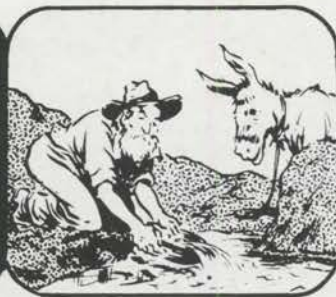


NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



With the 1978 ATOS Convention's being held in the deep South, we salute Dixie with nuggets gleaned from that area. References were the Motion Picture Herald (MPH) and local press.

Dec. 25, 1927 Birmingham (Ala.) News. "When Miss Birmingham awoke this Christmas morn and gazed into her silk stocking, hung gracefully by the municipal fire-side, her eyes opened wide in amazement, her heart expanded largely and her joy knew no bounds, for ensconced in that delectable hiding place, was a gift of which few cities can boast and of which this city is eminently proud: namely, a magnificent \$1.5 million theatre, the gift of that splendid organization known as the Publix Theatres Corp., which realizing Birmingham's colorful past, her magnificent present and her roseate future ever progressing, ever growing, has put "the big pot in the little one" and spread itself all over the face of the earth in giving the Magic City the newest, the most modern, the most artistic and the most comfortable theatre which money and talent could devise — the Alabama.

"Sidney Dannenberg is to be the new manager . . . House manager will be Stephen Barutio under whom will be a brigade of ushers, page boys, doormen and others . . . Director of publicity will be Larry Cowen . . . Ralph Pollock has been named master of ceremonies . . . The Alabama seats 3,000 and the seats are so arranged that every one is a good one . . . The double box office is in the front lobby, and there will be no waiting in line, as the automatic ticket seller machines and double box office service will take care of any amount . . . The magnificent organ is a wonder of its kind, according to reports. It is the perfect interpretation of the human voice and of all musical instruments. Thousands of miles of wire and cable have been used in connecting this giant instrument. The console is placed on an elevator and ascends and descends at the will of the organist. This eliminates any interference as the console is electrically sent below the sight lines while the performance is on. At the gala grand opening will be organist JOE ALEXANDER, featuring the presentation "Organs I Have Played." . . . The vertical signs outside the theatre are 11 feet wide, 60 feet high, with letters 4½ feet high, each sign containing 2500 lights. The marquee is 12 feet high with 3,000 lights . . . The theatre required 500 tons of plaster, 15 carloads of sand, 10,000 square yards of lath, 200,000 feet of channel iron and 3,000 pounds of fine ire."

Sept. 26, 1931 (MPH) EARL ABEL, at the Texas Theatre in San Antonio, offered an organ solo of his own arrangement, and he called it "Looking Backwards." Opening the musical presentation with "Daisy, Daisy," he followed with a group of comical song slides, depicting the style and ways of yesterday. Next, he rendered "In the Good Old Summertime" with several advertising slides

used in the days of the magic lantern, and these got many a hearty laugh. This was followed by "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree" and "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." The organist received a great big hand.

Sept. 26, 1931 (MPH) ART HAYES, who has been away from Memphis for the past year, received a welcome on his return to the RKO Orpheum there of which few organists can boast. Art, even after a year's absence, is still the fair-haired boy of Memphis. The town's leading citizens, with five or six of the leading societies and clubs, welcomed him back with a two-block parade, a police escort and music from bands and a radio truck.

Nov. 7, 1931 (MPH) MAC BRIDWELL at San Antonio's Majestic Theatre, recently offered an organ solo which he named "Everything's RKO." His first selection was "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams and Dream Your Troubles Away," followed by "The Waltz I Saved For You," an excellent parody to the tune of "Two Heart Beats," then came "Sweet and Lovely" and "I Want a Girl."

Nov. 7, 1931 (MPH) JOHNNY WINTERS, who held the organist job at the Warner Strand in Brooklyn, is now at home in Pennsylvania, recuperating after a minor operation. He starts at the Nashville Paramount on November 14.

Nov. 7, 1931 (MPH) EARL ABEL, solo organist at the Texas Theatre in San Antonio, is on his fourth return engagement at this house.

Feb. 13, 1932 (MPH) F. DON MILLER is at the Olympia Theatre in Miami. Now that the winter season is on, this house has brought Mr. Miller, who was quite popular here a season or so ago, back to the console of this city's leading theatre. Mr. Miller is offering two solos a week; the first half, "community singing" solos, and for the last, "straight concert" solos, in which either popular or classical numbers are featured. He has, in the short time he has been here, succeeded in building up a large following and naturally, making himself a real box-office attraction.

The solo this week is a straight spotlight "concert" solo in which special lighting effects added to the attractiveness of the solo. The numbers featured are, "The Miserere" and "Anvil Chorus," both from the opera "Il Trovatore." Mr. Miller is a capable musician and the audience shows its appreciation of his efforts in a fine manner.

Oct. 22, 1932 (MPH) DURAND "RANDY" SAULS is at Miami's Capitol Theatre. This 22-year-old chap has gained a lot of popularity since he started here, both for his theatre work and his "Slumber Hour" programs, every night at 11:30. One of his recent and typical programs opened with two favorite song hits from Broadway shows: "Of Thee I Sing" and "Let's Have Another Cup of Coffee." Next came song slides of "Somebody Loves You" for community singing, and the theme song, "The Old Refrain," used on "The Slumber Hour." This number won applause in the middle of the program. More audience songs were "Good Night, Sweetheart," a picture puzzle group of slides of "Down by the Old Mill Stream" and "The Night Love Was Born" which completed the community singing section. The surprise feature was Randy's arrangement of "Chloe," played in concert style and built to a big finale. As a rule, his "hand" runs into the feature picture which follows.

See you in the deep South, shortly.

Jason & the Old Prospector