



## 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.

Copy for June/July Issue  
Must reach George by May 1, 1978

### ALABAMA

The weather may have been cold but the spirit of the members of the chapter could not have been warmer as we started this new year. Young Cathy Hoffman was in complete charge for our January program. Cathy and her parents stopped by the Alabama Theatre on their way home from Christmas vacation in Florida. They were headed back to Bristol, Tennessee, where Cathy is a second year pre-med student. She still keeps her hand in music though, as she proved with her great presentation ranging from the beautiful music of Fritz Kreisler to present day ballads. This young lady is a real talent and our chapter has been

fortunate to enjoy her musical growth over the last few years. She is a real joy to those of us who love theatre organ music and proof that the youth of today can be a part of this great music tradition.

For our February meeting, Cecil Whitmire took charge of our beautiful 4/20 Wurlitzer and gave us a program of some great old favorites — with a couple of newer pieces thrown in that promise to become old favorites in the future. Cecil's charm and humor provided us with some enjoyable listening. It's great to have such talented members in our chapter.

Chuck Hancock is heading up our work crew this year and he and his crew (ably helped by Larry Dolaldson when Larry can get down from Copper Hill, Tennessee) are keeping the Alabama Wurlitzer sounding as good as ever. Make your plans now to come to the National Convention this year and you will get a chance to hear this beautiful instrument for yourself. Our monthly meetings are held the second Sunday of each month (excluding July) at 9 a.m. If you get the chance to visit us, you are all welcome anytime.

RIEDEL WEST

### ATLANTA

Dennis James was featured at the Fox on October 28 with the silent film, *The Monster*.

The chapter rented the Fox for an evening in November and was introduced to the considerable talents of young Tom Helms, resident organist at the Saenger Theatre in Pensacola, Florida. Tom had but a mere 45 minute acquaintance with the "Mo's" mighty keydesk. Our members know this instrument and are not easily impressed; but this young man definitely has both the guts to play the Fox "cold" and a tremendous amount of musicianship and talent to merit comparison with such luminaries as Larsen and Erwin. A fitting evening, indeed, for our first meeting in the Fox since 1974. A reception followed at Vice Chairman Jack Goodwin's home. A good contingent was present to hear Tom play a set at the Music Grinder Pizza Emporium the following evening where we closed the house around the witching hour, thanks to the generosity of the Dick Webers. Remember the name — Tom Helms. If your chapter gets a chance to be entertained by this artist, you're in for a treat!

December 4, Virgil Fox dusted the pipes at the Fox for his second encounter with the Moller. It was a sold-out performance with 165 standees who paid \$6 for the privilege. The event was marred by the theatre management permitting standees to lounge on the stage steps near the console (and in the spotlight) throughout the performance. Virgil's program was fast-moving and technically demanding, though somewhat "heavy" for theatre organ buffs. He



Cecil Whitmire at the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer during the February program.



The 1978 officers and directors of the Alabama Chapter.



Tom Helms, organist at the console of the "Mighty Mo," Atlanta Fox Theatre, for chapter meeting in November. Helms is house organist at the Saenger Theatre, Pensacola, Florida. (Kelly Campbell Photo)

put in seven days of practice prior to the concert, and the few who were privileged to hear some of those great arrangements in the empty theatre are still ecstatic about the experience. A full-house audience has a considerable damping effect on reverberation and high frequency propagation, even in the cavernous Fox. Dr. Fox clearly is a master of the classical repertoire. Near the end of the first half he got the full attention of the ATOS contingent with a Jesse Crawford arrangement of "The Entertainer" by Scott Joplin.

Treat is the word for the December meeting at the Music Grinder to hear Jay Mitchell wind up the 3/22 Wurlitzer at 3 p.m. Jay has been playing this instrument daily for at least six months and knows it inside out. The recent addition of tuned sleigh bells and a new rank of Tibias enhanced the presentation. Following the prepared program it was open console til opening time when most of the members lingered for dinner of pizza and more Wurlitzer until the wee hours. This chapter may soon be faced with a merger with Weight Watchers unless Jay can get some of the calories out of his nightly concerts! (It *couldn't* be the pizza!) You Midwest members heading south on I-75 will drive within 1/2 mile of the Music Grinder! Why not break the trip overnight and hear a fantastic organ played by a fantastic organist, accompanied by the best pizza this side of the Forum?

The January meeting at Joe Pat-

ten's East Point Theatre featured a twin concert by Lyn Larsen and Hector Olivera! They were playing the Fox Mighty Moller by "remote delayed" broadcast, so to speak, through stereo speakers set up on stage. Sounded remarkably like the real thing and gave a small taste of the sound we expect to get from East Point's "Mini-Moller" when the 3/11 installation is complete in early April.

The meeting was really a business session to discuss work assignments and view the theatre. East Point will play an important role in the 23rd annual convention and the chapter has taken on the task of wiring, duct work on the heating system and cosmetics. Moller will complete the organ installation.

At this meeting the members, quorum present, voted to pursue the possibility of purchasing the East Point (with Moller) from Joe Patten. The secretary recorded the names of those present and a further report on this subject will be made after restoration is complete and negotiations ended.

The regular February meeting was hosted by Jim Scott Studios on Clairmont Road in Skyland Center where Emory Barns demonstrated the versatility of their Hammond, Conn and Yamaha line, after which those who dared kept the remainder entertained for an enjoyable couple of hours. Our thanks to Jim Scott Studios and Emory for a very pleasant Sunday afternoon meeting.

Otherwise, February's highlight was the appearance of Hector Olivera in person at the Fabulous Fox Theatre in a return benefit engagement. During this second visit to Atlanta, Hector laid down tracks for a new disc to be released in early spring. Contents of the recording are still under wraps, but the scuttlebutt is there are some fantastic sounds on the tapes.

Hector was his usual professional and informal self at the Mo console. The program duplicated only two numbers of the previous concert, and was quite inspiring to local buffs.

Just as entertaining as Hector's concert was the privilege of members to introduce him and Walt Molt to the delights of the Music Grinder Pizza Emporium where Jay Mitchell and Walt Winn regaled the full house with "Winifred's" winsome pizza music, and the Dick Webers and staff provided excellent food and drink for the evening. Somewhat after the patrons had left, Hector was coaxed to exercise the keyboards. It took him about 45 seconds to get his bearings and sail off with "That's Entertainment" and thirty minutes later end with "Flight of the Bumblebee." Winifred will never be the same. But workhorse that he is, Hector retired to the Fox at 1:30 a.m. to practice for the concert the following afternoon. No wonder he's a walking ad for Weight-Watchers!

JAMES K. JOBSON

## CEDAR RAPIDS

The Closing Chord has sounded for members three times in the past year.

The first was for Pat Maynard who died in January 1977. He had a fine talent up to the end, having presented chapter programs in 1973, 1974 and 1976 on piano as well as at the organ. I am sure that this writer will not be alone in missing his counsel. The next was for Gordon Bagg who died last December. He, too, was a performing member and his input will be missed. His last chapter performance was in February 1976. Our chapter reporter, Byron Olson, died within a week of Gordon after a lingering illness that obviously prevented performance of his usual chapter support with enthusiasm.

The chapter continues its string of semi-annual "Sold Out" silent movie

nights. Hector Olivera made his third appearance in the Cedar Rapids last October to a wildly enthusiastic house. His comments regarding the condition of the Paramount 3/11 Style 235 Wurlitzer were sweet music to the ears of the maintenance crew headed by Jim Oliver and prexy Bob Burkhart.

Early in the year an extravaganza featured the umpty-four-year-old Del Castillo who amazed a packed house. What an ovation he received. Dinny should have been there to be impressed.

CRATOS joins the city of Cedar Raids and the CR Symphony in the celebration of the second anniversary of a feeling of security regarding the Paramount Theatre. Having slipped to the showing of "R" and "X" pictures, we faced an ominous future for the home of the beauty we had resurrected. The Paramount was purchased by local financier Peter Bezanson (now a member) and given to the city as a Theatre for the Performing Arts.

Since then, public subscription has resulted in complete interior redecorating, all seats refinished and re-upholstered, carpeting replaced, orchestra pit enlarged and a temporary stage enlargement. A beautiful house!

In the meantime, installation work is continuing by Howard Burton and his crew on the chapter's Style E Wurlitzer in Iowa Hall on the campus of the local Kirkwood College. The dedicatory program featuring Tom Cotner was cancelled by heavy snows which so far have prevented rescheduling. Tom had played the program for the August meeting at the Paramount and thereby broke a record for yours truly; the only performer in eight years at the Paramount with whom I could not spot a single fault in chord choice or registration. He is tremendous. Hear him whenever you have the opportunity.

In case we haven't mentioned it before, CRATOS is proud of Ray Snitil, now in his second year as ATOS National President.

LOREN H. FRINK

## CENTRAL INDIANA

Due to inclement weather the December meeting was cancelled. Due to past inclement weather in

January the meeting was not scheduled. So now, at this writing, we are up to February and inclement weather is still with us, the remains of the Blizzard of '78. However the "meet-in" day was sunny and beautiful with only a forwarning of "you know what!"

Many interesting and entertaining projects are on the agenda for 1978. Artists scheduled for concerts at this writing are Lee Erwin at Manual High School at the Louisville Uniphone #314 and Kurt Schakle at Foster Hall at the Aeolian.

The biggest topic of the day was the future of the Indiana Theatre. It has, at least, been saved from the demolition crew. A discussion was led by Larry MacPherson on establishing a foundation to save Indiana Theatre Auditorium and a committee was formed to do a feasibility study on this subject. The City of Indianapolis is to take possession in August or September. They will have control and will attempt to save the entire building. However, there would be numerous changes made which might endanger the original design of the auditorium. This is a beautiful ornate fifty-year-old theatre that needs all the help it can get from any source to retain its original structure. The organ console was a Barton #317 and has been removed. Gene Gladson showed us some very interesting slides when the theatre was relatively new.

It looks as though at last "Indy" will be in the swing of things with a new Pizza Pipe Organ Palace with an Indianapolis resident as the owner. He has purchased the Paramount Theatre organ from Oakland, California, and has hired a manager and organist from Grand Rapids, Michigan.

It seems as though we are going to be doing great things this year. We are growing-growing-growing!

Now to entertainment of the day. Member pianist/organist Virginia Rectoris presented guest artist lyric soprano Bernice Fraction who has an enchanting lovely voice and manner. The selective repertoire was light and ideal for the occasion. The program was presented with an air of informality and humor. The "L" Steinway and Allen #417 console organ was in good hands with the nimble fingers of Virginia Rectoris. Wilking Music was kind enough to

provide the instruments and meeting hall for us. Ken Stoops, institutional organ salesman and pipe organist in his own right, was in attendance and also performed for us at the Lowry Theatre Organ.

Then, have at it! Open console time.

BEE BUTLER

## CENTRAL OHIO

With pride, COTOS members read this *Columbus Dispatch* front page caption: "Backstage Maestro Directs Symphony of Light." Within the paper a feature article described the spectacular lighting effects created by Joe Worman, stage manager of the Ohio Theatre. Joe's artistry richly deserves the recognition he receives.

The Ohio Theatre's Robert Morton, 50 years old this year, had a birthday party in February. Roger Garrett, resident organist from 1933 until 1942, shared the program with Dennis James, current resident organist. The original plans for the celebration included Bill Dalton, the Ohio's first organist from 1928 to 1933. Because of his death this past summer the program was also a salute and tribute to Bill Dalton. Dennis opened the program playing the "Ohio Theatre March" which is a Heidi James arrangement of variations of "Beautiful Ohio." Dennis located and played an original composition by Bill Dalton entitled "What A Moon." The tribute to Bill also included the number "My Bill."

Roger Garrett, appreciated, as always, by his audience, charmed us again. One of the best at sing-alongs he also put us through a whistle-along, in addition to his outstanding concert and showmanship. Roger and Dennis played to an almost capacity house.

A member of the theatre's original pit orchestra, Henry Cincione, playing trumpet, was dramatically spotlighted in a loge level theatre box. Playing "Cottage for Sale," he was accompanied by Dennis at the organ.

Unfortunately, the shortage of electrical power in Ohio has necessitated the postponement until fall of the 50th Birthday Party for the Ohio Theatre including the program of Dennis and Heidi James with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

Another postponement was our

January meeting, due to the great blizzard. Our hosts, Betsy and Bob Richard, moved the date up a week and we were able to hear Betsy's concert at her own Conn 651 with added speakers and Conn pipes.

Hosting our February meeting were Ed and Joanne Lougher. Pam Giehl, Joanne's organ teacher, presented the formal concert at the Baldwin organ. Her smooth style of playing, varied arrangements and choice of music afforded us a highly-pleasing concert.

Between David Love, Bob Shaw and Mark Williams (all of whom are now in the over-20 age group) we get some spirited musical compositions such as Mark combining the themes from *2001* and *Star Wars*. Betsy Richard, always willing to comply with our requests for her to play, did so and enhanced our musical evening.

The Los Angeles Chapter will gain from our loss. Thelma and Frank Babbitt are moving to that area. They were charter members of COTOS, instrumental in helping to save the Ohio Theatre and as part of the HBG Enterprises (Hamilton, Babbitt and Grover) produced concerts at the Ohio Theatre using the Robert Morton, developing public interest in the theatre and the organ. Thelma was the first COTOS secretary and Frank has held several offices including that of chairman. We are sorry to have them leave, but happy they are fulfilling the dream of going back to Frank's native California.

IRENE BLEGEN

### CONN. VALLEY

Once again our annual Christmas party was held in Thomaston (Opera House) and Torrington (Di Leo's Grove). It was a grey, cold but clear winter afternoon which made the subdued lights in the opera house seem ever more cheery than usual. The beat was up, the organ was playing and all was right with the world. A chance to sit down at our beautiful monster (Golly Mom — it's a Marr & Colton!) was topped off with a mini-concert by our own Ev Bassett whose vast repertoire and fantastic memory produced some delightful nostalgia which blended perfectly with the pre-party mood of the day.

A brief "Mush!" northward



brought us to the now almost traditional locale of our year-end orgy known as DiLeo's Grove.

After a "happy hour" and a hearty meal, Santa (appearing incognito) distributed a present and a "peck" to each and every good little girl while Mrs. Claus (who looked a lot like Peg Ray) ably assisted in like manner with the boys.

An interlude of music with Ev Bassett and Joe Puskas at the Hammond gave those with Terpsichorean aptitudes some pleasant turns about the floor.

To top off the evening we were treated to a Christmas medley by Tom Gnaster, whose melodies brought us to reflect how beautiful they are when we have not been saturated with them as has sometimes been the case in years past.

As we left in the twinkling, crisp air we caught a glimpse of what appeared to be a sleigh pulled by eight reindeer arching across the sky. It trailed a banner on which several people will swear was written: "DENNIS JAMES — THOMASTON OPERA HOUSE, JAN. 21 and 22."

Saturday evening, January 21 and Sunday afternoon, January 22, Dennis James was the concert artist at the Thomaston Opera House organ console.

Selections included the music of Gershwin, Ellington and Joplin, with a fine rendition of the delightful "Sleigh Ride" by Leroy Anderson. The "Poet and Peasant" Overture concluded the first half of the evening's concert.

After intermission several numbers from the musical stage were followed by a delightful Gershwin medley. The piece-de-resistance of the second half of the concert was a mighty transcription for theatre organ of music from the score written

for the motion picture, *Gone with the Wind*. So well was this received that it took two encores to allow Dennis to escape from the console.

Our February meeting took place in the Windham Technical School, Willimantic, CT. It was our first meeting there, and long overdue, having been postponed at least twice because of unavoidable difficulties.

It offered our first opportunity to hear the mighty 3/15 Wurlitzer, transplanted from its original house, the RKO Madison Theatre, Brooklyn, N.Y. The installation has been accomplished (although not yet finished) under the able guidance of member Mike Foley, ably assisted by organ enthusiasts from Rhode Island, as well as by members of the student body and staff of the school.

It can be most satisfactorily reported that the organ sounded great, and is a fine monument to the efforts of all concerned. We look forward to hearing it again soon when the laborers will have had time to put the finishing touches on the installation.

We appreciated the console efforts of an accomplished quartet of artists — Mike Foley, Phil Stock, Tom Gnaster, and Ev Bassett. We could not ask for any better.

WALLACE F. POWERS

### EASTERN MASS.

EMCATOS opened its 1978 activities at Babson College on January 28 on a different note, it being an infrequent Sunday afternoon meeting allowing some of our professionals to attend. The Board of Directors established an Education Committee to explore additional ways our club can fulfill its purpose as a nonprofit educational group, with Lucile Weston as head.

Paul Chavanne spoke of the valuable collection of silent film music and cue sheets used by the late T.O. Hall of Fame member Edith Lang, long-time Boston Exeter St. Theatre organist. These were left in the custody of Mrs. Eleanor Bowering, who now desires the material be placed in a music library for safety, preservation and availability. Paul suggested we establish such a library at Babson.

Among the guests were Allen Miller, active in the ConnVal Chapter and Mrs. Carol Moeller, daughter

of the late well-known Boston theatre organist and teacher, Lewis Bray.

With Dick Johnson at the controls of Knight Auditorium's new P.A. system, we enjoyed a tape of selections from Fr. Bill Biebel's Babson Christmas concert.

Craig then introduced our three artists of the day, Tom O'Brien, Lenny Winter and Phil Bourdeleau. The first two we rarely hear owing to professional commitments. Tom opened with a lively "Granada" and continued with a variety of Broadway musical selections, all nicely arranged. Lenny is a veteran theatre organist which was immediately apparent from his bright "That's Entertainment" to his "Paramount March." As a finale Gerry Parsons led the audience with a short sing-along of patriotic numbers. Phil, a promising young new member, who comes from a musical family, very carefully selected his piston settings for "It's De Lovely" and "The Blue Danube."

Many took advantage of open console, including Mrs. Moeller, first on the Steinway grand with Lenny at our 235 Special and later at the console with Bob Legon assisting in registration. Guest Allen Miller, whose artistry is well-known, was among those who "had a go." It was a nice way to spend a Sunday afternoon!

At our February meeting Al Winslow mounted the console bench to accompany a series of old silents (with an early talkie interspersed) supplied and introduced by our old friend Charlie Clark. Phil Bourdeleau completed the formal portion of the evening accompanying a short Charlie Chaplin comedy.

Customary open console drew many to the bench including Phil's guest, Mrs. Bertha Watson. She had earlier been introduced as a former theatre organist who played as Bertha de Pinquertaine in several Detroit theatres, including the United Artist. She later played some of the Manchester (N.H.) theatres. She has not lost that certain something of the spotlight past which shines through immediately. She remains active playing church pipes. Allen Miller was again present as guest of Garrett Shanklin and his artistry always makes for good listening.

This evening was a "double fea-

ture," but at the same time as open console, so there was a divided audience. In a nearby classroom, where the Wurlitzer could plainly be heard, Craig Johnson presented a slide show of the 1977 Chicago National Convention and his Amtrak trip en-route. The color slides and running commentary were excellent and who could wish for a better background!

STANLEY C. GARNISS

## KIWI

What ever happened to 1977?

One thing certain, we are a year older and will shortly be celebrating our second birthday.

Our bi-monthly meetings are always well attended and thanks to members who open their homes on these occasions. We are somewhat envious of chapters in America who are able to meet in a cinema or a pizza parlour and enjoy the sounds of a mighty organ, but we do very well, for most of our members are proud owners of very fine electronic organs and open console at the meetings are a lot of fun.

Most notable event of the year was a concert presented by various members of the chapter and this did much to publicize the activities of ATOS. Taking part were Margaret Massey, Audrey Koke, Bill Mitchell, Ian Johnston and Norman Nazard.

An enthusiastic collector of old phonographs, Les Stenerson has purchased, on behalf of the Museum of Transport and Technology, an early model Wurlitzer, Opus 1748, one of the last to be shipped from Tonawanda in 1913. The 2/5 model, with piano console, requires much work to restore it to its original

condition and many parts are required. This will prove to be a very interesting project for chapter members.

Grace and John Jenkins, from the Aloha Chapter were visitors to this country. They were holidaying on board the Monterey on its last voyage and were accompanied by Dr. Ed Mullins from Wyoming, another keen ATOS member. We are always happy to meet and entertain members from overseas chapters.

NORMAN DAWE

## LONDON AND SOUTH OF ENGLAND

As we complete our most exciting and action-filled first year of affiliation, plans are building up rapidly for what has already been dubbed: 'The British Theatre Organ Event of the Decade' — the presentation of the great George Wright at our favourite Gaumont State Kilburn 4/16 'Torch' Wurlitzer in North London.

In bringing George the 5,000 miles from his native California for a 'one only performance' on Sunday, April 30, our pride in pulling off such a scoop is matched only by our pledge and enthusiasm to fill the 1,500-seat auditorium and to bring to the British organ scene the sound that hitherto has only issued from their stereo speakers.

George Wright's only previous visit to the UK was in 1971 for a commercial promotion by Conn at the equally famous Granada Tooting in South London — but unfortunately not featuring the superb 4/14 Wurlitzer there (now sadly derelict due first to flooding and later the conversion of the theatre to Bingo).



John Ledwon signs the visitor's book for manager Bill Weir as ATOS Honorary Members Edith and Les Rawle look on.

Talented John Ledwon, chairman of the Los Angeles Chapter, got us off to a good start in 1978 at the Gaumont State in January. This was prefaced by our New Year supper at 'Wurlitzer Lodge' Northolt — home of newest ATOS Honorary Members Edith and Les Rawle — at which John also entertained at the 3/19 with a preview of his public concert.

On the morning of his return from the UK, John was the subject of an exemplary eight-minute 'live' interview on the commercial 'London Broadcasting' radio station, which also included two tracks from the fine new LP that he has recently made on his own home studio 3/25 Wurlitzer.

Before the GW concert, our chapter is presenting another unique first in Britain. This is a home pipe organ tour — by Lowell Ayers at the beginning of March and embracing five venues (including the Rawle Sr. 3/19 Wurlitzer and Len Rawle's 4/25 Wurlitzer at Chorleywood). Lowell's busy schedule will also include two 'theatre' venues visited on both UK Safaris — the 3/7 British Compton at the Regal Henley-on-Thames and the 3/13 Compton/Christie in the Town Hall, Ossett in Yorkshire.

Looking further ahead, we are already planning the welcome return of Dennis and Heidi James in September — and also to the appearance of their LP record featuring Len Rawle's Wurlitzer and Yamaha grand piano.

On the preservation side, our efforts to improve and re-voice the Tuba rank of the 3/10 Compton of the Windsor and District Theatre Organ Trust were recently heard to excellent effect in the hands of talented Northern organist Geoff Stephenson. Geoff's 'big style' is particularly well known in association with the most distinctive twin Balaban and Katz Style 4 Wurlitzer 3/19s of 1932 vintage with embossed consoles that are now so beautifully restored and preserved in the country of Norfolk in East Anglia, and both of which he has recorded. Formerly in the Paramount-Odeon cinemas in Newcastle and Leeds (Opus 2162 and 2169 respectively), they are now in the Kitchen Brothers Garage at Diss and the George Cushing Steam Engine and Organ Museum at



John Ledwon, talented Southern California organist entertains our new London and South of England Chapter.

Thursford. Claimed by many (including John Ledwon) to be among the finest Wurlitzer sounds to be heard anywhere, these gorgeous instruments were both played in their original locations by Jesse Crawford during his British tour of 1933, and are frequently broadcast. Most recently they were visited by a chapter coach party.

Chapter membership continues to expand and we hope to be able to top the hundred mark by our first anniversary in May. Monthly club meetings are also highly popular and well-patronised. Mainly held at 'Wurlitzer Lodge,' they are soon to be enhanced by the relocation of the organ console in the spacious new music room extension.

A forthcoming meeting there is to feature our well-known organ photographic members John (Doug) Sharp and his charming wife Mavis. Not so well-known is the fact that Doug was a member of the very notable 'Granada' team of organists in the late 1930s and notably worked with such great stars as Reginald Dixon (who toured his cinema circuit through three successive Winters out-of-season from his famous bench at the Tower Ballroom Blackpool) and Stuart Barrie.

We are therefore eagerly looking forward to entering our second busy year of Anglo-American theatre organ fellowship and pleasure — and the mutual exchange of organists, enthusiasts, records and all that makes our new chapter venture so enjoyable.

NORMAN BARFIELD.

## LOS ANGELES

The excitement of being able to witness the musical marriage of a fine Wurlitzer — San Gabriel Civic Auditorium's 3/16 — and a fresh young talent is indeed a rare treat. It was a dimly lit theatre, the "orchestra" was doing its usual before-performance tune up — or so it seemed. The baton was tapped on the music rack and quickly all musicians were ready for the opening number. As the orchestra began to play its rousing opener, the elevator brought up the beautiful three manual Wurlitzer with Jerry Nagano conducting a cleverly done and well



Jerry Nagano at San Gabriel.

(Zimfoto)

thought out orchestral overture. No one noticed it was a gospel tune: the arrangement was "big orchestra."

That was the setting for our 1978 Concert Season opener. For the next two plus hours Jerry had his well attended program entertainingly spiced with humor, precise technique and spectacular pedalling.

Jerry's smile was indeed radiant at the chapter's response to his hard work — and rightly so. Many artists would be very pleased to receive one standing ovation, but to earn two in a single performance is a goal achieved by very few.

On February 12 Chicago organist John Muri was in black tie to play a delightful and varied program of rarities from the Golden Age of theatre organ music. John has a unique style, both musically and verbally. His comedy routine of inept organists is always fun to experience. He parodied the console tippler, the muncher, the punk musician and the wiggler. His selections ranged from tunes by Del Castillo to Bert Bacharach, from Crawford favorites to Gershwin's "American in Paris."

The program was well attended by LA ATOSers. It had been 35 months since they had heard the magnificent 4/37 Kimball organ in the Wiltern Theatre. The console has been completely redone to make the stopkey layout more standard for organists to play.

Four Los Angeles Chapter Board Members played a benefit concert to begin a scholarship fund for talented young organists to help further their musical careers. The officers playing

were 1978 Program Chairman Rod Skelding, Liaison Chairman John Ledwon, Chairman Bob Power and Vice Chairman Mike Ohman. The program was held at the Wiltern Theatre and all who attended agreed we have some talented officers. The proceeds from this concert will become the Joe Koons Memorial Scholarship Fund, in memory of a great man and friend of the chapter who gave freely and willingly of his time and instrument to benefit all of us (see Closing Chord).

Plans are being formulated for the installation of our Marr & Colton in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. There are two schools of thought concerning it: (1) install it as it was in the Hollywood Warner Theatre as one of few remaining classic examples of the Marr & Colton organ; or (2) add pipework and a new console (and solid state switches) to approximate a 4/36 Wurlitzer, an undertaking which would require several years. While that matter is under discussion, a restoration crew is working on the M&C in a basement workroom in the Civic Auditorium building.

MIKE OHMAN

## MOTOR CITY

Lowell Ayars, and his superb baritone voice were in good form when he appeared in January for a one-night performance at the Royal Oak Theatre. The film was the 1925 silent version of *The Wizard of Oz*, with Oliver Hardy as the Tin Man, and most appropriate accompaniment offered by Lowell at the 3/16 Barton.

All contributors of \$25 or more to our "Buy the Redford Fund" were invited to a special "I'm an Angel Show" with Lyn Larsen at the Redford Theatre on January 28. Despite the winter's worst weather, a sizeable crowd turned out for Lyn's program, which featured the Wolverine Chorus of Oakland County, a member of SPEBSQSA.

Bob Ralston pleased three different audiences at his reserved-seat engagement at the Redford Theatre in early February. He played just the kind of music they had come there to hear. Instead of retiring to his dressing room at intermission, he spoke to his admirers while signing autographs in the lobby, where record sales were brisk. Not a bad idea, judging from the enthusiasm of the crowd.

Artists for our Second Sunday program in January at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor were none other than Dennis and Heidi James, enroute to a concert engagement in Flint, Mich. As part of their fine morning program they showed slides of their recent trip to Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand.

In February, John Lauder made his second appearance as a Second Sunday artist at the Michigan Theatre's 3/13 Barton. Releathering of this organ will soon begin under the direction of Ben Levy and Grant Cook.

Our Fourth Sunday programs at the Royal Oak Theatre are also attracting good audiences with John Fischer the featured artist in January and Scott Smith performing at the 3/16 Barton in February.

Work at the Redford Theatre complex continues with a new roof on the office building, to keep our tenants dry in wet weather. Meanwhile, back in the Redford auditorium, a "new" stage lighting control system, a donation from the Pontiac Motors Division of General Motors, is being readied for installation.

In return for your tax-deductible contribution of \$25 or more to the "Buy the Redford Fund" you will receive an "I'm an Angel — I Helped to Buy the Redford" pin to wear at your next get-together. Your donation, in whatever amount, is still welcome at: MCTOS, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

DON LOCKWOOD



During his western visit John Muri visited the organ studio-home of John Ledwon, in Agoura (near LA). Here he is made welcome by John and Carmella Ettaro. (Bob Hill Photo)



The Gordon Wright home in Dallas. The center door opens into the Music Room, complete with theatre Wurlitzer.

## NORTH TEXAS

What was the January program for the North Texas Chapter? Well, mostly snow, freezing rain, sleet and ice, which sort of messed up any opportunities for a formal get-together. And it continued right on through February, giving us more snow for the year than has been recorded in any of the previous 100 years that weather data has been kept. But it didn't cool the interest in our recently-acquired Wonder Morton from Jersey City. See story this issue T.O. Page 24. Gordon Wright took over the membership pledge program for financing the delivery and storage of the Wonder Morton. This is mentioned so that anyone desirous of helping us achieve our goal of a super theatre organ installation in North Texas who wants to contribute, can send donations to our newly-elected secretary-treasurer, and past Chapter Chairperson Lorena McKee at 13406 Noel Road, Apt. 254, Dallas, Texas 75240. Lorena will see that any donations will be included in the project fund.

Work schedules for the refurbish-

ing operations have been in development and we'll all soon be meeting several times each month, some in Dallas and some in Fort Worth, to bring each piece of the organ back to brand new condition.

Sunday, February 26 was a beautiful day. Beautiful enough for the whole gang to show up at Gordon Wright's for a real good meeting and program. It was also the election of officers meeting, so there was plenty of activity. It was also our last opportunity to hear the Wrights' Wurlitzer, around which they designed their beautiful home. The present 9-rank instrument will be removed and a newly acquired 18-rank organ installed in its place.

Chairman Jim Peterson opened the business session with a couple of raps of the special gavel we've had since the days of Earl MacDonald's chairmanship. It's a gavel-shaped cutting out of a "Y" branching in a good ol' Texas red oak, and packs a lot of weight. A report on the status of the Wonder Morton program was given and then, after a review of "old

business," some discussion followed about the possibilities for an installation site for the Morton. Several members who had been assigned research projects reported. Currently there are about eight locations under consideration, each one with its advantages and disadvantages. The various reports emphasized that the site selection committee had a lot of research and planning ahead of it. They're going to have to come up with a location (and all the various agreements) to make the majority of the membership happy.

After that discussion, we got into election of officers. Under last year's by-law change, the chairman — elect automatically becomes chairman. Eric Parker submitted the nominating committee's recommendations.

The positions were filled as recommended by the nominating committee. Chairman Jim Peterson then passed the gavel to Charles Evans, who thanked the membership for their confidence in him, and proceeded to accept the position by playing the first numbers of the after-business session concert on the Wright's organ. Program Chairman Lew Williams then played a brief concert. Lew's performance at the console was his usual "top notch" musicianship. He was followed at "open console" by our transplanted Australian member, Reginald Peake, performing beautifully enough to want the members to hear more. Several other members, including Stan Guy, Grace Larner, and our new chairman, Charles Evans thus played and another great theatre organ afternoon for the chapter came to an end.

JOE KOSKI



Outgoing Chairman Jim Peterson congratulates new Chairman Charles Evans (left).



Chapter members listen in the Wright Music Room as Lew Williams plays.



Reginald Peake tries out the Wright Wurlitzer during open console.



## OK CITY

Our Christmas party turned out to be a fantastically, beautiful musical and gourmet dream, almost beyond the imagination. Hosts Ed Thrower (our sec.-treas.) and Bill Blevens, (a charter member), left nothing undone in turning their home, and specially designed music room, into a yuletide setting for our gala affair.

We were met at the door by two Afghan hound doormen and, on entering the music room, beheld a beautiful white Christmas tree with 2700 lights and a revolving animated Santa chasing his sleigh around the top.

Surrounded by thousands of recordings, scores, and tapes of probably every organ and symphonic recording ever made, were two three-manual theatre organs, (Rodgers and Allen) and an ebony Yamaha concert grand. (The president of the Yamaha Corp., and his interpreter had spent a day with the instrument and pronounced it one of the six finest instruments the firm had ever built).

Bill's aunt, Dorothy Brochinski, prepared the gourmet dinner, with table after table laden with food that would have turned a Roman Emperor green with envy.

With Dorothy Hamilton, our historian-librarian, at the concert grand, Ed at the Rodgers, and Betty Yetter at the Allen, we had a concert that included "The Warsaw Concerto" and Christmas music.

Among our honored guests were John Strybos, Dean of the A.G.O. chapter in OK. City, and Joe Webster, the "Golden-Voice of the *Starlight Serenade* program that originated from the old WKY radio studios for the NBC network. The 4/15 Kilgen was always heard with Ken

Wright at the console, and Joe's voice is still as fine as in those days. Joe sang some request solos and led us in carols accompanied by the two organs and piano.

After much reminiscing of the old days we reluctantly said our "Merry Christmas" and headed for home, midst snow and cold.

Our Valentine meeting was held in the music studio-home of Dorothy Hamilton, one of our longtime teacher-organists, who gave a demonstration of her new Gulbransen theatre organ and Steinway piano. Then we had a sit-in at the console with Ben Bailey, Bob Boetcher and David Bridges doing the honors.

The upcoming Hector Olivera recital in April will open the Spring Art's Council Festival in OK. City.

PAUL N. HAGGARD

## OREGON

On January 29, we traveled to the beautiful home of Mr. and Mrs. Milt Kieffer near Vancouver, Washington, to hear their talented daughter,



Wendy Kieffer at the 2/11 Wurlitzer in her parents' home in Vancouver, Washington.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

Wendy, play their 2/11 Wurlitzer. Wendy is a former student of Don Simmons, and has just returned from an engagement in Anchorage, Alaska, where she played a 3/8 Morton at Uncle's Pizza Parlor.

Wendy's program was an excellent choice of old and modern numbers, played with fine registration and precision, followed by generous encores. Included were "Old Black Magic," "Weekend In New England," "When Sonny Gets Blue," "My Way," "Sophisticated Lady," with lush string and vox, "Little Green Apples" featuring complex left hand technique, and many others.

As reported for our November 1976 meeting, the organ came from the Roxy Theatre in Irvington, N.J. as a 2/7, but is now up to 11 ranks, with modern Tibia unification. A special feature was an electronic reverb system, brought in for this program.

Thanks to the Kieffers for their hospitality and fine music.

BUD ABEL

## PIKES PEAK AREA

The chapter has been very busy through the late winter months. The move of the Chief Theatre Wurlitzer to its new home is progressing rapidly. Early in February the relay, switch stacks, blower and main chests made their way to the City Auditorium of Colorado Springs. By late February wiring was well on its way and the main chamber was nearly ready for winding. Hopes are for the main chamber to be playing from the console by May with the solo chamber to follow shortly thereafter.

Another project is the restoration of the projection equipment at the chapter clubhouse at Mt. St. Francis

Exciting Theatre Organ Concerts!

**Gary Reseigh**

American  
Keyboard  
Management

Representative:  
Jim Boutell

31716 Staman Circle • Farmington Hills, MI 48018 • (313) 478-9448

**INVESTORS WANTED**  
**FOR THEATER ORGAN ORIENTED**  
**PIZZA PARLOR**  
*For Perspectus Folder*

*Reply To*

Box 4048  
825 Van Brunt Blvd.  
Kansas City, Mo. 64124

Convent. The twin projectors are original auditorium equipment. They were installed in the late 1920's and were the first Simplex sound projectors devised. After years of disuse they had become inoperable. When cleaning and restoration are completed they will be capable of showing all 35mm sound and silent films. Along with the new screen the restored equipment will add greatly to programs at the convent. We hope to have the 2/8 Wurlitzer playing at the convent by the end of this year and silent films with organ accompaniment will be certain to follow.

SCOTT CHRISTIANSEN

## POTOMAC VALLEY

The PVC's Third Annual Christmas Party was held December 18, 1977 in the Chesapeake Room of the Center for Adult Education at the University of Maryland. The Center's theatre will be the new home of the chapter's recently acquired 3/10 Warner Kimball pipe organ. A major portion of the restoration of the organ has been completed. The start of the installation phase will soon be a reality.

Outside, the evening for the meeting was cold and rain drenched. Inside our large, attractive hall was the warmth of the conviviality of the holiday spirit. Each table was decorated with an intricate, handmade centerpiece arrangement of a miniature rank of organ pipes trimmed with holly. These were donated by members Shirley and Harold Andrus and offered later as table prizes.

The program of entertainment began with a group of timely and relaxed organ cameos played by our own members, Rick Maryman; John Terwilliger, including a superb vocal solo by John's wife, Wanda; Earl Sharits, and Todd Strickland.

The affable Todd Strickland again wore "two hats" (see THEATRE ORGAN, Page 62, October-November 1977). First, seated at the electronic organ, he invited the audience to stroll down the street with him, by ear, on a musical tour of church congregations of many faiths, to hear individualistic sounds of the holiday season. He recalled another nostalgic reminder of Christmas past — the playing of an old time Salvation Army band.

A brief intermission followed while Todd and his equally talented wife, Marie, with magic wand in hand, prepared for the second feature, a sparkling excursion into the enchanted world of magic. The couple had laboriously brought along the contents of three large cases and a trunk load of 'props' which had to be unpacked to set the stage for a generous treat of tricks, mystifying magical effects and illusions.

Occasionally Todd harmoniously combines his duo of professional experiences by playing organ for magic shows. As a long time member of the Yogi Magic Club of Baltimore, he recently served as general manager for the 23rd Annual Yogi Magic Show, a public performance which took place December 3, 1977 in Baltimore, Maryland. He also provided a pre-curtain and intermission time organ concert, and organ accompaniment for a stimulating three-hour program of magic classics and variety acts performed on stage by members of the Yogi Club. In a forthcoming issue of THEATRE ORGAN we hope to bring you a documentary on what it takes to organ-ize a full-time magic show such as the Yogi effort.

We were treated to two old-time silent movie comedies: *Coney Island* starring Fatty Arbuckle, Buster Keaton and Mable Normand, a film

of 1917 vintage; and *Pale Face* starring Buster Keaton, 1921. Our new chairman, Bob Stratton, at the organ, accompanied the films with theatre sound and sound effects of the silent days drawn from his years of theatrical experience. Though Bob had not had the chance to review the films before projection that evening, he did a remarkably exacting and seemingly effortless job in realistically cueing and following the action on the screen. The Gulbransen Rialto was provided through the courtesy of Gordon Keller Music of Alexandria, Virginia.

For the January meeting, about 90 members joined a Pipe Organ Concerts, Ltd. sponsored bus trip to Wilmington, Delaware, to see and hear the delightful piano/organ duo, Dennis and Heidi James, at the 3/28 Dickinson High School Kimball theatre pipe organ. I was unable to attend, but Bob Stratton reports that the Dennis and Heidi James concert "was about as professional as one is likely to see and hear." Bob's report continues, "The writer had heard them at the same location during the Philadelphia Convention, and while they were certainly very competent at that time, they did not excite their audience to the extent that they did last Saturday.

"The program was very well balanced, containing something for everyone, and their ensemble work was near perfect. Dennis accompanied a Laurel and Hardy comedy as well as some early trailers (coming attractions), one of which was for *The Phantom of the Opera* with Lon Chaney. The closing number brought the audience to its feet. It was the first movement of the Grieg "Piano Concerto in A Minor."

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

## WALTER STRONY

"... a show stealer" THEATRE ORGAN

SPRING AND SUMMER  
CONCERT DATES AVAILABLE

RECORDING

"Walter Strony Plays the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer"

Available at \$6.75

Mail address: Box 125, THEATRE ORGAN Magazine  
2231 N. Burling St., Chicago, Ill. 60614

## Cap'n's Galleys - Pizza & Pipes

WURLITZER THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

3581 Homestead Road  
at (Lawrence Expressway)  
Santa Clara, Calif., Phone 248-5680

821 Winslow Street  
(Downtown - Off Broadway)  
Redwood City, Calif., Phone 365-6543

1690 S. Bascom at Hamilton  
(Hamilton Plaza Shopping Center)  
Campbell, Calif., Phone 371-5000

100 North 85th  
(near Greenwood)  
Seattle, Wash., Phone 782-0360

146 Serramonte Center  
Daly City, Calif., Phone 994-2525

550 112th NE  
Bellevue, Wash., Phone 453-1444

"featuring America's finest Theatre organists"

## RED RIVER

Greetings from the very frozen North. Quite a few changes have taken place on the organ scene here since our last Chapter Notes.

The plan for installing our chapter Wurlitzer at Moorhead Senior High School has been postponed indefinitely as the costs for the project keep getting higher. Latest estimates have been around \$8,000 and the school is not able to help us with that burden, even though they are in favor of our putting the organ there. Along with this project, we were gathering all the information needed to complete our tax exempt application. This has now been done and we should have the good word on the acceptance of this in a few weeks.

The bright spot in our search for

a home for our chapter organ has been a very recent development — mainly since the new year. A proposed Heritage Bridge complex — a cultural center linking Fargo (ND) to Moorhead (MN) by a bridge over the Red River — has excited the two communities and it may include our chapter in a big way. There will be a heritage center, museum, an art gallery, studios for public radio and educational TV and a performing arts concert hall. The concert hall is in phase three and the Heritage Bridge Task Force has had members speak at our chapter meetings about having us possibly install our organ there. The concert hall will seat approximately 1200-1400 and will have all facilities for the symphony, opera, and other theatrical events, and maybe a pipe organ. Lance Johnson

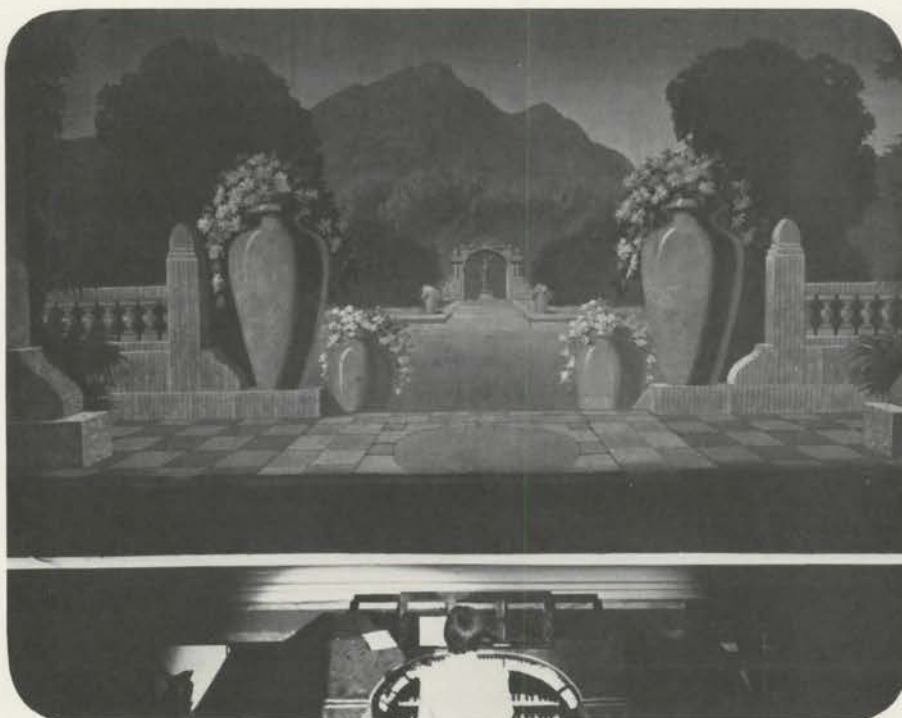
has met with the architect and detailed what our chamber and lift requirements would be. It means waiting quite a while to install, since this building is in the last phase, scheduled tentatively for 1981. It would be well worth the wait to have our chapter organ in such a prestige-filled setting. It also gives us more time to improve and add to the organ, which will possibly be 18 ranks.

Our immediate goal is getting ready for our spring show at the Fargo Theatre in April, our seventh there.

Yours truly Amtraked to Milwaukee the end of January to spend the weekend. Evenings were spent at Pipe Organ Pizza listening to Gary Hansen play and especially to hear Walter Strony one last time before his departure to Phoenix. Pipe Organ Pizza has been the scene of many good times. The food is great, and the de Luca family has always been extremely friendly. I also attended a Dairyland Chapter social at the magnificent Victorian mansion belonging to Greg Filardo.

Our annual election of officers was held in January.

SONIA CARLSON



The beautiful vaudeville curtain is still in use at the Fargo Theatre, location of the November concert featuring Bob Richards at the Wurlitzer. (Shawn Leer Photo)

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

In November 45 people met at the home of Bill and Pricilla Arthurs. Our organist of the day was Russ Jones from Loveland, Colorado. He presented a fine program of oldies and newies and some legit music. Charlie Herman, our woodworker and builder, presented a slide show made up of photos transmitted from the Viking Vehicles entitled "The Viking Explores Mars" complete with taped music background and narrations. We had several prize drawings; the door prize being a gourmet kitchen tool set won by Don

# DAVID HAMILTON

ENGLISH THEATRE AND RECORDING ORGANIST

1560 N. Sandburg Terrace, Apt. 3108  
Chicago, Illinois 60610  
Telephone: (312) 944-3833

# Al Sacker

— THEATRE ORGAN CONCERTS —  
Currently 28th Year at the Jefferson Theatre

Contact: Al Sacker  
1135 Liberty Avenue  
Beaumont, Texas 77701

Smith, and Margaret Ann Foy donated a Hector Olivera record that was won by Johnny Rowe. All proceeds went to the chapter to cover expenses.

December brought about our election meeting at Fred Riser's place. We had a good turnout despite the cold weather. The officers for 1978 were elected and several special committee heads were appointed. We even have an official chapter historian, Ken Tillotson. Chairman Don Wick and our new chairman of education had a visit from Cathy and Harry Koenig as they were passing thru Colorado on vacation. Jack Walden, the education boss, took Cathy and Harry to his place where he has a 2/12 Kimball in great shape. Harry charmed everyone for an hour making the old Kimball really sing out. A great organist is Harry.

The 2/7 Wurlitzer at Fred Riser's is really moving now. The crew from Loveland is completing the wiring of the relay and the wind trunk is about ready to mount under the chambers. Next will be the connecting of the 15" blower and lookout below when we fire it up. "Everything but Chickens will come Flying out," Fred says. The console is ready to connect, and then we can play Pointer System Book Two.

We formed a board of directors consisting of the present officers and past chairmen, also the committee heads and our director Duane Searle. We had the new agenda for 1978 to work on at a meeting at Don Wick's house in January. Now we are really moving. On February 23, 1978, The National Railway Historical Society presented a 1925 silent at Denver's Paramount Theatre where Bob Castle cued the film at the Mighty Wurlitzer. We planned a display in the lobby on ATOS to wake up the

public to the fact that theatre organs are not dead. The movie was made in Colorado and MGM released the film for this special showing. This was a benefit for the Railroad Society in which we took part.

Member Pat Ryan, who teaches music at Golden High School in Golden, Colorado, is going to install a "straight" pipe organ at Fred Riser's place. The work is being done by Mr. Ryan and his students as an educational program.

We have six new members since December 1977 and several are playing organists that we will put to work very soon.

FRANK R. GANDY

### ST. LOUIS

Many inquiries about our chapter has prompted this report on the highlights of the past year.

The happiest event in many years for chapter members was the grand



Stan Kann, an all-time St. Louis favorite.

(R. Abeln Photo)

opening, in February, 1977, of The Old St. Louis Noodle and Pizza Company which offered the only daily theatre pipe organ music in the area since 1975. Further jubilation was created by the fact that Stan Kann would return from California for this opening and continue as featured organist for two weeks. Before going West Stan had been the busiest television, recording and theatre organist in this part of the country and from 1950 to 1970 was resident organist at the St. Louis Fox Theatre where he thrilled millions of devoted fans as he masterfully played the 4/36 "Crawford Special" Wurlitzer.

Following Stan Kann, Philadelphia's Andy Kasparian dazzled pizza eaters at the 3/11 Barton until November when Stan returned for one more week. After this, Chicago's Tom Cotner followed and initiated sing-along slides and Wednesday evening silent movies. On the days off for these featured organists, the entertainment was handled superbly by Gerry Marian, resident organist at the St. Louis Fox from 1970 through 1975. Later in the year Marc Eyestone substituted at the Fox until the sad day in February 1978 when the organ was removed.

The beautiful tones of the Fox organ were heard on September 2 when Stan Kann returned for a benefit performance for the St. Louis and Chain of Rocks Railroad Museum. This consisted of a mini-concert and the presentation of the silent movie *The Phantom of the Opera* with original score composed and played by Stan on the famous 4/36 Wurlitzer. Mike and Gerry Marian worked many hours preparing the organ for this program since it had not been played for so long.

Leo and Sally Kikendall staged a fabulous show for chapter members

Tom Cotner  
Organist

- 1064 W. MAPLE AVENUE
- WAUCONDA, ILLINOIS 60084
- (312) 526-5707

## THE SUBURBIAN

RESTAURANT and COCKTAIL LOUNGE

3/17 WURLITZER  
Theatre Pipe Organ

Belvedere Ave.  
Wanaque, New Jersey 07465  
(201) 835-3903

FRANK CIMMINO  
Organist



Stars of the show at Kikendall's "Wicks Theatre" in Springfield, Ill. (L to R) Organist Les Mathews, dancers Litta Lynn Lawler, Cherry Hoffman (winner of two scholarships to Ill. Sate U.) and Mark Caine.

(Ernie Laws Photo)

on September 18 at their home in Springfield, Illinois. Over fifty members traveled by bus and car to the Kikendall's home and their own "Wicks Theatre" complete with a 2/5 Wicks (plus harp) theatre organ. Printed programs announced the events of the day including an organ novelty number by Leo, organ selections by Les Mathews, a sing-along with slides and a mini-vaudeville performance by students of the local Sansone Dancing School. After the show there was open console and loads of delicious food and beverages.

Members Paul and Billie Coates traditionally hold our Christmas party in their home and the last one was another huge success. Jack Jenkins, a former San Diego pizza parlor organist now living in this area,

gave an impressive performance on the Coates' organ which is a ten-rank (with tuned sleigh bells) hybrid designed to eventually accommodate forty ranks with a four-manual Kilgen console. Paul operated some of his other instruments such as his cylinder phonograph, nickelodeon, player violin, player reed organ and many others much to everyone's delight. Erwin Oehlert played his violin accompanied by Betty Tyler. Chairman Ken Iborg and Joe Page accompanied the entire group as they sang Christmas carols.

Chapter meetings are held at different places and this has certainly provided variety. At one, Albertina Weygandt, a harpist for over twenty-five years with the St. Louis Symphony, after explaining the intri-

cacies of her instrument, gave a concert and received a standing ovation. In January, Joe Barnes and Chuck Wiltsch presented a program using Chuck's 2/3 Wicks which is completely self-contained (except for blower and trem) in a cabinet about half again the size of an upright piano. In February, Bob Ellison treated members to a brilliant musical program on a most unusual Hammond located in Joe Dallavalle's home. Joe modified his C-3 by adding a horseshoe top complete with tabs to the original console plus an array of solenoids. Now the C-3 and also a Hammond spinet can be played from the one modified console.

BILL ANTHONY

We have finally found a home for one of our organs. The beautifully sounding 2/8 Wurlitzer will soon be installed in the former Kingsland Theatre in South St. Louis. An agreement for mutual use of organ and building has been reached.

Joe Barnes has been the group leader in the complete rebuilding of the organ and installation in the theatre. The Wurlitzer was acquired about five years ago by the chapter from the Majestic Theatre in East St. Louis, Illinois. Since then all leather has been replaced in chests, relay and console. Joe has almost single-handedly rebuilt the console along with refinishing it. The main chest is already installed in the chambers along with the shutters. Many magnets still need replacing and the job of wiring, followed by installation of the wind lines, is still ahead.

The size of the theatre is ideal with its 80 foot width and 128 foot projection distance. There is a balcony 30 feet deep and the stage is 30 feet deep and 32 feet wide at the pro-



ALEXANDRIA ARENA  
4/34 WURLITZER

**Jimmy Boyce**

*Recording Artist  
Available for  
Theatre Organ Concerts*

4921 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22311  
Telephone (703) 931-4840



*Magical Moments in Music*

**Chad Weirick**

CONCERTS

- Theatre • Classical • Silent Film
- Contemporary • Sing Alongs

420 Sunrise Lane • Rockford, Illinois 61107  
Phone (815) 398-1788

Member: Land Of Lincoln Theatre Organ Society

scenium. Seating capacity is approximately 1,000 as the original seating has been revised to provide wider spacing between rows. The lobby has been remodeled and the auditorium redecorated in a deep red and black motif with bare brick on the lower part of the inner wall.

The organ console will not be on a lift, but rather a moveable platform and covered with a beautiful heavy cloth cover fabricated by member Mrs. Gorman Selbert. The ranks are Open Diapason, Tibia, Salicional, Flute, Trumpet, Vox Humana, Clarinet and Orchestral Oboe. (The last two start at tenor C.)

The Gateway to the West Evangelistic Crusade which owns the theatre was largely the inspiration of the area's well-known Lester family. The Lesters have had a gospel singing group for many years that has a large following throughout the country, and they have appeared on television and radio many times. Harvey and Opal Lester and son, Herschel, also operate a music store and teaching studios plus a complete professional recording studio.

These friendly, ambitious people and the members of the Gateway to the West Evangelistic Crusade are doing a beautiful job of restoring and remodeling the old theatre into a modern auditorium useful for church and public programs. Our mutual use agreement now provides a home for another magnificent Wurlitzer which will after many years of silence be heard again and enjoyed by the public.

A more complete feature article will be written when the installation is completed. We will then be able to say that the St. Louis Theatre Organ Society is no longer an organ moving and storage club, but once again has a real live organ going.

DON ULLRICH



From left to right: Charles Porter, program chairman; Marjorie Greer, chairman; Ramona Gerhard Sutton, organist; Gerald Sullivan, publicity chairman at Organ Power in Kearney Mesa. (Ed Minder Photo)

## SAN DIEGO

Some folks may have been singing "I Get The Blues When It Rains" the night of our January concert; but we who made it to Organ Power in Kearney Mesa to hear Ramona were just "Easy Winners." What a way to start the New Year!

The chapter is indeed fortunate in being able to use the Mighty Wurlitzer for concerts, open console, and for personal or group practice between business hours. The 3/12 organ originally was installed in the Wilson Theatre in Fresno, California, which opened February 3, 1926. It was used to accompany silent movies and some stage shows until purchased by Organ Power Productions in 1973.

Ramona Gerhard Sutton, a delightfully charming person and tremendous organist, had a great time playing this organ and playing in a pizza parlor for the first time. All those who came from all over San Diego County as the rain poured down were captivated by Ramona. Her little personal comments of

other times and places interspersing her medleys added much to the evening's enjoyment. Ramona's blending of all types of music into a concert of pure listening pleasure was truly emotionally rewarding.

On February 13 we had another special treat. John Muri (voted organist of the Year in 1977 at the convention) entertained at the Wurlitzer at Organ Power. We heard beautiful medleys, spiked with laugh-provoking remarks, as John took us on a musical trip via the music of Westerns, *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Orient Express*, and into space with *Star Wars*, followed by a Duke Ellington medley and a couple of Jesse Crawford favorites.

After a break John indulged in some fun numbers portraying the hungry organist of early silent movie days, who kept food tucked in the console to munch as he played; the alcoholic organist, who tipped the bottle at random while playing "Dizzy Fingers" with bilous digits!; and the acrobatic organist, doing his antics with "12th Street Rag."

## Rosa Rio

COLORFUL and EXCITING  
THEATRE ORGAN  
CONCERTS  
Silent Films

130 Mill Street  
Huntington, Conn. 06484  
(203) 929-1652 - phone



Home of the Mighty  
Theatre Pipe Organ

### CLARK WILSON AT THE ORGAN

Associate Organists: Don Lorusso and Gary Hanson

620 W. Oklahoma Ave. • Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53215

February was indeed a busy month with a board meeting, concert, and a fun and food time at Organ Power where Chris Gorsuch, talented young staff organist and ATOS member, kept the Wurlitzer busy sending out its musical answers to the many requests.

We finished the month with our bi-monthly membership meeting at the beautiful not-yet-finished home of Mr. and Mrs. Coulter Cunningham. They have bulldozed out a spot high on a canyon wall in El Cajon, just room enough to get around the house at the upper edge of the canyon which overlooks the valley below and the hills beyond. It was worth finding this home, designed and built by the hard work of Coulter and Mildred, both artists and talented in many ways. The living room with cathedral ceiling was built for the Rodgers 330 organ and the Yamaha baby grand piano. There was also a balcony for those who wished to view the whole scene as they enjoyed the music.

After the business meeting we enjoyed lots of music with a capital M. We had organ alone, organ and piano and when Coulter added his hot trumpet to the two, the day was made complete.

Work continues on our Wurlitzer Style "D" being installed in the California Theatre in downtown San Diego. Our crew of dedicated volunteers are working Wednesday nights as well as weekends to get this little beauty going as soon as possible.

The board of directors has authorized setting aside 10% of the gross proceeds of our March 20 benefit concert for a scholarship fund, which is being established to further the study of theatre pipe organ music by deserving students with an accredited teacher.

GWEN O'CONNOR



John Muri addresses the San Diego Chapter during his February concert. (Ed Minder Photo)

## SIERRA

Sunday, January 22, was chapter day as we presented three of our own members at our Seaver Memorial organ. Approximately seventy members were present when Chairman Art Phelan introduced Jim Brown, associate organist at the Big Top Pizza. Jim is one of our younger members and we've watched his playing get better and better in the past three years. He opened with three listenable modern numbers, and then played a very good arrangement of "Battle Hymn of the Republic," with some fine pedal work. Those of us who hadn't heard Jim for a long time were greatly sur-

prised at what a fine organist he has become.

Joe Gustin, our English teacher from Paradise, was joined by Louise Daggett for a sing-along. Joe is both a good organist and a real enthusiast. He not only makes the two-hundred mile trip to attend meetings, but usually brings along some of his students. What do you tell them, Joe? "Either you get an "A" in the theatre organ, or you'll get an "F" in English."

Herb Dunkley has been a member since our first chapter meeting. At that time he had one of the best Artisan installations in his home that we'd ever heard and he knew how to get the most from it, just as he does when playing pipes for us today. As everyone knows, we had a drought for two years and now have gone to the other extreme with rain and more rain. Herb acknowledged the situation with a medley of all the "Rain" and "Sunshine" songs imaginable.

Concert organist Bill Thomson took over the gleaming console of the Grant Union High School Wurlitzer in February. Weatherwise, this was one of the few beautiful days we've had in many rainy weeks, and Californians love the out-of-doors, so unfortunately attendance was disappointing with only two-hundred-forty persons present. We can feel sympathy for those who missed Bill's program. Though we've heard the Grant organ for many years, Bill brought forth many new sounds we didn't even know were there. His registration was brilliant, and his playing flawless. Bill's warm personality is evident during his "chats" between numbers, as is his sense of show business. We now know why Bill is so busy playing concerts all over the world.

KEYZANPEDALS



Concert Tours

# Karl Cole

2457 N.E. 27th Terrace  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33305  
(305) 561-4282

# ashley miller

a.a.g.o.

— THEATRE ORGAN CONCERTS —

Bill Perrotta — Personal Representative  
160 West 73rd Street • New York, N.Y. 10023 • (212) 877-6700

## SOONER STATE

Although winter in Oklahoma is nowhere near what it is in the Northeast, we, too, have had more than our share of snow and cold weather! However, most chapter members — typically undaunted — wouldn't dream of letting Tulsa's slippery streets or blowing snow keep them from attending the two excellent programs presented at our January and February meetings, both performed on the 3/10 Robert Morton in the American Christian College.

David Osborne, our January artist, didn't let the fact that he was more used to plug-ins stop him from doing a commendable job on the big Robert Morton. We enjoyed a number of medleys, a Latin American collection, selections by Scott Joplin, a medley of love songs — and "Twelfth Street Rag" performed upside down and backwards! For an encore he played Bob Ralston's arrangement of "Bubbles in the Wine." David is a music student at Oral Roberts University and had been featured recently at the Tulsa (electronic) Organ Club.

During open console we heard several piano-organ duets, with Joe Crutchfield at the console and Chad Weirick at the piano. Then Chad took a turn at the console, followed by Phil Judkins.

February featured another performance by talented Chad Weirick, again at American Christian College. Chad opened with "How the West Was Won," then presented a tribute to the day's blowing snow storm with a medley of "weather" songs, following with novelty tunes and marches. After a short intermission, he treated us to "Tu Es Petra Et Portae" ("Thou Art The Rock") by Henry Mulet, proving once again that classical organ music should

not be excluded from theatre organ concerts. For the balance of the program it was back to popular standards. A silent movie accompaniment was cancelled. The movie projector was another victim of the cold weather and burned out its light bulb! We'll have to try again when winter (will it ever??) is gone!

DOROTHY G. SMITH

## SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Activity is beginning to pick up around here, somewhat. The chapter was notified this week that office space was available on the former executive floor of the Jefferson theatre. The writer called a friend to inform him of the good news, but we needed furniture for the office. On February 20, 1978 we moved into our office with a desk, typewriter and all of this at no cost... that cannot be beat!

While the Jefferson Theatre is being booked solid during February and March, our organ work crew started the first session of the complete refurbishing and restoration of the 27-rank Moller in the former Phelan mansion, which is now a convent. After we work the Phelan Moller, we will undertake overhauling the Rogers mansion 12-rank Aeolian Duo-Art Player with separate console. This will give our chapter three pipe organs to oversee.

The Jefferson has been declared a Historical Landmark.

AL SACKER

## SOUTHERN ARIZONA

We have been busy as beavers working on our new by-laws and on February 2, 1978 we filed Articles of Incorporation with the Arizona Corporation Commission. Our past chairman, Helen Staininger, and

current chairman, Rudy Kotasek, with a lot of helpful advice from our friends of the Valley of the Sun chapter, succeeded in this mighty step forward so we are that much closer to our dream of helping to teach and educate the youth (as well as the older generation, who still care) of the merits and joy of a theatre pipe organ in proper surroundings; someplace where all can enjoy that beautiful sound once again. Soon our papers with the IRS will be filed and along with our nonprofit corporation, will put us in the educational organ business.

On the first Sunday in October we met in the Parish House of Grace Episcopal Church for our third meeting of the year through the courtesy of our new members Fr. and Mrs. Richard M. Babcock. Mr. Allen Guirl, owner of our new dealership Broadway Keyboard, furnished us with his own Conn 651 model and pipe speakers. We take this time to mention how very cooperative Mr. Olson has been in the past in not only furnishing organs for our club use but in backing the productions of such well-known and established artists as Don Baker, Don Kingston and others as well as our own Arthur Crowell, and one who in the past played on the East Coast and is now playing Hammond around Tucson, George French. Thank you, Roy Olson, for a lot of good things. Fr. Babcock played the Grace Church pipe organ, which is one of the largest in any Tucson Church. We got to see the other instruments of the church and then started our business meeting followed by the program. We finally got to hear Mildred Ives and a new member, Louise Townsend.

Following our December meeting and election of officers came the program which, through the courtesy

"A James family show  
is an adventure in showmanship."



**DENNIS & HEIDI  
JAMES**

DENNIS JAMES PRODUCTIONS

The Ohio Theatre  
29 East State Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

(614) 464-0889



**Organ Stop Pizza**

5330 North Seventh Street, Phoenix, Ariz. 85014  
Introducing, Featured Artist, **WALTER STRONY**  
Associate, Rob Richards

2250 West Southern Avenue, Mesa, Ariz. 85202  
Featured Artist, **RON RHODE**  
Associate, Rob Richards



of Richard Brennan of Schroeder's Pianos-Organs, we were furnished the new Hammond, a console model of two manuals with 25 pedals and a very lovely piano section. In the past Mr. Brennan has loaned us a three-manual Rodgers trio and a Hammond Concord so we have been very well-treated by this dealership. Thank you very much, Schroeders of Tucson.

Tucson's Southern Arizona Chapter has been helped a great deal in our pipe organ "drought" many times in the past by several dealers not to forget Muller's, the Wurlitzer electronic dealer and Mr. Roles of the Baldwin store of Tucson.

Our program chairman, Mrs. Katherine Gard, did a bang up job while suffering from an "uncast" fractured ankle. Her performers were Bob Tozier, Evelyn Framke and our youngest playing member, Miss Lynne Staininger.

Our February meeting was held at the El Dorado Townhouses club-room using a Baldwin Theatre Two furnished by Roles Piano and Organ Co. Louise Townsend, Flo Erickson of Green Valley, Arizona, and Ralph Cloos were the entertainers.

BOB HIGH

## SOUTH FLORIDA

1978! No, 1928 would better describe the atmosphere during the now traditional New Year's meeting at Andre Hall. Bob is moving ahead with construction of a model Eberson atmospheric theatre, inspired by the Olympia Theatre, Miami. The stars were brightly shining, with fleecy white clouds and a full moon in the Spanish courtyard when Betty Lee Taylor slipped quietly to the Wurlitzer console and introduced *The Rink* with Charlie Chaplin. This was followed with a Laurel and



Marti Lynch at the Gusman Hall Wurlitzer in Miami, Florida.

Hardy comedy, *Their Purple Moment*, and wrap up cameo, before Betty Lee relinquished the console to the inspired members and guests who were anxious to try the big instrument.

We are fortunate to have the talent of Betty Lee in our group and are grateful for her willingness to share her superb abilities on a regular basis.

I am always amazed when a performer of Betty Lee's caliber, a trooper who was a part of the silent film era, demonstrates the abilities acquired many years ago.

Past an age when failing sight, hearing or arthritis have stopped most people, the theatre organist can sit at the console and be transported fifty years back in time to display a talent and ability envied by those half as young, to cue an unpreviewed film with an inconspicuous caress, capturing every mood, anticipating every action, as though performer, organ and film are of one being. But most of all, to transport the audience on that same magic carpet of youth and, to the casual observer who can tear away from the

screen long enough, to catch the obvious pleasure the artist experiences in so doing, it is a precious gift. Yes, we are indeed fortunate.

Never inhibited by tradition, we scheduled the preview of the Gusman Hall Wurlitzer for club members two months after it's debut to the Miami public. First heard during free noon concerts the week preceding Christmas, we postponed the club concert until surely all would be in order before exposing our baby to the "critics." It took two months to correct what those five concerts uncovered.

Marti Lynch was our featured artist, her first concert following major surgery. Marti took us on a tour of the Wurlitzer, exploiting its capabilities for the new (*Star Wars*), old ("Old Cape Cod"), fast ("March of the Toy Soldiers") and slow ("I Left My Heart in San Francisco"). Truly an artist who has the gift of theatre organ style, with rich harmonies and full chords, Marti provided a very enjoyable Sunday afternoon for those members fortunate enough to attend.

STEVE FITZGERALD

## VALLEY OF THE SUN

The chapter was so busy during November and December that some of us thought that 1978 couldn't possibly be any more hectic. 'T ain't so! At our first board meeting of the new year, we worked out a schedule of meetings, concerts and organ treks that are bound to keep the entire membership hopping for the remainder of the year.

Our first big group activity was our January social meeting at Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix. It was Lyn Larsen's last night there, and many of our ATOS members, their fami-



Hear him at the  
Suburban Restaurant

**Frank Cimmino**  
THEATRE ORGAN CONCERTS

80 Lions Head Dr. W.  
Wayne, New Jersey 07470  
(201) 696-3421

Belvedere Ave.  
Wanaque, New Jersey 07465  
(201) 835-3903

**RON RHODE**

KARL WARNER MANAGEMENT  
6842 EAST VIRGINIA AVENUE  
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85257  
AREA CODE 602 - 946 - 6892

FEATURED AT ORGAN STOP PIZZA  
2250 W SOUTHERN • MESA, ARIZ.

CONCERTS  
theatre pipe organ



Walt Strony starts at Organ Stop.

lies and friends were there to wish Lyn good luck in his new venture. Mr. Larsen is now part owner of a restaurant in Sun City in which he is going to install a theatre pipe organ while having the place remodeled.

The February meeting was held at the First Christian Church Fellowship Hall. New board members were introduced, and a change was made in our by-laws to allow for the election of additional board members. Since our general membership is growing, it had been decided that we needed more representation on the board. Later, Chairman Bill Carr explained plans for the 2/12 Wurlitzer he is installing in the church hall,

and showed members what had already been done.

February 18 and 19 *had* to be the two busiest days of the month for members! Saturday, a group of us were at Phoenix College getting things ready for our Sunday afternoon concert. This included setting up the grand piano and a Rodgers Trio for our artist, and tuning the college's 2/9 Wurlitzer that we are in the process of restoring. Some people were there until 4 a.m. Sunday morning! It was back to the college again at 2 p.m. Sunday afternoon for our first concert of the year. Rob Richards, associate organist at Organ Stop, presented a program of organ and piano music with enough variety to suit everyone's taste. From his toe-tapping opening of "Broadway Rhythm" to a tender closing with Schubert's "Ave Maria," it was a most enjoyable concert. Rob gave us a chance to hear what progress had been made on the pipe organ and the Tibias are beautiful!

The busy weekend wasn't over after Rob's concert, however. Local ATOS'ers had not one, but *two* organists to listen to that evening. Some of our members gathered again at Organ Stop Pizza to welcome Walter Strony to Phoenix. Walt is the new featured organist at the restaurant. Others joined the



Rob Richards relaxes at the Rodgers.

crowd at Phoenix Symphony Hall to hear our own chapter Vice Chairman Steve Schlesing, perform during a Liberace concert. Steve recently entered a keyboard contest sponsored by the Liberace Foundation For The Performing and Creative Arts and the Baldwin Piano and Organ Company, and came in first in the organ division out of 130 original entrants. That evening, the 20-year-old Schlesing played "MacArthur Park" and the theme from *Star Wars*. As he presented Steve with his trophy, Liberace said that our young man sounded like an entire orchestra. Congratulations, Steve!

MADELINE LIVOLSI



*Organ Parts and Accessories*

**ARNDT**  
ORGAN SUPPLY COMPANY  
1018 LORENZ DRIVE • ANKENY, IOWA 50021

"Multi/Scann" Multiplex Relays  
Micro/Computer Combination Actions  
Consoles • Chests • Wurlitzer Parts  
Peterson Chromatic Tuners • Engraving  
Custom Built Parts

**New Catalog Now in the Making**


*"Quality Through Pride in Workmanship"*

Flicker Fingers Presentations  
The Organ and the Silent Screen  
Still Going Strong

# Gaylord Carter

1371 Paso del Mar • San Pedro, California 90731  
**(213) 831-6360**

LANDMARK PIZZA & PIPES



Featuring

**The Mighty Barton Theatre Pipe Organ**  
played daily at lunch except Mondays  
and nightly from 6:00 pm

Piping Hot Pizza and other delicious foods

**Danny Ray**  
Musical Director

**Larry Hasselbring**  
Associate Organist

6522 East N.W. Highway at Abrams Dallas Texas 692-7027