

THE KURPAN 2/6 PAGE

by Vince Kurpan

Joe and Lanette Kurpan's 2/6 Page theatre organ was built in 1928 in Lima, Ohio, and originally installed in the Pastime Theatre in Berea (Ohio) where it was played until the talkies took over. It sat idle until 1939, when it was sold to a church in North Olmsted. In 1963 it was again in storage (exact dates are not available). In 1964, Mr. George Rogers did a beautiful job of installing this organ in his home in Painesville, Ohio. In April of 1973, Bob Brown took Joe and Lanette and their sons, Russ and Vince, to Painesville to the Roger's home, with the purpose of just tape recording this wonderful sounding instrument. But the Kurpan family fell in love with the Page, and subsequently bought it, hoping it would fit into their basement-less ranch home in Macedonia, Ohio.

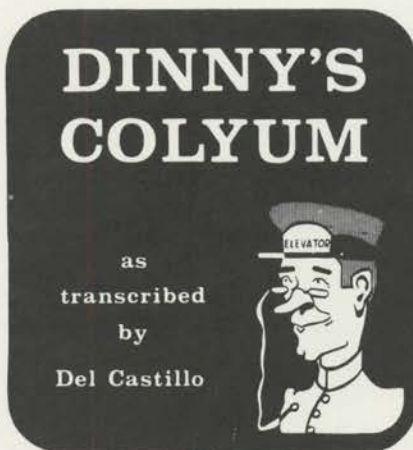
They brought it home in a rental truck on the Saturday before Easter, to the utter amazement of their family, neighbors and friends. Many bets were made by friends, unfamiliar with pipe organ "nuts," that the organ would never fit in the

house." The pipe chamber was to be in one of the bedrooms, with the swell shades opening into the adjacent living room. Joe and the boys took the ceiling out of the bedroom to accommodate the Bourdons. A portion of the attic floor was used for the Xylophone, Glockenspiel and toy counter. The space in this chamber was very limited, but utilized very well.

To help in tuning etc., Joe very cleverly put the entire shades and frame on hinges. The tremos are in the attic as are the wind lines coming from the blower and the relay racks

are in the utility room. The installation was completed in approximately seven months, with the great help of many good friends.

On October 13, 1974, WRTOS held a monthly meeting there to hear George Krejci play this wonderful instrument. George, who plays at the Lamplighter, in Olmsted Falls, and played at the Hawaii Theatre while stationed there in the service, gave us a beautiful concert. In one of his selections, he used a synthetic 32' Flute. Approximately 60 people enjoyed the installation and this "little honey of an instrument." □



take in a movie or two and wait for the Fall activities to start up again. So I wouldn't say the summer was a complete bust. I saw a dandy movie with the pianist Arthur Rubenstein tellin' all about himself and I want to tell you he is quite a pixie for a old boy and he uncorked some mighty good pianner playin. And then I see another movie with a woman conductor named Brico all about how hard it is for a woman to get to be a conductor, and all I can say is that if you can cut the mustard it aint so hard and the woman that can prove it is this Sarah Caldwell who runs the Boston Opery Company so good she jest got a honorary degree from Harvard University to say nuthin of the fact that we got a young pianner player here in L.A. name of Mona Golabek, and if they's anybody any better Id jest like to hear her.

And so far as organ playin goes they was a jim dandy here on electric organs with three organ players name of Pomping Vila and Don Lee Ellis and Skip O'Donnell and every one of them was a crackerjack and I aint talkin about boxes of candy neither. I even got to see Virgil Fox a-jumpin up and down on the organ pedals and that's jest about enough excitement to last through the summer all by itself. And then I got to readin a book by a riter whose name I forget and it was all about Ragtime so you might say my musical education was kind of spread out in all directions.

I dont think a feller ought to stick too close to one thing anyway. Its

I swear I dunno where in tunket the time goes. Maybe its because I aint been doin nuttin to speak of that the summer slid by me so fast. I didn't get to go to the S.F. Convention and I didnt get to go to the Organ Holiday for that there Nostalgick Week End at Dream-Inn-On-The-Beach which sounded like a real gasser, and I didnt get to go to the Home Organists Adventure Midwest in Chicago and I always like adventures. So it seems like I aint done nuthin and aint seen nuthin neither. Heck, I didn't even get to hear Gaylord Carter, who is one of my favorite organ players, cuttin loose on The Hunchback of Noter Dame.

Well, in a way its my own fault. I was a little short of jack this summer, so I sort of decided to jest take it easy and kind of laze thru the summer. So instead I decided I would jest kind of go to a concert if it was clost enough and maybe



Left to right: Russ Kurpan and Dad, Joe.

George Krejci at the Kurpan's 2/6 Page.



pretty good for a feller to be a musician, because he's makin' molla doin somethin he likes and mostly he's a-goin to keep on likin it no matter how old he gets. I ain't no great shakes as a musician, but sence I give up runnin elyvaters I been thankful that I took those pianner lessons last year I rote about, because I can get some fun now at the pianner even if I do have to pick out the tunes with one finger kind of. So I guess the moral is that if you aint fortunate enough to make your livin doin somethin that's fun like playin music, the next best thing is to have a hobby for when you quit work, and I guess for my money bein able to like music would be about up to the top of the list. □



the letters to the editors

Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

Address:

George Thompson
Editor
P.O. Box 1314
Salinas, Calif. 93901

Dear Sir,

This letter is an appeal to all lovers of the theatre organ and the Wur-litzer in particular. Those who know anything of the work of Robert Hope-Jones may well have read about his organ in St. John's Church in Birkenhead, England, or even have seen the famous photograph of the maestro himself sitting at the console in the graveyard playing the

organ inside the church! The instrument was complete with the very first Diaphone and Tibia to be made and originally the organ had second touch and other Hope-Jones' innovations.

The sad thing is that the church was closed some time ago and a recent visit by the technical team of this Trust revealed that not only were broken windows allowing the weather to get at the organ, but that vandals had already been active in the building, fortunately at this stage without severe damage to the organ.

As a result the Trust has bid for this famous instrument and has been told that it can have it for a nominal sum. Therefore the decision has been taken to remove it and place it in storage until it can be re-erected, or at least the Hope-Jones' parts placed on permanent display. This project will place a strain on the finances of the Trust which has to raise all money voluntarily or by selling its records. The Committee appeals to friends on the other side of the Atlantic where the Hope-Jones organ developed into the Wur-litzer, to support us by sending a donation to our Treasurer at 4 High Elm Road, Hale Barns, Altrincham, Cheshire, England. Dollar cheques are acceptable, so, buffs, get that pen out and drop us a few dollars! We shall not waste them we assure you, but we do need your help!

Many thanks from your fellow buffs in England.

Yours Sincerely,
John Potter,
Honorary Secretary

Dear Sir,

I have just received the May-June Issue of 'THEATRE ORGAN' and upon reading through the feature — 'For the Records,' a feature I am always anxious to read each time as I have a great interest in collecting theatre organ recordings, I noticed some incorrect information, which I feel for the sake of justice should be corrected for the records. It concerns the review of the record by my late friend Gerald Shaw. Your reviewer in mentioning about Deroy 929. Gerald Shaw at the Odeon Leicester Square' says that the Melotone unit of Compton organs was used as an excuse for an extra manual and that is likened to a Solovox and that the Odeon Compton has a manual devoted en-

tirely to the Melotone. I'm afraid this is quite incorrect and I would be more than grateful for you to point this out to your readers, as this concerns a rather important issue regarding the leading builder of theatre organs here in Europe. The Melotone unit became part of the design of all but three theatre organs delivered between 1935 and 1940. It is the invention of Leslie Bourn the brilliant inventor of the Compton electro-static pipeless organs. No Compton organ has a manual devoted entirely to the Melotone as some of its tone colours are found on the solo manual, tones like the Melotone, Krummhorn, Cor Anglais and Musette. These can be used solo or in any combination of pipe ranks, whilst other stops on the unit provide the Vibraphone, Marimba, Chimes, Carillon and these are found on the accompaniment manual and solo manuals. With the usual couplers it can be used where one likes. In fact they are not designated on the console. Nearly two thirds of the Compton organs were delivered before 1935 it stands to reason that a large proportion of organs were equipped with the unit. The early model was equipped with a "Glide" stop which the organist could use for a most realistic Hawaiian Guitar effect the first time this effect had ever been heard. Some electronic organ firms are quite incorrectly claiming today that this is something new! The volume is controlled by the usual swell pedals. The large horn speakers being sited mostly behind the grille. The Forum cinema Southampton was the first cinema organ installation in the world featuring this wonderful integrated tonal system, which is sorely missed if it should be out of order as apart from missing additional tone colours there are then no Chimes, Vibraphone or Marimba as

moving?

Send your change of address to . . .

VI THOMPSON
THEATRE ORGAN
P.O. BOX 1314
SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93901