

equipped with plugs for the same reasons. Another nuance is that the original electro-pneumatic systems of relays has been replaced by the Burton Solid-State Relay System. There are a total of 276 power transistors and 3051 series diodes in the system.

The pipe room temperature is kept at 68 degrees in winter. A dehumidifier is run during the summer months. The temperature approximates that of a church or theatre.

Although Mr. Burton plans for additional ranks and percussions, symbolic of many theatre organ owners, the organ is now 90% playable. He is equipped to show silent movies, and has started a movie library, which already includes films of Chaplin, Laurel & Hardy, Lloyd, Arbuckle and Semon. He is equally proficient at accompanying the silents on organ or piano. □



Console of Howard Burton's first organ, a 2/7 Geneva, installed in his home in 1961. The console was completely rebuilt. (Burton Coll.)

## Closing Chord

**Ira Swett**, a former member of the L.A. Chapter, who gave several midnight concerts at the Wiltern Theatre many years ago, and recorded two LP record albums there, passed away March 12, 1975. Born in L.A. on May 18, 1913, Ira lived there most of his life, attending Polytechnic ("Poly") High School, where he played the pipe organ in the auditorium with the late Phil Olson and the late Truman Welch, both of whom were well known to theatre organ buffs in Southern California.

Ira later attended USC, where he continued his studies in music, then worked for many years for the Salvation Army as its program director. He was also a radio organist for several years, and played over different radio stations in the area, including a regular Saturday morning broadcast over KFVB, using the 3-manual Wurlitzer which subsequently became the property of the late Joe Kearns.

Ira was best known nation-wide by the electric railway buffs for his well-documented histories of various streetcar and interurban lines. He owned perhaps the largest collection

of photos of Pacific Electric Railway cars in existence. During World War II, he published a monthly newsletter for electric railway buffs serving in the armed forces, keeping them informed of what was happening on the various electric railways. This newsletter later evolved into periodic treatises on specific railway systems which were so thoroughly detailed that the editor of TRAINS magazine coined the phrase, "Ira Swett-thoroughness."

**Roderick Hallowell "Sandy" Macpherson**, a member of the Theatre Organists Hall of Fame, died on March 3, 1975 on his 78th birthday.

Born in Paris, Ontario, Canada, he became a musician after holding several assorted jobs. He played theatres in Hamilton, Ont., Buffalo (Shea's Hippodrome), and Syracuse (Empire), before going to England where he was featured organist at the Empire, Leicester Square in London. He then succeeded Reginald Foort as staff organist of the BBC, a position he was to hold over 25 years.

During World War II, he played numerous radio programs for both the home audience, and soldier audience overseas, "Sandy's Mailbag," "Sandy's Half-Hour" and "A Message From Sandy" being among the popular shows.

After the war, he continued in broadcasting, though on a smaller scale, and also served as a church organist. He retired a few years ago.

(His complete biography appeared in the Winter '64-'65 THEATRE ORGAN).

**Dr. Arthur J. Movius, Jr.**, prominent surgeon in Billings, Montana, had two hobbies — ham radio and theatre organ. Movius was destined to be a medic; his father, also a physician, founded the clinic where his son practiced the healing art. The son loved to converse with far-away places via his ham rig with about the same zeal he had for playing the organ. He was an accomplished musician and his residence was pipe-equipped.

At 1:00 a.m. on an April morning, Dr. Movius was found unconscious in his ham radio room. Taken to St. Vincent's hospital, he was pronounced dead on arrival. Burns on his body indicated accidental electrication. He was 64. His wife Evelyn, survives.

Organist **Bea Bailey (Sheehan)**, who teamed with pianist/organist Ramona Gerhard for "Twenty Flying Fingers" radiocasts over WCCO, Minneapolis, during the '30s, died at her Minneapolis home in mid-April, reports Alden Miller. □