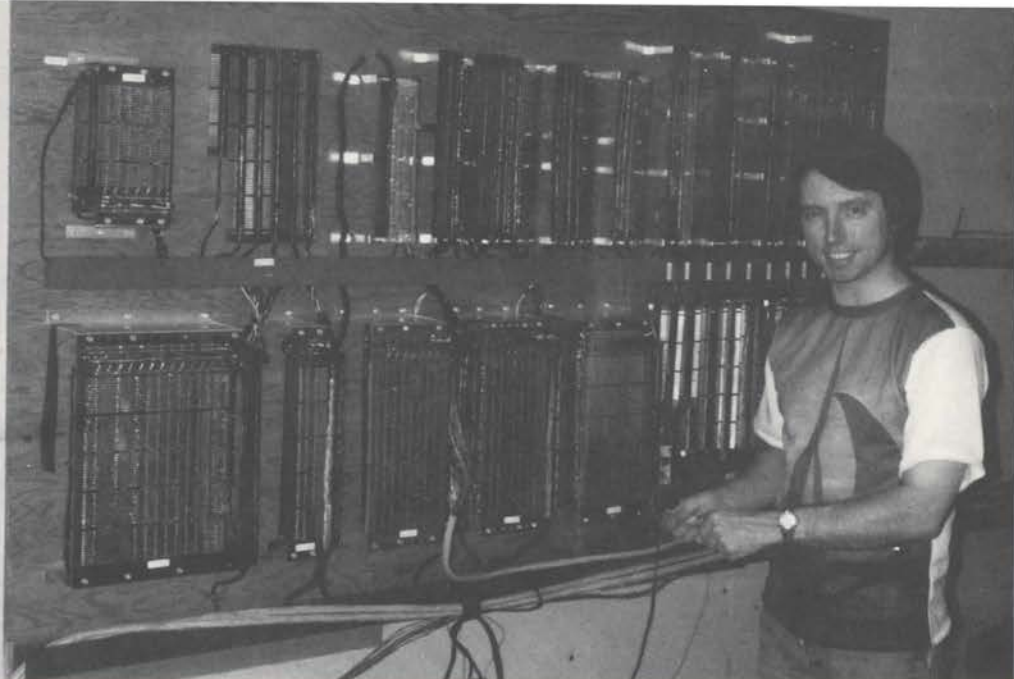


**T**he Connecticut Valley Chapter recently completed additions to their outstanding Marr & Colton installation in the Thomaston Opera House. Members may recall a feature article on this organ in THEATRE ORGAN, December 1971, p4. It had been the opinion of several concert artists that the 3/10 Marr & Colton, as it had been reworked, had many of the characteristics in sound and registration of an organ of 15 to 18 ranks. It was felt that the addition of three ranks would give the Opera House organ the full capabilities of a much larger instrument.

It was not just a simple matter of adding ranks and stop tabs. The horseshoe stoprail was already filled to capacity. The problem was to decide which ranks would make



Allen Miller installs switching panel on Peterson relay. Unit shown handles half of the augmented Thomaston organ.

# MORE PIPES

the organ most useful, and which of the present stops would have to be deleted to make room for the additions. We sat at length with Tom Hazleton, Dennis James, and Lyn Larsen reworking stoplists, and finally after a year of juggling, worked out a realistic plan. The additional ranks were to be Posthorn (English Horn), Oboe Horn, and Krumet. The present Kinura was to be deleted or left playable only in one place for comic effects. By

(L to R) English Horn, Clarinet and Diapason installed at Thomaston Opera House.

judicial substitution of stops, and figuring on the use of 16' couplers for ensembles, and limiting 16' stops to those needed for particular solo combinations, we were able to make the additions within the space of the horseshoe.

Since the original stoplist of the Marr & Colton had been sparse in a few areas, we had previously added switches and diodes to the original relay. The new stoplist required such extensive changes, plus the additions, that we decided to install a solid-state relay and switching system to take care of all additions to the original relay. We chose the Peterson system because we could easily provide for the eventual replacement of the pneumatic relay with additional solid-state switching in the future.

The Peterson relay was wired in and the horseshoe rebuilt during last summer, and we were ready for the new ranks we opened our first concert in the fall. To our surprise, the organ was already more versatile with only the ten original ranks playing.

We had decided to revoice an English Horn which we had in storage. This rank had been made by Schopps for a large Wurlitzer, and we knew it would be overwhelming in the intimate Opera House.

*Organist Ashley Miller and Lyn Larsen will be heard on the augmented Marr & Colton during Connecticut Valley's "Autumn Serenade" regional convention in October.*

Our real windfall was the gift of a 3/15 Marr & Colton church organ which included all the chests, regulators and pipes we would need except for the Krumet. Allen Miller undertook the revoicing the pipework for the Thomaston organ, and while he was at it, revoiced a Salicional and Celeste to replace the scratchy Violin and Celeste from the original organ. A new copy of a Wurlitzer Krumet is being made through the facilities at Austin Organs. Meanwhile, we were able to tame the Kinura by partially capping the resonators.

The results of these additions were even more rewarding than we expected. The changes had been completed only days before Lyn Larsen's May concert. Lyn made it known to all that he was pleased with the results, but the concerts he played were the best tribute he could have given. Bon Smith, who headed the New York City Beacon Theatre Wurlitzer restoration, was in the audience, and commented that we had, "... made a tired old lady into a beautiful young princess." □

