowa organ installations. Ross arranged a most interesting slide and taped program of this trip. He gave an informative and interesting commentary with the slides, then presented taped music of each organ visited. Some of the organs included were the 2/13 Estey Duplex Player organ in the Laurin Musser McColm mansion overlooking the Mississippi River at Muscatine; the 3/14 Wurlitzer, formerly in the Keith-Albee Theatre in Huntington, West Virginia and now in the residence of Dr. and Mrs. John Klein. An interesting installation was the 3/10 Wicks (originally a 4/28 Moller damaged by water twice and rebuilt by Wicks in 1928), now located in the Capitol Theatre. It has a Wicks console with 8 Moller and 2 Wicks ranks. In the Harvard Adams home is a 3/10 Barton



from the Tower Theatre in Milwaukee, and a Wurlitzer band organ.

"Getting around" in usual ATOS style, the group moved on to Cedar Rapids. The Iowa Theatre probably houses one of the most unique organs anywhere from the standpoint of outward appearance. It is a 3/14 Wangerin Barton with a black velvet console decorated with rhinestones.

Two more installations visited in Cedar Rapids were the Paramount Theatre's 3/11 Wurlitzer and the 2/7 Wurlitzer from the Logan Theatre (formerly the Paramount) in Chicago, now located in the Howard Burton residence.

This was, indeed, a most interesting program. Thanks to Ross Kirkpatrick, who, incidentally, is CIC-ATOS chairman-elect. Following the program, an elaborate assortment of Christmas "goodies" was served from a beautifully appointed table by Chairman Ruth Hawkins, assisted by Peg Roberts, Tess Moses and Berniece Demaree.

One of the extra curricular activities of some of the members of CIC-ATOS is participation each year in "Christmas at the Zoo." This is one of the highlighted special events of the yule season in Indianapolis. Yule scenes are created in and around the animal areas and thousands of twinkle lights decorate the Zoo grounds. A nativity scene, Noah's Ark floating on the lake, a calico-decorated barn, and a reindeer descending the ski slope in the penguin area added color, atmosphere and excitement to young and old alike. Candy canes here and there, a tin-can tree in the goat pen, Chinese characters spelling holiday greetings in the oriental garden and stained glass window reproductions outside the Education Building all add a festive and "human" note to "Christmas at the Zoo." Now, where does CIC-ATOS fit into this scheme? Live organ music sets the holiday mood in the Education Building as visitors touring the grounds end up in this area for refreshments. The organ is situated in the foyer, with holiday greenery and a five foot tall poinsettia tree as background. Not only does the organ offer appropriate background music, but also serves as accompaniment for many groups — Scouts, Brownies, church groups, school groups, etc. — that want to gather around the organ and sing carols. This is a fun experience and one shared this year by CIC-ATOS

members Jack Pollock, Tim Needler, Mary Drake and Ruth Ward who participated in "Christmas at the Zoo."

RUTH D. WARD

## CENTRAL OHIO

Durthaler's Organ Studio was the location for our November meeting. The studio features Lowery and Conn organs. It is large, well-stocked and has a large meeting room ideal for a chapter meeting. The first of a series of seminars to inform our members of the history and technical aspects of the theatre pipe organ was well prepared by Dave Billmire. Beginning with the Pipes of Pan, Dave progressed thru the development of wind supply, first manually supplied, and then on to the technical breakthrough of the 1830-1850 era which gave us the Barker lever, the discovery of electricity and steady wind pressure and the beginning of romantic music.

Dale Durthaler presented the new Lowery, the H 25-3 with Symphonic Console, and did an excellent job of demonstrating the features of this remarkable instrument. Through his courtesy an LP record of this model, plus a demo of a smaller Lowery, were



Mary Bishop and Mark Hite. She was chosen Outstanding Member for the Year 1973 by the Theatre Historical Society.

available to members. Open console followed with many fine instruments available for our use and members had a great time playing them.

Sparkling like a jewel, the Ohio Theatre was the site of our annual Christmas Party. Our thanks go to Carlos Parker and Don Streibig, the newly appointed executive director of the Columbus Association for the Performing Arts, for arranging for our use of the theatre and the Robert Morton organ. Stars fell on Alabama and now Columbus. To our great delight two bright stars, Heidi and Dennis James, are now residents of Columbus. With Dennis' appointment as house organist for the Ohio Theatre the fervor for theatre organ *may* well compete with the football fever here.

During the short business meeting conducted by Chairman Frank Babbitt we learned that the new electronic computer capture system for the Robert Morton was designed by Gary Harris. The all-electric stop action, that replaces the noisy pneumatic action, was completed by Ed Smith, and is a much appreciated improvement. The renovation of the Ohio Morton included some revoicing by John Steinkampf.

Rosemary Curtin Hite, music director for the COLUMBUS CITIZENS JOURNAL, presented a plaque to Mary Bishop, building chairman for the Ohio Theatre, honoring her as the Theatre Historical Societies' Member of the Year. Mary is also a member of the board, a member of the Historical Society and a chapter member. A delay in seeking the right time and place for the presentation was worth the waiting and our applause was warm and genuine. Mary deserves all the recognition and our thanks for her outstanding and successful efforts in restoring the Ohio Theatre. The formal concert was played by Dennis James. Always a pleasure there was something special this day — perhaps the informal, relaxed atmosphere and playing for friends. Many members and guests took advantage of open console time. Gene Decker of Marion, Ohio, played and also accompanied his wife, Hope, with her magnificent vocal rendition of *O, Holy Night*. We are pleased to have so many young members aspiring to theatre pipe organ and one, Dean Wagner, age 13 and a student of Fred Lewis, Jr., took his turn at the console with excellent command.



Our membership at the close of 1974 was 81. We have done no recruiting so our members are genuinely interested. It gives us much talent to call upon to offer an outstanding regional convention November 7, 8 and 9, 1975!

IRENE BLEGEN

## CHICAGO AREA

Business was on the agenda November 15 when Chairman Russ Joseph presided over a membership meeting at the Evanston YMCA. An unusually small number of members were on hand to also hear a 45 minute talk by organ builder Bill Hansen. Bill used an autobiographical format to weave a fascinating tale of youth, pipe organs, and dedication to the idea that theatre organs are historic instruments wanting and deserving preservation. Bill is an intriguing person who has spent much time and effort to add the professional touch to CATOE projects. We thank him.

The Moody Bible Institute hosted the Christmas social on December 12. Starting at the 65 rank Moller in Torrey-Grey Auditorium we heard Gil Mead, well known gospel and concert organist, fill the large hall with excellent music including a medley of Christmas carols. Then organ maintainer Bill Hansen invited the 125 people present to the studios of WMBI radio with its 14 rank Kimball, a frequent feature on the Moody Network religious programs. Mrs. Gil Mead presided and showed the smooth, well-regulated sound of this instrument which was originally installed in Kimball Hall.

John Muri was in from Detroit to present a 90 minute program prepared with school children in mind at the Oriental Theatre from December 10-13. A trip through the organ, silent films, and a Punch and Judy show made up the show which played one morning to 2800.

Excitement mounted as December wore on. CATOE was waiting for December 12 to arrive. On that day Walt Strony and 1450 friends gathered at the Pickwick Theatre for his professional concert debut. Extra work went into this special show. Considerable effort went into the lighting, Poinsettias banked the stage, and the console rose into a forest of Christmas trees.

At age 19 Walt Strony is the



Walt Strony at the Pickwick. He and ATOS were both born in 1955 and have grown up together. (Carl Anderson Photo)

youngest artist ever to be presented in a public CATOE show. Born in the same year as ATOS, he has grown up with theatre organ. CATOE is proud to have watched him do so and presented him to help fulfill our purpose of encouraging new performers on an old instrument. He has also been chosen to record the Oriental Wurlitzer in what CATOE hopes to be the first in a series of local artists on local organs.

Walt brought up the console with *Cabaret* which featured Chicago style jazz syncopation in the last chorus. Rounding out the program was a sing-along especially prepared by Joe DuciBella from the archives of the theatre Historical Society, and Laurel and Hardy's Christmas tree selling escapade, *Big Business*. *Till Then* was a previously unheard but beautiful ballad by Walt's teacher, former Stadium organist Al Melgard, whose teaching studio in Oak Park he now occupies. Santa Claus put in an appearance to the sound of tuned sleigh bells and presented the organist with Pointer System Books, a comical gesture which brought down the house. On December 12 Chicago discovered what audiences at the Atlanta Fox and Cedar Rapids Paramount had already learned this season: Walt Strony is a competent theatre organist who can put on an exciting, well-balanced program, and who has a winsome per-

sonality and a boyish charm which people appreciate.

The excitement didn't end there. "On State St., that great street, they do things they don't do on Broadway" . . . notably, play theatre organ. At Christmas a large display poster appeared on State St. in front of the Chicago Theatre announcing a special organ solo to ring in the New Year played on the Chicago Theatre's Mighty Wurlitzer by Walt Strony. Peter Miller, managing director of the Chicago, had heard Walt at the Pickwick and decided that he should be the first theatre organist that the Chicago had hired in 25 years. As best we can tell, Arsene Siegal played New Year's Eve in 1949, exactly 25 years ago.

Walt Strony opened the special half-hour segment with *Chicago* in an entirely dark house with follow spots picking out appropriate chambers. The conclusion was a countdown to midnite with a bouncing-ball sing-along of *Auld Lang Syne*. About 25 of 29 ranks were playing including the 32 foot diaphones. The sound is a grand one — broad and mellow and smooth.

With a public debut, plus two theatres hiring theatre organists for public shows, it was a good holiday season in Chicago for theatre organs and enthusiasts.

RICHARD J. SKLENAR

## CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Our November activities began with concerts on the first and second of the month by Connecticut's own Bill Dalton at the console of the Thomaston Opera House Marr & Colton.

Bill's concerts included a nice selection of well known popular tunes, a medley in tribute to the late Jesse Crawford and a generous smattering of more serious music from opera and concert repertoire. *Rhapsody in Blue*, *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* and *Slavonic March* were among the outstanding arrangements.

On November 10, two busloads of chapter members and friends left Connecticut well before daylight to be at Radio City Music Hall in New York City to enjoy the grand concert in honor of Music Hall organist Ray Bohr's 27th year at the great hall. The concert was under the auspices of the New York Chapter and was probably the chapter's best concert effort yet. Leroy Lewis, playing the first half of



the concert from the left console, and C.A.J. Parmentier, playing the second half from the right console, provided a rare treat indeed.

Our November meeting was held at member John Starr's Crystal Palace in West Goshen, Ct., a most suitable hall complete with a three-manual Wurlitzer pipe organ, a foot-powered organ, piano, player piano, crystal chandeliers, and genuine theatre seats from the Paramount Theatre (now gone) in New Haven.

Open console was available all afternoon until 5:00 p.m. at which time business was conducted. Officers elected for 1975 are Donald MacCormack, chairman; Harold Weaver, vice-chairman; Norman Ray, secretary; Claire Rice, treasurer; and Eleanor Weaver, program chairman. An interesting item of business was the decision to undertake a limited regional convention in the Fall of 1975. It would be the first activity of such sort by the chapter.

After time out for dinner, activity resumed in the form of a splendid concert by Allen Miller at the console of the 3/13 Wurlitzer. Al opened with *I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling* and concluded with *Wake Up and Live*, with a dozen or so delightful selections in between, including some always appropriate music from motion pictures. Al's music wound up a most pleasant day, and our activities for November were concluded.

Our annual Christmas Party was catered at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Thomaston, on December 14 with the Opera House but a short walk from the hall.

WALLACE F. POWERS, JR.

### EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

The highlight of our fall season was the Hector Olivera concert on October 15. This was the second public concert performed on the newly resurrected 3/13 Wurlitzer formerly housed in Loew's State Theatre (Boston) and is now in Knight Auditorium at Babson College in Wellesley Hills. Hector put on his usual performance of emotion-packed pops and classics, including *The Flight of the Bumblebee* played with two "invisible feet."

During open console at the November meeting came the revelation that was our new member, Miss Julie Feltman. At 13 years of age she sounds like a pro and can easily carry

on a conversation while playing, without a tell-tale sign that all her attention is not on her playing — not missing a beat, not missing a note. Under the tutelage of Bob Legon, traces of the George Wright style are evident.

The chapter has embarked upon a program of featuring amateur organists from the membership at each meeting in the hope that not only will we hear their best, but also the artist will have added incentive to develop technique and repertoire.

Our first such artist, Lenny Beyersdorfer, brought fresh new talent to the October meeting. Lenny moved to Massachusetts from the Trenton (NJ) area where he, as a high school student, was introduced to theatre organ by Bolton Holmes, house organist at the Lincoln Theatre. On Saturday mornings Holmes recorded organ music for a radio show and let Lenny play that great Moller theatre organ during his breaks.

At the November meeting the second such artist, Cheryl Linder, one of the teen-age set, gave further evidence that the young do indeed take interest in theatre organ, especially when Dad provides a pipe organ at home on which to practice.

The annual December Christmas meeting was held at Somerville Baptist Church, home of the John Phipps 3/10 Wurlitzer. Sounds from the two cham-

bers were never better. Venerable Lenny Winter was featured artist playing for a sing-along, while former choirmaster and featured tenor soloist, Gerry Parsons, directed. (What a beautiful voice! Where can I get a "Parsons" stop for my organ?) During open console, to the delight and excitement of all, Stan Cahoon slipped onto the bench unannounced. What followed was a one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-repeated performance, climaxing with a stirring "on-the-spot" improvisation on an original theme hatched at the moment of playing. When pressed for a title later, Stan replied, "Oh, let's call it 'Baptist Church Opus one'." So be it.

ERLE RENWICK

### JOLIET AREA

Lights brilliantly illuminated the stage. A spotlighted figure gayly danced soft shoe to the lilting whisper of a pipe organ.

Straw hat and black cane in hand, Bob Wallace of CBS-TV welcomed greater Chicagoland television audiences to a grand tour of the Rialto Theatre located in downtown Joliet. The Rialto is the home of the golden-voiced 4/21 Barton maintained by ATOS affiliate, the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts.

Mr. Wallace and a television crew of seven arrived on a Tuesday morning in



JATOE members Lee Malone (seated) and Fran Irving during the WBBM-TV feature at the Rialto, in Joliet, with show host, Bob Wallace. (Dave Krall Photo)



November to record on film the spectacular frescos, marble, and gold leaf decorating the ornate Rialto auditorium and grand lobby.

Mrs. Frances Wood Irving, JATOE member, recalled for Bob Wallace the days when stars such as Helen Morgan, Jack Benny, Arthur Godfrey, Baby Snooks, ZaZu Pitts, Lawrence Welk, and the Marx Brothers were on the Rialto stage, and the Barton organ was a part of every stage show. Mrs. Irving played the organ for many of the stage shows at the Rialto in the thirties, and was the organist at the Barton console when the sweet tones of the 4/21 pipe organ were broadcast from Joliet around the world several decades ago.

Considerable film was exposed by the television crew to be trimmed into the short segment which was part of a series, hosted by Bob Wallace, Chicago station WBBM-TV had been showing on Suburban Landmarks. The five minute film presentation was shown on the late afternoon news program as well as the evening news.

The Will County Cultural Arts Association had arranged for the Rialto Theatre to be included in the Suburban Landmark series. One of the goals of the organization is to secure the designation of the Rialto as a National Historic Landmark. Some Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts are also members of WILCUTA and were present during the filming.

The golden tones of the Barton provided background music for the visual tour of the theatre. A nice shot of the organ console was shown. The organ was played by Mr. Lee Maloney of JATOE. Lee has continued to play around the missing pipes resulting from the current restoration being done on the organ; and the regular Saturday show is still a feature during the evening movie intermission at the Rialto.

A fine camaraderie between the television host and crew developed with the organ club members present. Club members contributed various skills and "know-how." Mr. Harold Brown, honorary JATOE member, donated his skill and time in providing lighting and special effects for the filming. "Brownie" is the chief projectionist and electrician for the theatre and was aided by two assistants.

JATOE and its work was noted in the closing remarks of host Bob Wallace. ATOS was also mentioned.

NANCY L. GEORGE



Bill Million enjoys his Wiltern audience. (Stufoto)

## LOS ANGELES

For our November concert Lyn Larsen returned to the 4/37 Kimball to entertain us with selections from both the classic and popular literature.

Selections included *The Wiltern March*, *Love me or Leave Me*. Medleys from *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Student Prince*, and *Radetsky March*. His rendition of *Czardas* brought the house down. Lyn has a new album just released, which sold briskly in the lobby.

Bill Million entertained us in December, and the large audience was delightfully entertained. He featured E.T. Paull's *Napoleon's Last Charge*, a march which should be played more often, Ann Leaf's *Happy Island*, Chopin's *Military Polonaise*, and *For Once in My Life*. A Christmas Medley followed intermission, and he closed with *My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice*, a Duke Ellington group, and a *Show Boat Medley*.

New officers were elected in December, your scribe will take over as chapter chairman. Vice-chairman will be Bob Hill, Secretary will be Ken Peterson, and our present Treasurer, Bernice Neal, will continue for another year. John Ledwon will be Program Director. This year's annual meeting was held at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, the home of the former Brooklyn (RKO Albee) 3/15 style 260



1975 LA Chapter Pilots: Malin Dollinger (chairman), Bernice Neal (treas.), John Ledwon (pgm. dir.), Bob Hill (vice-chmn.), and Ray Bonner (1974 chmn.). The man with the gavel is "Judge" Rulan Gardner, stage mgr. at the San Gabriel Auditorium, who donned legal regalia to swear in the incoming officers with a slightly facetious oath. (Stufoto)



Wurlitzer (now a 3/16). After the regular program, it was open console for the membership. Heard were Gerald Nagano, Dwight Beacham, Walter Freed, Donna Parker, Fernand Martel, Gaylord Carter and Ann Leaf.



Ann Leaf

(Nakaharafoto)



Ever faithful Gaylord left them wanting more.

(Stufoto)

Scheduled for January 19 at the Wilern Kimball is Helen Dell, organist for the Los Angeles Dodgers. For February we will hear Ramona Gerhard, who thrilled us all when she played a few selections for the Joe Koons benefit concert last month. Next month Bob Hill will take over as scribe here, while I figure out how to install my new (?) 3/22 Wurlitzer.

MALIN DOLLINGER

## MOTOR CITY

Our annual membership meeting was held Sunday morning, November 3, at the Redford Theatre. An increase in chapter dues, in the amount of one dollar, was approved. The necessary work to be done in the Redford Theatre, now that we are sole managers of the auditorium, was discussed, and an appeal for help from the membership was made by Chairman John Fischer. Following the business meeting, Amy Reimer, our teen-age member from Muskegon, was guest artist and did an excellent job at the 3/10 Barton. After Amy's performance, members were encouraged to tour the Redford on their own and come up with ideas that could improve the building.

The monthly Second Sunday open house at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, on November 10, featured Bud Bates, Jim Ford and Velma Burnham performing at the 3/13 Barton. The event attracted some 80 people, mostly from the Ann Arbor area. Tom Hadfield and Ben Levy explained how a theatre organ works and demonstrated the orchestral qualities of the Barton.

On Monday and Tuesday, November 18-19, Karl Cole played his first public engagement for the Motor City Chapter at the Redford Theatre. On the bill were two silent comedies, Laurel and Hardy's "Liberty" and "The Rink" with Charlie Chaplin, in addition to a concert and sing-along. The next evening, Wednesday, November 20, we presented the same show at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor. Perhaps the best review of the program was in the unbiased reporting of Norman Gibson, music critic for the ANN ARBOR NEWS, who ventured into the theatre that evening, and liked what he heard. To quote from his article, which appeared the following

day, "Theatre organists probably feel compelled to play with a dazzling display of virtuosity and to perform acrobatics feats of sound, feet, hands, pedals and keys. And so it was with Karl Cole at the Barton pipe organ in the Michigan Theatre... Cole's dazzling virtuosity really came out in his accompaniment to the pictures."

Our management of the Redford Theatre officially began on November 4. In that first month of operation several of our members became veteran theatre operators, literally overnight, as we somehow managed two (not exactly uneventful) weekends of that old American standby, the Kiddie Matinee. On a weekly schedule members have gathered to scrape gum off the auditorium floor, mop up and inventory store rooms, and fly the giant Cinemascope screen, to mention only a few of the myriad of projects now underway.

Musical Heritage, Inc. of Royal Oak presented Lyn Larsen, in concert, playing three Rodgers theatre organs on stage at the Redford Theatre on Sunday evening, November 24. The event marked the first time in many decades that the entire stage had been used for a performance. Nearly 1,000 people were on hand when the main curtain went *up* (rather than parting sideways) revealing the three Rodgers consoles in front of a sparkling silver backdrop. We are hoping for many more such entertaining evenings in our new home.

Our annual Christmas program was held on Sunday morning, December 15, at the Punch and Judy Theatre in Grosse Pointe. Santa and his costumed snowgirl helpers greeted everyone in the lobby, but more than that, we had Lee Erwin to entertain us at the 2/5 Wurlitzer, affectionately called *Little Sister* by the late Ben Hall.



## Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

**Editor's Note:** *Hollywood Cavalcade*, long a regular feature of THEATRE ORGAN, does not appear in this issue due to prolonged illness of its producer, Lyle W. Nash. We are happy to report he is on the mend and promises a sparkling *Hollywood Cavalcade* column for the April 1975 issue.





Lee Erwin and Betty Mason (publisher of THEATRE ORGAN) at the Punch and Judy Theatre.

Lee Erwin returned to the Punch and Judy on Monday and Tuesday, December 16-17, for our first public show there since 1968. The feature was to have been "The Saphead" starring Buster Keaton, but U.S. Customs in New York unfortunately would not release the film, returning from a British film festival. In its place we showed the Keaton silent, "Seven Chances," which was of excellent quality and provoked some of the best laughs we have heard from an audience. The Punch and Judy Wurlitzer seems ideally suited to underscoring a film in the 600 seat house, and Lee worked wonders with its five ranks.

DON LOCKWOOD

## NEW YORK

Pasta and pipes (as against the more common pizza and pipes) was the foundation of the chapter's annual meeting held at New Jersey's famed Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque, the colorful home of the former Bronx, N.Y., RKO Chester Theatre 3/17 Wurlitzer — now the largest visual playing pipe organ in the New York metropolitan area.

It was a carefree occasion with the North Tonowanda music machine's "right at your table" sound brought

forth by house organist Andy Kasparian and his soon-to-be successor (and former Suburban house organist) Frank Cimmino. Both artists are extremely popular with the chapter's members (and both recently shared the spotlight at a chapter concert on Broadway in New York City at the Beacon Theatre's 4/19 Wurlitzer).

In these days when so many still-playing theatre organs survive in one-time glamorous "movie palaces" that are seedy and dilapidated, it is a joy to find an instrument professionally maintained and playing amidst a sparkling and luxurious setting. The chapter (and countless other theatre organ devotees) give their thanks for this fortunate circumstance to the Provisiero family, owners and hosts at the Suburban.

Between the pipes and the Provisiero's Roman Table buffet dinner, everyone so enjoyed themselves that even Chapter Chairman Bill Warner was reluctant to interrupt with those mundane matters that must be a part of any corporate business meeting.

But it had to be — and he did.

Briefly.

Those proceedings are of little concern to Theatre Organ readers, but it should be recorded that four directors were elected by the membership for a two-year term — Alfred J. Buttler, who led the rescue of the New York Rivoli Theatre organ (destined to be heard again, hopefully in the fairly near future, in New Jersey); Ashley Miller, organist, composer, arranger, teacher and concert artist, formerly of the Radio City Music Hall's organ staff; Allen W. Rossiter, secretary-treasurer of the New York chapter since 1964 and a past vice-president of ATOS; Roylance H. Sharp, organist, member of the Beacon Theatre organ crew, finance chairman for the "Fabulous Fifteenth" ATOS convention in New York in 1970 and, by profession, a television network executive.

Elected by the board of directors as officers of the chapter for 1975 were: Secretary-Treasurer Allen W. Rossiter; Vice-Chairman Roy Sharp, and Chairman William Warner.

An open console interlude during the evening brought forth both eager students and accomplished amateurs. Exemplary progress in "mastering the beast" was evident in the playing of the students, many of whom are studying under professional musicians who are members of the chapter.

Then it was back to the talented hands and feet of Messrs. Kasparian and Cimmino who encouraged singing, clapping time to the beat and dancing (ballroom, belly or whatever!) for the merriment of everyone present. And this was the atmosphere that prevailed until the last diehards headed home-ward in the small hours of the morning.

Theatre organ is different! It's a great fun instrument. And our Suburban meeting proved that point superbly once again!

ARTHUR M. COX, JR.

## NIAGARA FRONTIER

Something new has been added for another attraction when you visit Niagara Falls on the Canadian side. We don't know if it just happened or if it was planned that way, but one of the better sounding home installations, a 2/7 Wurlitzer, is now playing at the Gillettes. We are sure that Thelma and Gordy would be proud to have you see and play their little jewel, and you would be more than welcome. A phone call in advance is a courtesy that should never be neglected before any visit, be it friend or stranger.

November 20 found Luella Wickham back at the Riviera after an absence of several years. She played many of the oldies. That left hand of hers has an education of its own. It was a pleasure to listen to those runs and counter melodies, instead of an evening of oompah's. For an encore she played *Tico Tico* as only Luella can play it. The crowd loved her.

The second half of the program was shared with Roy Simon. Roy accompanied the sing-along and silent movie. He also played many of our favorite numbers. Both artists reminded us of the '64 convention that was the first time this writer had the pleasure of hearing Luella.

Roy reminded us of the fabulous concert that Pearl White played at the Buffalo Theatre the night of July 4, 1964, by playing several numbers using her arrangements. He completed the program, as Pearl had completed hers, with *Thanks for the Memories* and *I'll see you in my Dreams*. For a while it seemed we had moved back in time ten years.

Frank Olsen was back for his annual Christmas Concert on December 11. One of the great organists of our time, Frank played some of our tra-



ditional Christmas numbers and some that were not so familiar. His accompaniment to the silent movie was outstanding. Frank does not find it necessary to bore the theatre crowd by playing a lot of classical music. Everyone knows he has the ability as he gives many recitals in different churches throughout the year, so if you want to hear Frank play classical go to church, not to a theatre. Contributing to Frank's great popularity is his friendliness, big smile and great generosity.

With all the returns in, our benefit concert held last August allowed us to turn over \$830.75 to the Historical Society of the Tonawandas. Our thanks to everyone who had a part in making this such a great success.

We were surprised to hear announced at the '74 national convention that Australia was the first international chapter. The Niagara Frontier Chapter has always been an international chapter with about one-third of our members Canadian citizens. We feel they should have said, "ATOS has now become an International Organization having granted the first charter to a chapter outside of the U.S."

Our chapter has lined up many fine artists for the Riviera for 1975.

Here is a partial list of artists and dates:

January 15 Jack Doll — his second time at the Riviera. He was heard at the Baldwin exhibit during the '72 and '74 conventions.

February 19 John Muri — has made several appearances here and has been heard at several conventions.

March 19 Del Castillo — This will be his first time at the Riviera, but he is no stranger to this area having played at the Buffalo Theatre in the late 20's.

April 16 Tom Gnaster — his first time at the Riviera.

May — Not firmed up as of this date.

June 18 Larry Ferrari — has appeared a number of times at the Riviera, and many come early to get a good seat.

STEVE CROWLEY

## NORTH TEXAS

Last time we mentioned that the Landmark Pipes and Pizza would open in Dallas on Nov. 15, and open it did, as scheduled. However, we of the Chapter were honored by owner Dino Santrizos with a fine party at Landmark on the evening of the 14th, with music from the 3/11 Barton installed therein by chapter member Jim Peterson. Jim and his helpers, which included several chapter members, had to really hustle to have the installation ready in time. To have it ready on schedule and also have a high-quality truly crafted professional installation certainly speaks well of Jim's capabilities. Organists opening the Pipes and Pizza included Mary Miller Marino, Charles Evans, Jerry Bacon, Pat Kohl, Mark Munzell, Jr. and Lew Williams. The evening began with an introductory commentary by our gracious hostess, who introduced Jim Peterson. Jim gave a brief description of the organ and its origin, and then we were off to a full evening of fine theatre organ music.



Dale Flannery at the Casa Wurlitzer. Shutters and pipe chambers are above the console. (Koski Photo)

We had Friday and Saturday to rest up for the Sunday, Nov. 17 session at Casa Manana, in Fort Worth. Needless to say, many of the members rested up by returning to Landmark periodically for more theatre organ music and pizza. We had our own "open house" at Casa Manana, where eight different organists, each with his own version of theatre organ presentations, played for us. We had as our guests a cross-section of the memberships of all the organ clubs in the area, plug-in, pipe and all. Over 400 heard the various members perform on the Casa Wurlitzer, presenting almost 3 hours of cameos, followed by open console, at which some additional talents and potential chapter members were discovered. Those presenting the cameos included Stan Guy, Jerry Bacon, Pat Kohl, Mark Munzell, Jr., Gene Powell, Dale Flannery, Lew Williams, and a new talent, not yet out of high school, James Leggio of Dallas. That's another name to watch in the North Texas



(L to R) Jerry Bacon, Mark Munzell, Jr., and Stan Guy at the Casa Wurlitzer. (Koski Photos)





Old-time theatre organist Fred Garrett tries out Chairman McDonald's plug-in at the Christmas Party. (Koski Photo)

Theatre Organ world. He's got lots of potential.

On Dec. 16, as guests of our good friends of the Fort Worth section of the American Guild of Organists, we were again able to hear our Casa Manana Wurlitzer. AGO had their Christmas Banquet at Casa and then presented our own Lew Williams in a genuine Theatre Organ concert. Lew included everything from oldies through pops, with a generous sprinkling of Christmas music included in keeping with the holiday season. The local press reviewers touted the session as "one of the most successful meetings Fort Worth AGO has ever had." The attendance of 1000 plus seems to justify that comment. Our thanks to AGO for the affair, and to Lew for his fine performance.

Dec. 22 was the date of our annual Christmas Party, this time at the home of Chapter Chairman Earl McDonald. While Mac took individuals and small groups out to his garage to show them the 3-manual Morton he has stored there until he figures out a place to install it, the rest of the group enjoyed refreshments and some fine music on the theatre-type plug-in Mac has installed in his living room. The player piano in the den, the old crank-up telephone and a few other nostalgia items that Mac has around also drew their share of attention. Included in the artists who handled the plug-in with real finesse were such well-known Dallas organists as Loretta Wolf and Alta Faye Schraudloff. Alta Faye used to play the old Capri Theatre organ in Dallas, now owned by ATOS member Gordon Wright.

A chat with Fred and Joye Mitchell of Mexia brought out some interesting organ matters at the Christmas Party. Fred and Joye had recently returned from a trip to England and were full of raves about the wonderful treatment they received there at the hands of the members of the British Organ Society. Fred visited 10 different theatre organ installations and got to play several of them. He and Joye also were high in their praise of the friendliness and hospitality displayed by Len and Judith Rawle and Len's parents, Les and Edith Rawle. The senior Rawles have two Wurlitzers installed in their home, where Fred and Joye spent a weekend. The Mitchells say that if the treatment they received in England is a sample, we better not miss the proposed Post - Philadelphia ATOS National Charter trip to England in 1976. The British hospitality and their great theatre organ installations would make the trip very much worthwhile.

The Chapter numbers about 40 members as of the end of 1974, a 10% increase. This is a good sign, and if the 1974 affairs can be considered any criterion, 1975 should continue the expansion in both activities and membership. Let's all meet in San Francisco in July!

JOE KOSKI

## OREGON

The meeting of the chapter was on November 23 and was our first chapter meeting at the Organ Grinder restaurant. Chairman Dennis Hedberg made the introductory remarks. He recalled how close we came to not having the organ finished enough for the 1973 National Convention concerts. At that time, only 18 ranks were playing. Dennis praised the fine assistance he had had in the installation of the instrument, both volunteer and professional. He paid a touching tribute to one whom he called his "most dedicated volunteer," Jim Applegate, who passed away in September, 1973. What a pity Jim couldn't have lived to see the final culmination of their labor. The completed Wurlitzer, with its 39 ranks, is truly a great jewel, in the "Taj Mahal" of all pizza palaces.

The Organ Grinder has an outstanding staff of organists headed by Paul Quarino and Jonas Nordwall.

Our concert was played by Jonas Nordwall. Although we are sure that everyone there had heard Jonas during "pizza hours," this was the first time the completed organ was heard under concert conditions. A quiet concert audience allowed Jonas to play many of the more subtle voices, which



James Nordwall at the Organ Grinder 3/39 Wurlitzer.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)



normally cannot be used during business hours. While Jonas always plays impeccably, he sometimes approaches the task rather indifferently, and this is typical of all professionals who play many hours every week. It was not so on this day! The fantastic genius of Jonas Nordwall really shone through. There are few organists in the world who can come close to Jonas for true ability and artistry. Congratulations, Jonas!

After the concert Dennis Hedberg took the audience on a tour through the organ. This was different than the so-called "tours" when the organist merely demonstrates the various voices and effects. Here Dennis took a walkie-talkie, connected to the P.A. system, and went into the organ chamber which is on ground level and completely visible, behind glass. As Dennis identified various pipes and instruments, Jonas played them from the console. It was most interesting and Dennis' dry, canded remarks are always amusing.

To close the program a sound film was shown which pictured the history — beginning and end — of Portland's beautiful Oriental Theatre. The Organ Grinder organ is from the Oriental. The film was narrated by Glenn Shelley, the organist who opened the theatre. He also supplied the background music on the theatre's organ. It had a tinge of real sadness to those of us who loved that theatre. This was a memorable Saturday afternoon for our chapter members and guests. It was very well done, thanks to Dennis and

his able assistants.

The annual Christmas potluck dinner and organ concert was held, as usual, in the auditorium of Benson High School. The attendance for the dinner was the largest ever, with nearly 100 persons on hand, twice the number who said they would attend. There seemed to be enough food, but somewhat of a last minute scramble to get enough tables and chairs on the stage.

Following the dinner, our annual meeting and election of new officers was held.

Bill Peterson was named Honorary Member of the year. No chapter could have a more devoted member than Bill. He has served in every capacity in the chapter, and was chairman for three conventions in Portland, one regional and two national. His name is known by organ fans all over the country. The Oregon Chapter is justly proud of Bill Peterson.

Next came the annual election of officers with the following results: Gerry Gregorius, chairman; Paul Quarino, vice-chairman; Arlene Ingram, secretary-treasurer; and elected to the board of directors were Bob Burke, Mike DeSart, Jerry Duffy and Ron Johnson.

Following the meeting we heard our annual Christmas concert on Benson High School's 3/24 Kimball. Our soloist was Jack Coxon, one of the relief organists at the Organ Grinder and an old timer in theatre organ playing. Jack, like most of the newcomers to the Benson console, played too loud, due to poor placement of



Jack Coxon at the Benson 3/24 Kimball.  
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

the console. The organist can not hear the left chamber, but the audience sure can! Nevertheless, some of his Tibia chordings were really lush. Several of the older people in the audience mentioned how they enjoyed hearing tunes that they hadn't heard in years. All in all, it was an enjoyable concert.

Many of the Oregon Chapter members are marking their calendars for July, and the great San Francisco convention. We are looking forward to seeing many of our old friends again. See you all in San Francisco in July!!

DON INGRAM

## POTOMAC VALLEY

The Potomac Valley Chapter has been very busy these past two months with a variety of events which have involved the entire chapter membership and many others in the Washington, D.C. area as well.

We started out with our first paid-attendance concert at the Virginia Theatre on November 19 with none other than Hector Olivera. To our immense satisfaction, 800 people were in attendance and really brought the house down. The theatre management is still not quite sure what happened.

Hector presented a concert ranging from Bach to *Bumblebee* and each selection was better than the last. His program was beautiful, well-balanced and utilized the full resources of the 3/11 Barton. Hector asked for two themes for an improvisation and these were provided by Jean Lautzen-



1975 Oregon Chapter officers. (L to R) Bob Burke, director; Paul Quarino, vice-chairman; Arlene Ingram, sec.-treas.; Gerry Gregorius, chairman; Mike De Sart and Ron Johnson directors. Director Jerry Duffy is not pictured.  
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)



heiser — “Tie a Yellow Ribbon” and Jimmy Boyce — “The Entertainer.” The resulting selection was performed ala Handel and was delightful with bits of the *Hallelujah Chorus* and several other themes woven together.



Hector Olivera

The Barton, which has not treated some other artists too kindly, was in excellent shape for the concert thanks to the efforts of George Johnson, Larry Goodwin and the crew.

The evening was an unqualified success and several more are in the planning stage for the coming year.

Bob Oberlander led the final session in our educational series “Pipes and Pieces” in late November with 15 members attending. The sessions all year were well received and have served to educate many of our members in the workings and theory of pipe organ care and maintainance. Many thanks to all who taught and participated.

New chapter officers were announced after November balloting by the membership. They are: chairman, Frank Vitale; vice-chairman, Steve Tillotson; secretary, Mrs. Melba Housman; and treasurer, Mrs. Henry Davis. Appointed newsletter editor for 1975 was Phil Lynch.

The grand windup for our year’s programs was held December 8 at the Alexandria Arena with Jimmy Boyce at the console of his 4/34 Wurlitzer. Jimmy’s performances are always looked forward to by our chapter members and 275 turned out for this one and were treated to a great program.

The instrument was originally in-

stalled in the Center Theatre in Rockefeller Center and, with an interim owner, was purchased by Jimmy a number of years ago and installed in the Alexandria Arena. The instrument is unique in that all 34 ranks are unenclosed — there is no expression for the entire 34 ranks! The problems presented by this unusual set-up are more than offset by the mastery of Jimmy Boyce and his program clearly showed that he is a most talented performer.



Jimmy Boyce

Jimmy’s program consisted of a first section of Christmas music ranging from *Toyland* to *Greensleeves* and featured virtually every voice of the organ. The second half of the program was a mixture of tunes — selections from *Gypsy*, some Joplin, *Peanut Vendor* and others which were well received. Jimmy closed with the Leroy Anderson *Christmas Festival*. A most satisfying Christmas present for the chapter from one of our best artists.

FRANK VITALE

## PUGET SOUND

The Haller Lake Improvement Clubhouse took on a festive appearance on the afternoon of December 8, complete with Christmas tree, as the members of the Puget Sound Chapter gathered for our annual Christmas

party. There were many willing, helping hands such as Mary Carson and Marilyn Schrum making the punch; Rosemary Arrowsmith creating the lovely table centerpieces; Annabelle and Milly Lawrence supervising the goodie table. Your correspondent acted as chairman of this event and wishes to thank all who attended and made it so wonderful a party.



Officers for 1975.

The newly-elected officers were introduced by our own Russ Evans, vice-president National ATOS. Those chosen to fill the positions for the new year are: chairman Mark Cockrill; vice-chairman Bill Carson; secretary Milly Lawrence; treasurer Bill Browning. Those elected to act as trustees are: Terry Hochmuth, Mahon Tullis, Russ Evans and Dan Adamson.

A very funny Laurel and Hardy silent film was presented by Russ Evans accompanied by Ed Zollman, Sr. After the movie the console was rolled out to the center of the floor which enabled many couples to enjoy some very lovely dancing around the organ. We enjoyed the music of many of the chapter’s artists.

The members of the Puget Sound Chapter, as well as the residents of this Northwest area are very lucky to have a new star shining on our horizon. A young man with much experience and love of music, loaded with talent and personality plus, is Andy Kasparian from Philadelphia, appearing five nights a week at Pizza & Pipes. Andy comes to us directly from a long engagement at the Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque, N.J. He has already gained much recognition from music lovers of this area and is destined for more of the same. P&P is still enjoying the artistry of our own Dick Schrum at the console two nights a week.

MARGARET SABO



## SOUTHEASTERN

Organist Lyn Larsen played to an audience of nearly 2500 at the Atlanta Fox Theatre, December 1. Larsen's inaugural performance in the South was embodied in an exciting and varied musical format ranging from light classics, to contemporary themes, and a generous "Southern sampler" of well-known melodies bespeaking the South.

As a Southeastern Chapter event, underwritten by member Jack Goodwin and others, the concert was open to the public without charge, and as ATOS regular chapter programs go, the 3,934-seat Fox filled to over half-capacity easily set an attendance record for an event of this nature.

The chapter program was by no means the usual in content. Larsen's talent, his great stage presence, and his sheer musicality, or be it genius, produced an extraordinary performance on the great four-manual, 42-rank Moller organ.

Outstanding selections included the *Knightsbridge March* from the London Suite by Eric Coates. Fritz Kreisler compositions, *Liebesfreud* and *The Old Refrain* (this selection showcased the quiet stops on the instrument and its Ethereal Division) — received sensitive interpretations. A Crawford-inspired novelty, *High Hat*, was an untampered recreation of "the poet," though in new dress due to the Fox Moller's unique voicing. *Masquerade* reiterated the Crawford tradition through Larsen's translation, and conjured up visions of Mr. and Mrs. Crawford at the twin Wurlitzer consoles at New York City's Paramount Theatre. Although George Wright first popularized the assembling of both parts of the composition into a transcription for one console artist (heard in the recording, *A George Wright Original*, Hi-Fi/Life Records), no one in the annals of the theatre organ could top Lyn Larsen's feeling for the music and the clean and precise exposition of this Loeb-Webster work.

Edward German's *Satyr Dance* (from incidental music to *The Conqueror*, a flop on the musical stage of the late 1800's, as Larsen pointed out to the audience), followed the great recorded tradition of organist Ashley Miller. But, moreover, the Moller's speech and tonal capabilities gave the piece a brilliance and physical excitement that would never be possible at

the somewhat "smothered" installation of Miller's recording instrument, the Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer.

*Vannessa* — once the darling of television and radio shows, and possibly the local super market's Muzak — came through as the perfect traditional theatre organ piece. There were the not-so-traditional works, such as the show stopper, Leroy Anderson's *Bugler's Holiday*, played with an orchestral expertise and control never once wanting for a real trumpet. The agility and skill of the artist's keyboard calisthenics was matched by the ever-careful ear — supervising musical ethics in every composition performed. After the Leroy Anderson

encore, the artist closed — all it took was the suggestion of a member of the audience — with a proud *Dixie* and a kickback to an earlier selection, Hoagy Carmichael's 1930 creation, *Georgia On My Mind*.

Tours of the Fox and a reception for the artist at Stouffer's Atlanta Inn followed the concert.

Suffice it to say that if the sounds of Lyn Larsen, drawn from this vast, near-perfect match of instrument and environment, can't convince city fathers and the public to "Save the Fox," then the case of the "tin ear" is all too real. Larsen means music, and his imprint on this Atlanta Fox audience was firmly made.



Lyn tells the large crowd how much he enjoys Atlanta's southern hospitality. He was requested to play "Dixie" — a must in the South. (Tom Ford Photo)



People from as far away as California and Michigan mingle in the lobby during intermission. (Tom Ford Photo)





Carlo Curley. His first time at the "Mighty Mo."  
(John McDaniel Photo)

Sunday, December 15, was a first both for concert organist Carlo Curley, and the Mighty 4/42 Moller at the Atlanta Fox. It was Carlo's first appearance for an ATOS audience, and the first concert on the Big Mo by a virtuoso concert artist. Performer and

instrument were an excellent match and the result was an organ spectacular, from Bach to Joplin. Curley was lavish in his praise of the Moller pipework. He liked the organ's superduplexing-unification for giving him so much to work with : 376 stop tablets.

JOHN CLARK McCALL, JR.

### SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Southern Arizona held its fourth meeting of the year at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Owens. Our special member, Dr. William Harrison Barnes, attended, along with Mrs. Barnes, and after a short business meeting Dr. Barnes played his "Dirty Half-Dozen reduced from a Dozen" numbers. As usual, Dr. Barnes earned much appreciative applause.

Arthur Crowell followed, with popular numbers of the 20's and 30's and ended with his *Desert Song Suite*. Our youngest member, a pianist, followed with *The Little Drummer Boy* played on the piano. Little Therese Deschenes also did a very good job for her first time at an organ console. Lynn Staininger was next with a theatrical number, followed by a Bach composition. The improvements we hear in one short year make us older players wonder about our "ability."

Why don't we advance at the same rate?

*The Hallelujah Chorus* was followed by Janice Owens with a theatre type number. It is a pleasure listening to our younger members perform.

Open console followed, and Helen Bowers, Kathy Stadler and Ray Gard took advantage of the time.

On December 8 many of us journeyed to the Organ Stop in Phoenix to hear Lyn Larsen, in what is becoming a traditional Christmas program for us. Donna Parker of our chapter (and also Los Angeles) was there, as was Bob McNeur, our New Mexico member, who is now on Bill Brown's staff in the capacity of assistant manager and organ technician.

BOB HIGH

### WESTERN RESERVE

On Saturday, September 14, 1974, a group of 32 theatre organ buffs headed toward the southern part of Ohio to enjoy five very fine pipe organs. We traveled via bus which made our trip even more enjoyable.

Our first stop was at the residence of Fred and Kay Reiger in Waynesville. After twisting and turning through the countryside and running into a detour, we finally wound our way to the Reiger's residence. The Reigers had a

*David Ashbolt*

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barn specially built to house their organ which is a 3/44 with an Estey player. Fred had the organ designed so that he could play the collection of Estey rolls left by his grandfather who had a pipe organ in his home. Besides being a fine concert organ, it has several theatre voices, including Tibia, Vox and Kinura plus tuned and untuned percussions. Fred's organ has a 32-foot Bombard which makes the barn rumble. The listening area is a large living room, fifty by eighty-five feet and the organ sounds superb. The pipe chamber is twenty by forty feet with a forty-foot ceiling. The basement houses the 15-horsepower blower plus a complete machine shop, carpenter shop, welding shop and spray booth. Fred restores antique cars and is also a fine inventor. We played the organ for about two hours before we had to bid our wonderful host and hostess farewell. We climbed into the bus and headed for our motel where we freshened up for the evening festivities.

The second organ was a 2/7 Wurlitzer in the home of Herb and Laverne Merrit in Cincinnati. This seven-rank organ sounded fine. Herb would rather listen, but we prevailed upon him to play, and he left the room and the blower came on — and a few moments later out came the wonderful sound of

the organ, but Herb was not at the console. In fact, no one was seated at the console. With the first few notes, Program Director Rod Elliott's mouth opened and his eyes popped with surprise! After the roll ended, we had our chance to put the mighty little Wurlitzer through its paces. The time passed quickly and before we knew it, we had to board the bus and head for our third organ.

Bidding Herb and Laverne farewell, we headed for Stan Todd's Shady Nook Steak House in Hamilton, Ohio. The 4-manual, 20 some ranks was put through its paces by Mr. Bob Reed who did a very fine job with the Mighty Wurlitzer. The combination-action did not work, so Bob had to hand-set the sounds. He did a great job and everyone enjoyed the evening of fine music.

Sunday morning was brisk. When we hit the road, about 9:00 a.m., we headed toward Dayton and the home of Denny and Mazie Werkmeister, who own a 2/14 Wurlitzer. Denny demonstrated the organ, and then we took over the ivories for a few hours. Rod Elliott came with the bad news that we had to leave once again; and we all wished that we could come back again to play this organ.

The bus headed toward the final stop and the last organ on our trip. We

arrived about 1:30 p.m. at the home of Ken and Ruth Hunt who have a 4/17 Wurlitzer from the Chicago area. Mr. Hunt said Leon Berry had been instrumental in helping him obtain this organ. After a brief history of the instrument the console was turned over to Fred Packard who opened our last bout with the giants! We enjoyed playing this fine instrument and touring the chambers. When it was time to leave, Gordon Hegfield played the final selection and we headed for the bus.

We had a delightful trip back to Cleveland with many conversations about the two days and our wonderful hosts. After we stopped for dinner, Fred Packard brought out his accordion and we had a great sing-along as we journeyed homeward. The chapter thanks Rod Elliot who laid the groundwork for this two day event. The wonderful memories will remain for a long time to come.

HOWARD KAST

## WEST PENN

Dormont, Pa. is the home of the only remaining in-theatre pipe organ in operation in the Pittsburgh area. That of course is the So. Hills Theatre. In it's heyday, just as it has recently, the So. Hills Wurlitzer could be heard

## Frank Olsen

F.L.C.M., L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M.,  
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accompanying silent movies. Well its seems that the So. Hills Theatre now has a companion; no, not a true theatre in the strictest sense, but to the more than 500 happy people there on the night of October 19, 1974, it was the "Keystone Oaks" theatre and it was the 1920's all over again.

It was a truly gala event — many celebrities from the organ world were present, to mention just a few: Nick Snow, Ed McMahon, Ty Pope, Elva Houston, Herkie Knell and direct from her engagements at the Loew's Penn and Enright Theatres, Irma Guthoerl. There haven't been that many stars assembled in any Pittsburgh theatre since the funeral of Lillian Russell at the Davis Theatre.

The master of ceremonies was Mr. Sam Dillon as he most eloquently introduced the bill of fare and the artist for the evening, that celebrated star of theatre organs from Atlantic City to Hawaii, Pittsburgh's own Harold Rouse.

Mr. Rouse approached the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer and without any fanfare the program began.

First on the bill was a comedy short starring Charlie Chaplin entitled "Behind The Scenes," it was followed by "Love and Hisses," a short film starring that new comedy sensation Stan Laurel and his co-star Oliver

Hardy. (I think they just might make it.)

After a 15 minute intermission the crowd filed back to their seats. The house lights dimmed and Harold Rouse closed the program with "For Heaven's Sake," a featurette starring Harold Lloyd as he received a thunderous ovation from the spellbound audience.

To just mention the fact that Harold Rouse played behind the films is inadequate at best. It would be a correct description to say that he was part of the photoplay itself, for as the scenes changed from drama to action to pathos, his music punctuated and supported the actors much the same as a symphony orchestra accompanies the ballet.

By the way, the rumors about sound pictures replacing silent films is pure nonsense. How could a record replace the likes of Maestro Rouse? Who would rather listen to dialog when they could listen to Diapasons? Silent movies are here to stay.

When the lights came back on, it was 1974 once again, and we were not in a movie palace at all but in the modern Keystone Oaks H.S. auditorium, at a program of the Pittsburgh Area Theatre Organ Society, and no it was not a Mighty Wurlitzer that we heard but an electronic theatre organ.

(Oh by the way, talkies did win out after all.)

It was fun letting our imagination run away for a little bit, but we will have to use our imaginations only for a while longer as the Keystone Oaks auditorium will soon become the proud recipient of a genuine Wurlitzer theatre organ, now being totally restored by dilligent PATOS workers.

West Penn Theatre Organ Society salutes our sister society PATOS, for doing such a great job of preserving the sounds and traditions of the theatre pipe organ in the Western Pa. area, as both WPTOS and PATOS continue to show that Silents Are Golden.

FRAN VERRI

## WOLVERINE

On Sunday, November 3, 1974, the Detroit Theater Organ Club was the 'concert hall' for over 150 members and guests of the Wolverine and Motor City Chapters and the DTOC, as guests of Charles and Betty Heffer. After being introduced by Chairman Lawrie Mallett, Herb Head opened his program at the 4/34 Wurlitzer with a medley centered around a recent trip to New York. As well as playing one of his ever-popular calliope medlies, at which he is a master, he got us all into the holiday mood with his version of *Sleigh Ride*.

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Wolverine officers for 1975 — Chairman Lawrie Mallett, Vice-Chairman/  
Treasurer Ed Corey and Secretary Scott Smith.  
(George Gephart Photo)



"Wurlitzer House" residents Glenn Rank and David Voydanoff at  
David's 3/16 Wurlitzer.  
(L.G. Mallett Photo)

Included in the afternoon's program was a surprise birthday salute to former chairman, David Voydanoff.

Although not a regularly scheduled chapter event, Wolverine members were invited to an all-Bach program by member Sam Lam, D.M.A., in the Hart Recital Hall of Michigan State University on Sunday, November 10. Dr. Lam's superb recital at the 4/43 Schlicker tracker organ included such well-known selections as *Passacaglia* and *Fugue in C Minor* and the *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*.

Wolverine's last meeting for 1974 was held at the Detroit residence of Glenn Rank and David Voydanoff on



Herb Head at the console of the D.T.O.C.  
4/34 Wurlitzer.  
(L.G. Mallett Photo)

December 15. The 21 room mansion, better known as the 'Wurlitzer House', contains Voydanoff's 3/6 Wurlitzer as well as Rank's 3/10 Wurlitzer, which will soon be playing. Small wonder how the house attained its name.

The meeting was, without a doubt, one of the most successful home meetings in the 10 year history of the Wolverine Chapter. Needless to say, the combination of over 70 members and a potluck dinner was quite a sight to behold.

Among the highlights of the day was a brief appearance by Mr. Lee Erwin who had just completed a program for the Motor City Chapter at



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the Punch and Judy Theatre. Mr. Erwin's ragtime music went over well on the organ — especially on Rank's piano which was recently added to the Voydanoff Wurlitzer.

Following dinner, Chairman

Mallett called the business meeting to order. The first order of business was the election of officers for 1975. The present officers were retained: Chairman, Lawrie Mallett; Vice-Chairman/Treasurer, Ed Corey, and Secretary,

Scott Smith.

The chapter wishes to thank all those responsible for such a successful year. 1975 promises to be even better yet.

SCOTT S. SMITH

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