



CHAPTER NOTES

Let us know what's happening in YOUR Chapter!

Send Photos and News to:

GEORGE THOMPSON
P.O. BOX 1314
SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902

Deadline for all material is the FIRST of the month PRECEDING Publication.

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ALABAMA

It's always a pleasure to have one of the real "master" organists in our midst . . . but in November we were fortunate to have *two* of them here . . . at the same time yet!

First of all, Don Baker came to Birmingham in early November for the purpose of cutting a recording on our Alabama Theatre Mighty

Wurlitzer. When Don, his wife, Anne, and his recording engineer, Max Schloss, arrived, he checked out the organ and, becoming familiar with the surroundings, Don went right to work making his recording. The release of this new record is expected to be in April, 1978. Thank you, Don, for choosing our organ for your latest recording. We feel this is quite an honor.

Our thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Harless, and Beatrice and Ola Fee for being hosts and hostesses to the Bakers and the Schlosses during their stay in Birmingham.

Of course, we can't overlook a word of gratitude to Chuck Hancock, work crew chairman, Larry Donaldson and the rest of the work crew for putting our "Big Bertha" in tip-top condition for the recording session. A very special thank you to Chet Rataski and Paul "Mack" Abernethy, from Raleigh, North

Carolina, and to Tom Landrum, from Richmond, Virginia, for their help in tuning the organ and their technical advice and assistance in preparation for the Don Baker recording. Our thanks to *all* who had any part in making this recording a success.

Our next special event was on November 10, at which time Gaylord Carter did a beautiful concert at the Southside Baptist Church here in Birmingham. The three-manual Kimball theatre pipe organ was, for many years, the studio organ for Birmingham's Radio Station WAPI and was acquired by the church through the efforts of one of their members.

"Flicker Fingers" was in rare form and did a tremendous concert to an almost full auditorium. Gaylord played a well rounded program which offered something for everyone from 8 to 80. Of course, there were encores, and no one seemed anxious to go home, but all good things must come to an end.

The Birmingham "welcome mat" is always out for you, Gaylord.

Thanks to Joan and Lee Aured for having Gaylord as their house guest. Who had the most fun — Gaylord, the Aureds . . . or Onyx (Joan's poodle) who won Gaylord's heart?

Besides the usual festivities of the Christmas Season, December 26 was the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Alabama Theatre and

Norville Hall at the Alabama Theatre 50th Anniversary Party in December.

(Tom Hatter Photo)



With Gaylord Carter are Ann and Don Baker at Gaylord's concert in November at the Southside Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

(Tom Hatter Photo)



first concert played on our Mighty Wurlitzer, so we had a dual-purpose celebration for our meeting.

Norville Hall, who always seems to come up with some interesting surprises on his programs, ran true to form and gave us a delightful "bill of fare" which was a combination Christmas-Anniversary program. He was assisted by M.C. Jim Ferguson. Jim sang some solos, and also led the audience in singing carols. Norville did a medley of Christmas songs and had as his theme, "The Miracle of Christmas." He also included his rendition of "Intermezzo" from *Cavallaria Rusticana* in special memory of Lillian Truss, who played the very first public concert at the Alabama Theatre on that December 26, in 1927.

The 1978 officers are Alleen Cole, chairman; Riedel West, vice chairman and program director; Betty Crowe, secretary-treasurer, and board members are Lee Aured, Gordon Nicolson, Ima Jean Price and Larry Donaldson. We thank the nominating committee for their time and work in this important task.

JO ANN RADUE

BEEHIVE

On October 30, members were treated to a meeting held at the Pipes and Pizza in Provo, Utah. This beautiful Wurlitzer and beautifully decorated building are owned by members Calvin and Annette Christensen who very generously let the chapter hold a meeting at their Pipes and Pizza in Salt Lake City and also in their home in Emigration Canyon.

The main discussion of the meet-



Clarence Briggs (left) and Calvin Christensen at the Pipes and Pizza in Provo, Utah.

ing centered around the ever-present concern of the restoration of the pipe organ that has been taken out of the Capital Theatre while the building is being remodeled. Members feel that outside of the chapter there is not enough interest and concern about putting the organ back into the building, restoring it, and then making sure that the public will be able to enjoy hearing it play again.

The Christmas spirit seemed prevalent on December 11, when a meeting was held at the beautifully Christmas decorated Organ Loft. The owner, Lawrence Bray, and his friends transformed the building into a magic Christmas atmosphere.

Election of officers for 1978 was held: Leland Lay, chairman; Murray Bywater, vice chairman; Darlene Walker, secretary-treasurer.

A special thanks to Mr. Bray for his interest in the chapter and his cooperation. Members consider it a special treat to try their hands at the Organ Loft Mighty Wurlitzer.

MAXINE V. RUSSELL

CENTRAL OHIO

Our first meeting at the Pipe Organ Ristorante took place in November. House organist Ted Gysan, at the Mighty Mo, entertained the general public and our members until official closing time. Ted has an abundance of gimmicks to add entertainment to his programs — one being the playing of T.B.B.T. or Teddy Bear Break Time, to which his followers have become accustomed. On occasion he puts on an "anything goes" show including the silents, sing-alongs, etc. Ted gave

our members a short private concert which included Scott Joplin's "Echoes of the Snowball Club." He acquainted our members with the features of the Moller and open console began. Apparently our members did their homework because all appeared at ease with the organ. Some did accept assistance with registration from Bob Shaw. Since Bob helped with the installation he was well-qualified to give expert advice. We had a number of guests who expertly controlled the Moller, including Carl Creager, a member of the Motor City Chapter before moving to Dayton, Ohio. Our thanks to the Ansel family, owners of Pipe Organ Ristorante, for making such a great evening possible.

Once more we thank Carlos Parker for arranging for our use of the Ohio Theatre for our Christmas party and to Carlos and Tom Hamilton for the use of the Morton. Concert artist for the evening was Dennis James who played a program of Christmas music. Dennis is an outstanding artist and members always agree each concert we hear is the best yet. Following his program Dennis gave us an informal, terrific short course on the use of the Morton with a discussion of the six categories of sound, registration tips, balancing of manuals and a question and answer session. Were it not for the itchy fingers of our organists we cheerfully could have kept him talking the rest of the evening. We consider ourselves fortunate in having Dennis at the Ohio Theatre, value him as a member of COTOS and appreciate his willingness to help the chapter and members in every way he can. From this point to closing a constant flow of organists took advantage of the opportunity to play the Morton and members and guests who did, performed admirably. With the fabulous array of good food, the companionship and good music we were sorry to end this thoroughly great meeting.

Neil Grover has acquired a number of Bill Dalton (now deceased) records which are jacketed as being performed on a Hammond X-66. Many members who purchased the record are of the opinion it sounds like pipes. Neil is offering these at \$5.00 postpaid and generously donates \$1.00 of each sale to the Chapter's Wurlitzer Fund. If interested,



Krehl King at the Provo Utah, pizzeria console with Lucille Dale looking on.

contact Neil at 5567 Crawford Dr., Columbus, Ohio 43229.

We are happy to share the news that COTOS is now listed in the *Who's Who* publication of the Greater Columbus Arts Council.

IRENE BLEGEN

CHICAGO AREA

This is the second edition of these notes for this correspondent but I am about to "retire" (again) since Marie Pond has been elected *Vox CATOE* Editor in a special election and will also be writing these notes. She was elected at a social meeting at Maine North High School in December which featured Jack Olander at CATOE's own Wurlitzer, along with two of his students from the vocal music program at the school, and lots of open console time for members. Refreshments were arranged by Val Escobar and Helen Near and CATOE thanks them.

The Maine North Wurlitzer is fulfilling its educational purposes in many ways. About 50 members of the Chicago Audio and Acoustic Group were recent visitors. This group of professional audio engineers and technicians toured the chambers, guided by Crew Chief John Peters, saw a slide show about organs and theatres by Bill Benedict and heard "Professor" Bill Hansen talk about organ design. Walter Strony then played a program to demonstrate what the organ sounds like. This past fall 40 people were enrolled in an 8 week course in theatre organ which was an adult education course in the local school district. Jack Olander was the teacher and spotlighted his students at a recital to end the course on November 28. CATOEers enrolled in the course were Thelma Douglas, Barb Meisner, Al Kuhlen, Dorothy Zaremba, Carl Hansen, Al Bilgen, Jim Koller, Geoff Naylor, Ted Gorski, Ed Tooke, Scott Striker and Harry Koenig. The course will be repeated again this spring.

In addition to CATOE's three Honorary Life Members (Leon Berry, Pearl White, and George Wright) three other people were named Honorary Members for 1978. They are Bill Lamb, official ATOS photographer, Peter Miller, managing director of the Chicago Theatre, and Mickey Gold, manager of the Oriental Theatre.


The books for the "Chicago '77" convention were officially closed in early December when ATOS accepted the audited convention financial statement. ATOS and CATOE split the net profit in half (the standard convention agreement) with each receiving \$2903.53.

Wagonmaster Alden Stockebrand's bus trip to Ft. Wayne on October 30 and 31 was a success thanks to him, refreshments on the bus by Marie Pond and Ione Tedei, and the hospitality of Bob Goldstine and the Embassy Theatre Foundation. In addition to John Muri playing *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* at the Embassy, we had open console there for three hours, stopped at the Village Inn Pizza Restaurant to hear Cal Prott at the 3/10 Barton, and visited Ray and Ione Danford's home to see and play their 2/7 Wurlitzer. Lou Shindler was on hand to show off the 2/6 Marr and Colton in the chapel at Calvary Temple. Later was joined by Wurlitzer's David Ashby (who is overseeing the installation of their 5/65 Wurlitzer in the company's Dekalb, Ill. headquarters)

at the piano for some fine gospel playing while the CATOE chorus joined in a hymn fest. Thanks to all our friends in Ft. Wayne.

Rob Calcaterra played the Chicago Wurlitzer for our November social meeting. The program was well-chosen and well-played. Rob is extremely busy at Indiana University where he is studying, but found time to play for us. We expect to see and hear more from him now that he has broken into the theatre organ world. Following Rob's program we were the guests of Stan Zimmerman at the Beautiful Sound, the local Allen dealer. That developed into quite a jam session with Kimball's Ned Siebert, Stan, Rob, David Ashby, and Bill Tandy (who spells Don Springer at the Barton in Joe and Mike Bortz's Sally's Stage) all sitting in.

Tom Cotner had to return to Park Ridge's Pickwick Theatre in December to play his debut concert for CATOE. Tom had just moved to St. Louis where he has been named resident organist at the Old St. Louis Noodle and Pizza Co. Tom's show



GEORGE WRIGHT In Concert

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY. . . .

" . . . A master arranger for the instrument. His original and daring registration gives the organ rhythmic vitality and zip in performance. . . He makes it swing."

The New York Times

"On stage to play a Bach chorale or a Gershwin song, he seems to be re-creating the music. He apparently does nothing that no other organist does, yet he accomplishes results that none of them seem to come near accomplishing."

Hollywood Citizen-News

"His program had humor and was always musical. He has brought theatre 'pops' organ back to a nation which had forgotten it."

Theatre Organ

"Sponsored by the San Jose Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, he gave a display of musicianship that must be heard, live, to fully appreciate. He had them in the palm of his hand."

Tabs and Drawbars

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J. NELSON MANAGEMENT
900 Andersen Drive, San Rafael, California 94901
(415) 457-0255

was filled with surprises including a slide projector that wouldn't work, and a mystery guest vocalist. What wasn't a surprise was the fine music that came from the 3/11 Wurlitzer. My favorite was "What I Did For Love," played just as beautifully as it was at the July convention.

Member Scott Striker, a student of Kay McAbee, recently presented his second concert at the Style D Wurlitzer in Illinois Benedictine College, Lisle. He was presented with an autographed picture of President Carter and a letter from the White House. Another rising young organist to watch from our area is 16-year-old Perry Petta. Perry won the youth playing competition at the Cleveland regional and can be heard playing pizza organ in Milwaukee, his home town, where Walter Strony has been giving him lessons.

TOM TIBIA

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Connecticut Valley is justly proud of its efforts to insure the perpetuation of the "theatre organ sound" through its scholarship awards program established in 1970. C.V.-T.O.S. was a pioneer in this field — contacting organ teachers in the area and providing them with material explaining just what we meant by "theatre organ" so that they would be better able to interest and inspire students to compete in the scholarship program; and giving interested students an introduction

to the "theatre pipe organ" at the Thomaston Opera House and arranging practice sessions on "pipes" at the Opera House and at Bethwood, the home of Harold and Eleanor Weaver.

In 1977, the scholarship committee broadened its scope to include music education in the form of an arrangement competition. Entrants were asked to submit their own arrangements of required music — choice between the currently popular "Now That We're In Love," or the golden oldie "Lovely Lady." Judges of this competition were Lowell Ayars, Don Baker, Bill Irwin and John Muri.

On Sunday, December 4, 1977, the C.V.T.O.S. Scholarship and Music Education Committee presented another "first" — a Theatre Organ Workshop conducted by Lowell Ayars at the Thomaston Opera House. The workshop idea is the "brain-child" of "singing" concert organist-educator Ayars who conducted a similar session at one of the national conventions. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania as a Master of Fine Arts in organ and education, he is well-qualified to teach as well as perform. His warm personality and easy, friendly manner create the perfect atmosphere for an instructive and enjoyable "learning" experience.

The workshop is designed to help all organists get the most from their instruments — be they electronic or pipes (and the majority of us have

the electronic versions in our homes). You don't have to have three manuals and 15 ranks to make beautiful music. Lowell Ayars has proven this many times in his playing of many of the smaller organs at our national conventions. Even if you are not an organist, you will find the workshop understandable and fun.

The session was conducted in an informal manner with participants encouraged to ask questions any time they might arise. Lowell first made it clear to all that the opinions he was about to voice were his alone, and his illustrations referred to no specific persons.

Lowell began his program by playing a number making all the mistakes in technique that are commonly heard. At the conclusion of this amusing demonstration, he analyzed the errors and how easily they can be avoided. His discussion covered improper use of the expression pedal, lack of phrasing, unimaginative registration and numerous other failings heard in both amateur and professional performances. Using the "guinea pig" technique, Lowell had volunteers play and then explained how their interpretations could be improved. The volunteers were young Keith Lambert, a scholarship winner, and Joe Sweet.

The two-hour session just flew by, and we were all reluctant to bring it to an end. In response to requests to "please sing something," Lowell Ayars delighted all by singing Oley Speaks beautiful "Sylvia." Bert Rankin just happened to have a copy of the sheet music in his pocket. To wind up the afternoon, he continued at the Marr & Colton console with "You're the Cream in My Coffee" and "Among My Souvenirs."

In thanking Lowell Ayars for the wonderfully instructive and enjoyable afternoon, Scholarship Chairman George Lewis, remarked that this was just Part I, and he hoped that we would be able to have a Part II at a later date — a sentiment which was shared by all present.

JUNE L. GAREN



Lowell Ayars addresses an attentive Connecticut Valley workshop session.

(P.A. Miller Photo)

EASTERN MASS.

In the absence of both Chairman "Pete" Hoagland and Vice Chairman Craig Johnson, former Chairman Dick Linder, acting on their



Fr. Bill Biebel at the 3/13 Wurlitzer for the Eastern Mass. Christmas meeting at Babson College.

(Paul Callahan Photo)

behalf, opened our November Babson meeting. The first item was a membership count with election of officers on the agenda, but without the necessary quorum, it had to be postponed.

Former member Dr. Alan Goodnow (now with SENETOS) was then introduced by Dick as our first artist of the evening and opened with a lively up-tempo "That's Entertainment" followed by a selection of enjoyable theatre organ stylings. His total lack of practice time certainly was not apparent and a good round of applause resulted.

Cheryl Linder, one of our younger, but talented Misses, was then presented by her Dad. Her program ranged from the classical writings of Ernst Pepping and J.S. Bach to selections from *Sesame Street*, all well-played. Her young musical friend and fellow member, Julie Feltman, then took over at the Wurlitzer as Cheryl joined her with piccolo and then with a bass trombone for two numbers — such versatility! Julie then soloed on the Wurlitzer with a well-registered group of six popular selections, played with the cool confidence of one twice her years. Both of these gals are going places!

Open console attracted much to the bench with much variety of registration, style and selections, bringing enjoyment to all present.

Our Christmas meeting at Babson in December was especially worthwhile with a good turnout of members and guests. Election of officers was quickly accomplished with Chairman Hoagland announcing

only the office of V.C. requiring a written ballot as there were two candidates. Royal N. Schweiger will head EMCATOS with incumbent Craig Johnson as V.C., Secretary Rosalie M. Fucci will serve again as will Richard A. Metzger as treasurer. Directors are Erle Renwick and William Carpenter, with alternates Timothy Holloran and David J. Marden.

Erle Renwick proposed that the chapter give recognition to Clayton Stone, presently hospitalized, for his unsung work on our organ (which he doesn't play), chairman of membership committee, goodwill ambassador for our cause, etc. The title of Member Extraordinaire was suggested and unanimously passed with a plaque to be presented. This chapter "Hall of Fame" honor will be sparingly bestowed.

Program Chairman Johnson then introduced our special artist of the evening, Fr. Bill Biebel from Erie, Pa., faculty member of the Cathedral Preparatory School. His priestly habit belied his warm, friendly manner and unquestionable love of the theatre organ. Fr. Bill was a new name to the majority, but won many proponents with his easy individual style, constantly changing colorful registration, program selection and rapport with his audience. Had he been born two generations earlier, perhaps he would have been "called" to play heavenly music on a unit orchestra! Jesse Crawford's ballad style is part of his artistry as is that of Lyn Larsen. He opened with an appropriate Christmas medley, both

traditional and popular, and his program included wide variety such as Gershwin, some of Crawford's recorded tunes, Richard Purvis and even a composition of his own called "The Maestro," dedicated to Lyn Larsen.

Craig had a short console interview with Fr. Bill to add further interest. There was even a sing-along of "White Christmas" to show his versatility. At the conclusion of his program, a long, well-deserved applause brought the unlikely encore of "Hard-Hearted Hanna" and "Peace on Earth" with just-right registrations to fit.

The evening was over all too soon, but its influence had us departing with Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men seeming most appropriate.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

GARDEN STATE

The 1977-1978 concert season got off to a grand start on Sunday afternoon, September 25, with the appearance of George Wright at the Trenton War Memorial Auditorium. Over 750 theatre organ enthusiasts turned out to hear the living legend of the theatre organ perform at the 3/16 Moller. Mr. Wright presented a diversified, well-balanced program which earned him an extended standing ovation from the highly appreciative audience.

The War Memorial Auditorium was pressed into service again by the GSTOS, less than a month later. On Saturday evening, October 22, Keith Chapman made the relatively short trek up from Philadelphia to accompany a silent film. Over 400 people were enthralled by his intricate scoring of the Douglas Fairbanks film, and several comments expressing utter disbelief at the precision of the whole affair were overheard by the hard-working, but not too-surprised crew, Mr. Chapman was well rewarded by the audience for his work, and in reply, he played a Bach classical number as an encore.

PETER PANOS

The October meeting was held at the Trinity Methodist Church in Clifton, N.J. It was a delightful surprise to find a small, perfect Wurlitzer in its original setting. Built in 1930 for the church, it has a horse-

shoe console and while the Diapason rank gives a firm foundation for hymn playing, one only has to put on the Tibia and tremors and "Gee Dad! It's a Wurlitzer." There was open console for an hour. A short meeting was held, then members settled down to enjoy a wonderful organ concert by David Kopp, a senior at Montclair State College. Considering that the Wurlitzer has only five ranks plus chimes, Dave's registration was imaginative and well-chosen. The entire program with the "Poet and Peasant Overture" as a finale was excellent.

Our November meeting was held at the Old Rahway Theatre in Rahway. It was a lively one with much discussion about chapter member's attendance at meetings and concerts. Five of the six members running for office for 1978 were present. All in all it was a good get-together. The remainder of the morning was an outstanding musical treat by Frank Cimmino, house organist at the Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque. He is well-known and many people came to hear and enjoy his program. Frank brought his new Christmas records with him "literally hot off the press." These are being released by HMR Recordings.

JINNY VANORE

GULF COAST

We have been "silent" during the past year but we have been anything but quiet! The first thing we have learned in this "Murphy's Law" of ATOS-Land is the price and quantity of midnight oil. How we have burned it and used it!

Tom Helms, our very capable premier organist, was elected chairman, Norman Jeter got the nod for his assistant and treasurer and Dorothy Standley was secretary.

We have met with the city council to be heard in the plans for restoring the beautiful Saenger Theatre, home of our own Robert Morton. They were amazed to hear all the chapter had done and was doing to save the theatre and what we did to restore the organ to its present stage. More midnight oil here.

Our chapter, under the talented direction of member Dr. Rhea, undertook to restore an old Brambach pit piano and to wire it into the console. The piano is now a work of art

and a joy to behold. A grand piano that is once more GRAND.

We have sponsored several events at the organ featuring it and other soloists. We have staged two silent movies that were very well-received. Lee Erwin, was our guest organist that night and he performed like the trooper he is and gave a great show.

After the concert Dr. and Mrs. Rhea hosted an "After the Theatre" reception for members, guests and Lee.

Chicago had to be another highlight of the year for the three delegates from here who attended.

We have printed bumper stickers to advertise our chapter and promote the restoration of the theatre. We have given many concerts, both for free and for admission. We find the "freebees" are well-attended and do much to build up good will and let our voice be heard.

Since we have done so much to the lovely organ, many other organizations in town have asked that we participate in their functions. First was the city when they celebrated the re-opening of the theatre as a performing arts center. Tom Helms played for them along with all the VIP's. Leif Erickson was MC; coming from Hollywood to do the honors. Our organ and organist were utilized when the SPEBSQSA (Barbershoppers to the unknowing) gave their annual concert. Same with a local sorority who asked Tom to play accompaniment for their acts in a vaudeville show. All very well-received. Tom does more than his share of providing good music for these events. He gives a very comprehensive description of the theatre and its history. He will ask the audiences if any of them have heard the organ before and with the response he starts his speech. Everyone enjoys the bit of memorabilia about the theatre and its old times.

Our Robert Morton was also heard accompanying a district choral group from the United Methodist Church. Our last performance of the year came in December when Tom was asked to play for a local music study club. Here again he gave the history of the organ, the theatre, in relation to the others of the Saenger chain, and the plans for the future of both. After a very enjoyable concert the 300-plus members were conducted on a tour of the theatre by

chapter members. All were amazed to see behind the footlights and under the stage. Most had never been backstage in any theatre so it was an exciting experience for them.

We have not only enjoyed our own performances but have travelled to other cities to see and hear how their affairs are coming. Tom played a concert for the Birmingham Chapter in May and in November the Atlanta Chapter invited him to play on the mighty Moller at the Fox. Quite an honor for our Tom! Jack Goodwin and his lovely mother were hosts for a reception for Tom and the Atlanta Chapter after the concert.

In 1978 we hope to see our being-restored Saenger Theatre fully restored and then we will shine! The concerts we have planned are visions of sugar plums dancing in our heads!

DOROTHY STANDLEY

JOLIET AREA

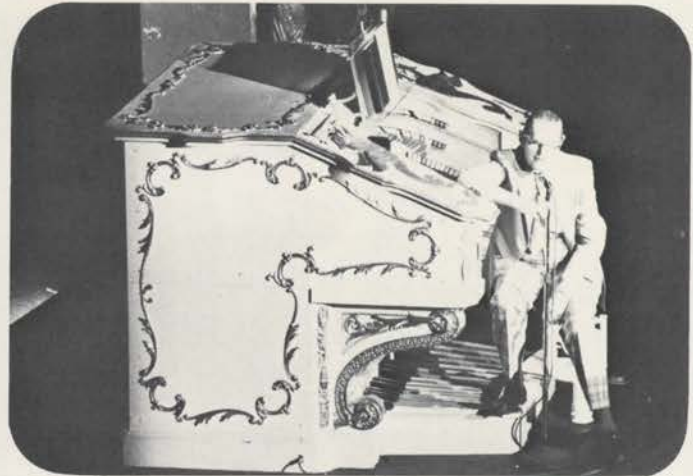
The Rialto Theatre was the place to be on October 29, as Rob Calcaterra delighted the audience with his original score to the 1925 silent film classic *The Phantom of the Opera*. The surprise-filled evening began as Rob was carried down the main aisle via the shoulders of his fiendishly fitted friends. As the ghoulish procession lurked about, one could hear the strains of a mysterious chant being intoned. Then, as if by magic, charming Rob Calcaterra arose from his coffin, floated to the 4/21 Barton Grande and played the traditional "Toccata und Fuge in D Moll" by



Rob Calcaterra at the Rialto, Joliet, Barton console.
(Bill Lamb Photo)



Rockford's Swedish Men's Chorus, the Sveas Soner, in concert at the Coronado Theatre. (Bob Schmoock Photo)



Bob Coe at the Coronado Barton in December.

(Bob Schmoock Photo)

J.S. Bach. But the night was still young!

Next on the program was a Halloween sing-along which was written especially for the evening by Rob himself. Familiar tunes such as "Baby Face" were cleverly transformed into their Halloween equivalents, i.e., "Pumpkin Face." The silent feature immediately followed.

However, during the second half of the program, the Lady Barton, not wanting to give all the attention to her nimble-fingered organist, decided to cease functioning! Thinking quickly, the versatile performer hopped off the organ and onto the theatre's grand piano, which he played completely in the dark! The quick-thinking organ crew attached a car battery to the generator, and the organ was again able to be utilized for the last few minutes of the movie. Rob closed the show with a few of his tasteful theatre organ renditions. What an outstanding performance by a first-rate showman!

Sunday, December 11, found the Rialto being utilized for three live stage shows which were sponsored by the Caterpillar Tractor Company for its employees and their families. Once again Rob's keyboard artistry amused the audience as he opened each show with his fun-filled Christmas selections. Then the organ was lowered to picture level and Rob proceeded to play for all of the seven acts. After each show was completed Rob played exit music as was the custom of the theatre organists of the 1920's.

It is a pleasure to know that Rob Calcaterra will continue to enter-

tain upcoming generations with his fascinating arrangements, which he performs in the style reminiscent of the original theatre organists.

DIANA WURZINGER

LAND OF LINCOLN

On December 6, LOLTOS hosted 75 members and guests of the Rockford Kiwanis Club, for tours of the Coronado and a slide and commentary program on the inner workings of the Barton organ. December 10, we hosted three shows at the Coronado, on a day billed as "Holiday Entertainment." Bob Coe provided organ music for all three shows. In the morning, several hundred young people from an area children's home and youth groups were invited as guests of LOLTOS for a short concert, silent movie and the antics of Clown Alley #22 under the direction of Cousin Otto. (He is really ATOS-LOLTOS member Gene Lee.)

In the afternoon, senior citizens of the area were our guests for a silent, Western feature picture, concert and sing-along. In the evening, Bob was joined by Rockford's famed Swedish Men's Chorus, the Sveas Soner. The chorus is directed by Dr. Bernhardt Westlund, and is accompanied by Mrs. Maureen Staublin. They presented a delightful program of Christmas music, as did Bob Coe on the organ. The closing number was a beautiful arrangement of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" with organ, piano and full chorus. A great ending for a fine program, which was well-attended in spite of a week of blizzards and cold weather.

Coming LOLTOS concerts are

planned for April 20 with Lyn Larsen and June 15 with Rosa Rio.

BOB SCHMOOCK

LOS ANGELES

The extremely popular and talented Tom Hazleton proved his total mastery of the Mighty Morton for his November appearance at the Elks Building.

Observing that the four-manual 61-rank Morton was as much a concert instrument as a theatre organ, he proceeded with a compromise between a "recital" and a "concert."

From his opener, "War March of the Priests" through Shubert's "March Militaire," Tom showed the brilliant might of the Morton. And to show that it can be pretty too, he led it through Schubert's "Serenade" and a number especially written for a roll player, "Dreams," employing the celestial set of echo ranks high above the hall. But none were prettier, we thought, than his medley from *Showboat*.

Included as a special tribute to his former teacher, Richard Purvis, was one of that master's own compositions, "Fanfare," followed by "Melody in Mauve," dedicated to colleague, Bill Thomson.

To show that the Morton can be solemn, he played "Now Thank Thee All Our Lord," and "Solemn Melody," again using the pretty echo pipes.

Although concert artists do not normally improvise, he challenged his audience to start him on an uncharted course with but two notes, from which he developed his own theme . . . on the spot.

Two highlights of the evening were his version of the popular "Plop, Plop, Fizz Fizz" commercial in "Fantasia and Fugue" and his unique finale in which he had his entire audience move to the stairs of the lobby to listen to three ballads played on the auxiliary two-manual console in the lobby. Those eleven ranks of echo never sounded prettier.

We congratulate Program Director Dean McNichols for presenting an artist of the calibre of Tom Hazleton, and our Crew Chief, Dick Stoney, and his group of volunteers who keep the organ up to his standards.

BOB HILL



Chairman Ron Werner signs the papers for the purchase of the Redford property in the offices of Community Theatres.

MOTOR CITY

The culmination of our "Buy the Redford" fund raising drive came on November 7, 1977 at the offices of Community Theatres, where we formally signed the papers for the purchase of the Redford property. On hand for the occasion was our board of directors as well as officials of Community Theatres, owners of the Redford.

One-fifth of the purchase price has been paid from the proceeds from our fund raising drive. The balance will be due over a ten year period. The property includes the 1500-seat Redford Theatre, the 3/10 Barton pipe organ, five stores, several offices and two parking lots. Our thanks to all who contributed to make this moment possible.

But, this is not the end — only the beginning. The State Attorney General has allowed us to continue to solicit funds to help the "Buy the Redford" project. Your tax-deductible donations may still be sent to:



Irving Goldberg (right), of Community Theatres, accepts the check for down payment on the Redford property. Board member Chuck Harris is seated between Mr. Goldberg and Fred Pellerito, business manager of the theatre chain.

MCTOS, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

Our annual meeting was held at the Redford Theatre on November 5, followed by a potluck dinner in the lobby of the theatre. Chairman Ron Werner reported on the purchase of the theatre and presented John Muri with a lifetime honorary membership in the chapter. John has always been a friend and has done anything he could to help the chapter.

Three of our youngest organists, Chuck Harris, Tony O'Brien and Kevin Werner, as well as veteran John Muri, entertained at the Barton prior to the meeting. After dinner Don Grimshaw showed slides of the 1977 convention and Gil Francis supplied slides of activities at the Redford. Open console followed.

The Saturday, November 19, appearance of Hector Olivera at the



(Don Lockwood Photo)

Redford Theatre was sold out well in advance of the program. What few tickets there were for the Friday performance were quickly sold at the box office that night. His dancing feet tapped their way into the hearts of our audience. In addition to a well-rounded program, Hector accompanied two Buster Keaton two-reelers, *Coney Island* and *Goodnight Nurse*.



Outgoing Chairman Ron Werner presents John Muri with a lifetime membership in the Motor City Chapter. Newly elected Chairman Larry Gleason (seated) expresses his approval. (Fred Page Photo)

On December 7 John Muri played a special program for the Michigan Railroad Club at the Redford Theatre, to which chapter members were invited.

The annual Christmas party, held at the Redford Theatre this year, was also billed as the Redford "Christening," it being our first official chapter activity there as building owners. The meeting included entertainment, open console, snacks and a champagne punch.

In mid-December, the Southfield Public Schools were invited to an educational program at the Redford Theatre, featuring a visual trip through the theatre and chambers, and, of course, plenty of organ music.

Our chapter has been given yet another theatre pipe organ (chapter-owned organs now total four). This most recent acquisition is the 3/30 Hilgreen Lane in the Madison Theatre in downtown Detroit. Unplayable for many years, the organ's only value is for salvageable parts.

Intermissions continue at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, with chapter artists supplying theatre pipe organ music between films

on Friday and Saturday nights. (This once was a commonplace occurrence for chapter artists at the Royal Oak, Redford and Punch and Judy theatres before changes in ownership relegated this activity to nearly a thing of the past.)

Second Sunday artists at the Michigan Theatre Barton in Ann Arbor were Herb Head in November, and Henry Aldridge, Greg Yasick and Larry Kass in December. Our Fourth Sunday artist at the Royal Oak Theatre Barton in November was Grace Joslin.

DON LOCKWOOD

NOR-CAL

The chapter has been on the go this year, ranging from 100 miles north and 50 miles south of San Francisco. Our northern-most jaunt was in October when we were guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Leiniger outside Shingletown, California. Tiny James was our featured organist performing at the Wurlitzer he is so familiar with — from the former Oakland Fox. John Leiniger installed the instrument to duplicate the chambers as they were in the theatre. Tiny verified that the lady spoke as well nowadays as in the days when in the theatre. It was our treat to hear Tiny again after too long an absence. During the intermission Tiny poured champagne as a special treat. It was truly a great day and well worth the long trip.

On November 6, we met at one of the newer eaterys in the East Bay. The Pizza Junction in Rheem has a 3/9 Wurlitzer. Installation of the organ is unusual with the console located on the second floor balcony between dual chambers. Every seat has an excellent view in this two-floor arrangement. Under the expert direction of the resident organist, Harvey Blanchard, we were entertained with continuous music for nearly an hour. He opened with "Chicago" and ran the gamut of old and new melodies so pleasant to hear. Following Harvey's concert, Jack Gustafson provided a detailed accounting of the recent completion of the organ, in which Jack has been deeply involved. The organ is a hybrid with no previous history. Kind of like an orphan who has made good on its own. Jack then opened the open console portion playing several arrange-

ments in his own style. Other contributions to open console included Warren White, Bill Taylor, Ken Federick, Fred Clapp, Jerry Miller, Warren Lubich, Don Creswell and Jimmy Paulin. Katherine Whaley, owner of the Pizza Junction, was a most gracious hostess for the meeting.

Our December meeting was held at another new pizza parlor, previously unvisited by our chapter. The New Bella Roma is also located in the East Bay, at Concord. One of the two features was a gleaming white and gold 3/16 Wurlitzer between a pair of chambers containing meticulous arranged pipe work. Two more ranks are yet to be completed plus the installation of a grand piano. The former Cincinnati Keith Theatre would be proud to see the fine installation keeping the grand ole lady sounding forth. We were anxious to hear the new addition to our organ rich area, but a delay was necessary in order to accomplish the election of next years Board of Directors. With the balloting complete, we turned our attention to the second feature, the resident artist, Dave Reese, who opened with "Winter Wonderland." Dave's concert proved he continues to be one of our fine area musicians. He always produces arrangements, coloring and technique to ensure the most in listening enjoyment. Open console included Warren Lubich, Gordon Pratt, Creston and Don Crestwell, Jim Parker, Fred Clapp and Jim Dunbar.

We have been privileged, for the past few meetings, to have Jimmy Paulin, of Radio City Music Hall fame, perform during open console. Jimmy is currently engaged as staff organist at the Sierra Inn in Sacramento. This bombastic artist is a great talent and always willing to entertain us.

NORTH TEXAS

The acquisition of the Wonder Morton by this chapter is naturally the big event of the year for the chapter. (The story of removal and transport to Texas will be a feature in the April issue of THEATRE ORGAN.)

Meanwhile the chapter has continued the regular schedule of interesting events.

The November meeting was held



Lew Williams during open console at Dale Flanery's refurbished console. (Koski Photo)

at Whittle Music Company's Organ Auditorium with well over a quorum present. Naturally, much of the business session dealt with the progress of the Wonder Morton on its way to Texas and compliments to workers. The business session adjourned to hear some of the great talent we have in our chapter. Danny Ray and Lew Williams put on a fine program, each playing Gulbransen Rialto II's, sometimes in solo, sometimes in duet. It was a unique and enjoyable program.

The Christmas meeting was held at Dale Flanery's home. Members arriving early got a chance to really see the innards of Dale's completely refurbished console as it was still in refurbishing status right up to concert time. Dale and his crew, including wife Margaret, spent several days and nights working practically around the clock in order to have all pipes, toy counter, chimes, etc. functional for Danny Ray's concert. Fortunately, there was enough business at the business session and a pre-concert serving of refreshments to give Dale, Larry Hasselbring and several assistants time to finish all the wiring involved.

Danny's concert tested all the wiring and judging from the results and the audience's enjoyment, all the craftsmanship, as well as the musicianship was top notch. Dale got his chance to check the workmanship and performance when he took his turn at open console. It was a fine meeting, with several new members added to the rolls, and everyone going home with the Christmas Spirit in full bloom.



Dale Flanery finally gets to play his just-completed-console-rebuilding-project as the last artist during open console at the Christmas meeting.

(Koski Photo)

By the time this appears in **THE-ATRE ORGAN**, there will be more plans made, refurbishing begun and decisions made. We're really finding out what some of the other chapters that have acquired their own theatre organs have been through. It seems a little rough at times, but golly, ain't it fun? A very happy and prosperous New year to all from the North Texas Chapter.

JOE KOSKI

OK CITY

One of the more pleasant surprises at each meeting is the uncovering of talent within the membership, reason enough to be a consistent attendant at meetings.

After a short business meeting in November at the Queen Ann Cafeteria and surrounded with some 35 long slender brass trumpets, (no drooling, they are only decorations and mounted on the walls), we had a very interesting talk by Mrs. Cecil (Dorothy) Hamilton entitled "What I Want To Be When I Grow Up."

Using the Jesse Crawford (biography) as a base, she revealed how her life and the theatre organ had been as one, from childhood to the present time.

Her descriptions, either as a student, or listener-in-person, and the incidents involved in getting to these concerts throughout the country, were as interesting as the lives and facts about such organists, as Crawford, Dunstedter, Slosser, Milton Charles, Wade Hamilton, and many others, with which she almost has a library filled.

To us elders she brought back nostalgia of the good old days, and to the newcomers she opened up such an interesting avenue with the theatre organ and the artists who performed on them, that we have asked her to continue the talks as a part of future meetings, and also made her Historian-Librarian of the chapter.

As an organist, teacher and historian on the pipe organ, she has few peers.

The Sooner State Chapter, "up the turnpike," sent us some very interesting material from the Ritz Theatre of Tulsa and Milton Slosser, which we are adding to our library.

PAUL N. HAGGARD

OREGON

In October we began a weekend organ trip with a visit to the Atonement Lutheran Church in Newport, where is installed a delightful two-manual Wurlitzer. This organ has been rebuilt for religious use and its sound in this building is truly inspiring.

Then it was on to the beautiful bay view home of Mary Pitts where she and the late Richard Pitts installed a large Wood theatre organ. This instrument was formerly located in the Oaks Park skating rink in Portland and was moved to the Pitts' house when it was replaced by the 4/18 Wurlitzer. It is unusual in that there are no preset pistons, but it has four manuals, making it easy to play. Thanks to our gracious hostess,

The October "Round Robin" featured, in addition to the six-rank Wurlitzer at the home of Ed Maas in Eugene, Oregon, a ride behind a live steam Atlantic type locomotive.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)



Gerry Gregorius at the 2/6 Wurlitzer in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hedderly.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)

Mary Pitts, we had a very enjoyable musical afternoon, with members and guests participating.

The next morning we assembled at the Egyptian Theatre in Coos Bay. Their original Wurlitzer has been doubled by the addition of a second organ and the console enlarged to four manuals. The two organs, played together, provide a really massive ensemble.

Our final stop was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Maas in Eugene, where Ed has his six-rank Wurlitzer. He has added a third manual and a

player mechanism. Two sets of swell shades, one behind the other, gives a great dynamic range. A special bonus was riding behind Ed's live steam Atlantic type locomotive!

Our November meeting was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hedderly where we heard Gerry Gregorius at the 2/6 Wurlitzer. This organ is believed to be Opus 169, first installed in the People's Theatre in Chicago about 1919. Originally three ranks: Flute, String and Diapason, Bert has added a Vox, Trumpet and Tibia. Because there are no relays, the Tibia and Flute are wired together, with a ground switch to select either rank as desired. This very clever arrangement gives the Tibia full use of the Flute unification. There is also a fast speaking electronic 16' pedal bass, plus a xylophone and glockenspiel.

Gerry Gregorius is a polished professional whose artistic registration and arrangements produced an unbelievable variety of beautiful tones from this modest instrument. He is very adept at combining a sustained melody with rhythm chords with his left hand while playing right hand embellishments.

This organ is proof that a home organ does not have to be large to provide an excellent variety of beautiful tones with plenty of power. Thanks to Gwen and Bert Hedderly for their hospitality and to Gerry Gregorius and his fine music.

Our annual Christmas party was held at Benson High in December and began with a wonderful pot-luck dinner. There was plenty of fine food and time to visit with friends and their guests. Special credit is due Bob and Laura Burke who organized this dinner and to Bob who also worked with the crew to service the organ for the occasion.



Jonas Nordwall played the 3/18 Kimball at Benson High School for the Christmas party.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)

Following the dinner we moved to the auditorium where we heard a special program played on the 3/18 Kimball by Jonas Nordwall. Jonas is staff organist at the Organ Grinder Restaurant and is internationally known by his recordings here and in Australia.

His program included many little-known, but beautiful Christmas carols. These were played with great artistry and delicate registration bringing fresh enjoyment to the music of the season.

Following the program came the election of chapter officers, with Gerry Gregorius named to return as chairman for 1978.

BUD ABEL

PIEDMONT

In December members and guests gathered at the home of Dr. Paul Abernethy, former ATOS National President. The December meeting has grown to be something of a tradition, thanks to the hospitality of Doc and Mrs. Abernethy.

A short business meeting was held during which progress reports on two of the chapter's projects were given and new chapter officers were installed.

According to Mac Abernethy, the Elon College organ has progressed to the point where he is able to play a full chord from the console. Funds are still needed to buy a combination action for the organ.

The second project, that of rebuilding the console of the Morton in the Carolina Theatre in Greensboro, North Carolina, is coming along, too. The console has been removed and will soon be reconditioned. The theatre has been purchased by the Greensboro Arts Council and will be used as a center for the performing arts. Seats have been recovered, the floor has been cleaned of chewing gum and coke residue, the stage area is being rebuilt and, happily, the popcorn counter in the lobby has been demolished. The Greensboro community has shown an enthusiastic interest in shows put on by the PTOS and we hope to put on many more in the future.

Val Valentine gave a report on a project which is still pretty far down the road, the purchase and rebuilding of the Carolina Theatre in Winston-Salem. The chapter has an organ in storage and hopes to be able to install it there someday.

After the business meeting we got down to the real reason for our get-together, organ playing and listening. Our featured artist, Howard Manly of Greensboro, led off with selections from *Showboat*. Howard has an easygoing style and is a master of registration changes and modulations. He followed with traditional Yuletide songs and wound up with numbers from the twenties.

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Open console followed refreshments and Warren Apple, a student of organ at the North Carolina School of the Arts, put on a sparkling performance which shows he has been paying attention at school. Don McDonald was followed by Frank Netherlands of Stewart, Virginia. Despite some minor lapses of memory, he got some beautiful sounding registration combinations out of the organ. The author wishes that he could play half as well as these guys who protest that they "haven't played in five years." Jim Thaxton then gave us some more contemporary numbers and then it was go-home-time.

ERNIE VAUPEL

PIKES PEAK AREA

PPATOS ended 1977 with election of new officers and with projections for the new year. Officers elected for 1978 include John Grunow, chairman; Gene Roley, vice-chairman; Scott Christiansen, secretary; and Larry Wood, treasurer. Mike Gregorich, Robert Boyer, and Jack Hall will also serve on the executive committee. With this fine group of people we hope to have the leadership to finish pending projects in 1978.

The foremost project for our group to complete this year is the final installation of the Wurlitzer from the late Chief Theatre. After three years of restoration work, the organ is ready for the final installation. Chambers have been completed for the new home in the Colorado Springs City Auditorium. Hopes are for the Main Chamber to be playing from the console by Memorial Day with Solo Chamber completion as soon after as time and funds allow.

Over the holiday season, while

the City Auditorium was unavailable for our use, our group spent many busy weekends tuning and reworking the long neglected Austin organ installed in the City of Pueblo Memorial Hall. This great organ came to our groups attention about two years ago. The 4/66 concert organ was installed in 1919 complete with traps and percussions. The Austin Company has been most helpful with information and advice to help us complete this project which we greatly appreciate.

The last public performance on the organ was presented for the late President Woodrow Wilson while he was visiting the city. Hopes are to have the organ ready for a presentation to the city in 1978 with a regular concert series to follow in future years to assure this fine instruments continued use.

The PPATOS was host to many visitors in 1977 and we wish to thank them all for stopping and allowing us to show them our projects. With visitors from California and Rhode Island here this year we hope they will spread the word to all points in between to visit beautiful Colorado.

Best Wishes for a prosperous New Year.

SCOTT CHRISTIANSEN

POTOMAC VALLEY

As noted recently in this column, the chapter has lost several in-theatre meeting places. We are fortunate to have remaining a number of nearby member owned pipe organ installations whose owners are willing to accommodate us. However, chapter growth has almost exceeded the best planned capabilities of home owners to cope with the increasing size of the average attendance. These generous, cooperative



Dick Smith at the 2/7 Wurlitzer in the home of Delores and Roy Wagner.

(Harold R. Richmond Photo)

individuals deserve special mention for their active support of chapter needs pending the availability of our own Kimball in the theatre at the Maryland University Adult Education Center.

For the October meeting, Dolores and Roy Wagner again opened their attractive home organ studio in Glen Arm, Maryland, to 85 appreciative guests. Because of limited space in the organ studio, two large screen, closed circuit television receivers were set up in an adjacent room for guests who would play "musical chairs" and exchange seats with those in the main studio at intermission time.

Roy has remarked that his 2/7 Wurlitzer Style E is unique in that it is essentially the same as the day it was made. He has "successfully resisted all temptation to modify it." Details about the organ can be found in the December, 1972 issue of THEATRE ORGAN magazine. Its sounds are true and ample.

Chairman Al Baldino quickly disposed with the business part of the

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meeting which involved a report of the progress made on our Kimball restoration and housing project. Then to the scheduled performer, Dick Smith, who entertained us, informally, with a varied and exciting musical evening.

Currently Dick is appearing at the Millrace Tavern, Baltimore. He feels at home at the console of any electronic organ, as well as that of the mighty pipe organ.

The organ responded beautifully and precisely to our artist's fine performance and expertise in handling keyboard, pedal and registration. Roy Wagner expressed his appreciation to the console crew for their many hours of voluntary assistance in preparing the Wurlitzer in perfect pitch prior to the concert. We in turn thank the Wagners for their hospitality and highly successful efforts in making the evening of top notch entertainment available to us.

The November meeting was held at the Alexandria Roller Skating Arena on Sunday, November 20, 1977.

A dual treat. The artist was Jimmy Boyce performing at his 4/34 Mighty Wurlitzer. He is a charter member and another of its perennial, most enthusiastic and popular performers. One hundred and twenty members and friends turned out for this pre-Christmas opportunity to again hear and see the unique instrument in concert.

A short business meeting was conducted by the chairman, Al Baldino. A slate of officers for the 1978 season was elected, to include Robert Stratton, chairman; Karl Hoffman, vice chairman; Marion Long, treasurer and Mark Hurley, secretary.

Jimmy Boyce, whose musical education began with the piano at age 5, progressed to the organ at age 12.

At 15 he was organist and choir-master of a metropolitan church. A graduate of Peabody conservatory, Jimmy, as a teenager, turned to theatre organ style listening to Art Brown and Milt Slosser at Loew's Capitol Theatre in downtown Washington, D.C. The indelible impression made by the fabulous sights and sounds of these early-day organists led eventually to Jimmy's purchase of a 4/34 Wurlitzer which had as its original home, the Center Theatre, a part of the Rockefeller Center complex. Within four years, Jimmy, with the help of members of ATOS and friends, had completed the monumental task of dismantling, transfer of the Wurlitzer, and installation of all 34 ranks at the Alexandria Roller Skating Rink. The instrument's speaking voices and percussions are spread unenclosed, for all to see, across the entire end of the huge arena and sing forth majestically. No swell shades here — all changes in volume must be made by stop variations. Jimmy Boyce, master of the console, does this to perfection.

Jimmy's ability to create sparkling new sounds and re-create the traditional theatre sounds of the past have earned him rave reviews at local, regional and even national meetings of the ATOS. On the "other side of the screen" portions of the movie *Scorpio* was filmed at the Rink in 1972. Boyce became one of the few theatre organists to appear in a motion picture.

Mr. Boyce played our November program with the expertise and quality to be expected from a professional of his calibre — a well balanced program.

The organ, as usual, sounded very big and full, as an instrument of its size, in its huge, cavernous setting,



Jimmy Boyce at Alexandria Roller Skating Arena 4/34 Wurlitzer.

should. Jimmy credited his assistants, Lester Martin and George Mather, for the many hours of work they continue to contribute in maintaining the organ.

Our thanks again to Jimmy Boyce and to the management of the arena for the use of the hall and the pipe organ.

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

RED RIVER

Mother Nature dropped the worst blizzard in years on Fargo just in time to stop our show at the Fargo Theatre on November 10, causing us to postpone it one week. By then, another storm was brewing, but we made it anyway. Our organist for the evening, our sixth show in this series, was Rob Richards of Phoenix, who played concert selections of something for everybody, accompanied two silent comedies — Harold Lloyd and the Our Gang Kids, plus two sing-alongs. A reception for members and guests followed at the theatre.

RON RHODE

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Currently we are gathering the information needed for getting our tax exempt status. We are looking for financial aid, in the form of grants, to help pay for the installation of our chapter Wurlitzer in Moorhead Senior High School. Lance Johnson and Reiny Utke will go before the school board's January meeting to present the drawings, cost estimates, plans for usage of the organ by us and the school and will have a contract ready for signatures. If things go our way, we could move some of the components into the school auditorium right away, with the major structural work to be done during summer vacation. Possible completion date would be Spring of '79. The console of our 3/12 Wurlitzer appeared on a local TV news feature in December when Lance was interviewed at his organ factory (Johnson Organ Co., Inc.).

Following our November meeting, we looked at the many pages of blueprints for the Fargo Theatre, built in 1925, noting the Greek columns, arches, ornate organ grilles, etc. wishing the theatre still looked that way. After two major remodelings, alas, there's nothing left of the original decor . . . sigh.

SONIA CARLSON

SAN DIEGO

On November 13 and 14 we sponsored our eighth concert of the year when we presented Bob Ralston at the Pavilion in Pacific Beach. It was our first attempt at giving the public a choice of two nights to hear the same artist . . . and well worth the effort. To see this talented musician take command of the 'Mighty Mo' was an exciting event. The following review, by Terry Sullivan, appeared in our chapter newsletter:



Bob Ralston at the Pavilion in Pacific Beach where he played the 5/29 Moller.


(Ed Minder Photo)

"Surprise! Can Bob Ralston really play a theatre pipe organ? He can indeed, and exceptionally well! I had heard many rumors, read mixed reviews, and watched the Lawrence Welk Show. I was apprehensive as I went to his concert when he played the 5-manual Moller on November 14. Yes, he did all the standard tricks (He's an entertainer — he knows what an audience enjoys) but a pleasant surprise — he was in total control of the most formidable of instruments. He is definitely a pipe organ organist. He had fresh arrangements ranging from pop to light classics with genuine theatre styles — which many refuse to acknowledge he can do. The audience responded to this entertaining artists' warm personality with standing ovations. His unusually extensive repertoire was topped only by the sparkle and clarity of his playing. It is to be hoped that soon he will be properly recorded on a theatre pipe organ. Note to other chapters when arranging concerts — do consider

Bob. You'll find that one of the top names is also one of the top talents."

December 4 found us enjoying our annual Christmas party at Organ Power #1 at Kearney Mesa where everyone had a chance to play the 3/12 Wurlitzer following our business meeting. The chairman's annual report was read and Coulter Cunningham reported on the recent regional convention in Cleveland. Election of officers for 1978 was followed by their installation, and we congratulate the following: Marjorie Greer, chairman; Lois Segur, vice chairman; Mary Hill, secretary; Ruby Sinclair, treasurer; Charles Porter, programs; Jerry Sullivan, publicity; and Bob Brooks, membership.


Due to the closing of the Pacific Beach and Solana Beach restaurants, our concerts will now be held at Organ Power #1 in Kearney Mesa. We invite you to join us. Work is progressing steadily on the installation of our Wurlitzer D in the California Theatre — the faithful crew



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working diligently every weekend. In the next issue we hope to give a more detailed report on our progress.

My highest praise goes to the dedicated and enthusiastic officers and members of this chapter all of whom give so willingly of their time and talents. It was a privilege to have served as their chairman this past year.

LOIS SEGUR

SIERRA

We don't know who "done him in," but there he lay in his black coffin with an ice-pick through his chest, and blood soaking his white shirt-front. As the various "mourners" arrived for the "service" at Grant School auditorium they solemnly viewed the body and were startled when it greeted them with: "How nice of you to come. Did anyone bring the ice? I've got the pick."

Promptly at four o'clock the service began as six white-gloved pall bearers bore the closed coffin from the lobby, down the aisle and placed it beside the gleaming white organ console. Jim Hodges announced that we had been unable to get an organist to play the service, but horror of horrors, the coffin lid opened and a hand slid out followed by a masked body in a flowing black velvet cape. Moving to the console, the wraith removed cape and mask to reveal, not the phantom of the opera, but concert organist Rex Koury.

The first half-hour of Rex's program was music of the season, mysterious numbers including Alfred Hitchcock's theme, "Funeral March of a Marionette," and a weird number accompanied by sound effects that Rex had taped on his electronic organ at home. The lights dimmed and *The Cat and The Canary*, of 1927 vintage, reeled off foot after

foot of shudders with Rex skillfully adding just the right nuance of music to match the screen action. Rex is that ideal showman — top organist with a great personality. Two comments were overheard from the audience: "How can that man possibly sit at that organ and play two hours of such beautiful music?" and "I'm glad I couldn't see the organ (console) from where I sat. I would have been watching him play instead of watching the movie."

A near-capacity crowd assembled at Big Top Pizza and Pipes in Carmichael in November to hear former Radio City Music Hall organist Jimmy Paulin, Jr. at the 3/17 Wurlitzer. They came anticipating the best and they were not disappointed. The old "goose bumps" came with his opening number "S'Wonderful," and continued throughout his entire program. (The way Jimmy grabs handfuls of keys from manual to manual in "Zippity Doo Da" has to be seen to be believed.) Following his concert, many of those who couldn't get enough of Jimmy's music and showmanship went to the Sierra Inn, where he is house organist, for more of the same. We're hoping he'll be around for a long time.

On Wednesday afternoon, December 7, a Memorial Service for Clyde Derby was held at East Lawn Memorial Park. An overflow crowd filled the chapel for a short service in memory of a very popular person, a fine organist, and one of the founders of Sierra Chapter. Even during his extended illness, Clyde was always a very enthusiastic member and contributed greatly to the success of Sierra Chapter. We'll miss him very much.

The Sierra Inn (Greer), being in a state of remodeling, was unable to

accept us for our Christmas party, which has always been held there in the past; so, Sunday afternoon, December 11, found us at the Golden Bear Theatre for an afternoon at our Seaver Memorial Organ. With the console opened, Ray Anderson, assisted by Herb Dunkley and Art Phelan, explained how the organ works. A sing-along of old pops and Christmas carols was next on the program, with Louise Daggett leading the vocals, Joe Gustin at the organ, and Carroll Harris at the slide projector. It was then open-console time and several of our members, some of whom we've never heard before, took over to be followed by two of our professional members, Jimmy Paulin and Jim Riggs. Louise and Sue Lang, with Joe back at the organ, then lead us in more carols to conclude the first half of the program. It was a cold, rainy, blustery day, so everyone made a fast drive to The Breakers, a beautiful new restaurant just across the street from the Cal-Expo fairgrounds. Following dinner, Chairman Art Phelan introduced the new board members, presented an honorary membership to Kathy Derby in appreciation for all she and Clyde have done for Sierra Chapter and awarded door prizes. Again we thank Cindy Carleton, our social committee hostess, for another successful occasion. We'll miss Cindy, who offered her resignation due to pressing family matters.

KEYSANPEDALS.

SOONER STATE

Our program for November was a most enjoyable concert presented by Chad Weirick on the Oral Roberts University 4/21 Wurlitzer. This was the first formal program we have



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Organist

heard from Chad, and it was truly delightful. We are looking forward to more of the same. There were a number of guests in the audience, hopefully budding "enthusiasts" and eventually new members. Nobody was brave enough to follow Chad at the console, so the meeting adjourned at the close of his performance.

Our annual Christmas party was held in the rural home of Bruce and Martha Wilson, north of Claremore, Oklahoma. Bruce handed out specification sheets for his 2-manual 12½-rank Hillgreen-lane-Geneva-Moller-Reuter-Wilson pipe organ as we entered. The console is a 1927 Geneva which Bruce obtained in 1975 from B.L. McCrary, Oklahoma City. The Hillgreen-Lane chests, pipework, blower and power supply were originally installed in the First Christian Church in Lawton, Oklahoma. The swell motor is a 1939 Reuter 8-stage and the swell shades are Moller. The Moller unit chests and more pipe work are from the Oberlin Music Conservatory, Oberlin, Ohio. Bruce and Martha designed and built the Wilson solid state relays, "assisted" by their two young sons, Derek and Deshayn. Advice and more assistance were also given by Phil Judkins, our chapter chairman, and by B.L. McCrary. The living room of their home is designed around the organ, with the pipes installed in the garage; they speak into the upper part of the extra-high wall at one end of the living room. Entertainment was impromptu open console, with music — Christmas and otherwise — played by Phil Judkins, Harvey Young, Joe Crutchfield and Dorothy Smith. It was a lovely beginning to the holiday season!

DOROTHY SMITH



National ATOS President Ray Snitil presents charter to Al Sacker, chairman of the newly-formed Beaumont Chapter during ceremonies at the Jefferson Theatre. William H. Tunstall (left) Houston ATOS chairman, and Erwin Young (right) National ATOS vice president/treasurer, look on. (G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

After having three organizational meetings in June, July and August of 1977 to form a Southeast Texas Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, the chapter did hold the first regular meeting on Septem-



Al Sacker at the 3/8 Robert Morton in the Jefferson Theatre. (G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)

ber 4, 1977 in our headquarters, the beautiful and historic Jefferson Theatre with its famous Robert Morton pipe organ. Truly, our chapter covers the Southeast Texas Metropolitan Area as the following officers and board of directors will indicate: Al Sacker of Beaumont is chairman, Floyd Broussard of Orange is vice chairman, Ruth Lindholm of Silsbee is secretary, Anne Kopke of Beaumont is treasurer, Tim Hart of Beaumont is membership chairman, W.D. Hargett of Beaumont is *Vox-Setcatos* editor, Dora Brammer of Port Arthur is archivist, Thelma Debes of Groves is house chairman, Ruby Holleman Monroe of Beaumont and Wayne Ruggles of Vidor are the two directors — at-large.

Al Sacker played intermissions during the SPEBSQSA (barbershop singing groups) District Contest in the Jefferson on September 9, giving much pleasure to many people who hadn't expected so much of a novelty

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The 50-year-old Jefferson Theatre in Beaumont, Texas.

(G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)



Interior of the Jefferson Theatre, headquarters of the new Southeast Texas Chapter.

(G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)

in an "old theatre." Also a quote from the *Port Arthur News* of September 27, 1977, "Fashions and fun were the keynote at Beaumont's Jefferson Theatre as the style show-musical review *Raisin' Cane* was presented to a full house on Monday night. Not to be overlooked is Al Sacker, Jefferson Theatre organist who entertained the audience before showtime and also provided accompaniment throughout the evening. Sacker and his console magic are reason enough to go to any show at the Jefferson."

Our organ work crew is second to none! The Robert Morton is being repaired and serviced by fifteen organ technicians including Spence Adams, Ed Berkely, Floyd Broussard, Bill Calhoun, David Givens, Bill Hamm, Bill Hargett, Nick Harper, Ralph Lindholm, Keith Morgan, Bob Neyland, Melvin Reeves, Wayne Ruggles, Al Sacker and Bill Tetley, Gladys Berkeley, Billie Luginbuhl, Shirley Hise and Ann Kopke help mightily, too, by bringing iced

drinks and snacks to some of the pipe organ work sessions.

The October meeting was held in our headquarters building, the ornate Jefferson Theatre, where after a short business meeting, two silent films were previewed, *The Girl and Her Trust* (1912) and *Barney Oldfield's Race For A Life* (1913). Both silent films were accompanied with pipe organ music with Al Sacker at the console. Refreshment time was on the stage while open console was being enjoyed by many of the chapter members.

The Sunday, November 6, 1977 luncheon meeting was a very memorable event in the short history of our newly formed chapter. Rarely is a chapter privileged to be invited to a former mansion, and rarer yet is for that mansion to have a pipe organ with two consoles! THEATRE ORGAN will publish the story of this wonderful edifice in the next issue. We were, indeed, thankful for this wonderful experience, for as of this writing, our chapter has been

granted permission to "take over" and service this magnificent Moller pipe organ with its Duo-Art Player in exchange for recitals and future meetings of our chapter.

At the meeting of the chapter on December 3, the ATOS Chapter Charter was presented in person by National President Ray Snitil. For most chapters this a big, auspicious occasion but in Texas it automatically becomes colossal.

Beaumont's mayor, Ken Ritter (nephew of Tex Ritter), issued an official Proclamation declaring December 3 as ATOS Southeastern Chapter Day. Ray Snitil, who was accompanied by V.P. Erwin Young, were given keys to the city and made honorary citizens of Beaumont. There were TV and radio interviews as well as newspaper coverage of these events.

Needless to say, everyone in Southeast Texas was aware that a new ATOS chapter was officially on its way. The meeting was a huge success.



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W. D. HARGETT

SOUTH FLORIDA

We did it! The week of December 19-23 will be remembered by the members of SOFTOS as the time when the Maurice Gusman Cultural Center Wurlitzer 260 special organ spoke once again for the people of Miami. Silent since stage shows were ended at the then Olympia Theatre, it spoke forth under the capable fingers of Hal Stanton, former organist for the Florida State Theatres, to which this house once belonged. Karl Cole, Art Venecia and David Thurmond each played noon hour concerts as the week's series progressed. Sponsored by SOFTOS, the Miami Offstreet Parking Authority and backed by the Miami Merchant's Association, the series was well received by the community. It was the culmination of a six-year crusade by chapter members.

The year 1977 was an active year for SOFTOS. Five times we met at Andre Hall with Pete Dumser, Art Venecia and Hector Olivera at the ivories. Betty Lee Taylor accompanied silent films on two "Return to the 20's" evenings. April found the club in West Palm Beach at the home of Johnny DeMiller and his "home brew" theatre organ with Ms. Marti Lynch, of the Rodgers Organ Company, as guest artist. August was a review of convention tapes at Ralph Anderson's, with open console at his Rodgers 33E. In November, SOFTOS was the invited guest of Preston Dettman at his recital at

Christ The King Lutheran Church, Miami, and co-sponsor of a Fr. Bill Biebel concert on an Overbrook Music installation of the Allen Organ Company.

Christmas was celebrated once again at the home of Cal and Mildred Jureit and their throbbing 3/14 mostly-Wurlitzer organ. Jim Benz-miller made the trip from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, to do the honors.

Jim, a featured artist at the Chicago convention, specializes in New Orleans style jazz arrangements. The balance of his concert consisted of familiar light classics, Broadway show medleys and current ballads. Or as Jim put it, "The songs everybody knows and loves and most organists hate to play." The Christmas concert was a special treat by a superior artist.

The kickoff meeting/New Years party, January 1978, was at Andre Hall with our ever popular Betty Lee and a film from Bob's vast library of silents.

STEVE FITZGERALD

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Chapter members enjoyed a special treat at the home of William P. Brown on November 12. In addition to his two pizza parlor organs, Mr. Brown also has a 5/22 Wurlitzer home installation. That evening Lyn Larsen presented over an hour of captivating music, including Lyn's own composition, "Lovers Belong to Sorrento." Following the concert, members and guests were able to try their hands (and feet) at the Wurlitzer during open console. Our special thanks go out to Bill and Barbara Brown for their wonderful hospitality.

Our Christmas party was held at the Mesa Organ Stop Pizza Parlor.



Ron Rhode joined Lyn for piano and organ duets at Lyn's Christmas program.

Ron Rhode took time out from his holiday chores to play an assortment of Christmas songs for us. "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" all right, but according to Ron, he's coming by Amtrak! Following his musical presentation, Ron gave us a capsulized explanation of the presets and pistons on the Organ Stop 3/23 Wurlitzer. Many members took advantage of open console time.

Another holiday organ activity was the Lyn Larsen Christmas Concert at the Phoenix Organ Stop Restaurant. The concert was a sellout. The special added attraction this year was Ron Rhode joining Lyn for piano — organ duets on two Chopin pieces and a "Nola — Polly" combination. We also got to hear Lyn and Ron sing together, which isn't an everyday occurrence! Dave Lindsay accompanied the two artists, and also handled lighting effects for the entire concert.

Our vice-chairman, Steve Schlessing, gave a Christmas concert at the First Southern Baptist Church on

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Lyn Larsen and his mother after his Christmas program at the Phoenix Organ Stop Restaurant.

December 17. He played a variety of songs of the season. Joining Steve for two of his songs was vocalist Esther Burkholder.

One of the events we have planned for 1978 will be a dedication concert performed on our recent restoration project, the 2/9 Wurlitzer at Phoenix College.

MADELINE LIVOLSI

WESTERN RESERVE

From sunrise to sunset of 1977, the WRTOS organ-ites now offer you highlights from several and exciting, innovative months of activity.

Dear Diary,

1/30 George Krejci has (you wouldn't believe it) silent movie cue sheets from the 20's . . . music from the mysterious to love themes and the all-important "huff-puff" chase music. George entertained us with his know-how and can-do at the Lamplighter Inn. A most worthwhile meeting!

2/26 "Everything is Coming Up

Roses" whenever we can enjoy Larry Ferrari "en concert." A super music fest as always which included Ben Turpin in the silent movie, *She Didn't Say Yes*. In the morning there had been a spectacular Leroy Anderson Festival on the 5/167 E.M. Skinner pipe organ at Cleveland's Public Hall.

2/9 *Lost and Found Department* — Long-lost Akron Strand 2/9 Wurlitzer Style F Special found in a Baptist church in Barberton, Ohio, by Harold Wright and Bill Taber (new owners) . . . last lost chords played by Denny Richards. The entire organ came out through a trap door in the ladies room of the church. Honest!

3/27 Did you know there's an Austin pipe organ at the Masonic Temple in Cleveland? Dr. Robert Bray, a specialist of the "classical touch," played, among other compositions, "An Organ Sonata in E Major" by Jones Rogers. Very impressive!

4/23,24 Today, twenty-nine of us more stalwart non-Saturday morning sleeping members bused it to Erie, Penn., to tour the Durst Organ Supply Co., guided by Denny Unks. Sometime thereafter, Joe Luckey of Gannon College welcomed the Pittsburgh and Cleveland clubs to enjoy John Mitchell's performance at the Tellers organ. Through the pouring rain, the bus schlossed to Buffalo and into Tonawanda (dinner enjoyed in Niagara Falls, Canada). On the way to North Tonawanda, we stopped at the Wurlitzer plant. Randy Piazza, chairman of the Niagara Frontier Chapter, and chapter members, greeted us at the Riviera Theatre where we enjoyed great company and a musical bash on the Wurlitzer therein. Shea's Buffalo Theatre was our last tour stop and then homeward with a golden sunset!

5/7 That Lyn Larsen is something

else! Charming, talented, and handsome (in any order). His inventiveness and original interpretations enhance any musical theme. His accompaniment to the hilarious silent comedy film *Flying Elephants* with Laurel and Hardy made this choice comedy even funnier.

5/22 Gordon Hegfield's concert at the Wurlitzer in the Lorain Palace Theatre was immensely successful. We're all proud of this young man!

6/4 SUPER '77 SNEAK PREVIEW at Public Hall featuring theatre organ artists Keith Chapman and Lowell Ayars. Lowell sang beautifully to his playing, and Keith dedicated the Coronation March of 1937, "Crown Imperial" by William Walton, to Claude Hawks, chairman of our forthcoming ATOS Regional Convention Thanksgiving weekend, November 25, 26, 27. Claude has been the person most instrumental in arranging the "big event."

8/21 The rain pattered over our picnic at Rosemary and Al Boehlein's but didn't dampen our spirits.

9/8 Have you heard of the Music Box Association? It's an organization similar to ATOS representing a group of dedicated collectors of not only music boxes, but, in general, all types of automated or antique musical instruments including band organs, player pianos, player organs and even an occasional theatre pipe organ. Hundreds of collectors from all over the world assembled in the greater Cleveland area for their 1977 convention held at the Bond Court Hotel!

Time and space doesn't permit me to tell you at this time about the fabulous SUPER '77 happening — except that it was a success from beginning to end! Will follow through on this event next time around . . .

BEA ROSSIN

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WOLVERINE

Due to circumstances beyond our control, this column has not appeared for a few months, so we'll do our best to make up here.

Our first Saturday programs have been extremely successful at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing, Michigan. On the aforementioned day of each month, the 3/11 Barton pours forth with an hour of music by a selected artist, followed by an open console period. Since our last writing some of our programs have included Father Jim Miller, John Lauter, Jim Boutell, Scott Smith, Burt Castle, and Barry Rindhage. October's first Saturday marked the kickoff for the campaign for "Da-Capo, Inc." to buy the 1500-seat theatre for use as a performing arts center, with the pipe organ intact. The group hopes to own the theatre and attached arcade building by next October. In November, David and Jo Lau graced us with their slide/tape show of ATOS Organ Safari in 1976.

As for our regular programs, we've had a succession of good ones. In May, we had Gary Reseigh at the DTOC Wurlitzer; Scott Smith at the Temple Theatre Barton (marking the 50th anniversary of the theatre) in July; a wonderful (but wet) picnic at the residence of Lawrie and Rose-

mary Mallett, who have a 2/10 Hybrid, better known as "Father's Folly" and Donna Parker at the new Roaring Twenties Pizza Parlor in Grand Rapids in a special program (just for us) at the 3/33 Wurlitzer. Dennis James also appeared at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing for a midnight showing of *Phantom of the Opera* on Halloween. In November, the 3/14 Wurlitzer in the Royal Oak



Donna Parker at the console of the Roaring Twenties 3/33 Wurlitzer. Above the console is the exposed Austin Bourdon. (Ed Corey Photo)



This sign welcomes you to the Roaring Twenties Pizza on 28th Street in Grand Rapids, Mich. (Ed Corey Photo)

residence of Chuck Harris was featured, and, of course, our annual Christmas bash was at the Detroit home of David Voydanoff and Glenn Rank, better known as "Wurlitzer House," the name derived from David's 3/16 Wurlitzer, and Glenn's partially-installed style H.

Officers for the coming year are: Scott Smith, chairman; Barry Rindhage, vice-chairman/treasurer; and David Jones, secretary.

Maybe this year's resolution will be to keep you better informed. □

Al Sacker

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