



Bill Blunk

(Alice Blue Photo)

summer. The show starts at 7 p.m. The Oriental is the home of the 5/24 Marr and Colton originally in the Rochester Theatre in that N.Y. state town. Bill recently installed Peterson solid state relays. "They worked perfectly the first time" says Bill.

Don Thompson was visited by Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau at the Toronto Organ Grinder pizzeria recently. Trudeau brought his two small sons and all seemed to appreciate Don's performance. A few days later a "thank you" note on official stationery arrived.

Jimmy, you've been one-upped!

Enthusiast Eric Reeve is trying to determine the whereabouts of the following organists, or any news of them: Bob West, Henrietta Kamern, Elsie Thompson, Doc Whipple and Stanleigh Malotte. Drop Eric a line at 1630 Elmwood Drive, Minot, North Dakota 58701.

One doesn't hear from the Minneapolis area too often, especially in regards to the Civic Auditorium's Kimball made famous by Eddie Dunstedter. According to ATOS member, Luther Winquist, the instrument's 124 ranks are playable from the 5-manual draw-knob console, and 21 of these ranks are also playable from the 4-manual horse-shoe keydesk. The theatre console is used for some ATOS events and for background music for other affairs.

The classic console is used mostly in church functions, such as the Episcopal Convention which was held in September 1976.

Several readers sent us a clipping from a May Wall Street Journal, a story about 28-year-old Gavin Mc Donough, owner, manager and sole employee of the B.A.B. Organ Co. headquartered in East Burke, Vermont. (population: 150). Interested since boyhood in amusement park carousel organs, McDonough was apprenticed for two years to one-time Wurlitzer organ repairman Ralph Tussing. The older the carousel organ, the greater the value

from the antique viewpoint, and Mc Donough says he has more business than he can take care of.

"Why do I do it? I guess I want to preserve what could become extinct. When I get those things playing, that's my reward." □

WHERE IT IS!

The cover photo on the June/July, 1978 issue of THE-ATRE ORGAN is the five-manual Wurlitzer at World Headquarters for the Wurlitzer Co. at Dekalb, Illinois. This information was inadvertently omitted.



Closing Chord



Norville Hall, veteran organist and pipe organ builder, age 68, passed away May 5th while attending a convention, in Detroit, Michigan, where he was giving a concert at an electronic organ. His death occurred instantly, on stage, as he was playing the concert.

Although he was born in Livingston, Alabama, he spent his childhood in Birmingham, living with his parents and four brothers and sisters. His family always had a piano in the home and he became interested in the piano at an early age. At about age 10 he was given permission to practice on the church organ at the Episcopal church where they were members.

After graduating from Phillips High School in 1927, Mr. Hall began working as an apprentice organ builder with Orla Allen, well-known organist and choir master for the Church of the Advent and a representative for the Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ company.

The Alabama Theatre was under construction and young Norville Hall, who was also an usher at the Strand Theatre, became a frequent visitor to the construction site. One night, after he had closed the Strand, he went to the Alabama and was invited into the building to see the Wurlitzer console which had arrived that day. The night the organ was completed, Mr. Hall was the



Norville Hall

first to play it and, in his words, "This was the greatest musical moment of my life."

In 1931, he attended the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, where he majored in piano and studied organ. Mr. Hall, in the depths of the great depression of the 1930s, began playing organ at a skating rink. He also played organ at a number of churches, theatres, night clubs and radio stations in the Chicago area.

In 1944 he returned to Birmingham and became staff organist for radio station WSGN. Also, during this year, he fell heir to Orla Allen organ business and in 1945 started

his career as a builder of pipe organs. It was during this time that he obtained the contract to maintain the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer and continued to do so until it stopped being used on a regular basis.

Mr. Hall was a member of the American Guild of Organists and the Alabama Chapter of ATOS. He was admired and respected by his many friends from all walks of life.

Though he is well-known for the many concerts he has given throughout the eastern and southern sections of our nation, his lasting tribute will be in the many churches whose pipe organs bear the plaque, "Built by Norville Hall and Associates."

Fred Feibel, Hall of Fame theatre organist, and one of the staff at the New York Paramount for seven years, died on May 16th at Vero Beach, Florida.

He was born in Union City, N.J., in 1906, and at an early age was a musician, playing several instruments for high school basketball games and dances. After playing organ in several theatres, he was named to the staff of the New York Paramount at the age of 21.

He served for 35 years as organist for the Columbia Broadcasting System on such programs as *The Goldbergs*, *Our Gal*, *Sunday* and *Starlight Theatre*. He did more than 8,000 radio and TV broadcasts before moving to Vero Beach in 1962.

Widely known as a composer, he had 100 original compositions to his credit, in addition to arrangements for musical shows and textbooks on popular music.

In his years in Florida, he played 22 concerts for several organizations, and founded a trust fund for scholarships in Indian River Community College.

Mr. Feibel is survived by his wife, Lenore, a daughter, and two grandchildren.

Lloyd E. Klos

Albert L. Heckman, organist in the Rochester, N.Y. area for over 35 years, died on June 21st.

Mr. Heckman served as WHEC organist in the forties. Following his radio career, he served as organist at Aldersgate Methodist Church. He is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter.

a tribute to pearl white

Pearl White died the other day. When I found out, I cancelled my own day; I wept and I wrote this note. In some ways this is a eulogy, in other ways a commentary on the sad state of so many of my fellow musicians.

Pearl wasn't a complainer. She survived two marriages, "Both," in her words, "rotten." In fact she survived many things and always smiled. I was eighteen when I met her in 1958 and she was forty-eight. We were on our way to try out the organ in the Belmont Theatre (now a bowling alley). She was in high spirits. It was to be the first time she had played any theatre organ in thirty years. This one, a Publix #1, had given her enjoyment in the late twenties. I remember she said, "I haven't played this organ in years." Well, she did play it, and wonderfully. Pearl White was playing the music in G^b and D^b long before it was an assigned task of George Wright imitators. They happen to be very good keys!

Born a virtuoso pianist, Pearl made piano rolls as a teenager. That was before the days of royalties; and, while coming from a wealthy family, she made nothing more than her original 'recording' fees. She was firstly a consummate pianist and her florid hands reflected the technique which eludes so many of us.

Musically, she was a humble genius. She was a child-like person. She was perhaps the most rhythmic theatre organ player I have ever heard. She had this musical "thing" of double-timing rag time melodies on the organ. It took a huge technique along with a fine rhythmic sense. It was *hot*. It was *fabulous*. Most important, it was *original*!

Like many organist-musicians, Pearl wound up playing in a bar. The place serves very good steaks. The management is terribly nice to the customers but not too gracious to the help. Pearl was "help," playing on a badly maintained, electronic organ to a mostly unattentive audience. She was overworked and underpaid. She died in her sleep. She had no bad thoughts about her job or her situation. I pray to God that I can be such a positive person.

I miss you Pearl. You play so well.

John Seng

Reynolds Galbraith, 1978 program chairman for the Valley of Sun Chapter, died of a heart attack in his Mesa home on March 8th.

Originally from the Pittsburgh area, Reynolds moved to Arizona about two years ago. Previously he had been both an evangelistic and theatre organist. He was active in the Valley of the Sun Chapter for a year and wrote an article for the local newsletter after his return from the 1977 National Convention. Galbraith appeared often in the Chapter Notes

from West Penn, Delaware Valley, and other ATOS chapters, in past issues of THEATRE ORGAN.

Galbraith has no survivors in Arizona. His memorial services were held in Pittsburgh.

Winifred Rhoades Emmanuel, concert and theatre organist in the Northwest for more than half a century, died in Seattle, Wash., June 12th, after a brief illness.

Mrs. Emmanuel, 70, began her

career as a theatre organist at age 13 in Lewiston, Idaho. Later she played in theatres including the Pantages in Spokane and the Seattle Fox, and in clubs throughout the Northwest in addition to doing regular radio concerts.

Her repertoire ranged from popular to classical music and she was known to play continuously for up to six hours without the aid of sheet music.

During the late 1960s, she gave concerts at the Food Circus in the Seattle Center. She played many benefit concerts including some at a Rodgers organ in her home.

She was born in Denver, Idaho, and had lived in Seattle for the last 33 years. Her husband of 32 years, Samuel J., survives along with cousins. □



the letters to the editors

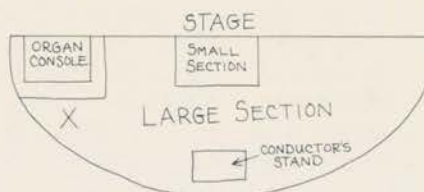
Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

Address:

George Thompson
Editor
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Salinas, Calif. 93902

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Greeting from one of the newest members of ATOS. I just received my first issues of THEATRE ORGAN and what a pleasure it was to see the article "The Fox Is Saved." I have played in the Fox many times and as a bass player, my spot on the bandstand was just in front of the console of that fine Moller. I don't



The organ lift, the main orchestra lift and a smaller section were all controlled from switches on the conductor's stand. The smaller section had room enough for a 14-piece band with a baby grand piano. A 50-piece orchestra was generally used for pops concerts at the Fox but the Met used a 65-piece orchestra during their spring tour. The author used to play in stage bands for the Met, and usually sat near the organ console (marked X) when playing with larger orchestras.

think a person who hasn't had the opportunity to hear or play music in the Fox can really comprehend or appreciate the superb acoustics of that theatre.

At the time I played there, the organ was in sad condition and I used to think what a shame to let something so noble in voice deteriorate like it had then. It is nice to know that something has been done to restore that voice to its true grandeur again.

I have enclosed a drawing of the

bandstand in the Fox as it was then. In the April/May issue the picture on page 37 shows a bench, but when I played in the Fox it had a seat as shown with the console pictured on page 38.

Best Regards
Jim Hopperstad
Citrus Heights, CA

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I have been a member of ATOS for fifteen years and would like to thank your organization for the immense pleasure which it has brought to me during that time.

It has been most gratifying to see how ATOS has grown and matured over the years and how it has taken on the difficult task of moving from organ preservation to theatre preservation as well. Were it not for the efforts of ATOS, many cities in this country would be much the poorer.

As is the case with anything we care deeply about, we always want it to be better than it can ever be. I find myself wishing that all ATOS chapters could accomplish what the

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