

VOX POPS



Conducted by Stu Green

Readers are encouraged to submit interesting sidelights on the organ hobby (exclusive of chapter news items) material they believe will be of general interest about local organ activities and installations and the people who work at the hobby. We know "there's VOX POPS in them there chapters" and it only requires a 10c postcard to get it to VOX POPS Editor, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. If the contributor can afford a 15c stamp, why not include a black and white photo which need not be returned.

A clipping from the Fort Lauderdale News submitted by Helen Kiley indicates that Karl Cole is hitting the spot at Mavandola's restaurant. Cole's instruments are electronic; a Wurlitzer organ, a Hammond organ, a piano and a synthesizer, six manuals in all, and on top of playing he does vocals in a pleasing baritone. The self-taught musician, who favors the key of B (yes, B), is on the stage Tuesday through Sunday evenings for four hour segments. Asked to account for his exceptional crowd-drawing ability, Cole explains:

"For some reason I always end up doing songs other musicians have forgotten — and they turn out to be songs people want to hear."

News reporter Bob Keaton sums up: "Seldom have I seen any solo act draw such a response."



Aloha Chapter hospitality was the order of the day when Chicago area ATOSers Harry and Cathy Koenig visited Hawaii in February "to escape the severe Illinois winter,"

writes Cathy. In Honolulu they contacted former Chapter Chairman Al Watson who took them to a Sunday morning chapter session at the Hawaii Theatre where members played the 4/16 Robert Morton. Then Harry was invited to play a few numbers, mostly light classics and operatic. It was with considerable regret that the Koenigs said "Aloha" to their kindly hosts and left the Islands. They had even more regrets when they got back to Niles, Illinois, and found it still frozen solid.



When the Ohio Theatre's resident organist, Dennis James, had an engagement in Davenport, Iowa, a show on the same date at his Columbus base of operations loomed, the Miss Ohio Beauty contest preliminaries on March 31. Dennis needed a substitute and he figured that a gal organist would be best able to resist the obvious onstage distractions. "Now where can I get a gal organist for a one-night stand?" he asked himself, leering darkly. Then a lightbulb illuminated above his tousled head; why not an organist who is also a beauty contest participant? That

narrowed the field to one candidate Miss Amy Reimer. Amy, who has been charming Detroiters with her music since she was a little girl, was First Place winner in the "Beautiful Ohio" organ competition in 1975. And she was a runner-up in the Miss Michigan contest last year.

So Amy was flown in for the one night stand from her home in Muskegon, and supplied the incidental music while the fledgling beauties paraded for the judges. It was perhaps the first time during a beauty contest that as much male attention was focussed on the occupant of the Morton console as on the lovelies on the stage. One loser was heard mumbling something about "unfair competition."



Good news reaches us that New Orleans' 3400-seat Saenger Theatre, though closed on March 12 as a moving picture house, has been purchased from ABC Interstate Theatres by E.B. Breazeale for slightly more than one million. The historic 51-year old structure will be completely refurbished and used as a performing arts center for concerts, organ



Amy Reimer. Unfair competition from the console.

programs, silent films, plays, operas and possibly conventions and trade shows.

The partition, enclosing the balcony for a second theatre, is being removed. The 4/26 Robert Morton, though playable, is being restored to mint condition by workers headed by Dr. Barry Henry and Richard McCormick. This organ was considered one of the best by its builders, and prospective purchasers were brought to the Saenger to hear it. Those who played it years ago included John Hammond (who opened it), Rosa Rio and Ray McNamara.



C.E. Dailey sent us a clipping from the *Wilmington Evening Journal* which pointedly illustrates the value of a pipe organ in a school as a means of spreading the word. Youthful Sean Mchugh was a member of the Dickinson High School organ maintenance crew and worked on the big Kimball. His parents weren't surprised when he asked permission to build a pipe organ in their 2-car garage; for years he had been addicted to the electronic they had bought for his older brother. In a short time Sean had collected several ranks of pipes, some chests and regulators. He bought an old straight console from a Pittsburgh church. The 17-year-old soon had 1,000 pipes perking and plans to add another thousand, and a Xylophone. With the garage doors open, Sean's organ can be heard to the end of the block, as neighbors learned when Hector Olivera gave the instrument a shakedown last year. Mchugh is modest about his accomplishment, which to date has cost him \$450 plus another \$200 for leather, not to mention a year's work during which he was helped by schoolmates.

"It's a good hobby. You know, you can buy an electronic organ, put it right in your house and be done with it . . . This weighs a ton, but I like the sound of a pipe organ."



The vagaries of the music publishing business are well illustrated by the history of a recent set of organ arrangements put together in a hurry to cash in on the hysteria surrounding the death of rock singer Elvis Presley. The music Elvis produced had little in common with organ styl-

ings, but with the inclusion of a few of the less rocky songs he sang and his photo on the cover, the retail price could be jacked up considerably. Because every publisher was coming out with Presley memorabilia in a hurry, our man had second thoughts; perhaps the demand would be gone before his book of organ arrangements hit the stands. So he switched from the gone Elvis Presley to the living Liberace, a musician who earns his AFM dues playing the piano. Without changing a note, he put the pianist's photo on the cover and relabelled it "Liberace Organ Book" and in smaller



Millie Alexander. 'First I'm Elvis — then I'm Liberace. I just want to be me — not a trinity!' (Stufoto)

print, "Arranged by Mildred Alexander." The organ stylings are fine but the buyer pays 75% extra for the photo of Liberace, who had nothing to do with it.



New ATOSer Harold Shaw reports from Bluff Point, N.Y. on a 50th anniversary celebration that did come off as scheduled. This one was staged by the Penn Yan Organ Club for central New York organist Dean Robinson in February. The theme commemorating 50 years in music was patterned after *This Is Your Life*, with 80 friends and relatives, some having come great distances, pointing up highlights in the Robinson playing and teaching career. Dean has played pipe concerts in Syracuse and for awhile owned a Wurlitzer. Letters were read from those who couldn't make it, some from out-of-state students, some from as far as Australia.



Dean Robinson, 50 years in the music biz.

Dean enjoyed all the fuss once he recovered from the shock. One friend summed up, "Harmony is the key to Dean's success and 'Mrs. Robinson' (Merle) is the name of his song."



Some years ago we published a story about the 3/10 Robert Morton installed in the Christian Crusade Cathedral in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was played by Jim Orcutt for services and also for two record releases by Concert Recording. The Cathedral was the brainchild of Billy James Hargis, an evangelistic preacher with a great talent for mesmerizing his flock as well as for raising the kind of finances via TV which built the Cathedral. Time passed and great changes transpired. Organist Jim Orcutt died from a drug overdose (after he left the Hargis menage) and much later Hargis was forced to leave for transgressions he was alleged to have committed. Without his electrifying leadership the Cathedral soon lost the support needed to sustain it. Last we heard the property was for sale, including the organ. Tulsa TO enthusiasts have an inside track on the organ, according to Lorin Whitney who put the organ in the Cathedral.



With organ-equipped restaurants springing up everywhere, organ-minded travelers are having a field day seeking them out and enjoying them. ATOSer Jim Phillips, traveling in Utah, found a pleasant surprise at the Pipes and Pizza in Provo — the 3/15 Wurlitzer which sounded forth



Seth Anderson at the Provo pizzery console.
(Jim Phillips Photo)

originally in the Piccadilly Theatre, way back east in Rochester, N.Y. The featured organist looked familiar and sure enough it was Seth Anderson, a lad Phillips had seen participating in the L.A. Chapter's *Stars of Tomorrow* program, an annual event designed to encourage young talent. When Jim Phillips got back home (Phoenix) he wrote us a few lines about his Provo adventure, and said Seth Anderson has been holding down the pizzery organ bench for the past two years. Time does fly. It seems only yesterday that we saw him do his stuff for the *Stars* program.

Dick Sklenar writes that "Genesee Theatre Day" in Waukegan, Illinois, came off well. Chicago Area TO Enthusiasts and the town celebrated the theatre's 50th anniversary with a concert on the 3/10 Barton, refurbished by CATOE members, played by Rex Koury, who came back after intermission for a sing-along. Dick says it was a well-attended gala occasion. Waukegan's mayor read his proclamation designating April 23 as "Genesee Theatre Day." Waukegan was the birthplace of Jack Benny. This was commemorated by radio program playbacks and film clips of the late comedian. Former Genesee organists Millard Heyman and Carmel Francke were introduced, as was CATOE's organ crew. Dick adds, "Rex did a fine job and was well received."

While we are in the Chicago area we have a story about a suicide-bent mouse, whose exotic method of self destruction ran up quite a funeral

bill, for a rodent. When organist David Hamilton turned on the blower to play the 8:00 p.m. intermission at the Oriental theatre on April 20, he noticed something very wrong with the wind supply. He had played two previous intermissions between showings of *The Great Caruso* without a hitch, but after one fanfare for the evening show, he knew the organ was in trouble and shut off the power. Greg Simanski and his crew traced the trouble to the blower. On disassembling it they found two damaged and blood-stained impellers. An invading rodent had been reduced to mouseburger. The repair bill totalled \$294.00. An expensive mousetrap if not a better one.

A few years ago, Dolton McAlpin was a budding organist with a penchant for pipes. He played Louisiana theatre Mortons, made a couple of very good records, then dropped from sight. Well, not entirely. He decided law was a more fruitful calling than music, and he is now practicing law in Starkville, Mississippi. He writes that the only organs he gets to play these days is when he drives to Meridian to put some time on the Temple theatre's Morton, or when he visits Jeff Seale in Laurel, Jeff has a fine home installation.

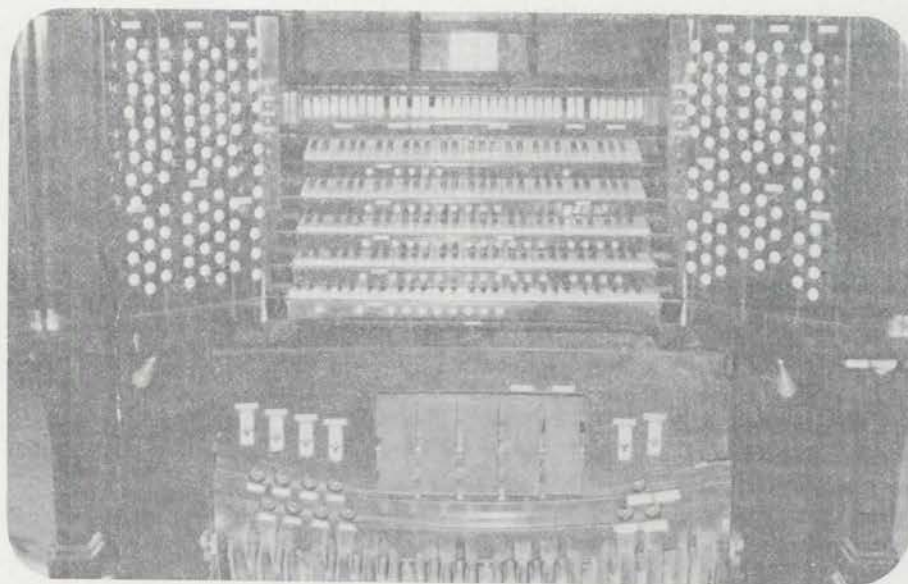
Dolton also had some news about the 110 rank Kimball in the Memphis Civic Auditorium; it has been completely restored by Bill Oberg "and is possibly the best concert

organ I have ever played." Dolton reports that Bill is dickering with Virgil Fox for a concert there.

From Beaumont, Texas, Al Sacker writes that the new Southeast Texas Chapter's regional convention, planned for 1978, has been postponed to November 1979, so the Chapter can give full attention to hosting the national Theatre Historical Society conclave in July 1978.

It has been revealed that another jazz great of the swing era was once a silent film accompanist back in the early '20s. This came to light during the Oscar Micheaux Awards ceremony held at the Oakland Paramount on Feb. 19 (seen on PBS TV on April 23). The awards are for Black Music in American Films, and orchestra leader Bill "Count" Basie was one of the recipients. During the intros it was mentioned that the Count had played piano for silent films in Kansas City but "only from hunger" when he couldn't get work playing jazz.

Marion Martin's trip to New York (from his Whiteville, N.C. home) was mainly to hear Don Baker's concert at the threatened Radio City Music Hall. He says that the lineup of people snaked through the sunken garden at Rockefeller Center and down 5th Avenue to 49th Street —



Console of the 5-manual Kimball in the North Hall of the Memphis Municipal Auditorium. Bill Oberg has all 110 ranks perking, and in tune.



Marion Martin. He made the rounds in Gotham town.

about 5000 total. Marion reports that Don was really at his best, and the tapes made on the Martin lap recorder indicate Don played the 4/58 Wurli to the hilt. Martin also with on Mel Robinson's "fantastic organ crawl," visited Rev. Ike's 175th Street Palace for a whack at the ex-Loew's theatre Robert Morton, visited a Scarsdale mansion equipped with a 2/9 Wurlitzer, and spent a day with Lee Erwin, braving 14 inches of snow for some time on "Little Mother" (2/9 Wurli) in the Carnegie Cinema.

Marion says his biggest thrill was playing the 179-rank Kimball in St. Patrick's cathedral: "It has a 9-second reverb, and you hear what you have played several measures back... This organ has five 32' pedal stops and a 64' Gravissimo which will rattle your teeth."



We get a boot from newspaper accounts of theatre organ concerts written by reporters who are probably more at home analyzing the police blotter or covering a dog obedience session. Their unfamiliarity with the subject often adds up to smiles. John Nelson, who books concerts for George Wright, submits a clipping reporting on a recent concert. The reporter for the *Waterbury Times* was somewhat "gee whizz" about George's technique during his April ConnValChap concert at the Thomaston Opera House. He observed George playing on three manuals.

"His left foot plays the base (sic) notes and keeps the rhythm. His right foot controls the shutters for

volume. His right fingers play keys on the top manual while his right thumb plays the middle keyboard. His left fingers are on the bottom keyboard and his left thumb pushes (combination) piston stops. Then he checks his wristwatch and never misses a beat."

Old stuff to buffs perhaps but the innocent wonder of a first timer just might arouse the interest of other prospective first timers. Incidentally, Chapter Chairman Norman Ray revealed at intermission that Wright had donated \$100 to the fund for the maintenance and improvement of the Chapter's Marr and Colton, reported the paper.



A few nights later, organbuilder Edwin Link and wife Marion were in the audience for George's concert on the Link organ the noted inventor donated to Roberson Center in Binghamton, N.Y. The *press* reported:

"As his final encore, he dedicated "Goodnight Sweetheart" to Marion Link, adding 'if the chimes don't work you can go home and give him h - - -.' But the chimes were perfect. In fact, the whole program was just Wright."



Speaking of Binghamton, the James family was set for the concert rededicating the restored Robert Morton in the Forum theatre there on May 27. We recently reported that Heidi James was up to here in music staff paper, composing a silent movie score for a presentation celebrating the Columbus Ohio theatre's 50th anniversary this Spring. Heidi tells us she finished the scoring for full orchestra in plenty of time, but the 50th Anniversary Jubilee has been postponed until September 24.



Like a rare vintage wine, Lyn Larsen improves with age. This was amply demonstrated on April 8 when he regaled 1095 enthusiastic concertgoers at Rochester's Auditorium Theatre. Making his fourth RTOS appearance, Lyn was in rare form, playing selections a typical theatre organ audience enjoys. The artist gave a fine tribute to organist Ashley Miller, by playing some numbers Ashley had arranged. His "Pic-



Lyn Larsen. He's like vintage wine.

(Dick Harald Photo)

colino" was a Xerox copy of the rendition Ashley recorded on the Radio City Music Hall organ some years back. Other highlights of Lyn's program included a trip around the 4/22 Wurlitzer, renditions of "Blue Danube Waltz," "Waltz of the Flowers" and a rousing closer, "Dance of the Hours." The audience showed its overwhelming approval by buying all the records which Lyn had brought to Kodakville.



Congratulations are in order to the British Theatre Organ Club on reaching its 40th anniversary. It was started in 1938, with Ralph Bartlett as secretary (he still is) and Robinson Cleaver its patron (so is he). With the closure of organ-equipped theatres in Britain, the TOC undertook a project to place organs in public halls by means of Preservation Societies operating within the club. So far three organs have found new homes through TOC efforts. For many years the TOC published an excellent quarterly magazine, *The Theatre Organ Review* which was discontinued in 1974, ostensibly for lack of contributed articles. It is former editor Frank Hare's fond hope to get the "Review" going again. Good fortune to you, TOC!



Those who attended the ATOS Convention in the Washington area in 1972 will recall the Tivoli Theatre in Frederick, Md. and its bright red Wurlitzer console. On February 9, the refurbished theatre re-opened as the Weinberg Center for the Arts. As one journalist observed, "The



Ray Brubacher. He was true to the Tivoli Wurlli.
(Tyner/Cann Photo)

Tivoli is like an aging vaudevillian, anticipating a return to the stage after years of retirement. Her make-up now needs fixing and her costume is dated, but come opening night, she was done up and ready to go."

Restoration began more than a year ago. The garish brocade is gone, the interior being restored to original gold, terra cotta and black color scheme. The damaged 2/8 Wurlitzer has been restored by Ray Brubacher, ATOS member and on the staff of the American Film Institute at Washington's Kennedy Center. Ray will play the instrument when silent films are featured.



They like John Landon's talents as an organist in Anderson, Indiana. For several years John has been providing weekend musical intervals on the 1657-seat Paramount Theatre's 3/7 Page. And an extreme oddity these days is that the theatre advertises the fact in its display advertising: "Hear the Beautiful Page Pipe Organ Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 6:30 and 8:45 p.m." According to John, "Our young manager is enthusiastic about it."



Ever since he performed at the 1966 ATOS Convention in Portland the star of Jonas Nordwall has steadily risen in the theatre organ firmament. That he has achieved the maturity so necessary in the business, was adequately proven on March 17 when he entertained 994 at Rochester's Auditorium Theatre. A few classics, more oldies, and a

sprinkling of numbers from the present era, culminating in a somewhat strident "Orpheus Overture" made up the varied program done in artistic but true theatre organ style. Jonas is one of those organists who feature solo stops, thereby demonstrating the voices of the "unit orchestra." However, he also plays a full ensemble. A nice easygoing console presence with his audience, coupled with a no-nonsense approach while playing, mark this artist.



The Connecticut Valley Chapter has long been known as the pioneer of ATOS chapters in awarding scholarships to deserving organ students, and a sizeable fund is an-



Rosa Rio. She produces winners.
(Dick Harold Photo)

nually earmarked for this competition. In March, Susan De Angelo of Waterbury, Conn., won the first award of \$150 in the Roberg Scholarships of Theatre Organ Arrangement for her score of "Til Tomorrow" from *Fiorello*. Her teacher and sponsor: Rosa Rio. Second award went to Ronnie Fabry of Huntington, Conn. another Rio student. Duane Boise of Waterbury, took third while Jim Arsenault of Stratford received honorable mention. Judges were Don Baker, Lowell Ayars and John Muri. The Roberg awards are open to students of organ living in Connecticut or western Massachusetts.



Billy Nalle has realized a 20-year hope — to record the 4/37 "Queen Mother" Wurlitzer once more. Old timers will recall that Billy recorded it in 1958 in its New York Para-

mount location when it was only a 4/36. RCA's "Swingin' Pipe Organ" release opened a whole slew of doors for Billy. He has made several records in the interim on other organs but always hoped one day to once more groove the Mother Wurlitzer. And with Wichita Theatre Organ Inc.'s approval and cooperation he has done it, recording enough tunes for two releases. The first should be available now. The title selected by WTO is "There is Only One Billy Nalle." Amen.



The success of two generations of Chicago's Sellers family in the field of music is well known. Preston and Edna Sellers were leading lights in theatre organ spectrum in the Windy City during the big era. For a number of years, their daughter, Barbara, has entertained thousands in the Bismarck Hotel's lounge, playing an electronic. Now word has reached us from Russ Joseph that Edna's grandson, Jack Matranga (Barbara's son) has been awarded a scholarship for advanced study on the trumpet in Graz, Austria, this summer. He is a graduate of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.



Ashley Miller informs us his concert schedule next year will have him playing in Canada, Great Britain and Wichita's Century II Exhibition Hall playing the ex-N.Y. Paramount 4/37 Wurl. Ashley was very much flattered to have been chosen to play a private midnight concert on the RCMH 4/58 Wurlitzer for members of the Los Angeles Chapter of ATOS (who flew to New York for the event), following it up next morning with a half hour concert organ program which included the Bach "Passacaglia and Fugue." He'll be coming west for several concerts in June.



The *Oakland (Calif.) Tribune* reports that an auction of organ parts netted about \$40,000 toward installing a composite theatre organ in the Paramount Theatre. It will be recalled that the theatre's original Publix No. 1 Wurlitzer was sold years ago and has been playing in a fast food restaurant. When the Paramount became a cultural center, efforts were made toward getting an-

other pipe organ for the beautifully refurbished house. J.B. Nethercutt, of San Sylmar "Tower of Beauty" fame, donated an almost complete organ, but installation funds were lacking. Then came a windfall. In San Diego, Sandy Fleet stopped expansion of his organ-plus-pizza-and-spaghetti operation. He closed down two pizzerias and disposed of the organs. That left him with one 4/28 assembled Wurlitzer he had bought from George Allen. Fleet donated the console and 20 ranks of pipework and associated parts to the Paramount project. That left the Paramount group with lots of organ but still no money, so they decided to auction off parts above what is needed for the theatre. The auction, held late in February, drew bidders from afar. The most expensive item was the beautifully finished console (see the cover photo of the May-June 1975 issue of THEATRE ORGAN). It brought \$20,000. Bids for other items ran to approximately another 20 grand.

However, the assembly and installation cost is estimated at \$58,000, according to the *Tribune*, so donations are still being sought.



Driving by the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, we saw three men carrying a long, tapered wooden box toward a waiting truck. Sensing a "snatch" of organ parts by "Midnight Organ Supply" operating in broad daylight, we hid behind a metal fence post and snooped.

In less than a minute a voice said,



Long tapered boxes were being moved. It couldn't be "Midnight Organ Supply" because it happened at noon, but the stage door of the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium was the scene of considerable activity. (Pegpic)



George Wright (front, center) poses with the loading crew for a group photo. (Left to right) Dennis Hedberg, Chris Hill, Bob Ziller, Ken Kukuk, John Hoffman, Ed Burnside, Bob Labbe and George Ashley. Two of the big Diaphones are shown. (Pegpic)

"Come on out from behind that pole, Stu. You're too wide to hide there." The voice was Dennis Hedberg's and the operation proved to be quite in order. Dennis, in his never-ceasing search for organ parts, had bought the 32' wooden Diaphone from the city of San Gabriel, a leftover from the 3/16 ATOS Wurlitzer installation, a set too large for the stage. It was a full octave, not the seven pipes plus top flaps often encountered. While we were shooting photos, George Wright drove up.

"Want to see a beautiful octave of 32' Skinner Bourdons?" George led us to the back of the truck, and already packed in was the forest of monstrous wooden Flute pipes. Dennis, who had arrived the day before with the truck and Chris Hill, said he didn't have any immediate plans



The big resonators are loaded into a waiting truck for the journey to Portland, Oregon, Dennis Hedberg's base of operations. (Stufoto)

for the 32' octaves, but had heard the parts were available and besides he enjoyed driving a rent-a-truck. He had assembled a crew of volunteers to jostle the big pipes from storage to the truck and was about ready to hit the road for Portland. We asked how he had learned about the available pipes. He pointed to George.

"He arranged the sale. In fact, the 32' Bourdon belonged to George." George grinned.

Before taking off, the crew lined up for a group mug shot.



We heard that Vancouver newspaper critics are not especially partial to theatre organ concerts. Perhaps, but three reporters for Vancouver papers went somewhat overboard on hearing Ann Leaf's Febru-



Ann Leaf. Vancouver likes her.

(Pegpic)

ary concerts on the style 240 Wurlitzer (3/13) in the Orpheum theatre. In the *Sun*, Lloyd Dykk's review was headlined "Little Organ Annie Charms 'em at the Orpheum." The *Province's* Ted Wing headlined his review "Ann Leaf an Entertaining Lady." In another issue of the same paper, Helen Bateson headed her article, "She's a Little Lady Who Makes Mighty Music." And radio station CHOM got into line with a very favorable verbal account of the two concerts. It was superlatives all the way. Like we said, those Canadian critics sure have good taste.



The grand guy of Chicago skating rinks, Leon Berry, now 63, is still going strong. We haven't heard too much about him of late, but in spite of a stroke awhile back, he still fingers the keys and taps the pedals of the Orbit Roller Rink's electronic in Palatine, Ill. Berry performs there twice a week, and is considered the best in the business by his employers. Well remembered are his "Beast in the Basement" series of recordings which were made at the time he played a pipe organ in the Hub Rink from 1950 to 1967. Now known as "The Dean of Roller Rink Rock," Berry has two loves in his life: his wife, Mildred, whom he married about seven years ago, and music played on a theatre pipe organ. Russ Joseph says, "It is heartwarming to see how ardently his loyal older, as well as younger, fans come out to listen to and skate to his lilting melodies, played with all the vitality and feeling which have marked his musical career." □



the letters to the editors

Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

Address:

George Thompson
Editor
P.O. Box 1314
Salinas, Calif. 93902

Dear George:

You can be very proud of a beautiful magazine — it will stand up to anything published as far as I am concerned. I look forward to it every month.

Four years ago I was able to purchase, and install in my home, a 2/7 Wurlitzer Opus 1080 Model 105 which had been repossessed by the factory and re-installed in a church in Coldwater, Michigan, from where I obtained it. It had only chimes, in addition to the ranks, and I have managed to pick up a combination harp and orchestral bells and am trying hard to find a Toy Counter. The only way I was able to install it, having had little previous experience, was to copy exactly the way it was originally installed. Incidentally the organ was originally in the Elm Theatre in Philadelphia, Pa., and I would greatly be interested in any information about the theatre and/or the organ from any readers.

I have also gotten a small group of people interested in restoring the original installation organ in our theatre in town, a 3/8 Barton. The chests have all incurred severe water damage and will require a great deal of work. If this group does not do the work on the organ, the organ will be

left to rot. I would like to suggest that people in areas such as ours, which happens to be 90 miles away from the nearest ATOS active chapter, in Detroit, and without the knowledge and guidance of people such as that, need all the help we can get in a restoration such as this. A series of articles on restoration would, I believe, be of great interest to many of us "untrained" ATOSers. Thank you for any consideration you can give us.

Sincerely,

R.C. Rowan, M.D.
Albion, Mich.

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Ben Levy's letter in the April/May, 1978, issue of THEATRE ORGAN will probably, as Mr Levy suggests, incur the ire of some ATOS members; yet, I hope those who disagree with him are few. The fact is that many, perhaps most, of the few remaining theatre organs are indeed being desecrated. In item after item one reads of a 2/7 that is now a 3/49; owners pose proudly beside their Wurlli-Marr-Mort-Bart-Moll-Wick-Austins. At this very moment a highly-touted project of a local chapter of ATOS is the removal of an original Wurlitzer installation from a theatre and the installation of a mammoth Wurlitzer from another theatre in its place — a violation of both national and local by-laws, which suggest as a prime objective, the retention and restoration of theatre organs in their original locations.

True, an owner is entitled to do what he pleases with an organ he owns, but the ATOS rank and file ought not to applaud these selfish alterations — especially when the organ is still in a theatre or other public place. As a restoration crew member currently working on a 2/8 Wurlitzer in a local theatre, I have observed a procession of visiting experts who have suggested such improvements as adding strings, Tibias, and reeds; re-winding this chest; dividing that chest; adding tremulants; synchronizing tremulants; adding couplers; increasing wind pressures; and so on ad nauseam. Though I have steadfastly refused to consider such aberrations, the day may come when I am outvoted. Assuming that this theatre and its organ are around fifty years from now, I feel that the atreagoers in 2028 would prefer hearing the Wurlitzer as it sounded in the