



Gordon Kibbee, featured at the evening concert, at Myrtle—2-9, Wurlitzer.



Tiny James, Doric Records star, opened afternoon program. He is shown here at the console of Fox Oakland Wurlitzer, 3-14.



Dave Quinlan, organist for the 615 Club at Benicia, California, at Wurlitzer, 2-6.

*Having a wonderful time—  
wish you were here!*

The annual A.T.O.E. meeting proves to be a rare treat for all those who attended

"The 1958 Annual Meeting of the Members of The American Association of Theater Organ Enthusiasts will be held on SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1958 starting at 3:00 P.M., in the Joe Chadbourne Barn, Fairfield, California." Thus began the announcement that went out to every member of A.T.O.E. It was, of course, not possible for everyone to attend, but those who were fortunate enough to be there were treated to a program that made it very difficult to return to normal. In fact, the trials and tribulations of everyday living simply vanished from our lives for that day.

Arrivals at the Barn began about one hour before the meeting. Greetings and warm exchanges followed throughout the rest of the day and night. Besides the reunion of friends and the introductions of the unacquainted, there was a great exchange of verbal want ads, will swap, and where-can-I-get-it conversations. If a

theater organ still hides in the civilized world, it is undoubtedly being tracked down right now by someone in that group who gathered at the Barn.

Promptly at three o'clock, Dick Simon-ton called the meeting to order and extended the official greetings to all who had gathered and to those who could not make it, as well. He spoke warmly and was received in like manner. From there on, the meeting was told in music.

W. 'Tiny' James started things off with a stirring but slightly shortened half-hour. He had previously indicated that he would vacate the seat at 3:30 and with theater organist precision stopped on the dot. The members required Tiny to return for an encore. This performance set the mood for the rest of the musical portion of the gathering. And Opus No. 909 Myrtle did her best. Never has more glorious music flowed in that loft than was heard on that Saturday. Tiny, as always, enjoyed play-

ing and we enjoyed hearing him.

The second half-hour was devoted to the music of Everett Nourse, organist for the Fox Theater, San Francisco. Everett, too, took us on a musical tour. We paused momentarily as he literally went around the world. Among his favorite treatments is the group of Spanish dances, and he gave these some foot-tingling rhythms that had his entire audience with him. Everett added another scene to the already exciting afternoon. When his portion of the program ended, many glanced at their watches, not believing that thirty minutes could have passed so quickly.

The third organist stepped over to the bench and seated himself easily. This young man looked at the stopboard with great interest, and when Bill Thomson began mixing tibias and voxes, flutes and musettes all over the place, it was apparent that we had heard one of the organ



1959 A.T.O.E. Directors present at banquet, (L to R) Kibbee, James, Bell, Simonton, Jacobus, and Walton.

greats. Bill looks younger than his twenty-nine years, sounds as though his experience had been at least twice that. He played with great imagination, precise technique, and with an immediate appreciation of what the situation called for in music. Coming after two different styles of playing, Bill continued the many thrills of the afternoon, adding to the climactic fantasia of the concert. The end of Bill's program sent the audience into a mad scramble in applause and simultaneous search for words to express their feelings to each other.

Again, with the appearance of Dave Quinlan, the local A.T.O.E. chapter claimed an honor and Dave gave us that delightfully lyric and ballad style that has made him so popular with the local organ enthusiasts. His music is very singable, and one feels his personal warmth and his practised ability to entertain. Dave was among his friends and his playing made each of us proud of him. Since someone had to be last and bring the afternoon's music to a close, Dave agreed as part of the host organization to perform that sad task. Dave does a beautiful job with the stop tabs, too, and it is always interesting to watch his manipulation of these to produce effects not always available from the setter board.



Bill Thomson, recording artist for Pacifica, Los Angeles, California

When the music died down, there was the sound of a moving audience, a crowd that had been respectfully silent through two of the most delightful hours any of us can remember. Then it became apparent that there wasn't a sound from that group of listeners during the playing of two hours of music . . . not a cough, sound of a shoe on the wood floor, no whispering, just nothing but concentrated silent listening! So it was little wonder that the performers responded so magnanimously and sympathetically to such an appreciative audience. Never did four men play to a more loving congregation.

Immediately after the music, a meeting was called of the Board of Directors of A.T.O.E. Several matters of routine business came to their attention and was acted upon. But of particular interest was the election of officers, the official acceptance of reports, and the resolution to continue publication of our journal under our own name. Cancellation of the contract with Radio Magazines Incorporated was decided upon as a condition to the above. This was serious business and was given a lot of thought prior to this meeting. We then went our several ways, to meet at Herb's Troc for a dinner to match our appetites. About one hundred appeared for this official function and here, everyone participated with equal skill. Dick Simonton turned the future of A.T.O.E. to Judd Walton who stepped up from Vice President to take over the presidency. Dick was given a real ovation as evidence of our regard for A.T.O.E.'s first President! As a background to the dinner, we listened to stereophonic tapes of the afternoon's concert! That was one of the special treats, to hear some of that music again. The tapes were made in order that

Joe Chadbourne could hear the concert that his organ and The Barn made possible—Joe was not able to be present at the time. When the last au jus was but a diminished aroma, we returned to The Barn for the evening concert.

Gordon Kibbee's amazing music is available on a few records . . . far too few! But to be within a few feet of him, and to watch him as his fingers make their way around the keys, is to add tremendous interest to wonderful music. Gordon gave us the kind of music that has as much as one has appreciation to understand. His is an intensely correct approach, obviously not imitative and not likely to be imitated quickly. His progressions are deceptively easy to hear and understand, very elusive to reproduce. And his wealth of variation in treatment of familiar themes leaves one with the constantly recurring wish to hear the whole thing again. Gordon seldom repeats a theme with the same arrangement as before. A high point in the program which never dipped below cloud level was the playing of Puccini's Un Bel Di Vedremo. It provided the dramatic change that was stirring almost to the point of overwhelming. And the organ responded eagerly to those inspired fingers . . . how could it have done otherwise? And when the last notes faded into the silence of the night each of us took something of Gordon Kibbee with us . . . something that lives only in the souls of men like Gordon Kibbee . . . something that is revealed when those whose love for music is big enough to bring them together, gather for such occasions as this. Whether one actually remembers the music more vividly than the gracious personality of Gordon is questionable, but surely the combination



Everett Nourse, staff organist at the Fox

of skill, artistic interpretation, flawless technique, and willing performance are complemented by a personality whose sparkle is the jewel in its setting. One need not attempt to describe the exceptional in ordinary language. And yet, all we can hope to do is to revive some reflection of a thrill that is over . . . to relive an experience that at one moment filled the cup of happiness to its very brim! This, Gordon Kibbee, was a small measure of our appreciation.

And in this manner, as it does to everything, an end came to the Concert-Meeting of The American Association of Theater Organ Enthusiasts . . . wish you all were here.

## 1959 HONORARY MEMBER



Jesse Crawford, one of the truly great organists in the theatre organ field, was chosen as HONORARY MEMBER OF A.T.O.E. FOR 1959, in accordance with the bi-laws. Dick Simonton placed Mr. Crawford's name in nomination for this honor in response to President Judd Walton's first official action. A future issue will feature the Crawford Story in detail.

# RECORD REVIEWS

## A Review of the George Wright HIFIRECORDS

It seems appropriate to present a summary of this series of records together with a description of the outstanding quality of each. They are all available on monaural, and stereophonic editions are available starting with number R707 "More George Wright". A special discount of 10% is offered to A.T.O.E. members who wish to purchase the complete set of stereophonic records, tax and shipping charges prepaid. Place order direct to HIFI records.

**R701 — GEORGE WRIGHT PLAYS THE MIGHTY WURLITZER.** This first release on the HIFI label of George Wright is most notable as setting a new high standard in theatre organ recordings. It brought to HIFI listeners the first Wright dual recording technique in the number "Dancing Tambourine".

**R702 — GEORGE WRIGHT ENCORES.** It might logically be stated that this recording features percussions as none of the records has done. Every number with the exception of "Silvery Moon" is spiced with extensive percussion tone of great variety. Best known for the "bird number", "Quiet Village" and the exciting "Crazy Rhondo".

**R706 — MERRY CHRISTMAS.** Certainly no explanation required as to why this record is outstanding. Notable is the sound of the combination action used as a "percussion beat" in "Little Red Monkey".

**R707—MORE GEORGE WRIGHT.** A different recording technique with a resulting bigger sound make this record outstanding from its predecessors. Recorded and available in a Stereophonic edition.

**R708 — GEORGE WRIGHT SHOWTIME.** Recorded at the Fox Theatre Wurlitzer, S. F., an excellent selection of showtunes marks this record as an outstanding production. Recording difficulties make accurate reproduction of this organ difficult, but definitely outstanding in the HIFI series—excellent on the Stereo version.

**R710 — GEORGE WRIGHT SOUND.** A decidedly new sound emerges from this recording, no doubt influenced by the Fox record's bigness of sound. An ethereal quality is heard at times, not previously evident.

**R712 — GEORGE WRIGHT CONN-ORGAN.** Outstanding for an obvious reason, this record is good listening for even the most avid theatre organ fan. Non-standard tonal effects liven the renditions of several of the numbers, and this is Wright at his electronic best, to say the least.

**R713—GENIUS OF GEORGE WRIGHT.** The cover illustration of the interior of the Chicago Paradise Theater is a tip off to the sound content of this record which is quite theatre-like in several of the numbers. New combinations are noticeable and pleasing.

**R714—HYMNS THAT LIVE.** Different only in the type of selections played, no one who had ever heard George Wright would have trouble identifying the organist. This recording is notable because we have George Wright playing Hymns—old favorites—new harmonies.

**R715—GEORGE WRIGHT'S IMPRESSIONS OF MY FAIR LADY.** Distinctively different in that these show tunes really are impressions—excellently played in good taste and very much in character with the original score and story. Easily identified as setting a new pace for the entire series.

**R716—GEORGE WRIGHT GOES SOUTH PACIFIC.** Here again it seems we have reached a new high in theatre organ entertainment. Even greater than its immediate predecessor, it is lively and uninhibited, a really "happy" rendition of superb numbers.

**R717 — FLIGHT TO TOKYO.** Was this trip really necessary? So it would seem for here we have grouped together all that is oriental in name, played with all that is oriental in Wurlitzer. Unusual and outstanding for these reasons the record is a decided change in pace and setting.

**R718—THE ROARING TWENTIES.** This is the latest HIFI release of George Wright, the monaural edition having just appeared on the shelves recently. The Stereophonic edition will follow shortly. Recorded on the San Francisco Fox Wurlitzer, as was "Showtime" (HIFI R708), and furthermore, having been recorded at the same time, it is interesting to note the tremendous difference in the sound reproduced by the two releases! "ROARING TWENTIES" is so vastly superior to its predecessor as to make a comparison almost impossible!! While not a completely accurate reproduction of this tremendous organ, it is a really fine L-P combining the exquisite execution of fourteen favorites of the 20's by George Wright, pressed on high quality vinylite for which HIFI has become known. Listen for the Tibia-Sax combinations in "It Happened in Monterey", the 25" Tibia in "Then I'll Be Happy", the 16" English Horn in "Mississippi Mud", and the delicate Musette and Krumet combinations in "I Wanna Be Loved By You". To be able to hear this excellent recording is a privilege that no organ enthusiast should deny himself! Twenty-eight minutes and twelve seconds of pure enjoyment! For complete details on the organ see Volume I, No. 2 of The TIBIA.

**LATE FLASH**—the Stereophonic edition arrived for review just prior to press time . . . its argument enough for the most persistent hold-out to purchase stereo equipment!!