



CHAPTER NOTES

Let us know what's happening in YOUR Chapter!

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is the FIRST of the month
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ALABAMA

On Monday, January 10, 1977, at 4 p.m., on a snowy, icy and very cold afternoon here in Birmingham, little Jesse Barnard Franklin, III, made his first public appearance in this world . . . weighing in at 7 lbs. 10 oz. He has good lungs and long fingers, but I guess we'll have to wait a while

yet to see if he is going to give some competition to "old Dad" who is the house organist at our Alabama Mighty Wurlitzer. Proud parents Marti and Barnard, and little Jesse, are doing quite well. Congratulations to the three of you!

Our January meeting was small in attendance, but large on enthusiasm. It was a cold, rainy, snowy day, with travel warnings out for the entire state, but our guest artist, Michael Pack, from Nashville, Tennessee, was lucky enough to get here and soon warmed things up with some beautiful ballads. Michael made his first professional appearance when, as a teenager, he was a winner in the Yamaha Festival contest. He also did some later club work in Las Vegas for a while. He is now in his early 20's and has just discovered theatre music. He has done mostly church work, but is really developing a love for the theatre sound. Michael's



Master Scott Crompton, from Montgomery, accompanies the group in "The Happy Birthday Song."
(Thomas L. Hatter Photo)



Michael Pack, from Nashville, Tenn., was guest artist at the January meeting.
(Thomas L. Hatter Photo)



Lee Aured, chapter chairman, watches Margaret Crompton cut the cake she baked for the fourth birthday of the Alabama Chapter in February. The unusual cake is a doughy duplicate of the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Alabama Theatre.
(Ed Bruchac Photo)

program consisted of some lovely ballads and some familiar show tunes. Of course, being from Tennessee, he also had to include the beautiful "Tennessee Waltz," to the delight of the audience.

Our February meeting showed us much improved weather. It was a beautiful, balmy Sunday morning, and we had a very good turnout. We didn't have an out-of-town guest for this meeting, but we did have a Parade of Stars — our own local chapter members. We started with one of our youngest members of this chapter, Master Scott Crompton (age 9), of Montgomery, Alabama, some of our senior members as well as some of those in-betweens . . . Bruce

Rockett, Barnard Franklin, Riedel West, Larry Rodriguez, Alleen Cole, Lillian Truss, Evelyn Jones and Norville Hall. The performances by each of these "stars" were just super, and you can bet we're going to be using some of this hidden talent more often now that we've got it out in the open. Lee Thomas, another of our members who plays a mean trombone, also did a great job and added a professional touch by acting as emcee for the program.

To round everything out for this meeting, it was a real birthday party! This being our fourth birthday meeting, Margaret Crompton (young Scott's mother) another talented member, lent her artistic abilities by creating a cake that was a masterpiece. It was a replica of our beautiful red and gold Mighty Wurlitzer, complete with all the scrolls, right down to the last pedal, stool and pineapples on top of the console. It was such a lovely addition to the party that we had one of our local newspaper photographers come down to do a bit of publicity for our chapter with a picture of the cake, and the organ, along with the "Baker" and Lee Aured, chairman. Finishing out the refreshment table were Beatrice Fee, Louise Harless, Evelyn Jones, Ruth Farris and Betty Crowe. Thanks to all these ladies from the rest of us!

All in all, it was a wonderful birthday party, and we're already looking forward to our meeting next month, when our guest will be Jack Moelmann, from Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

JO ANN RADUE



"Convention costs? I thought it was the National Debt!" says Chicago '77 Treasurer Ione Tedei to CATOE Chairman Richard Sklenar and ATOS President Ray Snitil during a recent meeting. (C. Albin Anderson Photo)

CATOE

CATOE's absence from these pages for the last two issues doesn't mean that we have been idle. Indeed not! A large number of our members have been busy under the leadership of 1977 Convention Chairman Bill Rieger, planning every detail for what we are sure is going to be a great convention this summer. Work goes on on the many organs that CATOE maintains, so that they'll be in top shape. It's a big job, but we feel that the final product is going to be worth it. National President Ray Snitil and THEATRE OR-

GAN publisher Betty Mason have been guests at recent planning meetings.

The second show of our 1976-77 season was presented on November 4 at the Chicago Theatre. The program featured Walter Strony at the 4/29 Wurlitzer, and Chuck Schaden, Chicago's "King of Old Time Radio." The entire show was a night of nostalgia, and brought back many memories of those days before television, when the only limitation to what we "saw" was our own imagination.

CATOE's October social event



Another CATOE convention planning meeting held at the beautiful Palmer House. Bill Rieger (front center), convention chairman, has held numerous meetings to make certain that the huge 1977 ATOS convention will run smoothly for the enjoyment of all conventioners. (C. Albin Anderson Photo)



CATOE members protect their ears while touring the inside of the Axle Rink's organ chamber.

(Frank Axelson Photo)

was a banquet at the picturesque Baker Hotel in St. Charles (there may still be a few people around who remember the Baker from the 1965 convention).

CATOE's November social event was held at the Pickwick Theatre in Park Ridge, where Tom Cotner played a full program, including silent film and sing-along on the 3/11 Wurlitzer. Tom is a fine musician, and we hope to hear more of him.

On December 12, our Christmas social was held at St. Mary of the Angels Church, which houses a large, very romantic Kimball. About 75 of us braved a cold, January Sunday morning for a social at the Axle (formerly Hub) Rink, where staff organist Freddie Arnish entertained us on the high pressure (mostly 25") Wurlitzer. And finally, our February social featured organist Gladys Christensen at the Chicago Civic Opera House, playing the 3/50 E.M. Skinner which is maintained by a CATOE crew.

JIM TAGGERT

CENTRAL INDIANA

"The snow is snowing — the wind is blowing, but I can weather the storm" . . . some did and some didn't . . . but 32 brave souls ventured out into the worst blizzard of the winter to attend the first meeting of the new year.

Congratulations and best wishes were extended to Carrol Copeland as he presided at his first meeting as

CIC-ATOS's newly-elected chairman. The meeting held at the Frieden United Church of Christ in South Indianapolis was something a little different and an excellent beginning for what promises to be another busy and exciting year. The organ concert was presented by Bee Butler and her talented student, Todd Goens. The organ was a Hammond Concorde, furnished by Larry Weber of Columbus, Indiana.

There was a time when January was the "let-down" month following holiday activities, but no longer do people, at least not ATOSers, experience this dilemma. There are smaller groups split off from the "mother" chapter that seek organ activities throughout the intervening weeks and months. One group recently journeyed by motor home to the Ohio Theatre in Columbus to attend the concert of Hector Olivera. What a tremendous concert he presented on the Ohio's 4/20 Mighty Morton theatre pipe organ. Still another group went to the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, Indiana, for Hector's concert there on the 4/15 Page.

The big event locally was the formal dedication of the 3/14 Louisville theatre pipe organ at Manual High School in Indianapolis. A near-capacity crowd filled the auditorium on a bitterly cold and snowy night to hear Lee Erwin play the dedicatory concert, followed by the silent film classic *The General* starring Buster

Keaton. It was a thrilling experience for young and old alike and the first exposure to theatre pipe organ music and a silent film for many in attendance.

This memorable evening culminated four years of diligent work, dedication of time and people to accomplish the feat of saving and renovating another theatre pipe organ. Many from CIC-ATOS gave able assistance to Carl Wright, stage manager of Manual High School, who instigated and promoted this gigantic project. The Manual organ is one of only three such installations in high schools in the United States. Our congratulations to the many who made this possible!

The completion of Manual High School's Louisville theatre pipe organ now gives Indianapolis two pipe organs contributing to community activities. The other is the Hedback theatre's 2/10 Page which has been serving Indianapolis cultural and community groups for the past year.

RUTH D. WARD

CENTRAL OHIO

Our first meeting at the home of our Palace Wurlitzer took place in January. Members and guests had guided tours of the chambers and progress reports were given by Willard Ebner and Bob Shaw. For the first time we used the attractive new auditorium of the Worthington High School to watch the last movie made by Harold Lloyd. The film and sound track is owned and was projected by Willard Ebner.

An unexpected event began with a phone call from Mrs. Ansel, one of the owners of the new Pipe Organ Ristorante. She informed us that the following evening Gaylord Carter would be putting on a mini-concert and our membership was invited. We requested a block of 40 reservations be held and immediately burned the telephone lines to reach as many members as possible. When we phoned in the reservations we had we learned the restaurant was booked to capacity. Over forty of our members were present when Gaylord began his concert which now was stretched from mini-size. Thanks to his friends Frank Babbitt and Tom Hamilton who furnished a projector, the Harold Lloyd silent

Haunted Spooks and a sing-along, all projected on a wall of the restaurant, Gaylord gave us a full program. His concert included two of his original compositions, "Virgin River Rag" and "South Dakota Waltz" — both enthusiastically enjoyed. His command of his audience is magnificent and patrons new to this sort of thing were soon entranced with what was going on.

Partially quoting from information printed on the place mats — "The Pipe Organ Ristoranté is proud to introduce to the public our majestic 3/21 Moller Theatre Pipe Organ built by the M.P. Moller Company in 1926. Our 'Mighty Mo' was built for installation in the Strand Theatre, Moundsville, West Virginia. The organ was later removed from the theatre and installed in a church in Barnesville, Ohio. Our 'Mighty Mo' was too powerful for the church, however, and it was soon removed. Since that time, history is sketchy, but we believe it spent most of its time in storage in a garage. After we purchased it, we brought it to Columbus to be brought back to life so that it might entertain as it had in its prime. It is now happily enjoying its 50th birthday here at the Pipe Organ Ristoranté under the agile fingers of our organists. Installation of this magnificent instrument was expertly undertaken by the Bunn-Minnick Co., Columbus, Ohio. They have done much to make it the superb-sounding organ that it is today."

House organists are Ted J. Gyson and Steve Barnes. Following Gaylord's concert Steve performed at the console to an appreciative audience. Before coming to Columbus Steve played Jimmie Boyce's 4/34 Wurlitzer at the Alexandria Arena in Alexandria, Virginia.

The restaurant will have open console, and amateur night with advance auditioning required. The Moller is now about half finished with the traps yet to come. With audience response what it is now, there is little doubt this venture is headed for total success.

Williams Music Store, featuring Allen and Thomas organs, was the scene for our February meeting. During a short business meeting Vice-Chairman Bob Richard informed us of a major program being undertaken in Columbus to coor-

dinate cultural activities with a clearing house for dates to try to eliminate overlapping of important cultural events. Bob and Betsy Richard will attend the meetings and represent COTOS.

Tom Lasten of Williams Music Store, introduced us to the Thomas 2001 and played a tape prepared by Byron Melcher demonstrating the features of this versatile instrument. With not much more knowledge than how to turn the 2001 on, one can be an instant artist — which prompted professional organist Lois Hays to comment, "I've wasted my life." With other organs available to us, members kept the music flowing.

Always of interest is what our young members are doing with their musical talent. Charles Prior Jr., 15, is to play a Conn organ for the Junior Achievement Trades Fair March 4, 5 and 6. He will also play the Ohio Theatre Morton on March 17 for a Junior Achievement Production.

IRENE BLEGEN

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

The February meeting of this lively chapter was hosted in the homes of Harry and Carmen Charette and Irving and Anita Twomey, both with organs in Manchester. The Charettes' instrument is an Allen Theatre Deluxe while the Twomeys' is a 2/7 Wurlitzer Style E.

Open console was enjoyed at the Charettes' until dinner time. Our program resumed at Towmeys' with the business meeting that covered the usual matters, but was most unusual as it started promptly on time and didn't consume over 40 minutes. Congratulations, Chairman Norm Ray!

With the close of business, Program Chairman Paul Plainer began one of his excellent entertainment programs by introducing Lew Price, one of our members, who played for us. Next, Paul presented Allen Miller who builds organs, tunes organs, plays organs, etc., etc., etc. Al favored us with a few numbers, all nicely done.

The third portion of the evening's program depended upon some timing at the Hartford Civic Center where Phil Stock played the organ

(not hockey!) for the Whalers' game which, fortunately, did not go into overtime. Wasting no time, Phil managed to get to Manchester in time to accompany, at the 2/7 Wurlitzer, Anita Twomey with her violin. Anita plays very pleasingly, indeed, and with Phil's accompaniment, the effect is most delightful. Their offering included the lovely "I Dream Too Much," written by Jerome Kern some years back for the late Lily Pons who sang it with her marvelous coloratura voice in the motion picture of the same title. The great hymn, "How Great Thou Art" lent a satisfying element to the close of Anita and Phil's presentation.

Phil stayed at the console for a bit to play a little and to relate some interesting experiences in connection with his regular playing at the Civic Center.

And so another enjoyable meeting came to a close. Many thanks go to our hosts, to the artists, to the program chairman, and to those who prepared the delicious refreshments.

W.P.

EASTERN MASS.

Our new slate of officers and those reelected opened our first 1977 meeting at Babson, Saturday evening, January 22, in an auspicious manner with Chairman "Pete" Hoagland at the "helm." Despite the cold, approximately 100 were present. It was announced that the building and console keys were now available at the security guard house to those playing members approved by the Key Committee. Our unworkable console enclosure is to be rebuilt by the manufacturer with cost assumed by the college after which the club must be responsible.

New Board member, Paul L. Callahan, spoke of the Boston Paramount's unfortunate quiet closing in late December when operating expenses and taxes overtook diminishing box office receipts. A possible field trip there was being anticipated (which houses the 3/14 Opus 2173 Wurlitzer and the last downtown in-theatre installation), but those hopes have now evaporated.

Vice Chairman and Program Chairman Craig Johnson, outlined program plans and requested that the membership write file card suggestions, including names of a Fall

concert artist. His appointment as Don Baker's booking agent was also mentioned. Craig then produced his wife's oven clock timer for use during open console to be set at 15 minutes to insure equal time for all.

Member Bob Legon, our mini-concert artist for the evening, was then introduced with "Lush Theatre Organ" as the program theme. A deserved round of applause had Bob consent to an encore of "On Old Cape Cod," which further showed that he had done his "homework."

Customary open console followed with first on the sign-up sheet being Mark Renwick, just back from being a college student in Florida. Most playing members signed up and several had a second "go". Much good music resulted and one of the unusual happenings was when Cheryl Linder with a marching band sousaphone "oompahed" with Bob Legon at the Wurlitzer for a couple of tunes. Another toward the end was with Cheryl again on the sousaphone, her Dad, Dick, on the stage Steinway parlor grand piano and "Pete" Hoagland at the console for a fun threesome. It was well after midnight when Organ Crew Chief and former Chairman Arthur Goggin put the organ "to bed" with "Mame." It was a satisfying evening with good fellowship, good refreshments and good Wurlitzer.

The console artistry of Lyn Larsen is a brand of magic very hard to resist and why try when only your presence is requested! Some 35 members and families accepted the open invitation of the Curtis Music Store of Lynn and the Gulbransen Company to hear Lyn put the Rialto II through its paces. The place, Colonial Hilton Inn, Wakefield; the date, Sunday afternoon, January 30. His console talents, enthusiastic

personality and originality are all suggested by the large audience following the planned concert, much to the delight of all. So young in years and so old in experience, Mr. Larsen has to be counted among the very select few top exponents in the theatre organ world!

In excess of 100 members and guests met at Babson on Saturday evening, February 26. Prior to the meeting, Bob Legon kindly played cassette tapes he made while seated at the Boston Paramount Wurlitzer a few years ago. There was a tinge of sadness while listening, realizing that this fine instrument will almost certainly not be heard again, at least not there.

Chairman Hoagland soon brought the meeting to order with the various reports read and approved. Craig Johnson, also Spring Concert Chairman, announced that he needed help — much of it! All essential tasks were then filled voluntarily without need of "drafting", which portends well.

This meeting's theme was "An Evening of the Silents" with our former theatre organist, Al Winslow, at the console and Charles Clark, projectionist and film supplier. A 1928 comedy, *From Soup to Nuts* with Laurel and Hardy, was the opener, followed by what was announced as a special movie of our crew working on our organ, with "tongue in cheek." If ever there was a destruction crew at work, then it was Willy West and McGinty with Joan Davis in an outtake from *Beautiful but Broke* made during World War II. The final film was of 1921 vintage, *Dodge Your Debts* with Gaylord Lloyd. All three created many a chuckle as Al supplied his own always listenable musical cueing on our favorite instrument and Char-

lie blowing an authentic police whistle where appropriate. It was fun and the applause between films and at the conclusion attested to that.

Now it was time for membership to have their stints on the bench, but the sign-up sheet was blank owing to the previously darkened auditorium. Al was prevailed upon to start open console time with more of his manual and pedal dexterity to the delight of all. A steady console "parade" ensued, each providing enjoyment for themselves and to those listening. The home-made refreshment table with coffee urn also became a "magnet" and for "organized" conversation. All too soon it was time to push the console off switch for the evening (actually morning), but a relaxed feeling remained — such is the spell of the pipes!

STANLEY C. GARNISS

KIWI

Greetings. Happy events are always eagerly awaited, but generally have to be planned well ahead, and so it was with the birth of the KIWI Chapter. Finally the great day came, the arrival of our Charter No. 52, and we are one year old in April. Newsletters from CATOE, Toledo and Sierra chapters, as well as letters from members in America, have proved just the riet diet and we thank you for the interest shown to the new arrival. From Rocky Mountain we had a visit from Margaret Ann Foy who was touring New Zealand.

The highlight of our year was the visit of Dennis and Heidi James, who stopped over on completion of their Australian tour. They presented us with a wonderful Christmas present — a concert on the 2/10 Wurlitzer Opus 1482, the only cinema organ in NZ (at the moment) that is in full working order. This is



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Reg Maddams at the 2/10 Wurlitzer, Opus 1482, in Tauranga Town Hall, Tauranga, New Zealand.

installed in the Tauranga Town Hall, about 130 miles from Auckland. The concert was on Sunday December 19 — the dreadful weekend when NZ was nearly drowned. The weather did not deter a busload of enthusiasts from making the journey, and music lovers from near and far to hear these superb artists. ATOSers who have attended concerts given by Dennis and Heidi will know what a treat we had — to those who have not, then do not miss when next they are in your area. In this, the American bicentennial year, we were presented with a grand programme, some selections new to us and the familiar numbers were refreshingly different, particularly "Rhapsody in Blue," rarely heard in concert in this country. Our personal thanks to our members Rex White, who organized this event — and also maintains the organ, and to our secretary, Mollie Granwal, for organizing the landcruiser, which was farewelled on the return journey, in grand style, by our artists. It is hoped that in future, other organists

visiting Australia will pay us a visit. A very warm welcome is assured and it takes only a little over two hours to fly across the lake.

We are fortunate to have some professional members in our ranks,

and earlier in the year Reg Maddams journeyed north from Wellington and delighted a large audience on the Tauranga organ. As well as appearing at several Australian cinemas, Reg was also organist at the Civic 2/16 Wurlitzer — Opus 2075. This is at present awaiting installation near Wellington and is owned by member Len Southward.

Members of the Kiwi Chapter are widely scattered in the North Island but we have a good average attendance at our bimonthly meetings. Though the Kiwi does not fly we hope to have representatives at the Convention in San Diego in 1979. So — watch out.

NORMAN DAWE

LAND O' LAKES

Once again, the ballroom of Cedarhurst, palatial Estate of the Newmans at Cottage Grove, Minn., hosted by Claude and Sedonia Newman, was the setting for our annual



Ramona Gerhard at the 3/18 Wurlitzer at Cedarhurst, the estate of Claude and Sedonia Newman, Cottage Grove, Minn. (C.J. Newman Photo)



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Christmas Party. Among an abundance of boughs and Poinsettias most tastefully displayed and the nicest setting we have ever had, our chapter was treated to an unforgettable event — Ramona Gerhard returned to Minnesota as guest artist, as well as for her annual concert at N.W. bank. Claude, our masterful M.C., introduced Ramona, charming as ever, and started the program by asking, "Who remembers Ramona at W.C.C.O.?" The majority responded by raised hands; then he asked everyone to close their eyes. For a second — silence — and then, with all stops down, "Open Your Eyes" was Ramona's opener. She had her audience captivated in a state of nostalgia. Claude's 3/18 Wurlitzer, "Goldie," responded admirably to her professional touch. Her long list of well-chosen selections was enthusiastically received by the members.

During several short "breathers," Ramona's monologue about their trip in the Mediterranean on their cruiser Mona-Mona was most interesting, and her cute way of presenting it was entertaining. On the closing chords of "Ramona," and a standing ovation, Ramona remarked, "I've always liked Minnesota!" The Land O'Lakes Chapter is grateful and wishes to extend thanks to Fred, Claude and Sedonia Newman.

LOS ANGELES

A concert by Bill Thomson is no ordinary affair. Nor was his introduction at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium on January 16th. In fact, it was a well-planned exercise in suspense.

While organist Bill Shaw kept us on edge regarding the where-



1977 Officers, Los Angeles Chapter: (L to R) John Ledwon, chairman; Robert M. Power, vice chairman Shirley Mickey, secretary; Hugh Hanger, III, treasurer; Dean P. McNichols, program director; Robert E. Hill, liaison-chairman.
(Chuck Zimmerman Photo)

abouts of our featured artist (he was originally booked to play the 4/37 Kimball at the Wiltern), 3 lovely cuties, presumably Bill's students, drove cars from his collection on stage, inquiring about the man. But the day was saved when Bill chugged on stage, tooting the horn on the midget of them all (his Honda Civic) to relieve another of his students,

Dan Semer, who meanwhile rose from the pit playing the mighty you-know-what. Dan relinquished the bench to our hero, Bill, who proceeded to perform in an inspired fashion, presenting perhaps the finest Bill Thompson concert we have ever heard.

His selections included such a balanced variety of older melodies, a touch of semi-classics, a thoroughly charming set of three original works called "Tahoe Suite" and for the contemporary such current hits, as "I Write the Songs," Barry White's "Love Theme" and "Feelings."

Most outstanding and very apparent was Bill's sensitivity of communication between himself and the great instrument. The organ responded equally to every nuance and technical demand made on it.

At the end of the program, the audience gave Bill a standing ovation and he responded with several encores, the climax being "My Heart



Bill Thomson (Stufoto)

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Bill is no stranger to this organ. The 3/16 Wurlitzer in the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium was brought west from Brooklyn, N.Y., in 1968 and was dedicated in Feb. 1972 at which time Bill Thomson gave the final concert of a three day dedication program.

BOB HILL & ELINORE DECKER

MIAMI VALLEY (Ohio)

Things in Ohio have been grotesque during the past couple of months, with the local power and light company telling businesses that they could not run at any usual pace. Homes have been cold, and although the President has told us about the heat of our homes, there has not yet been an edict about operations of pipe organ. Sure glad that pipe organs are not run on natural gas, or we would be surely out of business.

Having served for better than two years, and having new demands on his professional schedule, Chairman Bob Cowley has relinquished his duties to Vice Chairman Dennis Werkmeister, who is owner of a splendid home installation of a remarkable 2/17 Wurlitzer pipe organ, which you must hear in order to believe. Dennis promises a lively schedule of home visitations and other enjoyable social gatherings for our chapter in the coming months. Judging from earlier affairs Dennis has arranged, we can hardly wait.

JOHN M. GOGLE

MOTOR CITY

Our Second Sunday series (now beginning its fourth year) at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor featured John Lauter at the 3/13 Barton in January, and Lance Luce



John Lauter (Garv Hitches Photo)



Lance Luce

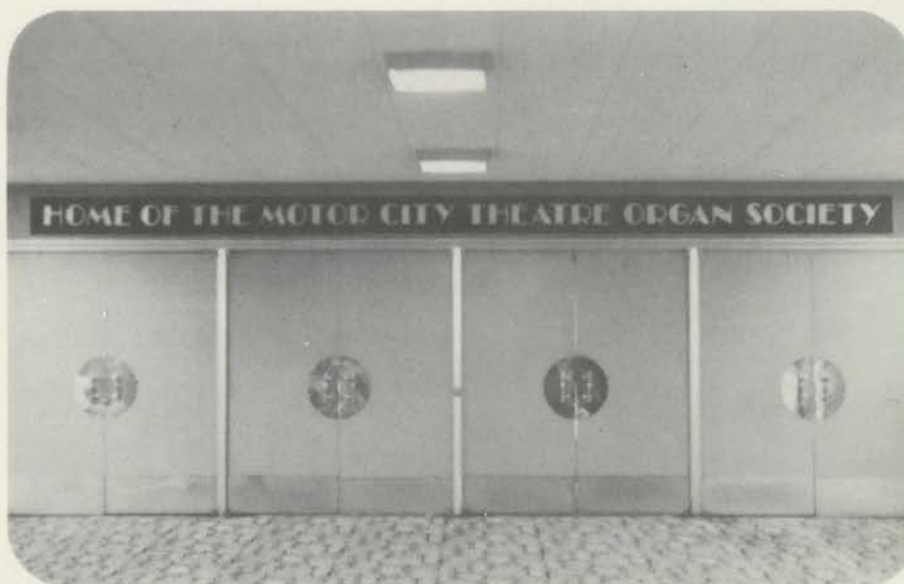
at the organ in February. Both John and Lance are seventeen years old and Motor City is proud to have such talented young artists as members. These programs now attract an audience of 100-150 listeners every month.

Dave and Jo Lau brought their synchronized slide and tape show of last year's ATOS Organ Safari to

the Royal Oak Theatre for the January Fourth Sunday program that also featured Rupert Otto in his first appearance at the 3/16 Barton.

The artist for our Fourth Sunday presentation in February at the Royal Oak was Lou Behm.

At a special chapter meeting on February 6, our membership voted



This sign welcomes patrons to the Redford Theatre, home of the Motor City Chapter for the past 2 1/2 years. If the fund-raising drive is successful, it will become a *real* home for MCTOS and the Barton Organ.

(Don Luskwood Photo)

Maria Kumagai

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in favor of purchasing the Redford Theatre. The purchase would include, in addition to the 1500-seat theatre, two parking lots and several stores and offices. A fund-raising drive is now under way to obtain the necessary capital.

Gaylord Carter's two-night appearance at the Royal Oak Theatre in February, with the Buster Keaton film *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, was very well received by the enthusiastic audiences. The print was excellent and Gaylord's playing has probably never been better. Enthusiasm and Gaylord Carter seem inseparable.

DON LOCKWOOD

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Another year another election. The following officers were reelected. Randy Piazza, chairman; Elwyn Guest, secretary; Chester MacRae and Albert Wright directors for three years. Newly elected are Harry Cousins, vice chairman; Roland Riegle, treasurer; Paul Locke, director for three years.

Neal McDonald has resigned as director and Eugene Upper has been appointed to serve out his term. Other directors whose terms did not expire and will help guide the chapter through 1977 are Greg Gertner, Ken Martin, Irv Toner, Tom Van Brocklin and Steve Crowley.

Jean and Bob Flierl, long-time chapter members, have hosted many chapter activities over the years. Bob, former chapter chairman and regular convention goers for many years have purchased a year-round home in Fort Meyers, Florida. They have decided they could stand the torrid Florida summers better than the frigid Buffalo winters. Sorry to see them leave but we wish them the best of luck.

So you didn't get your *Silent Newsreel*? Jim Meyers who has done such a fine job as editor of *Newsreel* has found it necessary to resign as editor because of a conflict with his work schedule. Neal McDonald at whose home the *Newsreel* has been published for several years can no longer find the time to carry on because of other interests. So we thank these two members and the many others who helped them over the years for a job well done.

Roy Simon has been appointed to take over the duties of *Silent Newsreel* editor and house the editorial office in his home. Because of the blizzard of '77 and the blocked highways, Roy has been unable to move the equipment to his home. We hope you will soon start receiving your *Silent Newsreel*.

Because of the winter storms and bad road conditions we were unable to obtain coverage of the Colin Cousins concert at the Riviera in January.

Dick Smith was back to play his annual concert for the chapter at the Riviera on February 16. This is one concert I did not wish to miss but again I was over-ruled by the weather. However, I feel sure Dick did his usual fine job.

On a pizza parlor menu in California, on letterheads and envelopes from different parts of the country, I have seen reproductions of the beautiful Riviera theatre organ console with the two indiscreet ladies painted on each side of the keyboard. It's a nice feeling to think that so many chose this console to grace their letterheads and menu. I understand this was the fourth ivory console built by Wurlitzer, but I can find no record as to whether ladies adorned the other three consoles, or where they were shipped.

Rex Koury, who has made such a

great hit with the Riviera crowd, will be back on March 23.

Another first at the Riviera will be Ron Rhode on April 20.

STEVE CROWLEY

NOR-CAL

One objective of our chapter is to report our activities more faithfully in this section. The lack of news from Nor-Cal did not mean we have been inactive since hosting the 1975 Convention. Many fine artists have performed for our enjoyment at the numerous installations in the San Francisco Bay area.

As the new year unfolds, the membership reluctantly allowed our five term chairman, Warren Lubich, to retire and devote more time as a professional organist coupled with his full time medical research occupation.

Dick Clay advanced from vice chairman to chairmanship. Jim Dunbar fills the vice chairman post. Our faithful treasurer, Etta Nevins, and secretary, Isaleen Nadalet, continue to perform these important functions.

Dave Reese organized at the Bella Roma Pizza Parlour in Martiniz for our December meeting. The program and his artistry were equal to, and better than, his performance during the convention. So, many of you know we had fine entertainment.

Our January 30 meeting was in Cupertino at the Monte Vista High School to enjoy an unusual 1½ hour slide show presented by Steve Levin, president of the Theatre Historical Society. He traced the history of theatres from the store style of 1900 to the magnificent palaces of the '30s. Architects and their styles of design and decoration were presented by excellent photographic displays of interiors and exteriors of these in-



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(L to R) Gordon Walker and Judd Walton congratulate Steve Levin on his entertaining slide show, featuring movie palace history.

stitutions. The restoration of the Paramount Theatre in Oakland was detailed with the before, during, and after photos proving what a huge cleaning and refurbishing job was done. The excellent presentation is recommended to other chapters. Following the Levin presentation, we journeyed a few blocks away to the home of Bob and Donna Baese to enjoy refreshments and the well-voiced 2/10 Wurlitzer. Jack Gustafson welcomed us with his artistry at the console. The organ was kept busy the full afternoon by many members making beautiful music on a fine home installation.

The next meeting is set for March in the East Bay at the homes of Judd Walton and Norm Lippert.

Nor-Cal will sponsor two upcoming public concerts. Ron Rhode will appear on April 3, at the Capn's Galley in Redwood City. On May 20, Dennis and Heidi James will perform at the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco.

On your next visit to the Bay Area you are cordially invited to join with us in our activities. Here are some

persons you may telephone to obtain information on events, locations, and perhaps transportation.

San Jose Vicinity

Dick Clay — (408) 296-0079

Jim Dunbar — (408) 867-1095

San Francisco Vicinity

Bob Vaughn — (415) 564-6652

Oakland Vicinity

Duke Wellington — (415) 526-8690

JIM DUNBAR

NORTH TEXAS

Even though the January meeting ended in a snowstorm, the first in this part of Texas in about five years, attendance for the first meeting of the New Year was way above the norm. Seems like every member came and brought a guest. But then, with an attraction like John Landon and his great presentation on Jesse Crawford, who could stay away, even with the threatening weather? The audience sat spellbound in the Organ World's auditorium while John, the Jesse Crawford tapes and the slides brought back fond memories of the Poet of the Organ. This

writer grew up in New York during the heyday of Jesse Crawford and the theatre organ. Even the weather added to the nostalgia and a full appreciation of Mr. Landon's presentation. The meeting, was a real 4-star session.

Not so for the February meeting, mainly because of the poor turnout for an important session like election of officers. However, the meeting was by no means a flop. Chairperson Lorena McKee presided in her usual capable manner for the election of officers, after a few items of other "old" business. The nominating committee, chaired by Richard Nichols, presented their slate of officers recommended for the next year. Of course, with the chairman-elect position, Jim Peterson automatically became chapter chairman. Charles Evans, the dean of Dallas organists, was elected chairman-elect. Eric Parker took over the chores of the secretary-treasurer from Doris Garrett, who received a standing ovation, and the heartfelt thanks of the chapter for her many years of fine service in the position. Doris "did not choose to run" this year because of some health problems. Eric has a real challenge in trying to fill Doris' shoes in the job of secretary-treasurer, which is really a key position in the success of the chapter. Without all the necessary correspondence, dues collections, fiscal chores and other details of the job, the chapter would find it hard to operate.

Lew Williams, our favorite up-and-coming young organist, was elected to the job of program chairman. Lew should do a real good job in that position what with his contacts in the organ field all over the world. Earl McDonald was elected to the post of membership chairman.



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After the election of officers, Lorena presented the gavel to incoming Chairman Jim Peterson, who thanked her for her capable handling of the position for the past two years. Lorena, too, received a standing ovation from the group and was given a vote of thanks for a job well done. Jim thanked the outgoing officers for their service and then outlined some of his plans for the new year. He chaired a session which generally reviewed the purpose of the chapter and then presented an outline of possible activities to fulfill those purposes. Among the points Jim discussed was the need for a permanent "home base" for the chapter, preferably a location suitable for theatre organ concerts, and hopefully with a theatre organ installed and working, through the efforts of the chapter members and their skills. He also pointed out the educational benefits of such a program and emphasized that to be successful, it required participation by all members. Several possible locations were discussed, and some sources of theatre organs for chapter installation were discussed. Jim also discussed the possibility of more frequent meetings, both formal and informal, concert-type and technical sessions, where members could learn theatre organ craftsmanship as well as musicianship, and simultaneously open the way to a lot more pleasant listening for theatre organ enthusiasts. Jim has done a lot of thinking on the chapter possibilities and has arranged his professional schedule (Jim's a professional pipe organ designer, technician and installer) so that he can devote maximum time to the activities of the chapter. With his guidance, 1977 should be a banner year for the group.

JOE KOSKI

OHIO VALLEY

The chapter had an enjoyable meeting in December at the home of Jack and Joan Strader, featuring their 3-manual Wurlitzer, which was originally installed in Cincinnati's long-demolished Paramount Theatre. Organist for the afternoon was Esther Hanlon, a long-time Cincinnati pro. Esther has played on practically every Cincinnati radio and TV station in past years, in numerous supper clubs, and even had her own band for a time. Having achieved a successful career as a professional entertainer, she decided to go back to school; and went all the way, earning a PhD in improvisation at the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. She provided an interesting and varied program, using a soap-opera type skit to demonstrate the value of correct musical accompaniment to silent films and also showing her ability at improvising on popular song themes. Open console, always popular on Straders' Wurlitzer, followed Esther's portion of the program.

The following announcement doesn't give us much pleasure to make, but we thought that we should, in order to squelch any possible rumors and provide full information to everyone. As some readers may know through contact with Ohio Valley Chapter members, we had planned on holding the dedication concerts for the former Albee Theatre Wurlitzer now installed in UC's Emery Auditorium on April 29 & 30, 1977. Last July, when our article was published in THEATRE ORGAN and we set the concert dates, we were certain beyond any doubt that the organ would be ready this spring. At that time no one could foresee that

the winter of 1976-77 would be one of the worst ever recorded, with its resultant natural gas shortages. Beginning in December, 1976, Emery Auditorium was put on gas allocations and the temperatures began to drop, but no one gave it much thought. Working conditions just weren't quite as comfortable as before. When the gas crisis hit the East and Midwest in January, it hit us full force, as all gas supplies to Emery cut off completely. All water pipes, heating lines, and even sprinkler system pipes were drained to prevent bursting, as the temperature in the building dropped below freezing. We were told that there would be no gas at all until April and that it was doubtful even then. Quick conversion of the boilers to oil or coal was not possible. Since we were not assured of having gas even at concert time and were in the final stages of work on the organ; regulation, tuning, and trouble-shooting, we decided that it would be best to postpone the opening concerts. It's hard to tune and trouble-shoot an organ in below freezing temperatures and expect it to sound like much when it finally warms up. Work continues where possible by a hardy crew clustered around space heaters. A late spring concert would run into conflicts with other local musical and cultural events of long standing, and summer just isn't a good time because of vacations. Early fall gives us conflicts with the Cincinnati Reds baseball games, as this is World Series country, so we have set our opening concerts for October 21 & 22, 1977. UC will have a special opening program on October 23, 1977. We'll provide more information on the upcoming event in future columns.

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Ron Graham at the Hammond during the January meeting at his home in Brighton.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

On January 30, 1977, the chapter had a "plug-in" organ party at the home of member Ron Graham in Brighton, Colorado. It was a lovely sun-shiny day but "ya can't plug 'em in outdoors" so Ron's house was packed with 24 guests 'n cookies n' punch n' cheese, etc.

The concert by Ron Graham was a well-rounded program of pop, jazz, show music and a couple of lovely old church hymns. Ron had just acquired his Hammond enclosed in a beautiful ebony case. His use of reverb and percussions was artistically done. A piano-organ duet of "Maple Leaf Rag" with Ron on organ and one of his students, John LaPont, was one of the highlights of the program.

The concert was preceded by a short business meeting headed by our new chairman, Don Wick. Don introduced the other new officers — Vice Chairman Fred Riser; Secretary Frank R. Gandy; and Treasurer Bill

Arthur. Our director, Duane Searle, recovering from a "Gig" in the hospital, returned home to recoup and could not make this concert and meeting. Get back to us soon Duane.

Photographic work is being done on Bill Arthur's Marr & Colton installation in his home, and also on Fred Riser's Wurlitzer at what we lovingly call "Organ City" out in Henderson, Colo. They will be ready



Bill Johnston and "The Mickey Mouse March," during open console at the Graham home.

with stories by next edition.

We have programs planned for just about every month up to June of this year. The new officers have clenched their teeth and fists to make this the best year ever.

FRANK R. GANDY

SIERRA

Late in October, via chartered bus and private cars, sixty members made our third trek to Scotty's Castle in Death Valley. It was the usual fun trip from the time the bus left Sacramento until its return. Emil Martin played a wonderfully varied concert on the Welte theatre organ at the Castle, and the National Park employees were our very enthusiastic guests. Many had never heard the organ. Dale Mendenhall, past chairman, arranged the trip and it's for certain he'll be asked to do it again.

One-hundred-twenty-four members and friends filled the dining room of the Sheraton Inn (formerly Carl Greer) on Sunday, December 12, for our annual Christmas party. The holiday spirit was much in evidence as the group began to assemble about three o'clock. The Robert Morton was willing and able, and for two hours we relaxed at the beautifully decorated tables while members took turns at the console. It's surprising how many fine organists are developing among our members. A "Name That Tune" contest taxed a few minds and several contestants won prizes from jewelry to theatre organ records. House organist Clyde Derby was our "orchestra" for the game and also kindly helped many members with registration at the big console. After a delicious dinner, the new officers and board were introduced: Art Phelan, chairman; Jim Hodges, vice chairman; Charles Zell, treasurer; Betty Wilmunder, secre-

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tary; and John Carleton, James Welch, Sr., and Hal Wilmunder new board members. Three members, Bob Longfield, Paul Siglin and Larry Weid, were given lovely wall plaques for past services to Sierra Chapter. It was long past eight o'clock when the last guests left for home. Much thanks must be given to Cindy Carleton and her hard working committee for a most successful party.

Despite cold weather and the Super Bowl on TV, more than 200 members and fans arrived at Grant Union High School for the concert on January 9 by one of our favorite organists, Dave Reese of the Bella Roma Pizza eatery in Martinez. An excellent organist with a bubbling humor and unflappable personality, Dave is one of the "beautiful organists." The auditorium was cold — boiler trouble; and someone had inadvertently reset his carefully arranged combinations, but that didn't stop Dave from playing a concert without a flaw. In a bit of "half-time" fun, Dave indulged in some clowning with Carroll Harris and a silly looking bird-marionette. Dave has to be seen as well as heard and it's surprising that he is not one of the country's most "in demand" concert organists. He's truly a fine artist.

KEYZANPEDALS

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

The first quarterly meeting was held for our year in February. The big news was a report given by Lois Seamands on a possible installation of a theatre pipe organ, if our chapter becomes the owner of one. The committee has been busy running down any and all leads for a proper home for the organ. The Tucson Temple of Music and Art, on South Scott Street in this city, a small the-

atre of 929 seats (including the balcony) is equipped with two side chambers and an overhead echo chamber which at one time accommodated an organ that was moved and destroyed for scrap during the Second World War. The Temple is again being used for stage productions and chamber-music concerts. It will be 50-years-old this year. The new managers, a youthful group, are much interested in the placement of an organ in their theatre.

In March, Karen Claus of New York City will be appearing as a soloist with the Tucson Symphony at the Tucson Community Center. The next day Karen Claus and one of our honorary members, Lon Hanagan, also of New York, will give a program of song and Lon's special styling of solo-type theatre organ music. This will be held at Seamands home on their 650 Conn and pipes, a very theatrical sounding installation. Donations are to be used for our future organ courtesy of Karen and Lon.

Our February program was highlighted by a talk by Grant Hill, a "musician's librarian." Long gone out of print tunes, both popular and classical, are Grant's specialty. Hill, at one time, had 82,041 tunes very precisely indexed, but now they run to over 100,000. Mr. Hill, a retired insurance executive and a member of Southern Arizona Chapter, started his collection in the 1920's, while working in London. Being married to a French born classical pianist helped get him "hooked" in setting up her music file. Hill, an honorary member of the local musicians union became so by being helpful in supplying 'requests' to any and all musicians both professional and amateur. Upon receiving a call for some tune or tunes, Grant looks them up and gives out the music. He also says,

"if you can't learn this or copy it in ten days, you don't deserve to have it." They always take the music and he always gets it back.

The correct title is very important as everything is filed on 3 x 5 cards.

After the talk, refreshments were served, and a program was given featuring Julia Smith, the writer and Lynn Staininger played on Lynn's Lowery console model followed by open console.

BOB HIGH

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Our January meeting was held in the auditorium at Phoenix College. The chapter has begun restoration work on the college's 2/10 Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. That evening Al Davis, Phoenix College Music Dept., gave us a brief history of the Wurlitzer organ now installed in the auditorium.

The organ was originally installed in the Rialto Theatre in Phoenix in 1922. Sometime in the 1940's the theatre was destroyed by a fire that left only the stage and pipe chamber standing. The organ incurred water damage while it sat in the fire damaged building, since there was no roof covering the organ. The organ then was stored in various places.



Valley of the Sun is now restoring this 2/10 Wurlitzer at Phoenix College.



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#3 Solana Beach, 4/20 Robert Morton, 113 S. Acacia St.

In 1947 the organ was given to Phoenix College and it was installed in the auditorium where it is presently located. At the time of its installation, the organ was barely playable and could only be heard four rows back in the room.

In 1963 Al Davis and the college music department were given the go-ahead by the college to begin restoration on the organ. Finally in 1971 the organ became partially playable. Many hours have since been put in on the organ and at our meeting we were shown what the organ is capable of now. During our open console time, Organ Stop organist Ron Rhode honored us by playing the Wurlitzer.

Our chapter is currently holding work sessions on Sunday afternoons at the college auditorium.

The February Valley of the Sun meeting was held at the Allen Piano and Organ Company in Phoenix. About 35 attended the demonstration given by Ken Schroeder of a beautiful Allen digital organ. Ken demonstrated the organ's capabilities wonderfully with such tunes as "Deep Purple" and "Misty." Our group really enjoyed Ken's demonstration and a chance to try out the organ during open console.

Our chapter was very proud to

present a Ron Rhode concert on the Allen digital theatre organ in February at the Phoenix College Auditorium. All profits from the concert will be used to finance the restoration of the Phoenix College Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. Cosponsor of the concert was the Phoenix College Music Department.

JANICE PERRY

WOLVERINE

Our first meeting in 1977 was held in conjunction with Motor City's Second Sunday performance at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor on January 9. Organist for the morning was John Lauter, who at the age of 17 is showing an amazing understanding of the theatre organ. Beginning with "Another Opening, Another Show," from *Kiss Me Kate*, John led us on an orchestrated tour of the 3/13 Barton with pieces from *The Fantastiks*, contemporary selections by the Carpenters, standards like "Vanessa," and the rarely heard "If I Ruled the World." There was an average turnout of mainly Wolverine and Motor City members.

The February meeting was held at the Mert and Rita Harris residence in Troy on February 20. Mert has the organ that was originally installed



Mert Harris in the organ chamber of his now 3/14 Wurlitzer. (Ed Corey Photo)

in the Glen Falls, N.Y., Paramount Theatre, one of the last 3/11 Wurlitzers built. He has meticulously installed the organ in what used to be his attached garage and has added three ranks. An informal party-meeting was had in lieu of the usual formal concert. Some of the people who played were Donna Parker MacNeur (recovering from a bad car accident), Fr. James Miller, Gladys Nancarrow, Lois Page and Gary Montgomery. A crowd of 44 filled Mert's house to near-capacity.

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