



CHAPTER NOTES



CHAPTER NOTES OMITTED FROM AUGUST-SEPTEMBER ISSUE

A lost envelope, containing a few Chapter Notes and other articles, showed up on September 8. They are printed here with apologies to those who expected to see them in the last issue.

ALABAMA

Our May meeting happened to be on Mother's Day this year, and what a special day we had! Our guest organist was Tom Helms from Pensacola, Florida. Extra thanks are due Tom for a beautiful job since he practically came straight from the hospital in Pensacola having had major surgery shortly before the program date. In the true tradition of "the show must go on," Tom was able to make it and played a tremendous program. He is a very talented young man. His pleasant chatter from the console added to the program as well. Tom is a very articulate musician and demands a lot of himself, as artists often do. He was self-taught until 1972 when he was awarded scholarships to the University of Alabama where he studied organ. He is quite well known in the organ field from the Florida area to

Canada where he did a stint at Toronto's famous Organ Grinder. His original silent movie scores have become very popular in his concerts. Tom was instrumental in "Saving the Saenger" Theatre in Pensacola and the restoration of the Robert Morton organ there. He is not only the house organist, but also organist and music director for St. Michael's Church, one of the largest Catholic churches in the Pensacola area. Besides his demanding playing schedule, Tom services pipe organs all over the Southeast. Again, thank you, Tom, for your "extra" effort to get here to play for us. It was appreciated.

Although our membership voted not to have regular meetings in June and August because of vacationing members, we did have a training session at our June meeting, which was very helpful and informative to a lot of us who did not know just

how to operate our beautiful Wur-litzer at the Alabama Theatre. So many of us just go and enjoy listening to others play, but never take advantage of the opportunity to play it. We decided one of the reasons for this might be that most of us are quite "in awe" of our lovely old lady and don't know just what to do with it. Norville Hall, as always, very graciously agreed to help us out by instructing us on raising and lowering the lift, how to set up registrations, how to turn the organ on and off, etc. . . . the sort of thing that those who play a lot take for granted. It was a very good meeting, and we wish to express our thanks to Norville for again coming to our rescue with just what we needed at the time. We hope to do this again in the future.

Thought you might be interested, too, in some "outside" activity by some of our members. Mr. and Mrs. Don Cole, from Northport, Alabama, were quite instrumental in starting this chapter here in Birmingham. Alleen and Don have always remained so active in our chapter activities, even though they have to drive about 50 miles to the meetings which are at nine o'clock on Sunday mornings. Alleen and Don have recently purchased a 2/6 Robert Morton which was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre (1928) in Monroe, Louisiana. It was donated to Jefferson Junior High School in 1970. I'll only tell you enough about that one to "whet your appetite" because I'm sure Alleen will be writing a lot more about it as they go along with rebuilding and installing it in their home. They plan to put it back together as near the original installation as space will permit in their home. They have already had to start raising ceilings!

The Coles already had a 2/8 Moller installed in their home. They spent two years building the organ and installing it. They recently took it apart and moved it to their church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Coker, Alabama, and spent six months rebuilding it there. On Sunday, May 22, 1977, the organ was dedicated to the church in memory of Alleen's mother, Mrs. Alma E. Mixon, who passed away last year, and Alleen did the dedication program. Alleen is former organist of the church, and now serves as director of music there as well as teach-



Tom Helms, guest artist for the May meeting, with Chairman Lee Aured (left) and Program Chairman Jo Ann Radue at the Alabama Theatre. (Thomas L. Hatter Photo)

ing piano at Westwood School in Coker, and piano and organ in her home. She is a member of Tuscaloosa Music Teachers Association, Piano Teachers Forum, the Alabama and Mississippi chapters of ATOS and has served in various offices in each organization.

As you can see, the Coles are very busy people, and we are just very proud to have them as members of our chapter. They really are an asset to us when it comes to working on the organ, or performing, or any other task you might ask them to do.



Without Larry Donaldson and Chuck Hancock, the major members of the work crew, and others who work on the organ, we couldn't have our meetings. (Thomas L. Hatter Photo)

They are always very eager and willing to help, and we do appreciate them very much . . . as members and as friends.

We're looking forward to another good program in July when Cecil Whitmire, former organist for the Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville, will be playing for us.

JO ANN RADUE

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Our annual banquet was held April 23 at Chicks restaurant, Angola, N.Y. As usual, it was a great success, thanks to our banquet committee: Doris Guest, Carol Piazza, Roy Simon and Leah Wright.

With organ and piano at our disposal, the night was filled with music. Many fine musicians took their turn at the keyboard, including Greg Gurtner, Chet MacRae, Will Marshall, Bill and Barbara Milligan, Roy Simon and Irv Toner.

Mr. and Mrs. John Spaulding, now living in Coudersport, Pa., also attended the dinner. John, a former chapter chairman, spoke briefly of the early days when they were organizing the chapter.

After the restaurant closed the party moved on to the nearby home of Doris and Elwyn Guest where the music continued until the wee hours

of the morning.

After the long pleasant night at our banquet many of our members were up early the next morning to greet some 40 members of the Western Reserve Chapter from Cleveland, Ohio.

The day started at the Riviera at 9 a.m. with Winifrea Armistead, Bill Mulligan, Rou Simon and Irv Toner putting the organ through its paces, followed by open console until show time at 2 p.m.

One of the guests, Bill Taber, made everyone sit up and take notice when his turn came at the console. After 2 p.m. the group moved to the organ in the church across the street from the theatre and then on to the Buffalo Theatre.

On March 23, genial Rex Koury was back at the Riviera with his fine music. Ron Rhode made his second appearance at the Riviera on April 20 for another pleasant evening.

On May 18 Len Rawle, from England, played his first concert at the Riviera. Len explained that he can play without music but in England you must have a rack full of music or they think you are not a musician!

On June 15, George Blackmore, another organist from England, played his first public concert at the Riviera console. As an extra treat, Mrs. Blackmore sang several numbers and was well received by the crowd. George is no stranger to the Riviera organ having stopped over here last year on his way to the convention.

Another first appearance at the Riviera on July 20, was made by Kay McAbee and in August we heard Don Thompson, another fine English organist now living in Toronto, Canada. I should mention that Don is another one of those crowd pleasers who has made many appearances at the Riviera. I understand that Don is soon about to make a recording on our Riviera organ.

This must be the year for English organists at the Riviera. Don will be the third this year and in December Frank Olsen, who is also living in Canada, will be our fourth.

I might add that Organ Restoration Chairman Bill Milligan and his crew now have the 32-foot pedal stop working. What a "belly shaker." Every day the Riviera organ gets bigger and better and is now 19 ranks.

STEVE CROWLEY

OREGON

In May, we heard veteran staff organist Don Simmons play the 4/18 Wurlitzer at the Oaks Park Rink. This instrument was originally in the Broadway Theatre in Portland and in 1956 was moved to the Oaks Park. The pipes are suspended on a platform above the center of the rink and speak out in all directions. The console is located behind glass at the side of the skating area. It may well be the only organ where the console is enclosed and the pipes are not!

Don is well known for his recordings here and at the Organ Grinder Restaurant. He is a master of rhythm and registration and it is amazing how much expression he can achieve by adding and subtracting stops, unaided by swell shutters.

Don explained and demonstrated the difference in playing for various skating styles. Although his tempo is always precise, he uses a metronome for skating. This is adjusted to standardized speeds for inter-rink skating.

Don's program consisted of some 14 numbers, each a master production. It included a romping "The Blues," a very lush "Waltz of the Maxims," "Kamenoi Ostrow" — rink style and a slow tempo "I Write the Songs." While this organ can be heard nightly from the bleachers on the side, it is a real treat to get out on the floor, under and around it, where its real power and brilliance can be appreciated without skate noise.

Thanks to Don Simmons and the



Don Simmons at the Oaks Park Rink, Portland.
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)



Dennis and Heidi James at the Benson High School Kimball, Portland.
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

Oaks Rink for a most unusual and enjoyable afternoon.

In June, we had the honor of hearing Dennis James at the Benson High 3/18 Kimball and his lovely wife Heidi at the grand piano. This unusual duo has justly gained national fame by their many concerts and recordings. Each of their arrangements are truly artistic masterpieces. The piano and organ parts never compete or duplicate, but always compliment. They are always in exact time, which is quite an accomplishment considering the reverberation delay in the Benson auditorium.

Some numbers, such as "Moonlight Sonata" featured Heidi in an exquisite piano solo. Some of Dennis' organ solos were well augmented by appropriate and beautiful slides. Their judicious program included a dynamic "Dizzy Fingers," a Crawford style "High Hat," "It's a Raggy Waltz" with a remarkable pedal string bass effect, and closed with "Rhapsody in Blue."

Thanks to Dennis and Heidi James.

BUD ABEL

POTOMAC VALLEY

Our April meeting was "something special," as vividly chronicled here by Earl Sharits:

April 30, via charter bus, 44 chapter members journeyed to Greensboro, N.C., for a weekend of music with our neighboring Piedmont Chapter. Natalie Neviasser, Bill Alexander, Marion Renn and Chairman Al Baldino provided snacks, soft drinks and fun games en route to the Hilton Inn, Greensboro.

Thence, to the Carolina Theatre by 3 p.m. for our first concert. This 2/6 Robert Morton, the only remaining in-theatre organ between Richmond and Atlanta, now has a big, lush sound due to high unrestricted chambers opening into an acoustically live auditorium seating over 1,100. The Carolina recently has been designated a performing arts center for the City of Greensboro.

As expected, MC Mac Abernethy kept events rolling at a fast pace. Jane Sparks, PVC and Piedmont active member, opened the afternoon with medleys of American songs old and new. Jane played for us about two years ago at the Byrd Theatre, Richmond, with Eddie Weaver, and it was a real treat to hear her again. Chet Retaski then entertained us with unusual rhythmic arrangements of tuneful standards including a number of our favorite Gershwin songs. Both Chet and Jane deserved our enthusiastic applause for well-prepared programs.

After dinner, we attended a public show featuring Larry Keesler at the Carolina organ, Buster Keaton in *Balloonatics* and Harold Lloyd in *Haunted Spooks*. Larry's modern interpretations, including seldom-heard effective use of divided organ chambers, began with music dedicated to the ladies, sophisticated or otherwise. Between films, one of Larry's talented choir members sang two Barbra Streisand ballads. In all, it was a great show.

Sunday morning at 10 a.m. we were back in the Carolina Theatre to enjoy the big-theatre and radio broadcast organ sounds of Bill Floyd from Richmond. You wondered how so much music came out of six ranks! Bill's concert was varied and concluded with Laurel & Hardy in *Love and Hisses*. There was no doubt that Bill had been a working theatre organist for many years.

But there was more — on to Burlington, N.C., and Dr. Paul Abernethy's 2/8 Robert Morton home installation of the former Greensboro National Theatre organ, now with piano and pipe chests you can walk under! Baffled swell shutters spread sound evenly throughout the listening room. Cameos were played by Earl Sharits, Lee Prater, Rollie Miller and Edith Evelyn of PVC. Then Dr. Abernethy proved his talent with

"Dancing Tambourine" and "If I Were a Rich Man." We thank Paul for his hospitality in sharing this fine instrument with us.

After Sunday dinner at Morrison's Cafeteria in Durham, we arrived home about 9 p.m. a bit tired but happy with memories of how much ATOS means to all theatre organ enthusiasts everywhere.

The May 14 meeting of the chapter was held at the KB Baronet Theatre in Bethesda, Maryland, the home of a 1927 2/8 Wurlitzer from the Maine Theatre, Portland. Our host for the meeting and program of entertainment was Pipe Organ Concerts (the owner of the instrument), for the past year an active producer and promoter of professional theatre organ concerts and organ accompanied silent film shows in the metro area.

Following a short business meeting, during which Chairman Al Baldino announced a memorial fund in the name of Cliff Long, our host treated us to video tape playbacks of highlights of Rosa Rio, Ray Brubacher and Hector Olivera as they appeared on television shows taped at the Baronet theatre while performing for Pipe Organ Concerts.

Our first artist was Doug Bailey, who charmed us with selections from his repertoire of "music to relax by." Doug is directly involved in the history of the pipe organ at the Baronet. He chose for us, appropriately, songs which were a part of his daily one-man radio show, 1949 through 1953, broadcast by radio remote from the same theatre (then known as the Heiser).

Doug recalled that during shows an unusual multi-facilities set-up was available to him while seated at the remote radio control position. A record turntable was in back of the seat. He faced a 2/4 Marr and Colton console and the remote radio controls. A piano was at his right, enabling him to play simultaneously, organ with the left hand and piano with the right hand!

Earl Sharits, a long-time member of the Baronet Wurlitzer re-build crew and its "tonal consultant," shared with us a sampling of unusual arrangements and interpretations of lesser known oldies which were part of a "beer bottle box" of nostalgic memorabilia stored in the attic of his home.



Earl Sharits and Doug Bailey shared the 2/8 Wurlitzer, for the May meeting at the Baronet Theatre.

The program was rounded out with open console in which Phil Pensyl, Russell Spear, Eddie Diamond, Jack Boyer and Tod Strickland participated. Guided tours of the Baronet organ chambers followed, for the Wurlitzer will soon be dismantled. At the time of this writing, destruction of the theatre is imminent, to make way for a Metro-rail (subway) station.

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

PUGET SOUND

On Sunday, May 22, the chapter teamed up with the Haller Lake Improvement Club, where the chapter organ resides, for a popcorn, punch and movie afternoon. Following a half hour of organ music by board member Ken Gallwey, the movie program began with two short silent film comedies provided and accompanied by Don Myers. This was followed by an early talkie, *Way Out West*, featuring the incomparable team of Laurel and Hardy, also from the extensive Myers' film library.

An impromptu get-together was arranged for June 12 at Greenwood Pizza and Pipes for the regular five to ten p.m. playing session, when it was learned we were to have Jimmy Paulin in our midst for two months. Jimmy has a large, bombastic style which delights the pizza audience, but his musicianship is of a quality to appeal to the more discerning listener as well. Incredibly, the voice of the "Entertainer" was not heard in the land that evening.

GENNY WHITTING

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

First off — a retraction. Our sincere apologies to several gentlemen, including Fred Munier and Norman Lane of Denver. In a back issue of THEATRE ORGAN we said that the organ in the Aladdin Theatre had been sanctified when a church was using the theatre. Later, after receiving some phone calls, we find that the organ was sanctified after the church had moved out. Fred Munier was servicing the 3/17 Wicks at the time the church was using it. Fred and Norman, we are sorry.

We wish to extend our congratulations to the new Pikes Peak Area Chapter down in Colorado Springs. Welcome to the chambers. As we know some of the folks there, we know they will be a credit to ATOS.

Last month several of us met with Don Hout in Arvada, Colorado. He has a 3-manual Artisan in his home. Great sounds and installation. A couple of weeks later, on a sunny Saturday morning, we met at Trinity United Methodist Church for a concert by Dr. James Bratton of Denver University. Norman Lane had a slide show of old, old organs in Colorado. Then we walked through the 4-manual Roosevelt, and even looked down into the 32' pedal pipes from the second story.

The writer made a trip with his family to Salt Lake City, Utah, and was invited to the home of Clarence E. Briggs, chairman. He has a Rodgers Trio with two Leslies. Clarence took us to the home of Darlene Walker who has a Rodgers 33E with some real toys. thanks to Beehive Chapter for their hospitality and great organ spirit. They have three Rodgers Trios and three pipe organs in various homes of their members, but time ran out and we had to leave. We also visited the Mormon Tabernacle and heard the great organ and choir. Some experience.

At this writing we are planning to meet at the home of Dr. Dorothy Brookens where Bill Johnston, Ron Graham and Frank Bandy will share the concert on her Digital Computer Allen.

At Fred Riser's, we have installed another 3-rank chest, the xylophone and chimes. We have a goal to meet — winded and playing in another two months.

FRANK R. GANDY

SIERRA

We may even patent it! Sierra Chapter has discovered how to make it rain.

Spring brought out our gypsy spirit and a trip to Shingletown, the home of John and Aurora Leininger. We've been suffering one of the worst droughts in history but the morning of Sunday, May 1, forty-three members boarded a bus in a pouring rain. We were so happy to have the rain that it enhanced rather than spoiled the trip. A three-and-a-half hour ride — the last half-hour through lovely forest of pine and redwood — brought us to "Leininger's Landing" a beautiful home set among the lush pines and foliage of the California foothills.

Entering the front door, the first object to attract attention was the console of the 3/14 Wurlitzer sitting beside a long wall of sliding glass doors. Beyond the doors was a large stone patio and beyond the patio a velvety green lawn stretched to the shore of the privately owned lake. The large living room with its big fireplace and balcony leading to the bedrooms, was finished in stone and natural wood and beautifully furnished. Beneath the bedrooms, behind a four-foot "mixing" area, the chambers extended almost the length of the room. There was a large open kitchen at one end of the living room and beyond that a family room. It was an organ enthusiasts dream house.

We had an hour to meet our gracious hosts, relax and get acquainted with other guests. At two o'clock Everett Nourse was introduced and began a program on this beautifully installed instrument. Everett knew how to get the full potential from this organ as he had played it when it was in its original home, the Oakland Fox Theatre. Everett played numbers popular when he was featured organist at the San Francisco Fox. Listening to the beautiful music and watching the view of the windows change from rain to sunshine to rain and finally a light fog, everyone agreed that there couldn't be a more perfect setting for an organ concert. During the second half of the program, Everett played "Pennies From Heaven" and it started to hail, but didn't last long.

When the program ended at four-

fifteen, we reluctantly said good-bye and boarded our bus for the drive to Redding where we stopped for dinner before the return trip to Sacramento. A thank you to the Leingers for sharing their lovely home, to Everett for the beautiful organ music and to Program Chairman Dale Mendenhall for a great day.

On the go again, chapter caravanners warmed up their jalopies and traveled to El Dorado County and the home of Milon and Connie Thorley for our May meeting. For the third time in several years, this reporter had to miss a Sierra activity, but from glowing reports everyone had a great time. The Thorley's have a 2/5 Wicks "in the bedroom" and a steam train and it was a toss-up as to which garnered the most attention. A delicious potluck picnic took care of the eating problem.

This was our second meeting within a month in the wooded California foothills and we'll be doing it again with our annual picnic at Pine Grove in August.

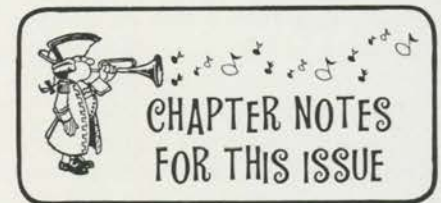
A big thanks to the Thorleys and our social chairwoman, Cindy Carleton.

Sierra and Nor-Cal chapters held a combo in June at our Golden Bear Seaver Memorial organ. The turnout was rather disappointing — about sixty — but this frequently happens in California when the weather is just too nice for even T.O. fans to stay indoors. Sierra Chairman Art Phelen welcomed those present and explained that "our baby" had come through her recent operation very well, and with a new blower, fresh tuneup, and some minor problems taken care of, she was again in good voice. To prove it he opened the program with several very listenable numbers. Joe Gustin, who is no stranger in Paradise (that's California not Kismet) was then introduced and in turn presented one of his students, David Jones. With Joe at the console, David leading the singing and Carroll Harris at the projector, we had a good sing-along, followed by several solo numbers on the organ by Joe. After raffling our waffles, (that's a drawing for L.P.'s) Nor-Cal took over with Warren White at the console. Its always a pleasure to hear Warren and his somewhat off-beat arrangement of the oldie "Strange Interlude" was

great. Even though our Golden Bear Wurlitzer "ain't awfully big," another Warren (Lublich) made it sound as great as his recent record played on the Avenue Theatre organ as he played a complete medley from *Annie Get Your Gun*. Dave Schutt and Jim Wagner, who stopped in enroute from Seattle to San Jose, arrived a bit late but that didn't stop Dave from playing several very enjoyable numbers including a good old '30s number "I Believe In Miracles." Jim, one of our younger organists, played three numbers, and David Jones, who had earlier led the song-fest, surprised us by moving to the console to prove that he could play as well as sing.

More thanks to the many members who worked to get the organ in such good shape; Art Phelen, Rod Daggert, John Carleton, Hal Wilmunder, Chuck Shumate, Dale Mendenhall, Ray Anderson, Harvey Whitney, and Clarence Kemper. They are dedicated members.

KEYZANPEDALS



ALABAMA

July was another exciting meeting for the chapter. We were really "ready" for some beautiful sounds from our Mighty Wurlitzer, since we didn't have a formal meeting in June... and beautiful sounds we did get!

It's always nice to have new members join our chapter, but it's even nicer when they are performers. Two of the newest additions to our membership are Cecil Whitmire and his lovely wife, Linda, who *both* play. The Whitmires come to us from Knoxville, Tennessee, by way of Georgia. Cecil is the former house organist for the Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville where he played the 3/13 Wurlitzer from 1957 to 1961 and again from 1969 until 1975 when they moved to Georgia. Cecil and a church organist friend had discovered and rescued this Wurlitzer from the basement of the Tennessee Theatre under 13 years of "dust, popcorn, chocolate and Coke." After



Cecil Whitmire at the console of the Alabama Theatre's mighty Wurlitzer.

(Robert Linthout Photo)

many weeks of late-night work sessions (sound familiar to any of you out there?), the organ was again playable. The theatre manager heard Cecil playing the organ and asked him to play for a benefit, which led to a five-year period when he played on a regular basis for movie intermissions. Due to heavy work schedules and other interests, Cecil did not play that organ again until 1969, when it was made a regular part of the program on weekends.

In addition to the Tennessee Wurlitzer, Cecil has also played the Atlanta Fox Moller and the Ohio Theatre Robert Morton, as well as endless hours of dinner music and dance music at various country clubs, some "boogie" music at the Rodeway Inn and Travelodge lounges in Knoxville — all on plug-ins.

Cecil gave us a really super program which was enjoyed by a larger than usual summer crowd at our July meeting. His program ranged from show tunes to old to new to Country and Western and a sing-along. As he says, "Of all the experiences that I have enjoyed during my organ years . . . the greatest thrill of all is to ride a Wurlitzer up into a spotlight in a theatre filled with several hundred people . . . and play for them." Well, we didn't have several hundred people, but I think he still got a big thrill out of it . . . and all of us who heard him liked what we

heard.

We feel that both Whitmires are tremendous assets to our chapter, and once again want to thank Cecil for giving us another memorable Sunday morning at the Alabama Theatre! Hope he will do it again for us soon.

On a not-so-happy note, I'm very sorry to report that Lillian Truss, our "First Lady of the Alabama Wurlitzer," suffered a massive stroke earlier this summer and is now recuperating at her son's home, Dr. Orrian Truss, another valued member of our chapter. Our best and most sincere wishes go out to Lillian and her family. She has always been such a willing, capable and gracious helper and performer in our chapter. Her presence at the meetings is sorely missed, as well as her performances at the console. Lillian gave the first public performance on our Alabama Wurlitzer on the grand opening day of the theatre — December 26, 1927, and was the theatre's first picture organist. We love you and miss you, Lillian!

JO ANN RADUE

ALOHA

With a slow first half of the year, our activities are beginning to accelerate, promising a busy time in the next few months.

The going-away party for Concert Chairman Dan Engelhard at the

Amelco Building was a huge success. Everyone had a great time and the organ was seldom quiet. The Baldwin Cinema II loaned to us by Bill Sanders of Baldwin's Piano and Organ Company got a constant workout. Our activity committee deserves our gratitude for a well planned activity.

The chapter will miss Dan from his participation as concert chairman, past chairman, and his input to the board all these years. Primarily through Dan's efforts we are today a chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. Dan was one of the charter members of the Hawaii Theatre Organ Club, now the Aloha Chapter, ATOS. We will miss his encyclopedic knowledge of pipe organs . . . who built them, where they are located and who is playing them.

Our secretary, Paul Walley, has tendered his resignation to the chapter board. During his term as secretary he pursued club business conscientiously and his term of service is greatly appreciated by the board and chapter.

Sunday, August 28, Jack Hazel brought his projector and showed some comedies in the club room and later in the auditorium where Frank Loney and Betty De Rosa accompanied them on the Robert Morton.

BETTY De ROSA

CENTRAL INDIANA

CIC-ATOS is fortunate in having at least six theatre pipe organ installations that are considered "special interest" locations for meetings at least once a year. Manual High School in Indianapolis is one of them. The Manual organ, a 3/14 Louisville/Kilgen pipe organ continues to grow bigger and better, thanks to the untiring and dedicated efforts of Carl Wright, stage manager at Manual High School and Larry McPherson. Carl and Larry hosted the May meeting.

We have watched the Manual organ "grow like Topsy," until now it is one of the finest instruments in the Midwest, serving the school and the community.

What started out as a dream in the life of Carl Wright has turned into a magnificent theatre pipe organ installation, deserving of a quick resumé of the rewards of dedication

and hard work to achieve that dream.

The Manual organ began as a 2/7 Louisville Uniphone, straight console, and was played for the first time at Manual High School's annual alumni meeting in May of 1974. John Muri was guest organist, performing superbly on the yet incomplete instrument. On Sunday, September 8, 1974, CIC-ATOS held its first meeting at Manual. Three more ranks had been added and at this meeting a 3-manual Kilgen horseshoe console was presented by CIC-ATOS Honorary Member C.W. Ober of Indianapolis. Two years and four months later the Manual High School organ, now a 3/14 Louisville/Kilgen was formally dedicated, on January 22, 1977. Lee Irwin played the dedicatory concert to a near capacity crowd on a bitter cold and snowy night. A story with a heart-warming climax, but not the end by any means! The latest addition is a piano hook-up to the console and somewhere between May of 1974 and January of 1977, a lift was installed to add to the elegance of any occasion as the organ rises majestically from the orchestra pit.

A most interesting program was presented by Bea Butler, organ teacher and promoter for Hammond organs. She did several groups of show tunes and to everyone's delight repeated her "Chicken and Turkey" number, a novelty number incorporating some "on stage" pantomime by one of her charming young students. Bea is one of our members. A lovely and entertaining performance, Bea.

The hospitality of Frank and Frances May, combined with one of the most magnificent organs in the Midwest, makes the annual meeting at the May home a highlight in any ATOS year. The June meeting in Kokomo numbered 73 members and guests.

Frank, who had open-heart surgery last September, is progressing beautifully and in his days of recuperation made a number of major changes and additions to his already fabulous 4/19 Barton. He has added a piano which he plans eventually to connect to his modern control system, using computer-type circuitry to replace the mechanical-pneumatic system. It will then be controlled

THEATRE ORGAN WANT ADS GET RESULTS

See Page 65 for Details

electronically. (See the May-June 1975 issue of THEATRE ORGAN).

Ken Double, who has many musical accomplishments to his credit, did a masterful job in presenting a delightful program. A very talented and captivating personality, Ken was recently named sports director for WLFI-TV in Lafayette, Indiana. Ken's contributions to ATOS have been much appreciated and in the field of his chosen profession, we wish him much success in his new position.

A hearty thanks to the Mays for opening up their lovely home to such a large crowd.

RUTH D. WARD

CENTRAL OHIO

July, for COTOS, resembled brilliant fireworks the entire month. We started off with Jimmy Boyce playing the "Mighty Mo" at the Pipe Organ Ristorante. He was excellent with registration. Using his own composition entitled "Charlie's Walk" added to the fun of the Chaplin silent *The Rink*. We hope Jimmy returns soon.

Our annual picnic took place at the residence of Ginny and Ed Lawrence. As a tip to other chapters, Secretary Tom Thornton came up with a winner for the picnic food. Instead of "If your name begins A to G, bring . . . etc.," his instructions were, "If your name begins A to Z bring your favorite and we will see what happens." What happened was no duplicates and everything fabulous.

Ed's Conn 651, with capture system and all of the added features, put concert artist Betsy Richard through her paces and she did the same to the Conn. Betsy prepared a program of seldom heard music. As always, her talent provides an excellent program.

Once in a while we watch a member's effort to accomplish organ technique and are overjoyed when he is suddenly off and running. This happened with 15 year-old Dean Wagner. Taking a turn at open console

he brought people from all directions to find out who was playing and hushed all conversation. Compliments to Dean were deservedly forthcoming.

The fireworks continued with the arrival of Hector Olivera at the Pipe Organ Ristorante. It was a sell-out and then some. With Hector playing what can one write that hasn't been written before and write it better for emphasis? You see people shaking their heads in disbelief that one person can do all that he is doing. He compares to the grand finale of fireworks displays.

Back to one event for August but what a meeting. Hosted by Dr. John Polsley and his wife Betty at their beautiful home in Urbana, Ohio, we met some of their friends who just happened to be outstanding organists. Performing the opening concert at the Baldwin organ was Gwen Tomar who is also John's organ teacher. Gwen, some years ago, had also been Secretary Tom Thornton's music teacher when he lived in Dayton. Thoroughly acquainted with the features of the Baldwin, Gwen performed a varied program. Her daughter Vicki also took a turn at the console. Both gave very fine performances.

Another guest was professional musician Bob Schetter. With a lilting style his program was quite different and interesting. Some of his selections taxed the brain trying to identify them.

The final guest artist was 16 year-old Kevin Sowers. Kevin's ability at the keyboard was immediately appreciated. Again, styling was noticeably unique. It seems we over-use the statement that here is a talent to watch but we tell it like it is.

Telling it like it is, member Tom Hobson, during open console, outdid himself with his easy listening style. For the first time we heard from Tom Thornton and wonder why he has been reluctant to play.

IRENE BLEGEN

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Our August meeting at the spacious residence of Stillman and Claire Rice in North Haven, Ct., included, as usual, open console in the afternoon, business at 7:30 and organ music from 8:15 on.

At 7:30 promptly Chairman Norman Ray called the business session

to order so that by 8:15 he was able to turn the floor over to Program Chairman Paul Plainer. For this occasion Paul had scheduled an excellent program featuring, first, two of our recent scholarship contestants.

The first of the youthful players was Tom Harveston, age 12, who gave a very nice program of three numbers.

Following Tom was Flory Muller, age 14. Flory played three selections, again, nicely done.

Kept well under wraps until the appropriate time, the "mystery guest artist" appeared on cue and turned out to be our own Mike Foley whom we hear all too seldom. Mike has been very dedicated for many months directing installation and tuning of a great 4-manual Wurlitzer pipe organ at the Windham Technical School in Willimantic, Ct.

Mike had a generous program of ten or twelve numbers ready for us and fed the appropriate combination cards into Stillman's Allen computer organ. When all cards had been digested by the computer Mike started his program. He played three numbers, announced his fourth selection, tweaked a few stop tabs and came down upon the manuals with fingers, but no notes; instead, all the console lights went out and terrible screeching sounds emanated from the speakers. Unfortunately, it was all over for the Allen and for Mike for this evening. The Allen could not be persuaded to go on. We were mighty sorry to be cut short with such an enjoyable program, but we did hear the youngsters and a nice sample of Mike's playing. Our thanks go to Stillman and Claire for a fine day.

On August 28 we had an interesting field trip to the Garden Theatre with a 3/9 Marr and Colton in

Greenfield, Ma., in the morning, and to Don and Lois Reed's residence in Longmeadow, Ma., in the afternoon to see, hear and play their just christened 2/6 Marr and Colton.

We have some good concerts scheduled for the Thomaston Opera House:

October 14, 15 and 16, Lyn Larsen and Tony Fenelon; December 2 and 3, Lowell Ayars; March 31 and April 1 and 2, George Wright. For tickets or information, phone (203) 888-9696 or write Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Ct. 06483.

WALLACE F. POWERS

EASTERN MASS.

Kaarina and Tim Bjareby again were our genial hosts, Sunday, August 14, at their Ipswich, Mass., home. This summer field trip has become an annual event much anticipated with the usual informal good fellowship, a fine 2/8 Robert Morton theatre pipe organ and home made food! These are the ingredients for a hard combination to beat. Among the more than 40 present were guests from Pine Tree Chapter and SENETOS (Southeastern New England Theatre Organ Society).

Playing got under way with Bob Legon on the bench, who has both opened and closed these Bjareby meetings in a sort of tradition. Bob never comes unprepared and he can be counted upon for some of the latest numbers well arranged. Host, Tim Bjareby, then put his pride and joy R.M. to the test with his intricate arrangements utilizing most of the pipes, traps and percussions during his program. Most playing members and guests had one or more interludes at the handsome white and gold console as they extracted varying pleasant sound combinations —

seemingly almost inexhaustible.

Before the blower switch was finally in the "off" position and the last of the guests were reluctantly on their way, daytime had turned to darkness, such was the enjoyment of the visit. The pipes had again cast their euphoric spell over all those present!

STANLEY GARNISS

GARDEN STATE

"Summertime and The Playing is Easy."

Open console, picnic, meeting and a mini-concert were all combined in a great June meeting at the home of Chairman Bill and Marianne Mc Kiscock, Morrisville, Pa. The weather was perfect and many members turned out with picnic baskets and music under their arms. The Mc Kiscocks have a large 4/37 pipe organ with everything on it including a large, beautiful gong that Bill brought home from one of his trips to the Far East. The treat of the day was an outstanding mini-concert by guest artist Jim Leaffe, a young and talented organist who is extremely proud of his American Indian heritage. Jim is house organist at Long Island University and has a most successful recording *Blue Heron* under his Indian name James Good Leaf. It was a most enjoyable day and members chalked up another great chapter meeting.

The old adage of winning one losing one was certainly true for the August meeting. Instead of beautiful sunshine, the rains came and the day was warm and humid. But this did not discourage a goodly number of interested members who used the two hours of open console time to good advantage playing the Pasack Theatre 2/8 Wurlitzer in Westwood. At 2 p.m., all travelled to Joe and

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Jinny Vanore's home in close-by Ridgewood for the remainder of the afternoon. Despite the rainy day, everyone worked extremely well on a large bulk mailing and enjoyed music from the Vanore's Ampico Reproducing Chickering piano. Organ selections were also played by members on the 2/3 Estey with a wall to wall toy counter.

When work was finished all relaxed and Jimmy Vanore accompanied a Laurel and Hardy silent film at the organ and piano.

LONDON AND SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Highlight of the two months since our first report has been the surprise and warmly applauded nomination of our well-known members Edith and Les Rawle as Honorary Members of the ATOS — conferred at the banquet during the Chicago Convention.

Not only is this signal honour richly deserved but it also gives great satisfaction and enhancement of association to the newly-formed London and South of England Chapter — the fiftieth in the worldwide ATOS family.

Altogether eighteen British members trekked to Chicago, and the chapter has since taken great delight in hearing of their most memorable experiences in the windy city.

Several members are avid record collectors and get virtually all new stateside issues as soon as they are published.

A well-known British organ enthusiast duo, members John and Noreen Foskett, provide a unique selection on their sales stall which they mount at most major organ concerts in the London area. With well over a hundred titles available, many of them of

US origin, they have also been instrumental in the production of around 25 LPs, notably in conjunction with member John Peters in the superb 'Amberlee' Series — which also operates an interchange arrangement with Doric. John Foskett's most recent record production venture has been of David Hamilton playing the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium Wurlitzer for the British 'Deroy' label — which is also now available in the U.S.A.

Member Len Rawle also operates his own record label — 'Tonawanda' — and his most recent production is aptly titled 'Pizza and Parlour.' One side was recorded at the Capn's Galley, Redwood City, Wurlitzer while the other was done on Len's own magnificent 4/26 home Wurlitzer — formerly in MGM's famous 'Empire' cinema in London's Leicester Square, and played and recorded by Jesse Crawford during his British tour of 1933.

Father Les and son Len Rawle are both avid Wurlitzer devotees with magnificent home installations which were visited during the 1976 ATOS Safari. Doubtless they will again be featured during the commercially sponsored 'Mini Safari' for an American party of 50 in October.

Our second concert presentation by member Stan Whittington at the delightful vintage Compton in St. Mary's Catholic Church at Hornchurch in Essex was a great success. More dates are now being planned, hopefully with visiting American console stars.

A chapter coach party attended the re-opening of the 4/21 'Queen' Wurlitzer, formerly in the Paramount Odeon in Manchester, now beautifully installed in the Free Trade Hall (home of the world renowned Halle Orchestra) in this

famous northern city. This most commendable venture has been achieved by our good friends of the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust (LTOT) in just four years since the 1931 vintage Publix 1 style instrument was removed from the theatre.

Meanwhile, other chapter activities are going ahead with vigour — notably including a monthly club night at Wurlitzer Lodge, home of Edith and Les Rawle, and the circulation of a newsletter to the now 60 plus members.

NORMAN BARFIELD

LOS ANGELES

One way of getting the public interested in a project or hobby is via the newspapers. So, when an organ-curious Los Angeles Times feature writer contacted LA Chapter Chair-



John Ledwon stands like Lohengrin before his fortress while his 'castle' broods above. No dragons, but it does house a roaring beast. John's hobby was revealed in a full page picture story in the *LA Times*.

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man John Ledwon, the scribe was invited to visit John's Wurlitzer-equipped home in Agoura, Calif. The reporter brought along his brownie and the result was a full page spread about John and the pipe hobby in the Feature section of a recent issue. Of the several large photos which appeared, the one shown here had the most eye appeal: John standing at the foot of his hill with his "castle" dominating the hill top.

How to encourage young talent? One way is to provide budding organists with a showcase. Of course, all who want to play may not be up to audience-pulling standards, so there must be eliminations to reduce the number of showcase size. Yet the planners of the chapter's *Stars of Tomorrow* project didn't want to put the youngsters through the "gladiatorial combat" (as one judge put it) of open competition, as some electronic builders do. Afterall, we are pursuing a hobby, not the bucks. Project Chairman Deke Warner, assisted by Debbie Lynn, evolved a plan which would cause the least embarrassment to the inevitable losers; the entire competition was conducted by tape recording. The volunteer judges (Ann Leaf, Del Castillo, Stu Green, Bill Johnson and Bill Tom-

son) never saw the 16 contestants, nor knew their names; the 16 were identified only by number on the tape. Thus, six were chosen. Their concert at the Crown Theatre in Pasadena on August 28 was attended by an enthusiastic audience of ATOSers who enjoyed the sextette's handling of the 3/14 Wurlitzer. On the same evening a reception was held for them at John Ledwon's residence. Five were able to make it, and they repeated parts of their programs for the invited guests. The six winners were Daryl Rosso (17), John Fleury (19), Meredith Price (17), Jeff Roberson (17), Jeanette Acosta (14) and Joe Tripoli (16). We were able to photograph the five who attended the reception but our congratulations go to all six of LA's *Stars of Tomorrow*.

ELMER FUBB

MOTOR CITY

Enough chapter members headed for Chicago '77 in late June and early July for Motor City to claim the second highest attendance as a chapter at this year's national convention. The overall attendance broke the previous record, set in Detroit in 1974, by about 50 people.

In place of the regular Second

Sunday program at the Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor area members attended a picnic at the home of Grant and Barb Cook on July 10.

Our annual chapter potluck picnic, in July, was held again this year at Hasler Lake, as the guests of Ron and Dee Werner, members of the Metropolitan Club that owns and maintains the several-acre site. A Rodgers organ, courtesy of Musical Heritage in Royal Oak, was heard all afternoon long in the pavillion overlooking the lake as members took their turn at the console. The picnic followed an open console session at the 3/16 Barton at the Royal Oak Theatre; our Fourth Sunday offering for July.

Our Second Sunday artist at the 3/13 Barton at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in August was Jim Boutell.

Nearly 500 members and friends enjoyed our successful fourth annual private charter moonlight cruise on the Detroit River on the 75-year-old excursion steamer Columbia on August 11. Those who weren't roaming the many decks of the 2500-passenger steamer, were on the dance deck enjoying the music supplied by members John Fischer, Henry Aldridge, Gladys Nancarrow, Ken

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Saliba and Scott Smith at the Rodgers organ, graciously loaned by Musical Heritage.

As part of our fund raising efforts to purchase the Redford Theatre, we scheduled eight weekend programs during the summer featuring the classic films of Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, James Cagney and Bette Davis. Chapter artists who performed at the Redford's 3/10 Barton before, after each program and during intermission were Ken Saliba, Scott Smith, Lance Luce, Wilma Steslick and Amy Reimer.

Our "Buy the Redford" project has already raised the down payment on the theatre, which is due by the first of November. Your tax-deductible contribution is still welcome, and needed. Write to: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

DON LOCKWOOD

NIAGARA FRONTIER

In July, Kay McAbee made his second appearance at the Riviera and gave his usual fine performance.

Walter Strony played his first concert for the Riviera crowd in August. The crowd took to him like a duck takes to water. A fine young entertainer — I am sure he will be asked to play a return engagement.

Carol Jones will make her first appearance for the chapter in October.

In the hey-day of vaudeville, everyone wanted to play the Palace. With the revival of the theatre organ, it seems everyone wants to play the Riviera.

When the Riviera opened in 1926, Fred Meyers, with five years experience, was the first organist. He had studied at Eastman, played for a while in Philadelphia, then moved to the Piccadilly and Cameo theatres

in Rochester before coming to North Tonawanda.

The Riviera organ, close to the Wurlitzer factory, was built with loving care uniquely designed so it could be used by Wurlitzer to demonstrate to prospective buyers, of theatre, church or concert organs.

I often wonder how many organists have ever played this fine organ. Not counting those who have played at our many open console and jam sessions, I have made a list of 63 artists that I can recall playing concerts for the chapter. One has played eleven concerts, two or three have played seven or eight times and ever so many have played two, three or more concerts. Quite an impressive list of fine organists who are making the concert circuit. I recognize several names of young artists who have made the big time, getting their first break at the Riviera.

STEVE CROWLEY

NORTH TEXAS


Since the April meeting of the chapter was held on May 1, and the



Larry Hasselbring at the Landmark Barton.
(Joe Koski Photo)

copy for our June edition Chapter Notes apparently traveled by Pony Express, it did not arrive in time to be included. So we'll give you a brief resume' of the meeting's happenings. Chairman Jim Peterson presided in his usual effective manner in the Organ World studio at Garland, Texas. Jim outlined his plans for the coming sessions and made some shrewd observations about the chapter's needs. Principle items included the need for more frequent meetings plus the generation of greater incentives for the group by establishing some goals and then getting everyone to participate in the achievement. Grace Johnson discussed some of the plans and problems involved in participation by the chapter in the Dallas Performing Arts program, explaining that the new phases of the program were still in planning stages. The Majestic Theatre, where the chapter was in hopes of installing a theatre organ, had been turned over to the Park and Recreation Department of the City after donation of the property to the City, and the program was not yet far enough along to warrant immediate participation. However, as soon as the good word is received, the chapter will take necessary action.


With all the "common fodder" he gathered from the April meeting, Chairman Jim proceeded to do some heavy planning on the chapter's future, and it really looks great. A couple of weeks prior to our August meeting, Jim called several key members by phone and arranged a sort of "ad hoc Board of Directors' " meeting. Much discussion and a lot of good ideas ensued. Jim compiled these into a real attention-getting newsletter which went out with the August meeting notices. The newsletter outlined very effectively the basic needs and items of discussion



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for the chapter, and urged all members to be there to join in the fun. Result? We had a double quorum present at the August meeting at Landmark Pipes and Pizza, and we are headed down the right road, with things moving right along.

Those of us who showed up at Landmark on Sunday, August 21, were treated to a fine program by Larry Hasselbring at the console of the Barton which the new owners of Landmark have been refurbishing into a real fine instrument. Larry played a lot of goodies, both old and new.

At 2:30, after the Sunday dinner, Chairman Jim called the business meeting to order, with some minor handicaps. A Pizza restaurant, open for business, is not the best place in the world to hold a chapter business meeting, the meeting was actually one of the best and most productive as far as chapter activity is concerned that we have attended.

Much was accomplished toward future planning, but in summary, main points included — 1. A more compatible meeting schedule. The most approved plan providing once a month meetings, with perhaps none during the hot summer months. In other words, an active September to June activities program. 2. A Management Committee, to insure continuity of chapter administration and guidance toward our goals. The committee would be composed of the officers plus a group of two or three "directors" elected for 1, 2 or 3 year terms so that only one would be elected each year. thus leaving people in the Chapter Guidance group who would be familiar with previous years' plans. 3. A permanent "home base" where meetings could be held, without having to depend on the generosity of others,



(L to R) North Texas Chairman Jim Peterson, organist for the day Danny Ray and Program Chairman Lew Williams. (Joe Koski Photo)

or invasion of public buildings or homes where organs are installed just for chapter business sessions.

These, then, were some of the items discussed and some action taken by appointing "ad hoc" committees to research some of the many angles involved in the complete picture. Jim's handling of the Chair and the generation of all these ideas and plans is breathing new life into the group.

After the business session we were treated to an especially fine theatre organ program played by Danny Ray, chapter member and regular organist at the Landmark.

In his opening remarks Danny said he was going to play a "non-Pizza" program, strictly theatre organ music. This he did with such fine numbers as "Laura" and others. However, Danny couldn't resist some fun with the Pizza Parlor theme. He introduced a "special" medley which he stated began as "the terrible three," and advanced through the various Pizza Parlor requests and favorites until it became "The Obscene Fifteen," a lampoon of the pizza parlor theatre organ, all in fun of course, but what a great job Danny

did with it. Danny was called back for two encores, each call from a standing ovation. The theatre organ certainly is a great instrument, especially when played by such talent.

After Danny's superb performance, nobody really wanted to try open console but after a while a few got up enough nerve to try it until the official Landmark Pipes and Pizza evening session began. It was a truly enjoyable theatre organ afternoon.

JOE KOSKI

OKLAHOMA CITY

After a preliminary meeting with several members, we called our first official meeting for the evening of July 18, at the Civic Center Music Hall.

First officers of the chapter are: Paul N. Haggard, chairman; Wendell A. Vandever, vice chairman; and Ed Thrower, secretary-treasurer.

We are very fortunate to have as one of our new members, Lou Ann Rice, chief organist at the Showplace Restaurant of Oklahoma City, where she presides over a 3/11 Wurlitzer. She also plays piano and sings with her husband's society orchestra The Floyd "RED" Rice orchestra. She gave us an impromptu concert which was thrilling to hear. When she found out we didn't have a Toy Counter, she presented the chapter with a check for \$45.00 to start a fund. Our newly elected secretary-treasurer added \$100.00, and another check from the writer got the fund off to a good start. And we hadn't even thought about it.

Another fine professional organist, Benjamin Bailey, entertained us and, with his guest, came all the way from Altus, Oklahoma, to join our chapter.



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Paul Quarino at the Organ Grinder, Portland.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

OREGON

On July 23, we had the rare treat of hearing staff organist Paul Quarino play a special program for our chapter at the Organ Grinder 4/41 Wurlitzer. The nucleus of this mighty instrument came from Portland's Oriental Theatre as a 3/13 with Post Horn. It has been expanded to the extent that the original three manual console became entirely inadequate, and was replaced with a large four manual console from Boston's Metropolitan Theatre. Features include two Brass Trumpets, six Vox Humanas, three 32s, three Tibias and a Harmonic Flute. The traps are outside the chambers and are pneumatically operated as usual. However they can be keyed electronically by an automatic rhythm device developed by the Rodgers Organ Com-

pany.

Paul Quarino is a master musician who came to us from the bay area in California. A native of Minneapolis, Paul included in his program "Open Your Eyes," radio theme of fellow Minnesotan Eddie Dunstedter. Also included were numbers featuring a style D Trumpet, piano sustain and a pizzicato Post Horn. His rendition of "The Way We Were" was truly exquisite, using many of the soft voices seldom heard when the organ is played in public. Paul displayed excellent pedal technique in his closing number: "Three Blind Mice" — Bach style!

The program also had a full 20 minute Laurel and Hardy silent comedy with their theme song and expertly cued sound effects.

Thanks to Paul Quarino and the

Organ Grinder management for this unique experience.

On August 21, we had our annual picnic at the Alpenrose Dairy Park, followed by an organ concert in the Opera House. This was played on the 1917 4/51 Skinner by John Green, a talented young man from the Rodgers Organ Co. John explained how the preset pistons operated the draw knobs but not the couplers. Because couplers are so necessary in a concert instrument, he was kept very busy setting them by hand along with the pistons and stops.



John Green at the Alpenrose Opera House Skinner after the picnic.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

John's excellent program included not only Bach, but also "In a Monastery Garden," "Meditation" from *Thais*, and a very ethereal "Fountain of Reverie." It is interesting to visit the other world of organ music and to examine the instrument from which the theatre organ evolved as a separate art.

Thanks to John Green for his music.

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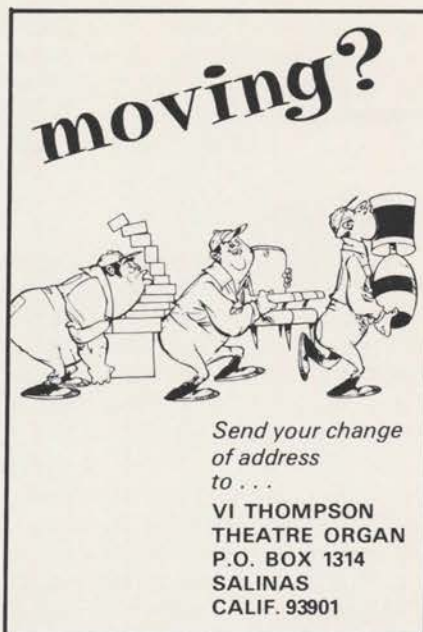
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PIKES PEAK AREA

The chapter had a busy and industrious summer. Work on the 3/8 Wurlitzer from the Chief Theatre was completed and three programs were presented by chapter members. On June 19, we hosted the Rocky Mountain Chapter for a mini-concert presented by our members, followed by open console. It was an enjoyable afternoon with over 60 in attendance. The following Sunday, June 26, we presented our "big" concert, for the city council of Colorado Springs, representing the city which is owner of the organ, and invited guests. A concert by four of our members was given along with a slide presentation of the removal and restoration of the organ, including a prospectus of its final installation in the City Auditorium of Colorado Springs. On August 6 a farewell concert was played, before removal of the organ to the City Auditorium, for the Sisters of Mt. St. Francis, who graciously made available to us their 350-seat auditorium for the past three years of restoration work.

Our temporary home at Mt. St. Francis was obtained in 1974 when it was decided more room was needed to restore the organ than the city provided. Originally, the St. Francis complex was the Modern Woodmen of America Tuberculosis Sanitarium. Built at the turn of the century the complex included a school building with an auditorium. The Sisters obtained the property in 1954 for use as a training center for novices and a retirement center for the older members of the order. The school building has been unused for the most part since and the Sisters were more than happy for us to use the building. The convent's location five miles from Colorado Springs in the foothills of the mountains makes it a



quiet and secluded spot for organ music.

The chapter was proud to have four members in attendance for the wonderful convention sponsored by CATOE: Mr. and Mrs. Neil Hein, John Grunow, and the writer.

It is reported from Alamosa, in Southern Colorado, that the famous organ of the Rialto Theatre has been sold to a party in Phoenix. This 2/7 Wurlitzer was made famous by the late Joe Brite, who played it from the late twenties until his death in 1974. It gained the reputation of being the longest continuously played theatre organ in the United States next to the Radio City in New York. The chapter was sorry that nothing could be done to keep the organ but, due to distances and pending projects, we were unable to secure an agreement on the organ and consequently lost the last in-theatre original installation in Southern Colorado. Mr. Brite, who managed the theatre, was murdered by a juvenile for the nights

receipts in 1974. Just two weeks prior to his death the writer spent an afternoon with Mr. Brite who was a very kind person and was a wealth of information on theatre organs in the West. An organ crawl had been planned for a Saturday morning playing session. Unfortunately, the bad news came the day before our planned trip. Incidentally, the person who committed the crime was released because he was a juvenile.

We hope to have the Chief organ completed in the early spring and welcome any skiers to the Colorado mountains to stop and visit.

SCOTT CHRISTIANSEN

POTOMAC VALLEY

Bob Stratton was the guest artist for the June meeting held at the Christ United Methodist Church in Arlington, Virginia. The organ, 3/34 Wicks, was originally installed in the church by Stratton in 1971 and has been maintained by him. In addition to the 34 ranks there is a 49-note harp. The Wick's console has draw knobs for pipes and stop keys for the couplers. The organ is divided; Great and Swell on the left, Choir and Pedal on the right, providing a rich, full sound in an acoustically compatible auditorium.

In addition to having played church organ for 45 years, Bob, after formal education in organ, worked for Eastman School of Music and theatre chains until sound movies came in. During high school years he installed pipe organs for Henry Pilcher's Sons, of Louisville, KY. He also helped install an echo organ in the National Theatre at Greensboro, which is the instrument Dr. Abernethy now has, minus the echo organ.

In 1966 Bob retired from the Federal Communications Commission. Since then, as a full-time vocation

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(an avocation that got out of hand and became a vocation) he custom builds one and two manual harpsichords. He is now working on Opus 43. The latest in this labor of love, is a 9-foot, 4-rank string choir, two manual instrument.

Bob Stratton's program on the Wicks consisted of an outstanding group of light classics, with a generous sampling of seldom heard selections played in the composers original arrangement.

The July meeting of the chapter was held in the spacious quarters of Gordon Keller's Music Store in Alexandria, VA. Eighty persons were in attendance.

Chairman Al Baldino quickly disposed of the scheduled business portion of the meeting, that of membership approval of the proposed name change and amendments to our Articles of Incorporation. All proposals were carried by the members.

Double featured entertainment was the keynote from that point on. Our twice gifted guest artist, Todd Strickland, theatre organist/magician, lived up to the promise of the credits of his long and active career.

Todd prefaced and interspersed the musical part of his program with surprises pulled from a baffling "bag of tricks." Our chairman, Al Baldino, who is also an amateur magician, shared the stage with Mr. Strickland as our guest crumpled a white scarf between his own hands and lo and behold, there appeared a white dove seemingly from within the folds of the scarf. The audience participated on stage in other effective illusions.

In concert, our guest promised "nothing new." Todd opened with toe-tapping melodies of popular and light classics, followed by show tunes and overtures harking back to the

days of the early silents. The audience then joined hands to the tune of the sing-along, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

RED RIVER

The ATOS '77 Convention is over but our delegate, Sonia Carlson, has not quit raving about this phenomenon in the toddlin' town. With wonderful memories and seventy slides, Sonia has high praise for this once in a lifetime event.

She gives high marks to all those responsible for making it happen, and notes there were few errors and lots of hits during a week of euphoria. Dampened organ chambers and a lost bus were a small price to pay for the thrill of a lifetime.

Pipe organ enthusiasts have the best of all possible worlds; a happy blending of past, present, future. A flood of memories surged among those who remember grandeur of movie houses, with the Chicago reigning as the apex of Midwest entertainment. The younger generation shares the cultural contribution made by majestic pipes and consoles gracing theatres, churches, eateries and auditoriums. Who can forget, Sonia recalls, meeting such wonderful people at the convention. She found the Chicago skyline very impressive; one of the most beautiful in the country enhanced by The John Hancock Center.

From Big Mac attacks to fine dining at Biggs, there was something for everyone in the gourmet department. Chicago maintains its reputation, says Sonia, for distinctive cuisine and ethnic food. Highlight for her was the banquet in the Grand State Ballroom. Parting is such sweet sorrow as Sonia vows to see you next year in Atlanta.

Red River had surprise visitors in Bismarck and Fargo when Dennis and Heidi James visited Reiny Delzer in Bismarck and on to Fargo where Dennis played the Fargo Theatre Wurlitzer. Weldon King of Springfield, Missouri, surprised us in July, stopping only long enough to play our Wurlitzer. "Fine instrument," remarked Weldon as he lovingly caressed the console. He is a freelance photographer just having returned from a long assignment in Africa.

Red River's "Incomparable Hildegarde" Usselman Kraus is featured in the summer issue of *North Dakota Horizons* magazine. In a letter to the editor, Hildegard says, "This is a tremendous thrill for me at this point in my life. I am very proud of this." Retired from active playing after forty years thrilling radio, television and theatre audiences, Hildegard basks in the sunshine of an adoring public and a host of friends.

The new management of Bud's Rink, Moorhead, Minnesota is excited about opening this fall with a restored 3/7 Barton, formerly the studio organ from WDAY. The Johnson Organ Company, Fargo, is in charge of restoration for this fine instrument that was originally 2½ ranks. The Barton was installed at Bud's in 1963, used for a few years then lay dormant for several years. The organ will be played by Alice Harden, a member of our chapter.

LARRY U. KINDLE

SAN DIEGO

The highlight of the summer was the National Convention in Chicago where our members who were fortunate enough to attend, constantly took notes on how to run a successful convention. Congratulations, CA-



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TOE, on a job well done. Enthusiasm and anticipation for entertaining all you wonderful ATOS members in 1979 is uppermost in our minds at this point.

Our chapter took a vacation from presenting concerts during July and August, but utilized the time to good advantage and we will have heard BBC's Robin Richmond perform for us on the 'Mighty Mo' at the 'Pavilion' in Pacific Beach in September.

August 4 and 5 were exciting evenings as we listened to guest artist Rex Koury's magical music as he played the 4/20 Robert Morton for the grand opening of the newly refurbished Spaghetti and Pizza Plantation (Organ Power) in Solana Beach. The theatre seats have been removed to make for more comfortable seating at tables and the southern air of hospitality creates a perfect setting for the lush tones of the organ. Earl McCandless and Ty Woodward are the newest additions to the staff of excellent organists.

August found 73 of our members and guests enjoying our annual potluck picnic at the home of Jan White, a most gracious hostess. Food-fun-swimming — and music, music created the perfect atmosphere for all the talented members who performed on the Conn 651 and the two Steinway grand pianos. A short business meeting and the convention report was followed by the exciting announcement that member 'Sandy' Fleet is donating a 2/7 Wurlitzer to our chapter. It is a small wonder that the sound of the music heard that evening was of such special quality, for it was really the only way we could all express our joy and happiness at hearing this news. The organ came from the California Theatre in Santa Rosa, Ca. and at this writing nego-

Coming . . .

ATLANTA '78

tiations are under way to install it in the California Theatre in San Diego. This theatre originally housed a 2/10 Wurlitzer and the chambers seem to be waiting with open arms for the installation of our VERY OWN organ. What a way to celebrate our chapter's third year. Our deepest and most sincere appreciation goes to Sandy for a gift that in the years to come will bring pleasure to thousands of listeners.

Even though we proclaimed vacation time, we are busier than ever with the many exciting details involved in the forth-coming installation of our Wurlitzer.

LOIS SEGUR

SOONER STATE

There's lots going on in Oklahoma these days! First of all, Tulsa's Sooner State Chapter extends an official and hearty welcome to the newly-formed Oklahoma City Chapter. With headquarters in that other city, Chairman Paul Haggard announces that their activities will center around the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Showplace Restaurant, and the 4/16 Kilgen in their Civic Center auditorium. The Kilgen, rescued from radio station WKY in Oklahoma City, was rebuilt and installed by Paul (an organ man for 50 years) and Reuter Organ Company of Lawrence, Kansas.

We're looking forward to many shared activities between our two chapters, the first of which is a scheduled trip in September to hear Hector Olivera perform the Kilgen's inaugural concert in its new home.

Speaking of big Kilgens — the

Central High School 4/47 Kilgen is coming along nicely. We're working with Rex Teague, music director of the Tulsa Public Schools, to arrange some meetings around the instrument.

This organ was originally installed in 1928 (at a cost of \$40,000) in Old Central in downtown Tulsa. It was completely paid for by donations of Central students during the ensuing years — by graduating class gifts, bake sales, other donations, — and was completely paid for by about the year 1934. During recent years it became apparent that the student body had completely outgrown the old building, and a new site was selected away from the downtown area. The first classes moved into the new building at the beginning of the 1976-77 school year.

The pipe organ might have been forgotten but for the loud cry put up by members of our chapter, Chairman (and Central alumnus) Phil Judkins in particular. As a result, it was decided to not only move the organ to the new school, but to commission architect Joe Coleman to design the new auditorium completely around the organ! This he did, beautifully — in consultation with pipe organ professionals. Restoring and installing is being done by Bill Moore of Pipe Organ Service of Oklahoma City.

The cost of rebuilding and re-installing the organ will amount to about \$45,000, and is being paid for through a donation fund and other money-raising activities sponsored by Central alumni. They auctioned off artifacts from the old school to sentimental Tulsans, and they've passed the hat at class reunions. We're very grateful that there has been enough civic support around Tulsa, and enough support from the more than 45,000 Central alumni,

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to save the big Kilgen and allow it to continue to be heard.

At our regular August meeting at American Christian College, we welcomed new member Chad Weirick. We also met his parents, Bob and Muriel Weirick, who had driven Chad down from Rockford, Illinois, to help him enroll at Oral Roberts University as a freshman music major. Young professional Chad picked ORU because he liked the school — and because of the 4/21 Wurlitzer! He can hardly wait to play it, and we can hardly wait to hear him! Meantime he "made do" at the American Christian College 3/10 Robert Morton, and later on Phil Judkins' 3/7 Wicks. He also treated us to some original-piano-roll music on Phil's (out-of-tune, Phil said) piano. Land of Lincoln Chapter's loss is certainly our gain, even if it only lasts while he's a college student.

DOROTHY SMITH

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

On Sunday June 5, 1977 at 4:00 p.m., the second chapter to be inaugurated in the South Texas area came into being: THE SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER OF ATOS. Headquarters are in the or-

nate surroundings of the historic 2000-seat Jefferson Theatre with its famous Robert Morton pipe organ, the only theatre pipe organ playing in its original installation in its 50th year and still going strong, in the state of Texas. There were 32 members and their guests to attend the organizational meeting and to hear Al Sacker, organist at the Jefferson for 28 years, explain the purpose and challenge of an ATOS chapter in the Southeast Texas area, and to present the program of organ music. After the program, open console was enjoyed by the members.

On June 26, several members of the Houston Area Chapter journeyed to the Jefferson Theatre where the giant CinemaScope screen was lowered to present a comedy starring Buster Keaton and accompanied on the organ by Al Sacker. The members expressed great pleasure at the beauty and opulence of the beautiful theatre with its striking lighting effects. We anticipate a fine relationship with our neighbor chapter in this area of Texas.

On July 3, the second organizational meeting of the Southeast Texas Chapter of ATOS convened at the Jefferson Theatre, our headquarters, for another fine gathering of prospective members. After the

Coming . . .

ATLANTA '78

business meeting, refreshments were served and open console was enjoyed by the members while plans were being formulated for future thinking concerning our activities.

On August 7, the third and final organizational meeting of the chapter was held at the beautiful Jefferson Theatre. More than a hundred members and guests attended the meeting to see two Laurel and Hardy silent comedies and *The Son Of The Sheik* starring Rudolph Valentino and Vilma Banky, and accompanied on the Robert Morton by Al Sacker. The business meeting was held first and our honored member Mrs. Ruby Holleman Monroe spoke and showed memorabilia when she was organist of the Jefferson Theatre in the early thirties, and also of her days at other theatre organs in Beaumont during the twenties. A reception was held on the stage of the theatre. Then everyone went back into the auditorium to view the silent films on the smaller of the two screens. Open console was enjoyed by several members after the program.

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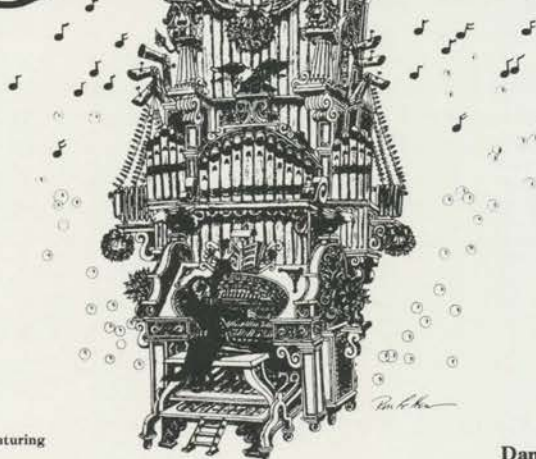
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