

Paramount to the unforgettable S.F. Fox . . . I'll play this record — the way it is, and enjoy the sounds of the mighty theatre pipe organ — the way it was.

Also looking forward to all future issues of THEATRE ORGAN, I remain

Your very truly,
John Mecklenburg
Central Indiana Chapter

Dear Sir:

I found the article by John Muri, "Our National Music," quite interesting. One thing which happened along the road to the selection of a National Song, or "Anthem," was overlooked. Mr. Muri was probably too young to have encountered it.

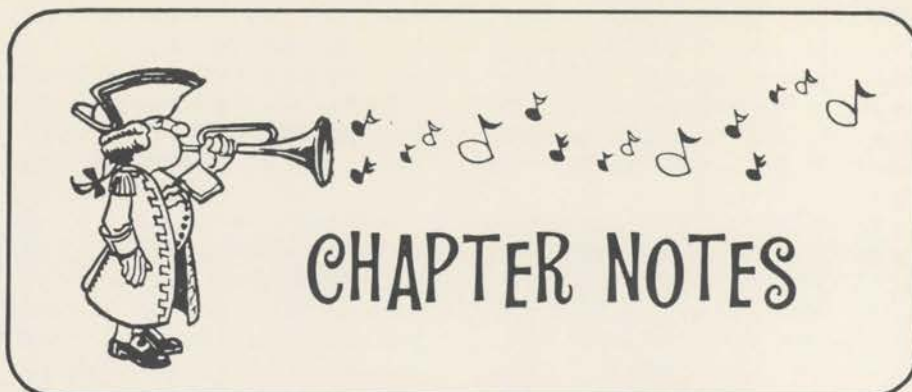
About the time I was in third grade grammar school (1911-12) a form of petition from the school children of the U.S. was being prepared. All school children were polled as to their preference for "The Star Spangled Banner" or "America The Beautiful." We were told that Congress would be notified of our vote when they took up the matter of legalizing our National Anthem. "America The Beautiful" won out because, to us, it was easier to sing and was more inspiring.

Congress voted the other way and the "Star Spangled Banner" was finally legalized as our National Anthem. The objection to "America The Beautiful," we were told, came from those with an anti-religion sentiment who complained that the piece appeared in "too many Hymnals" of different denominations. For that matter in recent years that has happened to "God Bless America" as well.

From years of playing in theatres, for large audiences, and, at the circus during patriotic pageantry, "America The Beautiful" brings the best audience participation, or response, and the most spirit. I, therefore favor that piece.

This same subject recently came up in the Retired Officers Association publication "letters" with somewhat similar results. It seems that there is a movement to finally make "America The Beautiful" our National Anthem.

Yours sincerely,
Harry J. Jenkins
Lt. Col. USAF, Retired
San Diego, Calif. □



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and versatility of numbers at the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer made for most enjoyable listening.

Our chapter was saddened by the passing of Norville Hall this past month. He was a valued and loved member of our chapter, having known the Alabama Theatre since it was constructed and actually helped to uncrate and install the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer in 1927. We will all miss him.

RIEDEL WEST

ALABAMA

May and June were very busy months for the members of the Alabama Chapter — all of us were involved in planning for the 1978 ATOS Convention. This is a team effort in every sense of the work, and I believe our chapter has the best possible members any chapter could want — nearly everyone has pitched in to make sure the "Alabama Day" is a success. Our monthly meeting for May was planned as open console to allow our various committees to get together and firm up the last bit of planning for the convention, and also to allow our members to try their talents on our 4/20 Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer. The music and planning were well-received.

For our June meeting, we were delighted to have Cathy Hoffman back with us. Cathy and her parents made the trip down from Bristol, Tennessee, and delighted our members with two programs. Her first stop was at the Don Cole's, in Northport, where she had a ball at the 2/6 Robert Morton that Don and Alleen recently installed. Our members in the western Alabama area were treated to a great performance by this young lady. Cathy's stylings, registrations



Cathy Hoffman, artist for the Alabama Chapter June meeting.

CEDAR RAPIDS

This coming September 1, CRATOS extends a big invitation to join us in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Paramount. It is in unbelievably pristine condition, having just been completely redecorated to exactly like new. True, it doesn't have palm trees, minarets, an Arabian Nights motif, star-studded ceiling, or elephant heads taunting the patrons, instead it is a non-

distracting house which accommodates whatever personal mood you brought in with you. It probably is the outstanding example for its age with the fewest changes in basic design of circa 1928 theatre architecture.

Present plans include a day-long celebration with Hector Olivera as the featured performer.

We believe that a lot of people will be surprised to find a theatre exactly as they remember it. We also wish to again reiterate our municipal gratitude to CRATOS member Peter F. Bezanson who gave the theatre to the city of Cedar Rapids as a Theatre for the Performing Arts.

Once again, the Paramount housed a near-SRO audience on May 20 for our 18th Silent Movie Night/Organ Spectacular featuring Ron Rhode. He played a nice program which was well-liked by the people. We were impressed with his use of original music which was free of distraction to accompany the Laurel and Hardy film. CRATOS is proud to proclaim a paternal interest in this young man.

LOREN FRINK

CENTRAL FLORIDA

Well, here it is finally, our first Chapter Notes. Bet you thought we'd never do it.

Our first meeting was held in March at J. Burns Pizza & Pipes, 103 E. Fowler, Tampa Fla. Approximately 20 ambitious members arrived and enjoyed the food, fellowship and organ music of Don Baker at the 3/25 Wurlitzer. An election of officers was held, the results are as

follows: Charles Stanford, chairman; Jan Bennett, vice chairman; and Tom Hoehn, secretary-treasurer. Since Don Baker resides in the area, a motion was made and carried to initiate him as an honorary member.

Our goal at the present is to find and install a pipe organ in the Tampa Theatre. Since the theatre has been named a national historical landmark, federal funds are coming into the cigar city to restore the theatre to its original condition, including the pipe organ. The three staff organists at J. Burns have volunteered, along with the management, to give a benefit concert for the Tampa Theatre organ.

Our second meeting was held at Stanford Music in April. Secretary Tom was in Sebring, Fla., concertizing so veep Jan took over the pen and scroll. Open console was held on the Conn 580 Theaterette. The chairman called the meeting to order and presented ideas for stationery and membership cards. The ideas were accepted and sent to the printers. A program chairman was elected, Bill Coffman of Lakeland.

Moving along to our third meeting, our members were treated to the splendor of the "Andalusian Bon-Bon" of the Tampa Theatre, complete with "doves circling in the balcony, peacocks preening on the organ grilles and Christopher Columbus discovering the orchestra pit," to quote Ben M. Hall. The meeting opened with a short concert given by Bob Lillie at the Wurlitzer Model 950 plug-in. Open console followed the regular business meeting after

which we toured the pipe chambers. It was discovered they could hold up to fifteen ranks instead of eight as per the original 2/8 installation plus use of the proscenium arch for percussions. It was decided at this meeting we would participate in a musical film festival at the Tampa to raise money for the organ fund.

For our fourth meeting we traveled to Lakeland to play the 2/4 Barton at the Carpenter's Home, a remarkably well-designed installation with the organ and chambers at the left side of the auditorium. Open console was welcomed by all. The regular meeting was held at Holiday Music in Lakeland, Fla. Our logo was submitted and accepted by the membership.

At this writing, we have thirty members and two Wurlitzers at our disposal. The J. Burns Pizza organ 3/25 and a 2/7 Style E at Central Music Warehouse, St. Petersburg, Fla. Our membership area includes a 125-mile radius from Tampa. Anyone wishing more info about our chapter, may contact us — P.O. Box 82419, Tampa, Fla. 33682.

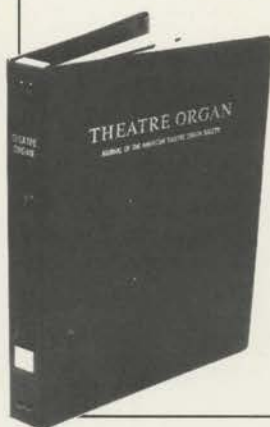
Bob Lillie of Holiday Music, in Lakeland, has consented to donate a Wurlitzer electronic spinet to us to raffle off at one of our benefit concerts. We are also in the process of getting our corporate and nonprofit status. Wish us luck!!

TOM HOEHN

CENTRAL OHIO

Dave Love and his mother, Martha, hosted our March meeting. Dave had his Hammond and Kim-

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ball available for our use. We enjoyed a fine concert by Dave and two of his students, Alberta Lipp and Ruth Chervier, attested his success as an organ teacher. With two organs available it was pretty much a night of duets. Tom Hobson and Stanley Jay are good in this area and we are always glad to have both present when more than one organ is on hand.

April was the "How Sweet It Is" month with our Wurlitzer at the Worthington High School sounding for the first time. Our program began with two movies from Willard Ebner's collection of oldies and a slide show presented by Bob Shaw showing some of the restoration of the organ when it was in a downtown warehouse plus the pictures of the actual moving of the Wurlitzer to the school. Secretary Tom Thornton said it best in his newsletter and I quote: "So folks, the last meeting was a high point in our work. We were all most happy. I think the expression on Stan Arsenault's face told the story. Stan, our closest contact with the school, had to have real wondering, was this thing really going to be worth the time and effort we were putting into it, and more important, would it be an asset to the school? That meeting let us all know it is worth it and will be a great joy to the school."

We have a long way to go to completion. Actually hearing the organ was what we needed to rejuvenate sagging spirits and bent backs. The adrenalin is running and it is now full steam ahead.

Going from our own pipes to electronic might seem like a letdown but not when the meeting is hosted by Dale Durthaler. Dale's Home of the Lowery Organ is a great meeting place but even greater when you get Dale's expert demonstration of the organs. Members were all over the studio enjoying, listening to and playing the multitude of organs. On leaving, Dale gave each family a copy of the Dennis Awe recording of the Lowery.

Our June meeting was a nice change of pace. We met at the summer cottage of Jim Hamilton along the Muskingum River near Zanesville for a potluck picnic and games and Honda riding. A very pretty and nice place to be on a hot summer day. In the evening we went to the

Zanesville home of Rosemary and Bob Hamilton to enjoy their 3/21 Morton. The guest artist was Earl Reisdorff. A pre-med student, Earl plays a 3/9 Kimball at the Lamplighter Restaurant in Olmstead Falls, Ohio. Many members were aware of his adeptness at 'trilling' — not too often heard on a pipe organ, and outstanding solo pedal work. Also a composer, Earl played his own tune, "Forever Yours," arranged in the 1940's style of pop ballads. Open console followed Earl's concert with many members taking part.

Our congratulations to Heidi James on her election to membership in the American society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (A.S.C.A.P.).

IRENE BLEGEN

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

In May, we were introduced to Rex Koury in concerts at the Thomaston Opera House. His first performances in Thomaston were most enthusiastically received and justly so. We were treated to a program which was varied, well-chosen, generous, and truly artistically executed.

To the obvious delight of the audience, the program was liberally interspersed with music of several of the enduring composers; Tsaikowsky, Bizet, Herbert Friml, Chopin and Thomas. We are seldom favored with such musical variety. The program covered the musical spectrum with classics, standards, and contemporary selections.

A special delight was the "Grande Valse Brilliante" (Chopin), very nicely keyed to the organ. For an "extra," requested by Rosa Rio, was the *Gunsmoke* theme music, composed by the artist and, he said, played by him about 4,000 times. Heard in its entirety, it becomes an enjoyable composition.

Rex Koury was with the late Jesse Crawford for awhile in New York, so our program included, as a tribute to Crawford, musical pieces most frequently featured by him, all done in the Crawford style, and very well, too. Victor Herbert and Rudolf Friml were given a place on the program with selections from their operettas from both stage and screen. It is obvious why their work remains

popular through the years.

The final scheduled number on the program was a masterful rendition of the "Carmen Suite" (Bizet). The opera house Marr & Colton organ was given a real workout with this one, and both organ and organist shone brilliantly.

Needless to report, after this rare treat, we called it an evening, but not without having our concert committee chairman, Stillman Rice, announce that Mr. Koury will be back next year. Good news, indeed, and "thank you," Mr. Koury.

Our June meeting was held at the home of Preston and Bea Miller in Glastonbury, Ct. Open console was the order of the afternoon. At 7:30 p.m., Chairman Ray called the business meeting to order and went through the items expeditiously, so that member Allen Miller, our chapter founder, could get on with the promised concert on his own pipe organ which he designed and built. This is a remarkable instrument and an outstanding example of Al's technical capabilities.

His musical talents are also noteworthy as we once again enjoyed an hour of Al's fine arranging and playing. We especially enjoyed hearing him play his very own instrument.

Al will appear with Tom Gnaster in formal concert at the Thomaston Opera House on September 22nd and 23rd.

The Scholarship Committee, this year under the chairmanship of Tom Gnaster, took considerable satisfaction in this year's competition. The playing this year was outstanding. Senior competition winners were David Senak, 12, of Bristol, first prize, and Ronald Fabry of Shelton, second prize. Junior competition winner was Cheryl Larri-vee, 12, of Waterbury.

WALLACE F. POWERS

DAIRYLAND

In May, members and friends were treated to an excellent concert by Kay McAbee at the home of Fred Hermes.

Kay started out with a medley from *Carousel* to show off the versatility of Fred's Wurlitzer. His program also included two excellent classical pieces.

Aside from the music, our host

explained to us that it has taken him twenty-two years to get his installation looking like it does. Recently, Fred has been adding to the decor of the place by installing parts of a leveled Racine theatre. The organ out of this theatre is being installed by club members at the Racine Theatre Guild Building. He has installed some of the grillwork in front of his swell shades and is presently working from the organ pit to the rear of the theatre. Probably, if all goes smoothly, he'll be done in another twenty-two years.

Our project at the Racine Theatre Guild is coming along fine and should be ready in early 1979.

Member Perry Petta is really starting to make a name for himself. In May, he played a concert for CATOE at Downer's Grove High School and is also playing at the Organ Piper in Milwaukee. Not bad for a teenager. Well done, Perry.

Clark Wilson, the new organist at Pipe Organ Pizza, played a concert at the Genesee Theatre in Waukegan, Ill., for our June social. The Barton Organ was completely rebuilt by members of CATOE from a water soaked mess. Both the organist and the organ received a well-deserved round of applause from members who attended.

WILLIAM CAMPBELL

EASTERN MASS.

How does one do justice in describing the talents of our spring concert artist, Eddie Weaver, who made his fourth appearance in May? It was evident that he is a very talented organist who has played theatre organ continuously for over 50 years. Few others have such a record! This exuberant showman is a witty, humorous personality with an unusual ability to tailor his programs to please all musical tastes. Between playing pipes two shows nightly at the Richmond, Va. Byrd Theatre Wurlitzer, concertizing, broadcasting, recording, and entertaining at a Hammond at the Miller & Rhoads Tea Room, there is no shortage of energy with Eddie.

Eddie's program on our club Wurlitzer was a real crowd pleaser with something for everyone. Those busy hands and feet made our organ work with constantly changing combi-



Eddie Weaver at the Stoneham Town Hall 2/14 Wurlitzer, explains how Chopin wrote the "Minute Waltz."
(R. Schweiger Photo)

nations for endless tone coloring and appropriate use of traps and percussions. He remembered the earlier radio days with the beautiful theme of the Firestone program and that of TV's *All in the Family*. For novelty, he played Chopin's "Minute Waltz" with a large timer near the console, and the 60-second buzzer sounded just as our veteran organist played the last note — a dead heat.

The youngsters present were not forgotten as Eddie showed that theatre organ is "right with it" (as he is) by cleverly playing familiar music with a disco beat, including "The Hustle."

Charlie Clarke supplied a fine old silent comedy, *The Blacksmith* with Buster Keaton, allowing our old pro full scope with marvelous cueing. A further nostalgic touch was a brief sing-along. Eddie received a hearty and deserving ovation for his excellent program and we were rewarded with the lively "Granada" as a fitting encore.

The second weekend concert was on the Stoneham Town Hall 2/14 Wurlitzer. Two bus loads of senior citizens who were in attendance for the afternoon performance were among those welcomed, including all mothers, by Chairman Royal Schweiger. He expressed thanks to Art Goggin and his crew for the many hours spent in getting both organs concert-ready, and then introduced our artist. Eddie gave a similar concert without the silent (too much light) and introduced a clever vari-

ation in playing one number, then a second, followed by both simultaneously. Our seniors responded heartily to the brief sing-along with many in good voice, and his thoughtfully planned program had music appropriate for both Mothers' Day and Sunday, which gave further balance to his program. The concerts were over all too soon for this rare career theatre organist of the older school who has kept pace with his constant playing. Eddie explores the organ and is in tune with his audiences.

May 27 was our regular meeting night at Babson with Royal "at the helm." Tim Holloran introduced our artist of the evening, Dr. Jonathan Kleefeld. When Jon is not at Massachusetts General Hospital as a skilled neuroradiologist, he is happy on the bench of a theatre pipe organ. His pleasure in performing is very evident in his playing as well as his avowed "wedding to this mass of wood and pipes, for a long time," he hopes.

His program was well thought out with numbers of Leroy Anderson, Broadway showtunes, old favorites, movie music and other listenable tunes, tastefully registered, resulting in long applause and an encore.

Sunday afternoon at Babson, May 28, was a casual open house gathering around the Wurlitzer with several playing members, including our ex-theatre organist, Len Winter. He included a "Name-That-Tune" segment as well as a request session.

Rosalie and Pat Fucci had their annual cookout for EMC members and guests on Sunday, June 11. Their hospitality extended to the basement where resides a 4/19 Robert Morton. Pat and Charlie Clarke showed slides of the organ's rebuilding as well as a number of short subjects, followed by several having a go on the bench as a perfect close to the event.

Our final meeting until September occurred at Babson, June 24, again with Royal in charge. Program Chairman Holloran introduced member Tim Bjareby as our evening artist, giving a thumbnail sketch of his organ background. Tim's best-known teacher was Miss Doris Tirrell, a regular on the Boston airways "back when."

Tim has changed and improved his style along with commentary between selections. His program showed very careful planning and the fitting of available tone colors to best advantage. His first selection was in the style of Ken Griffin with little improvising, following closely to the melody. "I Never Knew," in the Jesse Crawford mold, was next and both could easily be identified. A typical beginner at the piano was well-imitated at the organ. The balance of his program were nice arrangements of Cole Porter, George Gershwin and old favorites, including the complicated Brahms's "Hungarian Dance No. 5." Tim also included a tango with all the required traps and percussion in skating-rink tradition of playing. His good form earned him long and appreciative applause by an attentive audience, resulting in a nice encore.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

HOUSTON AREA

Past chairman of the Houston Area Chapter, William H. Tunstall, has left Houston to accept a position as building manager of the Buckner Square Office Park in Shreveport, Louisiana.

A native of Mobile, Alabama, Bill and his wife, Mary Jo, came to Houston about six years ago. During their stay here they made many friends and were active in various musical groups. They were instrumental in helping to organize the Houston Area Chapter last summer.

Bill and Mary Jo are truly dedi-



William Tunstall (George R. Hockmeyer Photo)

cated theatre organ enthusiasts and they are missed by their fellow members in Houston.

On April 1st Danny Ray took over Jerry Bacon's duties at Pipe Organ Pizza's 3/31 Wurlitzer after Jerry returned to Dallas after a little more than a year in Houston.

Danny, who comes to Houston from Landmark Pizza & Pipes in Dallas, where he put in two years as musical director and organist, has already made many friends among the Houston pizza and organ lovers. Shortly after his arrival he joined the Houston Area Chapter.

Born in Ft. Worth, Texas, Danny was a music major at Texas Christian University. Here he studied church music, concentrating mainly of the pipe organ. His initiation to theatre organ was at the famous Casa Manana, where Rex Koury played a concert several years ago on the 3/11 Wurlitzer which had originally resided in Fort Worth's Worth Theatre.



Danny Ray (George R. Hockmeyer Photo)

Although Danny collects and listens to theatre organ recordings, he has developed his own style. He greatly admires the work of George Wright. Danny believes Houston has a great potential as a city of many theatre organ enthusiasts and looks forward to working with members of the Houston Area Chapter.

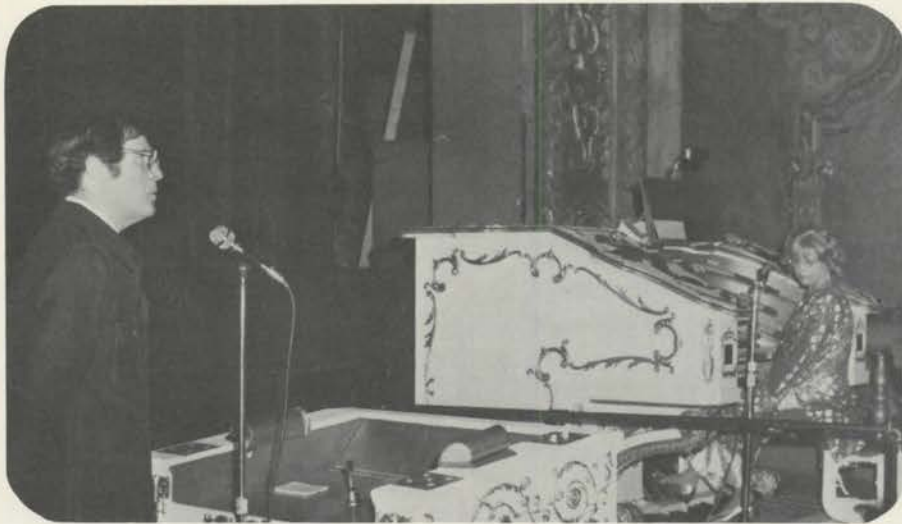
GEORGE R. HOCKMEYER

INDIANAPOLIS

The chapter May meeting was held at the Anderson Music Co. in Anderson, Indiana. Tim Needler was the artist of the day, playing Bruce Thompson's 2/6 Wurlitzer and everyone enjoyed his playing as always. His program consisted mainly of Cole Porter selections and a closing rendition of "Waltz of the Flowers" from *Nutcracker Suite*.

The news media has it that the beautiful old Indiana Theatre has been saved from the demolition squad and is in the hands of the city of Indianapolis. This will be the new home of the Indiana Repertory Theatre. The Indiana is to undergo some remodeling but the Spanish Baroque of glazed terra cotta tiling and interior Grand Corridor will be preserved. The Indiana Roof Ballroom (past home of the big bands and name performers) will be used for a convention center as well as for social events. It is nice to know that the profound efforts of many can still save something beautiful from the past and put it to good use for the future.

The June meeting was held at Frank and Francis May's home in in Kokomo. There was a good attendance and the day was a success. The wonderful 4/18 Barton installation in the Mays' home is really something to be proud of. Frank has worked on this installation for sixteen years. He certainly turned out a beautiful product. An electronic string bass and a side pull-out drawer which houses a synthesizer was added. It is a magnificent sounding instrument and has a nice easy-playing action. The artists of the day were Carroll Copeland, Ken Double and Tim Needler. Carroll, for an opener, played a medley of nostalgic hits. Ken then played a mixture of new and old including Barry Manilow's "I Can't Smile Without You." His arrangements were interesting



Husband-manager Bill Yeoman narrates as Rosa Rio plays soap opera themes at Rockford's Coronado Theatre. (Bill Lamb Photo)

and very enjoyable. Tim then joined him on the Hammond "H" in a jam session playing old-time standards. Tim couldn't stay away from the pipe so finished off with a beautiful arrangement on "This Nearly Was Mine" from *South Pacific*. Open console followed.

BEE BUTLER

LAND OF LINCOLN

On June 15th, Rosa Rio appeared in concert at the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Ill., in *Rosa By Starlight*. She did an excellent job on many concert numbers, but the outstanding feature of the evening was a nostalgic look back to the days of the radio 'soaps,' when Rosa played the background music for many of the old favorites. Husband-manager Bill Yeoman, narrated while Rosa played the old themes on the 4/17 Barton, and slides of the stars of the shows appeared on the screen. She closed her appearance with a splendid performance of Ferdie Grofe's *Grand Canyon Suite*, while pictures taken in the depths of the canyon were shown in wide-screen splendor. Comments from the audience indicated that everyone enjoyed an evening of great entertainment.

Everyone in LOLTOS is looking forward to October 22nd, when the 51st birthday of the Coronado will be celebrated with another great variety show. Myron Floren of *The Lawrence Welk Show* will be the featured attraction, Chad Weirick will be the organist, Jay Marshall will emcee. The Great Lamberti will

provide us with balancing feats, and De Yip Loo, World's #1 Chinese Magician will confound all present with amazing magic.

Restoration of the usher signal system at the Coronado is now complete, which also includes signals for the artists in the dressing rooms from the switchboard back stage. We would be interested in how many of these signal systems are still working around the country. If you know of one, please write to LOLTOS, c/o Coronado Theatre, P.O. Box 118, Rockford, Ill. 61105.

BOB SCHMOOCK

LONDON AND SOUTH OF ENGLAND

We have had the pleasure of having our mutual good friend Lowell Ayars over to establish a significant first on the British organ scene — a home pipe organ tour. Playing British Comptons and Christies in three residence venues, he also gave two delightful musical evenings at Wurlitzer Lodge, home of Edith and Les Rawle. Lowell also played the Compton in the Regal Cinema at Henley-on-Thames. He gave another concert at the very fine sounding Compton/Christie organ in the Town Hall at Ossett in Yorkshire — which was supported by a chapter coach party from the London area.

What else is there to say about the great George Wright that has not already been said so many times over. When he comes to London for his first pipe organ concert, the answer is — plenty.

Having him in person in our best theatre, on our 'Anglicised' Wurlitzer, and before our own audience, added a whole new and unexpected dimension to our already fullsome appreciation of this sensational and legendary star, on the celebration of our first birthday.

As it turned out, George is particularly fond of London, took an instant liking to our favourite 4/16 'Torch' Wurlitzer in the famous Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn in North London, and was a sellout attraction several weeks before concert day on Sunday April 30th.

This was the day that so many of the British theatre organ fraternity had awaited so long — the day when we would be able, for the first time, to hear George at a Wurlitzer organ in England. Never before, in its colourful 40 years can the Gaumont State have been the focal point for enthusiasts from all parts of the country and indeed from several parts of the world (including the Netherlands, Spain, Australia and the USA), and it certainly was most heartening to our chapter, as well as the theatre management, to see the 1,800-seat auditorium filled to capacity with so many dedicated and appreciative people. We were also delighted to have West Coasters Judd Walton and Bob Jacobus with



Lowell Ayars during his home pipe organ tour in England. (John D. Sharp Photo)



George Wright and Len Rawle prior to George's concert at the 4/16 Wurlitzer in Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn. (John D. Sharp Photo)

us, who had come over especially for this concert.

Opening with his up-beat rendition of "I Got Rythm," George's programme was a mixture of his greatest standards carefully and delightfully blended with modern and lesser-known items. Chosen almost on-the-spot to match the mood of the day, every number drew its own particular appreciation, all characteristically in the 'Wright' touch; all combined to provide a feast of musical charm and delight. Each was played in absolutely exquisite, if mainly muted, stylings and registrations.

George showed that his most delectable tones are produced by small registrations, often with merely two to four stops and with the shutters only just open. Thus, he was able faithfully to reproduce so many of the sounds which have long been familiar to us through his records. The tonal percussions and traps also became particularly effective when they were not drowned by massive sound.

The famous Wurlitzer had never sounded as it did on this momentous occasion, for at George's request, considerable attention had been given to it during the week prior to the concert, with George himself donning overalls in order to help re-set the tremulants to provide the shimmering splendour that we were all able to enjoy so much.

At the conclusion of his performance Edith Rawle, current Honorary ATOS member and our energetic chapter secretary, presented George with an engraved silver salver

in appreciation of his first visit to Kilburn.

This most exciting day was then rounded off with a delightful dinner at a nearby hotel — in what was also effectively the first mass social gathering of chapter members.

Two more discs have emerged on the Amberlee label — which interchanges with Doric. The British label that is run by Organ Enthusiasts for Organ Enthusiasts, is the highly successful and appreciated venture of chapter members John Peters and John and Noreen Foskett.

Our universally popular transatlantic member David Hamilton, now resident in Chicago and giving musical promotions and presentations throughout the world for Conn, has cut *David Hamilton in Conn-cert* (AEL 205) featuring the three-manual Conn 651 with Conn electronic pipes and electric band. This is almost certainly David's best disc to date.

Simultaneously appearing is the long-awaited *By George* (AML 310) featuring the outstanding talents of our member George Welling — entertaining at the strident 3/8 Wurlitzer until recently in the Granada Theatre in the London suburb of East Ham. As well as being a bright and exciting display of musical choice and musicianship, this also provides the first up-to-date recording of one of the famous Granada fleet of 3/8 Wurlitzers that were the highlight of the imaginative organ policy of this noted British theatre chain from their inception in the mid-1930s.

Our monthly chapter at home meetings, mainly held at Wurlitzer Lodge, are highly popular and well-attended. Live organ music, chat, records, tapes, silent films and slide shows have all been featured.

Good news, too, on the organ front itself from two other well-known chapter members — Father Gerard Kerr and George Harrison. Together they have most successfully transplanted the delightful vintage Compton formerly in the Rialto/Granada Leytonstone in East London to St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in nearby Hornchurch, Essex. Opened and dedicated during the 1976 ATOS Safari, this instrument is a frequent and popular chapter attraction and currently consists of seven conventional pipe ranks plus two ranks of harmonics for synthetic reeds (Krumhorn, Clarinet and Baryphone). By adding a relay to the top (coupler) manual it is now intended to add a further seven ranks to be operated from this manual and the appropriate work is already well-advanced.

On a sad note, we mourn the passing of our member Ernest Houlden, a life-long devotee of the organ and organ music. His technical knowledge of organs, theatre as well as traditional, was very extensive and over the years he had amassed a vast collection of data on installations and specifications which has been bequeathed to the Royal College of Organists. In the mid-1930s Ernest was invited to join the committee of Bernstein (Granada) theatre circuit organists — which notably also included Reginald Dixon — to devise the specification of the famous and distinctive Granada 2 3/8 Wurlitzers subsequently installed in their theatres in the London suburbs of North Cheam, Harrow, Clapham, Greenford, Welling and Slough — of which that at Clapham is probably the best known, and the fine example at Harrow is now maintained by our well-known chapter members Les and Len Rawle. In more recent years Ernest wrote a masterly 'Treatise on the Wurlitzer Organ' which was serialised in the Journal of the Cinema Organ Society (COS) — and which it is hoped that the COS will soon re-publish in booklet form. His passing is a great loss to the theatre organ world.

NORMAN BARFIELD

LOS ANGELES

An organ concert played by officers of the chapter was held on April 30th to promote a scholarship fund. The cause was the late Joe Koons Scholarship, a memorial to the wonderful guy who was for 10 years a one-man ATOS chapter in his organ-equipped cycle shop in Long Beach, Calif.

The organists were 1978 Vice Chairman Mike Ohman; Liaison Chairman John Ledwon; Chairman Bob Power, and Program Chairman Rod Skelding, the latter being a recent import from Great Britain.

We had prepared what we felt was a fitting and witty account of this extraordinary event for display here. Then we received our June/July issue of THEATRE ORGAN and discovered that Dinny Timmins had scooped us with an account of the concert written in his semi-ignorant style which tells the whole story, despite lousy spelling and a syntax we can't begin to cope with. Therefore, readers who want to find out (or review) what happened on that fateful April morning at the LA Wil-

tern Theatre we refer you to page 17 (Dinny's Colyum) in the June/July 1978 issue of THEATRE ORGAN. Scooped by — Ulp! — Dinny Timmins! Gad!

May 21 was a day of triumph for Candi Carley. It was the day of her first major pipe organ concert, played at the Wiltern Theatre for the LA Chapter. Her story was told in a recent issue of THEATRE ORGAN so we won't repeat. It suffices to state that Candi is blind. Therefore, the organ crew had been extra cooperative to make certain Candi had all possible advantages. One was to mark every stopkey on the console stoprail with a self-adhesive label marked in Braille. Her program in Braille was taped over the console's ATOS nameplate. Candi was ready.

Yet a lot of things went wrong. The Wiltern projectionist, who was supposed to run the spotlight and channel the PA system through the house speakers, failed to show. Crew members jumped in to fill the void.

Candi came up on the 4/37 console as though nothing was wrong and took her audience along with her. Here was a blind girl playing



Candi

(Max Herr Photo)

one of the largest and most complex organs in southern California, in complete control. Her varied program had something for all tastes.

"Is she really blind?" was a frequently heard question as the audience filed out. It was difficult to believe, so skillfully had she performed. Yes, in one sense she is sightless. But there are compensations and an inner sight. Candi Carley has them, and more.

On Friday, May 19, a plane load of LA Chapter members safari'd 500 miles northward to the Bay Area to visit organ installations. First stop was the Cap'n's Galley in Redwood City where Tom Hazleton did the honors at the 4/18 Wurlitzer. Next stop was the Avenue Theatre where surprise artist Ann Leaf played a concert on the 3/14 Wurlitzer. Next day it was on to Daly City where Warren Lubich presided at the Pizza & Pipes 3/22 Wurlitzer. After that it was the Pizza Pub in San Raphael where Larry Vannucci did his stuff.



Elmer Fubb hands out worthless "prizes" to concert participants Mike Ohman, John Ledwon, Bob Power and Rod Skelding. (Zimfoto)

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October 31 — Indiana University Auditorium, Bloomington, Indiana
November 4 — Dort Music Center, Flint, Michigan
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December 1 and 2 — Emery Auditorium, Cincinnati, Ohio
March 24 — Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana
March 25 — Civic Opera House, Chicago, Illinois

On Sunday morning some went to a Grace Cathedral service during which the huge Aeolian-Skinner was heard. Others went to Concord for a session with the Bella Roma Pizza's Wurlitzer. The two groups converged at Ye Olde Pizza Joynte in Hayward in the afternoon to hear Ann Leaf at the 3/12 composite Wurlitzer. There was ample time for sight seeing and shopping between shows. The group planed back to Los Angeles on Monday morning. All agreed that Ralph Meeker did a fine job of organizing the excursion.

The LA Chapter manned a booth at *Keyboard World Magazine's* May 18-24 "Home Organists' Adventure," through the courtesy of publisher Bill Worrall. The event was held in a Pasadena hotel. Chapter members Annie Olive and Ralph Beaudry made pitches in behalf of pipes and ATOS to the predominately plug-in oriented visitors.

On Saturday, June 17, at 8:30 p.m. former Radio City Music Hall Organist Ashley Miller performed for the chapter at San Gabriel Civic Auditorium. It was Ashley's first concert on the 3/16 Wurlitzer and he explained how pleased he was experimenting with all the colors available.

For the next two hours he proved his musical prowess with outstanding arrangements, an Ashley Miller trademark.

MIKE OHMAN

MAGNOLIA

It is with sadness that we must announce the passing of two avid supporters of the theatre organ, Jeff Seale, of Laurel, Ms., and Norville Hall, of Birmingham, Ala. Both were members of the Magnolia Chapter.

Jeff Seale, perhaps the quietest of the theatre organ enthusiasts and whose deeds and contributions spoke louder than any spoken word, passed away April 20, 1978. Jeff had the best of any home installation in the state, and perhaps the Southeast. Jeff spared no time, energy nor money to have the best that could possibly be. With the aid of Senton Granberry, and Tuddy Soley, he achieved just that.

Dolton McAlpin, Starkville, Ms., played a concert on Sunday afternoon April 16th. Jeff passed away while listening to a tape of that concert. There is no doubt that Jeff will be missed.

Norville Hall, a long-time organ mechanic, and an organist of the silent movie era, passed away on May 5th in Michigan. As reported in past issues of THEATRE ORGAN, Norville played at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, and at the time of his death was active in the repair and maintenance of organs. Many times in the past Norville helped with the tuning of the Robert Morton in the Temple Theatre prior to a concert, and without his help the job would not have been completed on time. This writer was most impressed by his knowledge, and his willingness to share that knowledge. The Alabama Chapter will be most vacant without him.

On May 22, 1978 the Magnolia Chapter celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Saenger's Temple Theatre in Meridian. It was a tough go after the Robert Morton suffered another dousing from the air-conditioning in September of last year. A lot of hard work on the part of a lot of members brought the organ back and playing on Thursday night, four days before the celebration. Without the hard work of Frank Evans, Pop Evans, Marl Cobler,

Sam Feltenstein, Tuddy Soley and Jeff Seale, the job would not have been completed.

Reproductions of the original 1928 program were available for sale, and there are a few that are still available. Please send \$1.25, to cover cost and handling, to Tommy Darsey, 2217 25th Ave., Meridian, Ms. 39301.

The opening day program was duplicated as closely as possible. We were not able to obtain a print of the original movie, *We Americans* so the second movie to be shown at the theatre *Speedy* starring Harold Lloyd, was featured. The organist for the evening was Tom Helms, of Pensacola, Fla. The standing ovation that he received after the show speaks of his talent better than words can say.

As previously reported, Major Jack Moelmann is leaving the Mississippi area. Jack has been an integral part of the rebuilding of the Saenger Theatre in Biloxi, now used as a fine arts house. Numerous concerts have been held by Jack, at his highly modified Hammond, in an effort to raise funds to refurbish the house, and this job has almost been completed. The Magnolia Chapter would not be what it is today without the aid of Jack. We will miss him.

TOMMY DARSEY

MOTOR CITY

Our Second Sunday program at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor featured Steve Stephani in May and Bob Cowley (from Springfield, Ohio) performing at the 3/13 Barton in June.

Rupert Otto was the artist at the 3/16 Barton for the Fourth Sunday at the Royal Oak Theatre, and John Lauter did the honors in June. Open



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National Yamaha Competition winner Lance Luce displays his trophy won at the finals in Los Angeles.

console follows each of these regular chapter activities.

Rex Koury returned to the Royal Oak Theatre for a two-night engagement in May. He accompanied three silent two-reel comedies in addition to his concert selections. It was evident from the response of the audience that they enjoyed his program.

Our giant two-day garage sale and paper drive at the Redford Theatre in June netted the chapter over \$3600 which included the profit on over 14 tons of newspapers collected by members and supporters of the Buy the Redford project. Many chapter members provided continuous music at the console of the Barton throughout the event. Theatre tours were available for any who were interested.

Our first bi-weekly film series proved to be profitable so a second

series of eight films began the end of June. Each evening features a top box office attraction of the past, with a few in 70 mm and 6-channel stereo sound. Chapter members will continue, as in the past, to provide the organ overture and intermission music throughout the series.

In June, chapter member Lance Luce won the National Yamaha Competition in his division (Senior I) held on the campus of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

After first winning the local competition, Lance won out over 24 other entrants at the regional competition in Wisconsin, enabling him to compete in the finals as one of the four regional winners. The prize was a \$2000 cash scholarship and a trophy. Lance hopes for a career on the concert circuit.

DON LOCKWOOD

NOR-CAL

The Johnson's Alexander Vineyard Winery in Healdsburg, California was the site of the May meeting. The Johnson family, our gracious hosts, opened the winery doors, picnic ground, and 2/7 Marr and Colton to us. Members and guests kept the bench occupied all afternoon with continuous music. Visitors to the wine tasting room were intrigued with constantly changing organists. Not every ATOS meeting can be so pleasant and accompanied with that unique wine keg fragrance.

On June 11 at the Capn's Galley in Campbell, California, Larry Vanucci entertained about 250 members and guests with his fine theatre stylings! Larry has a tremendous following which was further increased after the Sunday concert. He is a polished and versatile mu-

sician adept at pure entertaining. "In the Mood" and "Lady Be Good" selections demonstrated his excellent arranging. The Latin melodies and marches had to be heard to be appreciated.

The organ is the former Buddy Cole 3/26 Wurlitzer/Robert Morton. Bill Breuer's technicians had worked hard to have the instrument in top shape for the concert.

Following the concert, open console was held. Lori Fraser, a new, young talent, played for us the first time. She is a student of Marian Richie and is well on her way to becoming a fine musician. Ten other members entertained us for an hour.

An afterglow was held at the home of Dave Schutt in San Jose. Featured was his 3/10 Robert Morton, a grand piano, a pump organ, a new shiny Hammond, and a room full of musical antiques. Needless to say, the musical sounds continued to flourish for hours.

JIM DUNBAR

NORTH TEXAS

A regular meeting was held at Gene Powell's Organ World in Garland on June 25. Business involved a few modifications of our by-laws, including separations of the officer positions by dropping "chairman-elect." If the membership so desires, it can keep a chairman for as many terms as it desires. The announcement was made that two new members, Neil Gower, of Plano, and Dr. Robert Lloyd, of Dallas, raised our roster to an even 100 members.

Most of the progress so far on our ex-Loew's Jersey City Wonder Morton has been verbal and on paper. The main result of meetings, besides learning a lot of detail about the varied and myriad facets of the



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Chairman Charles Evans beside the Wonder Morton console. (Koski Photo)

refurbishing and installing of the instrument, was a feeling of closer cooperation and team effort among the members.

As mentioned, many of us need more training and experience in leatherwork, woodwork, metalwork, electrical wiring and crafts and skills found in organ work. Details will be left to the leaders of the various work sessions. The site committee will be making an evaluation chart to determine which location gets the best overall grade. We have already had several offers of potential sites, and they need to be evaluated before the October 1st deadline set by Site Committee Chairman Gordon Wright. There are many things to be considered, not the least of which is financing. Secretary-treasurer Lorena McKee's financial report at the meeting indicated we are keeping our head above water and making our loan payments, but we still have a good distance to "swim" and need all the help we can get, financially and otherwise.

The June 25th session at Organ World concluded with cameos by

three of our talented organists, Grace Lerner, Bob McGilvery and a rousing finale by Gene Powell at his Organ World theatre organ installation.

JOE KOSKI

OREGON

In April we had the opportunity to hear nationally-known Rex Koury at Bob Burke's 3/13 Wurlitzer. This organ was acquired by Bob from the Criterion Theatre in Medford as a 3 manual Special Style "D" in 1963. It is a basement installation, clearly speaking up into a beautiful living room through a very large floor grate. The organ is now 13 ranks including a Post Horn, plus a piano, and represents a most successful transplant into an existing home.

Rex Koury, a veteran theatre organist, played a varied program ranging from nostalgic tunes such as "Blue Skies" to selections from *Star Wars*. A special bonus was "Center City USA," a march composed by Rex to inaugurate the installation of the former NY Paramount 4/36



Rex Koury at Bob Burke's Wurlitzer in April.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

Wurlitzer in Wichita, Kansas. Rex's playing is ultra-smooth and professional, with excellent registration.

Thanks to Bob and Laura Burke for their hospitality and the use of this magnificent organ.

On May 21st we assembled at Benson High to hear a new member, Marti Lynch at the 3/18 Kimball. As previously reported, several ranks have been added to each of the two chambers, their stop tabs located on the back rail, with couplers required to assign them to different manuals as desired. This, plus the console location making it difficult for the organist to hear the left chamber, usually requires several sessions to get acquainted with this complex but beautiful sounding instrument. But because of school activities, Marti was limited to only a last minute study of this organ. However this handicap was not at all apparent in her superb playing.

Marti Lynch has appeared on radio and TV throughout the Midwest and was on concert tour for



Marti Lynch at the Benson High School Kimball.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

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Hammond. She had been in semi-retirement in Florida while raising a daughter, has now moved to the Portland area and plans to resume her career. Her style is quite unique, combining fine theatre counter-melody with fresh modern harmony — the best of both worlds. An unusual feature is the artistic non-use of tremulants. Her phrasing and expression are exquisite, whether punching out a fast rhythm number or a sentimental ballad.

Marti's carefully planned program was arranged in groups, each with it's own theme and appropriate numbers.

Our chapter is proud and happy to welcome this most talented and charming lady. Florida's loss is Oregon's gain.

BUD ABEL

PIKES PEAK AREA

The PPATOS is eagerly anticipating the completion of the Chief Theatre organ in Colorado Springs City Auditorium. As usual for organ projects we are well behind schedule but we will still be done in time for the planned dedication this fall. The organ has now filled the new chambers and winding and wiring are underway. The purchase of a second blower from a Montana theatre will ease our installation by alleviating long and inconvenient windline runs. There will be a blower on each side of the auditorium running directly up to the chambers.

Many of our talented members will be performing for the local chapter of the Amateur Organ Association International. We will be playing for the group in the home of a local music store owner on an electronic organ. The program will be a good chance to see "how the

other side lives" and to recruit some new people to our cause.

SCOTT CHRISTIANSEN

POTOMAC VALLEY

Monthly concert-meetings of the chapter alternate between Virginia and Maryland to accommodate the geographical separation of suburban membership. In April 70 members met at the former First Presbyterian Church, in Ellicott City, Maryland. The church, originally constructed in 1844, was rebuilt in 1894 after it collapsed while under restoration. In 1959, the building was donated to the Howard County Historical Society. The imposing, stone faced edifice, has been preserved as a museum.

Of particular interest to the PVC was the Hilgamacher (Erie, Pa.) 2/9 tracker organ, installed in the original church in 1850. The tracker console is now set on a raised platform in the main auditorium of the restored building. The organ has mechanical intermanual couplers and a manual to pedal coupler — all mechanical. Since these fascinating instruments operate on low wind pressure of 2 to 2½ inches, voices are subdued and very pleasing to the ear, particularly in the relatively small room into which the organ speaks. Originally hand pumped, it was only recently equipped with a blower.

Bob Stratton, Lem Keller, Don Johnston and Marshall Stone spent many hours repairing and tuning the tracker. Frank Harris made the arrangements that permitted us to hold the meeting at the museum.

The concert portion of the April meeting was informal. Ron Kragler and Michael Britt, with no prior practice time to familiarize themselves with the different "feel" and

action of keyboard and pedals of a tracker type, demonstrated the capabilities of the instrument, playing appropriate classical selections and a sprinkling of popular tunes. Charles Affelder played at open console.

May 19-21 was a memorial weekend of organ music away from home in another aura of a backdrop of history. Saturday evening at the Williamsburg United Methodist Church, Marcia Koller enthralled our group with a varied program of light classics. She showed to advantage the full capability of the 2/23 Moller and her mastery of it. She is currently a lecturer in organ at the College of William and Mary.

Our own Earl Sharits followed and despite the lack of tremulants and only a "nodding acquaintance" with the Moller, made the church ring with theatre style tunes, old standards and musical film numbers. He studied with Johnny Winters at the Colorado Theatre in Pueblo, and by 1927 was the youngest featured organist in that state. Earl came to Washington in 1934 and worked with the IRS for 37 years.

Sunday afternoon, Frank Lybolt was the featured artist at the 3/15 "Johnson-Kimball" in the Williamsburg home of P.K. and Annis Johnson. Much of the organ was built by Mr. Johnson, including the console and some pipes. Though the Kimball is not a theatre organ, Frank thrilled guests with light classical numbers. Frank showed the wide range of his skill and easygoing style by responding to requests which were in the popular theatre style. Those joining in for open console included host, Mr. Johnson, Earl Sharits, Ron Miller, Ted Ansink, Marion Long, Layton Fordham, Margaret Martin, and Delores Dyke.

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PUGET SOUND

The chapter continued its spring program in May by proceeding north to Bellingham to hear a concert by Gunnar Anderson on the 2/10 Wurlitzer in the Mt. Baker Theatre. This was followed by lunch and a drive to Mt. Vernon, approximately halfway between Bellingham and Seattle where the Lincoln Theatre still houses a Wurlitzer Style D Special. Jeffrey Fox of Bellingham, who has been spending his weekends restoring the organ, did a concert there.

Other concerts of interest have been the two sponsored by Granada Organ Loft at Bellevue Pizza and Pipes: Helen Dell in May and Bill Langford of the Pizza Joynt in Hayward in June.

Our pre-summer programming will conclude with a July concert at Seattle Pizza and Pipes by Ashley Miller, as a finale of his west coast tour.

The 3/8 Wurlitzer from Seattle Center, formerly installed in the Food Circus, was auctioned by the city on May 4th. High bidder was member Bill Carson, who also manages time after his regular work to keep the three area Pizza and Pipes Wurlitzers functioning.

GENNY WHITTING

RED RIVER

The local educational TV station, KFME, has a new way to begin their Friday night double feature of old movies. It starts with film of the Fargo Theatre marquee and then moves into the theatre itself, showing various angles, while our chairman, Dave Knudtson, plays the Wurlitzer. The big velvet curtain opens, and the organ music fades into the movie overture. Also, this spring,

the Coordinated Arts Fund Drive had the Wurlitzer for background music for their TV ads, as Lance Johnson played an abbreviated version of "Petite Waltz."

On June 20th, Ted Larson, instructor of film studies at Moorhead State College, brought a group of high school students, who are taking a summer theatre workshop, to the Fargo Theatre for a special program. After introductions by Dave Knudtson and Ted, our own "Incomparable Hildegard" played a short concert for the kids who gave her their rapt attention and a standing ovation. She began with silent movie music, without the movie, so they could form their own movie from the music. Following a break, Ted introduced Lance, who scored a silent comedy feature. The students toured the theatre and were given a demonstration of the organ. They asked many questions. Hildegard talked with them and told of some of her experiences getting started in her career, and of the famous people she had met, such as Jimmy Stewart and other film stars.

After summer vacation, our first project will be to install a lift at the theatre. It was donated to us last spring and will be undergoing a few changes to resemble a Barton four-poster.

SONIA CARLSON

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Our chapter is overjoyed with the idea that we have been able to purchase our very own Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. It is a 2/6, Opus 1370, that was installed in the Legion Theatre in Alamosa, Colo. The name was later changed to the Rialto. This piece of Colorado music history has the reputation of being one of the

last regularly used theatre organs in the country, mainly due to the efforts of one man, the late Joe Brite. Joe was theatre manager and organist and many a theatre organ buff made his pilgrimage to Alamosa to see and hear this historic instrument.

Our efforts began a few years ago when Joe was killed in a holdup. We helped obtain his song slides and projector for the ATOS National Library and made inquiries as to the future of the organ. The theatre owner was contacted and asked to donate or sell the organ to us for preservation. Unfortunately, even after repeated letters and phone calls, the owners sold the instrument to a well-known organist, Ron Rhode of Phoenix. We then contacted Ron who agreed to let us have first option to buy should he ever sell it. We had in mind that this might happen some time in the future. Well, it happened in April of this year, and we were given the option to buy the organ.

Our board of directors discussed the possibility, but saw no way of raising the money within the allotted time of April 23, 1978. It was announced at the last meeting held at the Aladdin Theatre and lo and behold, a miracle happened. One of our newest and most active members, Ivan Duff, agreed to loan the chapter the money. With this new source of funding, an emergency board meeting was called and voted unanimously to accept the offer. The organ is part of Colorado theatre history and preserving organs is one of our chapter's stated objectives. It would serve to be a unifying project for the chapter which has gained momentum in the past couple of years, has been involved in other successful activities and is gaining a national reputation. The ranks are:

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97; Clarinet, 61; Tibia Clausa, 73; Vox, 61; Chimes, 18.

There are no percussions. At this writing there are two crews enroute to pick up the organ — one to Phoenix and one to Alamosa and we hope the Phoenix crew meets the Alamosa crew and all will get to Denver at the same time 'cause they only have one moving van.

Work on Fred Riser's Wurlitzer is progressing better than average. As soon as the wires are connected to the main box, we're gonna turn 'er on and stand back.

FRANK R. GANDY

ST. LOUIS

Jim Grebe, chapter historian, and his wife Dolores hosted the May meeting in their home. Jim's pride and joy, a 2/8 Kimball theatre pipe organ, is on the lower level of their home. It was originally installed in 1921 in the Wheaton, Illinois, Grand Theatre (now known as the Wheaton). In 1937 the organ was reinstalled in the Kankakee, Illinois, Presbyterian Church until 1976

when it was replaced by a Keates classic organ of 30 ranks. Jim obtained the organ and with a lot of help from his friend, Bernard Nordmann, another chapter member, began the tedious fifty-three-week job of installation, voicing and tuning. Bernard was also the guest organist for this meeting and he demonstrated with first-hand knowledge all ranks, percussions and an infinite number of registrations as he skillfully played a program of show tunes. The evening was concluded with open console.

The June meeting was in reality a going away party at the home of Anne and Fred Pillsbury honoring their 3/19 Wurlitzer theatre organ which they have sold. The organ was originally built for the McVickers Theatre in Chicago. Pillsbury sold the organ to make room for another Wurlitzer, the famous 4/26 (originally 21 ranks) organ from the now-closed Ambassador Theatre in St. Louis.

The evening of this June meeting was special in many respects, but



Gerry Marian, one of St. Louis' most talented organists.

the professionalism of so many of the guests present enhanced the enthusiasm of the entire group. Bill Bartlow from Rushville, Illinois, was a guest who has a 2/12 Wurlitzer in his home where St. Louisians have spent many enjoyable hours. Bill Hansen of Quincy, Illinois, and Harry Hoffman of St. Louis were there and had spent many hours before the meeting preparing the organ for the occasion and their efforts proved invaluable. The guest organist, John Ferguson, was the former chapter chairman and presently pizza organist in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He expertly played a full program with something special for every taste.

During open console, former San Diego pizza organist Jack Jenkins, who is now minister of music at the Granite City Baptist Church, took his turn followed by Joe Barnes, formerly of Rochester. Leo Kikendall from Springfield, Illinois also played.

Gerry Marian, former organist on



Jim Grebe at the console of his 2/8 Kimball which he refers to as 'My Lady of the Lower Level.'

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the 4/36 Crawford Special Wurlitzer at the St. Louis Fox Theatre for many years as well as many other organ spots, then took over the console. It was quite evident why Gerry is considered one of the most talented organists in this area. He knows the capabilities of an organ and how to get the most out of one. Gerry studied music at Meremac College and Washington University and was for many years associated with the St. Louis theatre organist, antique collector and TV comic Stan Kann, who now lives in California.

BILL ANTHONY

SAN DIEGO

These are exciting times in San Diego. The organ installation is moving along with Ray Krebs directing a dedicated volunteer group which works every Wednesday night and Saturday morning. The organ can make sounds now; and very soon it will be ready for tuning. The old California Theatre will once more

resound to the beautiful sounds of organ music.

One Sunday last spring we met at the home of Ray Krebs in Mira Mesa. After many hours of tedious work, his two-manual Wurlitzer is in playing condition and sounds beautiful. It was a treat enjoying open console and seeing his collection of player pianos.

A few weeks later several of us went to a Joe Koons benefit concert held in the cycle shop in Long Beach. Several professional artists as well as a number of the regular Saturday nighters took turns at the 3/34 Wurlitzer Welte pipe organ installed in the back of the shop.

Our spring concert was a big success. The 3/12 Wurlitzer at Organ Power Pizza sounded beautiful when three of our own talented chapter members performed.

Tim Kriefels, started the program with several medleys, including show tunes, sweet ballads, oldies-but-goodies and closed with "The Impossible Dream."



Gerald Nagano at the Organ Power Pizza.

(Ed Minder Photo)

Leslie Wolf, a young organ teacher, church organist and advisor to Young Keyboard Artists, continued with a wide range of tempos and stylings.

Following intermission Chris Gorsuch, popular staff organist at Organ Power, finished the concert with gusto. The Wurlitzer responded beautifully to his changes in mood and tempo.

Maria Kumagai did an outstanding job at the Wurlitzer for our April concert at Organ Power Pizza. She has a special talent which can easily transport one into another world — a world of nuances, expressed with delicate sensitivity.

A week later our chapter met at the home of Tim Kriefels in La Jolla. Following an abbreviated business session, music filled the air as member after member entertained at the three-manual Rodgers.

In late April we had a tour of San Sylmar the "Tower of Beauty — a unique treasure house devoted to the concept of beauty." Unlike other museums everything here is completely restored and in use. Mr. and



(L to R) Chris Gorsuch, Leslie Wolfe and Tim Kriefels at the Organ Power Pizza.

(Bob Cochrane Photo)

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FRANK CIMMINO
Organist

Mrs. J.B. Nethercutt are proud and happy in their ongoing project of collecting and restoring beautiful objects to their original condition, and sharing their use with all those who love and appreciate beauty of sight and sound. We heard live concerts here as well as a computer concert on the 1926 three-manual Wurlitzer. Many noted organists have played here and their tapes have been added to the computer bank, so during tours there is always a concert, even without an artist present. Our thanks go to the Nethercutts and their organization for a wonderful experience.

On Sunday afternoon, May 7th, Gerald Nagano, an exciting and dedicated young organist from Los Angeles, took command of the three-manual Wurlitzer at Organ Power Pizza. Jerry captivated his audiences with his charming personality and his ability to produce entertaining organ music. His concert covered a wide range of tunes and tempos to please everyone.

In June members of the chapter met at the California Theatre, in downtown San Diego. We got rid of the business in a hurry so that we could, for the first time, admire, play, listen to, talk about and share our joy for our very own pipe organ — a gift from Sandy Fleet.

Wayne Seppala played the organ as the curtains parted, unveiling our Style D Wurlitzer surrounded by the volunteers who worked hours and hours to install it. Following the unveiling Colonel Jenkins, a retired serviceman, still going strong as an organist despite arthritis in one hip and pins in the other, did a mini-concert which took us back over the years.

June 25th was Ashley Miller Day in San Diego. What a day; perfect in every conceivable way from Organ



June 25 was Ashley Miller Day in San Diego.
(Ed Minder Photo)

Power Pizza in the afternoon to the California Theatre in the evening. We had a bonus concert by Ashley for those who had attended the afternoon concert. We were totally enthralled by the beauty and sounds of our now perfectly-voiced organ. The master musician wove his sound magic with ease and dexterity as exemplified in "The Flight of the Bumble Bee."

What a day, what a way to close our concert series for the summer. Ashley Miller, for using your terrific talent in such a beautiful and generous manner to make us happy, we thank you.

GWEN O'CONNOR

SIERRA

Saturday morning, May 6th, found about 40 enthusiastic chapter members aboard a chartered bus headed for Reno to hear Rex Koury. What excitement! Imagine a whole afternoon with Rex who was to play for us at three different organs — including one in his own home. We felt privileged indeed.

We stopped at Boomtown, a casino just across the California border

in Nevada, for brunch and a chance to "win or lose a few" before reaching our first destination — the home of Fred Beeks and his three-manual Wurlitzer-Smith where Rex Koury was scheduled to give his first concert at noon. He was a little late, which gave us the opportunity to hear a young man, nearly blind, give us a mini-concert at the grand piano. Then we listened to a perforated tape which actually played the Wurlitzer.

We were primed and eager to hear Rex's magic touch and gave him a warm welcome. He didn't disappoint us as he made many familiar tunes come alive in his special style. He ended his concert with several arrangements of "When the Saints Come Marching In," including a jazzy piano version on the electrically-coupled grand piano.

Then we headed for the First Baptist Church of Reno, where Rex presides at the specially-designed Artisan "straight" electronic organ. He was as much at ease playing "How Great Thou Art" as he is at great movie themes.

Leaving the church, our bus followed Rex's red pickup truck out of Reno southward to the Koury home at the base of a snow capped mountain peak. We all squeezed into his home and again listened to the master as he involved us in a group of sing-along numbers on colored slides. Then we laughed our way through a silent comedy as Rex cued each scene with appropriate songs and sounds.

There was more fine organ music ending with Mrs. Koury inviting us for dinner, served buffet style.

The music didn't stop there for some of our members played Rex's Artisan and others discovered another organ, a Thomas electronic, in the family room. We also discovered a stack of Rex Koury records and



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eagerly purchased most of them. Some wouldn't give up until we coaxed Rex to the Thomas and then to his piano.

We are indeed fortunate to have such talented members as Rex Koury and several excellent pipe organ installations available for our frequent enjoyment.

SOONER STATE

Now it can be told! Things were quiet in Tulsa early this year because of our long faces — the American Christian College, home of the 3/10 Robert Morton where we'd had many delightful meetings, was to be closed and the organ put up for sale. Could we raise the money to buy it? And if we did, where would we put it? Time was running out; if we bought it, we had to remove it by May 31st. We're a small group — could we round up enough people to take it out by then? Here was probably our last chance to acquire a theatre pipe organ of our own, right in our back yard — IF we could do it.

Well, we did it! After much discussion, and being told about all the problems we would face, we came up with an acceptable bid and the Robert Morton was ours! Our May meeting started on Mother's Day at 4 p.m. (all the speaking pipes were out and the small ones wrapped by 8:30 p.m.) and lasted for the next ten days! We did have lots of help: Phil and Laura Judkins; Bruce and Martha Wilson and sons Derek (age 11) and Deshayn (age 5); Lee and Dorothy Smith and son Jeff; Jim and Helen Reel and son Tony; Bill Roberts; Bob Busby; Harry Rasmussen; J.B. Ellis; Joe Crutchfeld; Sam and Nona Rhoades; Paul Lynch; Bob and Betty Weddle; Harvey Young; Drs. Raymond Maguire and Jim

Routsong; John Roberts; Gene Robinson, and Fern Dean — all contributed many muscle-hours, when and where their work schedules permitted. By Sunday, May 21st, everything was out and in storage except the relay and switch stack. We took one night off to recuperate, then came back Tuesday to do the rest.

The organ is in storage for now, but we expect to find a suitable home for it so it can be heard again before too long.

DOROTHY SMITH

SOUTH FLORIDA

In May, we gave "Welk"ome to Bob Ralston, for matinee and evening concerts on the Gusman Hall Wurlitzer. Lest the reader form an erroneous opinion, let me state that while Bob has champagne taste in music, it was not champagne music that Bob coaxed from the sometimes balky beast. A T.O. concert was promised and T.O. style music it was, to the delight of those who braved the tropical downpour to attend. A professional musician, Bob quickly earned the respect of the skeptics, playing around the occasional cyphers, while charming his fans with his personal magnetism. Bob's sunny show more than made up for the dreary, wet day. A champagne toast to this trooper, mit lots of bubbles!

Fr. Bill Biebel needs no introduction to most lovers of the Jesse Crawford, Don Baker, Gus Farney, Lyn Larsen styles of playing. We were fortunate to corral Fr. Biebel for one of the few concerts his Bishop allows him to give each year.

The Andre Wurlitzer, in Bob and Vivians dream-come-true hall, never sounded better.

Was it the magic of the evening, or the artist, or the electric moon,

that prompted begging Bill Biebel, theatre organist, for encores? It was a very enjoyable, relaxing evening of scrumptious arrangements, crying tibias, wailing voxes and mesmerized members.

Our thanks to a very gifted artist. And, "It's only a hobby," he says!

STEVE FITZGERALD

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

The first Sunday in April, 1978 was a most strikingly beautiful day in the Sun Belt when the Southeast Texas Chapter held its meeting at the ornate Jefferson Theatre in Beaumont where the second half of *The Mark of Zorro* was shown on the smaller of two screens, accompanied on the famous Robert Morton pipe organ by Al Sacker. We were delighted to have several visitors to be with us and enjoy this superb silent film.

Again, we thank Nick Harper, our program chairman and projectionist, for providing his expertise and the film. Our business meeting mostly concerned a proposed trip to spend a weekend in Baton Rouge, La., as the guest of Don May who has been responsible for the maintenance of the fine 2/6 Robert Morton pipe organ in the Paramount Theatre, where a fine friend, Dolton McAlpin, once presided at the console.

The next day, we continued our journey to New Orleans and the beautiful Saenger Theatre to be the guest of Dr. Barry Henry and hear and play one of the greatest of them all, the 4/26 Robert Morton, which was the prototype of the later famous Wonder Morton (which, if you recall, were five in number and installed in the New York Metropolitan Area). The Wonder Morton from the Jersey City Theatre is now the property of the North Texas Chapter and



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The May meeting was devoted to a board of directors meeting, open console and delightful refreshments, at the Jefferson Theatre. This meeting gave members an opportunity to relax with the Robert Morton.

The Robert Morton console, which was mahogany for only five years of its fifty-year history, was disassembled in May for complete restoration and refurbishing.

The June meeting was in the form of a summer picnic, held at the home of Ralph and Ruth Lindholm with good ol' Texas barbecue as the entree. Don Lyons of Lyons Music Co., the local Hammond Organ dealer, performed at the Hammond Concorde organ along with Spence Adams, Ralph Lindholm, Thelma Debes, Ruby Holleman Monore, a former Jefferson Theatre organist, and several others. A grand time was had by all.

AL SACKER

VALLEY OF THE SUN

May was a busy month from beginning to end — especially for Program Chairman Don Reasor. We found out just how capable an organizer he really is!

The chapter presented a program at the Mesa Organ Stop Pizza restaurant as part of our monthly social meeting. The program was presented without charge, and the public was invited. We featured four young local artists at the 3/25 Wurlitzer — our own vice-chairman, Steve Schlesing, Lynn Staininger of Tucson, Dave Broskowski (who filled in for another organist at the last minute), and chapter member Michael McCullough of Scottsdale. These young people gave excellent performances, presenting a variety of music. Special thanks go out to Organ Stop owner

Bill Brown, restaurant manager Nita Seamen, and Organ Stop's featured artist Ron Rhode for their cooperation and assistance in making our program a success.

Friday, May 19th through Sunday, May 21st, we were on the move. Members of the Southern Arizona Chapter joined us on a chartered bus for a weekend excursion to the Los Angeles area. We started the weekend by attending a George Wright all-request concert at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium on Friday night. We returned to San Gabriel Saturday morning for a closer look at the Wurlitzer installation and open console. Our host was Bob Hill of the L.A. Chapter. Our lunch stop was at the Great American Wind Machine Restaurant in Reseda, where we munched on pizza and sandwiches while some of our members played the 2/13 Wurlitzer.

The most breathtaking part of our weekend was our tour of the Merle Norman Cosmetics Tower of Beauty at San Sylmar.

Saturday night we heard the 4/24 Wurlitzer at Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo while watching some old-time silent and sound comedies. Sunday morning we attended a concert at the Wiltern Theatre in L.A. which featured Candi Carley. We were back in Phoenix by 10 p.m. Sunday night.

Also in May, chapter members gathered at the Don Reaser residence for a farewell party for our vice-chairman, Steve Schlesing. He left at the beginning of June on a world tour with a musical group from his church.

It was silent movie time again in June, at Gammage Auditorium at Arizona State University. Several chapter members gathered there to hear Lyn Larsen play an original pipe organ score for *The Phantom*



Michael McCullough made his pipe organ debut at Organ Stop.



Lynn Staininger — youngest performer at VOTS program.



Steve Schlesing also emceed VOTS Chapter organ program.



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Dave Broskowski filled in at last minute notice.

of the Opera. The movie was good, too!

We held our June social meeting at Phoenix College, where past chapter chairman Bill Hagey performed a varied program of organ music on the college's partially restored 2/9 Wurlitzer.

At our June-July board meeting, Michael McCullough was appointed vice-chairman to fill the vacancy left by Steve Schlesing.

For the rest of the summer, we will be mostly occupied with the completion of our organ restoration project at Phoenix College. We still

hope to have a dedication concert on the instrument before the end of the year.

MADELINE LI VOLSI

WOLVERINE

Our May meeting was at the Fabulous Fox Theatre in Detroit, with Gary Reseigh at the console of the 4/36 Wurlitzer. The long-awaited concert (nearly 2½ years after the re-premiere) began not in the auditorium, but in the lobby with Don Jenks at the 3/13 Moller for a nice "warmup" concert.

The 5000-seat auditorium had been relamped prior to the occasion, as was the giant spherical chandelier in the center of the dome. After a brief introduction, the console appeared on the stage lift, center stage, against a star-studded, dark-blue background. The lift descended to stage level and the console, mounted on the band cart, moved forward to the orchestra lift as Gary played his opening number. The program was well performed, widely varied and well-received.

On June 25, the Flint Capitol Theatre Organ Club and several of our own members traveled to Fr. Jim Miller's residence to see, hear and play his 2/7 Barton.

Our First Saturday programs have been gaining attendance each month, and the summer months seem to have no deterrent to folks who drop in at Lansing's Michigan Theatre to hear the 3/11 Barton. In May, Scott Smith and Fr. Miller performed an all-improvisation concert. In June, Barry Rindhage and Dave Dunlap, from the Flint-Saginaw area, split a program. Highlighted were several interesting numbers, including some live violin solos, accompanied by the organ. July was the 50th Anniversary of our Barton, and we celebrated by premiering a new star at the console, the very talented Gary Wick of Holly, Michigan.

Da Capo Inc. continues its efforts to purchase Lansing's 57-year-old, 1500-seat Michigan Theatre for use as a performing arts center, including Barton Opus 206. The building itself is architecturally fascinating. It houses not only the main auditorium, but a two-story arcade. A former bowling alley lies beneath the whole affair. John Eberson designed this theatre (originally the Strand) with the intention that it be a cultural center. Da Capo director, Tom O. Thompson, intends to see it return to that capacity, as does the Wolverine Chapter.

SCOTT S. SMITH

RON RHODE

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