

list is the absence of enough unification to take full advantage of the 11 ranks. This may be solved by the purchase of an electronic relay. Ken says they expect to have the Austin fully perking by next summer.

"We get constant support from the school and faculty," advises Ken. "They are very enthusiastic about the whole organ project."



Can anyone help Jon L. Busch, manager of the Wheeler Opera House Theatre in Aspen, Colorado? He says that the authorities of the city-owned house want to acquire a theatre pipe organ and will guarantee it a safe home. "We have plenty of chamber space available. The 1889 structure features a 445-seat auditorium, and includes a horseshoe balcony." Anyone who can assist can write Mr. Busch at the theatre in Aspen, Col. 81611.



From New Hartford, N.Y. Kenneth Gardner, who is a former chief engineer of Rochester's WHAM writes, "I knew organist Tom Grierson well. I was in the control room at the time of the RKO Palace opening as well as for his Thursday night radio programs after the final show of the evening. That was in the late '20s. He also worked in our studios and broadcast from the First Universalist Church at Clinton and Court.

"We broadcast a lot of organ music in the old days, and I became acquainted with Bob Berentsen, Bea Ryan, Harold Gleason, Helen Anker (our staff organist and pianist), J. Gordon Baldwin, Hugh Dodge, and Ed May, just to name a few. After placing mikes for broadcasting the Eastman Theatre orchestra, I used to climb onto the bench with Bea Ryan and watch the movie while chatting with her as she played. I was fascinated by pipe organs, and after I got acquainted with Bryant Parsons, Sr., who lovingly took care of the Eastman Theatre organ, the Kilbourn Hall organ, and the student practice organs in the Eastman School, I used to delight in prowling through the organ chambers as Bryant explained their workings." □



Let us know what's happening in YOUR Chapter!

Send Photos and News to:

GEORGE THOMPSON
P.O. BOX 1314
SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902

Deadlines

Jan. 1st. for Feb./Mar.
Mar. 1st. for Apr./May
May 1st. for June/July
July 1st. for Aug./Sept.
Sept. 1st. for Oct./Nov.
Nov. 1st. for Dec./Jan.

ALABAMA

The hot and sultry days of a southern summer lingered with us in Alabama, and we of the Alabama Chapter enjoyed a lazy meeting for our September get-together at the Alabama Theatre. This was an open console meeting to allow our mem-



Frank Evans (pictured here at the Jeff Seale studio organ) played for the October program at the Alabama Theatre.

bers to try their hand at trying to tame the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer (and hope we might discover a budding Hector Olivera in our midst). For all of us amateurs it is really a treat to get to try our hand at an instrument such as the Alabama Wurlitzer. It makes us appreciate even more the great job that our "work crew" under the care of Larry Donaldson and Chuck Hancock does in keeping this instrument in such good shape.

Our October meeting was held on a beautiful Fall Sunday morning. Our guest artist was one of the founders of the Magnolia Chapter in Meridian, Mississippi, Frank Evans. Frank and his father were the backbone of the restoration of the Robert Morton theatre organ in the Temple Theatre in Meridian, and Frank is the Temple organist now. Like most of us, Frank began his organ studies on electronic instruments, and at one time operated a Hammond Organ studio in Meridian.

Frank had a very versatile program for us at the Alabama Wurlitzer. His opener of "Paramont on Parade" was followed by "Alabama Bound." From there, eye opening Frank put "Big Bertha" through her paces with a variety of numbers, including one of my favorites "Butterflies in the Rain." He is a most versatile musician and we were pleased to have him for our October program.

RIEDEL WEST

BLUEGRASS

Monday, September 25th, we joined with Chairman John Landon for the official inaugural concert of his 3/10 theatre pipe organ. Artist of the evening was John Muri, 1977 ATOS Organist of the Year. Members of the Lexington Chapter of



It's Dues Time

See Page 17 of the Oct./Nov. Issue for details on how to pay your dues for 1979.

Don't Miss an Issue!



the American Guild of Organists were also guests for the evening. More than forty people were present for a program which varied from Theodore Dubois "Toccat" to selections from *My Fair Lady*.

A similar concert was held the following evening for friends of Dr. Landon's including some members of the faculty at the University of Kentucky. More than fifty persons were present the second evening making a total of more than 100 persons who heard John Muri at Landon's organ.

Each guest was given, in addition to a copy of the evening's program, an informational brochure about

Landon's theatre pipe organ and a one sheet flier advertising the Bluegrass Chapter of ATOS. Additional copies of the brochure about the organ are available to ATOS members from Dr. Landon.

CENTRAL INDIANA

The September meeting was held at one of our favorite places, Manual High School. After a short business meeting, Paul Roberts brought us all into focus on the inner secrets of the mechanics of the pipe organ. With Tim Needler assisting on Man-



Rob Calceterra played the 3/14 Louisville at Manual High School in September.

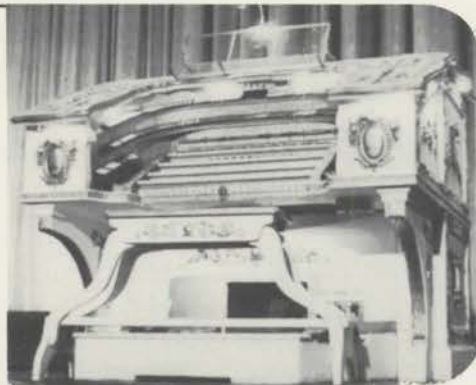
ual's 3/14 Louisville theatre pipe organ, Paul held up the various pipes and blew into them. Tim then demonstrated a suitable musical sequence for each pipe. It was very interesting and enlightening. How nice to enjoy the beautiful sounds from these magnificent instruments and at the same time understand how they are produced. There are to be more of these sessions in the future.

Rob Calceterra was our artist of the day and presented a marvelous program. His appropriate opener was "What a Wonderful Day." Rob's interpolation of "Doll Dance" was cleverly interlaced simultaneously with "Paper Doll." Standards followed, and the final selection was on the classic side, Widor's "Festival Toccata." Thunderous applause resulted in an encore rendition of "Around the World in 80 Days." The footwork displayed was superb. A standing ovation was awarded Rob Calceterra for his efforts. He is an amazing young man who studies, teaches and directs so many different groups. He is, at present choirmaster at Cathedral St. Raymond in Joliet, Illinois, where he also teaches and gives private instruction. Among other numerous doings he managed to find time to write the musical score for an animated TV movie. He is one busy,

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

members of J.A.T.O.E.

and the Rialto Theatre Joliet, Ill.



Holiday Greetings

Southeast Texas Chapter



SEASON'S GREETINGS
from your

South Florida Chapter

Season's Greetings

TO ALL OUR ATOS FRIENDS

Jason and the Old Prospector



talented young man, and we wish him luck.

The October meeting was held at St. Joan of Arc Church. The artist was Tim Needler at the 3/14 Kilgen. Tim was at his usual "best performance" and presented a varied program that highlighted the versatility of the pipe organ. Tim's versatility was quite noticeable!

Word is out that the Pizza Pipe Organ Palace is progressing. The organ is being shipped from California about the first of November and when the installation is completed it should be the largest in the country. We are looking forward to the opening.

BEE BUTLER



The late Bill Bendler. He was a dedicated member of Central Ohio.

CENTRAL OHIO

In the accompanying photo, Bill Bendler is seen at the key relay that he built for our Wurlitzer. It attests his dedication to our cause. Almost every Wurlitzer work day found Bill present, lending his skills to completing the renovation and installation of the organ. Shock and sorrow were deeply felt by COTOS when we learned he had suffered a fatal heart attack on Friday, October 6th. He had been preparing to participate in the formal concert for our meeting two days later at Somerset, Ohio, and had been pleased with the slide, prepared by Ralph Charles, that read "Sing Along with Bill Bendler." His death leaves a void in our chapter.

In July we had our first meeting at a cattle farm. Karen and Marvin Boerger were our hosts at their farm in Irwin, Ohio. Karen, an organ teacher for twelve years, played a number of selections at her Gulbranson Premiere before turning the remainder of the concert over to her

student, Cheryl Schieder, a most promising organist.

The contented cows did their bit too, providing the cream for the fabulous home churned ice cream plus entertaining the children during the milking session.

In September we were at the home of Ginny and Ed Lawrence for our annual meeting and picnic. As always, it was a day of fun. Charles Prior, Jr. played the formal concert and exceeded what we have come to expect from him. An unexpected treat came from our teenage member Kevin Sowers. Accompanying himself at the organ, Kevin sang a number of hymns and pop tunes. He has an excellent voice and charmed his audience.

Meeting at the home of Leona and Ralph Charles and having the use of their Robert Morton is always a joy. There are now two glittering revolving balls hung from the ceiling and the chimes have been moved from the chamber into the room. Displayed from left to right are the calliope, Robert Morton, grand piano and player piano. With all of

this plus our potluck meal, it was a very special day.

Much has been going on at the Ohio Theatre. Because of our energy problems last winter the Jubilee Celebration of the 50th birthday of the theatre was postponed until this fall.

In September the spotlight was on the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Evan Whal- len, the Morton organ with Dennis James and the grand piano with Heidi James. The orchestration for all instruments was admirably accomplished by Heidi and the performance of her original composition for the Harold Lloyd *Safety Last* movie was a tremendous success.

In October the celebration continued with a stage show headlining Bob Hope, Vic Damone, Ginger Rogers, Carmen Cavallero and others. It will be included in Bob Hope's TV Special on December 3rd, over national network. One of the spectacular events of the show was Dennis James at the organ, as proved by the tremendous ovation he received.

IRENE BLEGEN

The October 8th meeting was held at the home of Ralph and Leona Charles, near Somerset, and where his beautifully-voiced 4/20 Robert Morton is installed. Opening selections by Kenny Winland were followed by a husband/wife duet featuring a melodia with organ accompaniment. Featured keyboard artists included Lois Hayes, Tom Johnson, Bob Shaw, Bob Tyo and Kevin Sowers. Last, but certainly not least, were highly entertaining organ/piano duets by Betsy Richards and Ralph Schuttenhofer.

Our 3-manual Wurlitzer renovation at the Worthington High School continues to be a prime Sat-

Season's Greetings
and a Merry Christmas
to your group from ours...



Toledo Chapter ATOS

Season's Greetings

from

Southern Arizona Chapter



urday project. The completion of the stop tab releathering and replacement of stop contact wires virtually assures console readiness for a limited organ performance planned for our November meeting. Due to the unstinting efforts of Willard Ebner the right chamber installation is proceeding with duct work, chest and air regulator mounting. Modernization of organ circuitry will include new solid state relays on universal plug-in circuit boards, accessible for testing and trouble shooting.

JOHN R. POLSLEY

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Our August meeting was held at Melody Hill, the home of Stillman and Claire Rice. Open console at the Allen digital organ gave all who wished to do so a chance to try this latest marvel of electronics.

Following dinner, Chairman Norm Ray again managed to get our business over with in proper time and turn the meeting over to Program Chairman Paul Taylor at 8 p.m.

We had been advised that Paul Taylor had a guest "mysterioso virtuoso" artist scheduled for the evening. We were, of course, extraordinarily delighted when Paul introduced, as guest artist, none other than Ashley Miller. This talented, gracious man goes far out of his way to do good things for people. It is always a pleasure to be in his company.

Ashley was most generous and played fourteen numbers for us. As always, his arrangements were great.

Some of the selections that appealed especially to this writer were the opening medley of "rain" songs and a medley of songs by Jobin. At the end of the program all present

made very clear their appreciation of Ashley's time and effort in giving us such a wonderful finale to our day's program.

On September 22nd and 23rd, our chapter members and professionals, Tom Gnaster and Allen Miller, appeared in concert at the Thomaston Opera House. The two instruments were the 3/15 Marr & Colton pipe organ and a grand piano. These concerts were the fifth in the Rice Memorial series.

Having two artists doesn't necessarily guarantee double entertainment content in a program, but in this case it did. Al Miller is a very good organist and Tom Gnaster is an equally fine organist and pianist. Both have good stage presence and all their talents were combined in a polished presentation.

Tom Gnaster played "Alba," a piece he had composed for concert orchestra and had transcribed for organ. It was a beautiful composition.

With Tom at the piano and Al at the console, they played "Deep Purple." Tom then continued with a rendition of "Danse Macabre," and a gently contrasting "The Breeze and I."

They closed their program with a rousing "Tritsch Tratsch Polka." An extremely enthusiastic response from the audience left no doubt that the concert was well received.

On January 20th and 21st Lyn Larsen will appear and on March 16th, 17th and 18th George Wright is scheduled.

DAIRYLAND

After our spring concert, everyone who had been working at the Avalon thought that all the problems of ciphers, etc., were finally conquered. With rains of one or more inches

almost everyday for the first week of September, the main chest was hit with some severe water damage.

Although the roof had been repaired during the summer, there was just too much rain. Members Rick Johnson, Bill James, and George Larson were responsible for doing so much of the work needed to rebuild the main chest.

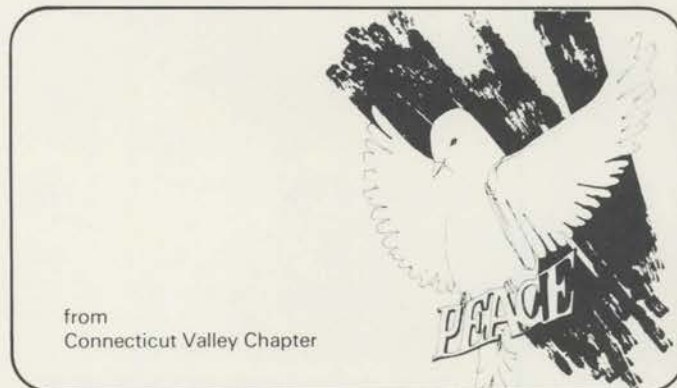
George and Bill constructed a plastic shield to place above the chest, while Rick Johnson was busy replacing the damaged parts of the chest. Thanks to all, we're back in playing shape again.

As if water damage wasn't enough of a setback, we received notice on October 1st that the theatre would be closing October 31st. Wayne, Chuck and Paul, the present managers, were pulling out and there were no new managers in sight.

But as luck would have it, Tony Grough stepped in at the last minute and took over. He has some exciting ideas about utilizing this theatre including more use of the organ.

On the weekend of October 7th, Dairyland was host to the Land-of-Lakes Chapter for some interchapter organ playing, socializing and sight-seeing. Our guests were received on Friday night at the mansion of Chairman Greg Filardo. Here they were treated to various forms of musical entertainment from Greg's extensive collection of antique musical instruments. On Saturday, our guests were greeted at the Avalon by members of our club. Here they were given a short demonstration of the organ and then we turned them loose for two hours of open console. Everybody played and had a good time. From there, our guests adjourned to lunch and on to the Pabst Theatre and the Hermes Residence.

Our annual fall concert starred Karl Cole. It was his first time in



Milwaukee, and the audience appreciated his vocal and organ solos in grand fashion. He was the first singing organist we've had, and his vocals added a new dimension to our concert series. Karl played a wide variety of music from Broadway and the 1920s.

Jim De Luca is opening up a new Pipe Organ Pizza in Chicago. He is using the organ from the Sheboygan Theatre. He has hired Donna Parker as chief organist. It is located at 3110 W. Peterson, Chicago, Ill.

The Racine Theatre Guild project is nearing completion. With some luck, it should be ready next year.

But for now, we're looking forward to the 50th anniversary of the Avalon on May 4th, 1979.

WILLIAM CAMPBELL

EASTERN MASS.

For the sake of some of our professionals and variety, an afternoon meeting was scheduled, on September 24th at Babson College. Chairman Royal Schweiger welcomed visiting members from Pine Tree Chapter and SENETOS. Two by-law changes passed establishing a permanent organ committee and authorizing the board of directors to award the title of "Member Extraordinaire," when deemed appropriate.

Pat Fucci, chairman of the nominating committee, presented the slate of 1979 officers with uncontested acceptance by the membership: Royal N. Schweiger, President; Robert Bramhall, V.P.; Rosalie M. Fucci, Secretary; Alvah Winslow, Treasurer; Edward Stanley and Timothy Holloran, Board of Directors (3 years) with David Marden and Arthur Goggin (1 year).

Program Chairman Holloran announced that Jimmy Boyce of Alex-

andria Rink (Va.) fame was to be our Fall Concert Artist, November 18 (Babson) and 19th (Stoneham Town Hall).

Our talent for the afternoon was seldom-heard member Tom O'Brien. This quiet gentleman can always be counted upon for a polished performance at the Wurlitzer and his re-creation of several George Wright originals were near perfect. Tom's mini-concert concluded with a sing-along. The bench was then kept occupied by members and guests.

Saturday, September 30th, a small group of members and friends took advantage of the Harold Weavers' kind invitation for a field trip to Bethany, Conn., to hear and play their fine Marr and Colton.

Jimmy Boyce's playing, via tape, greeted us upon entering the Knight Auditorium at Babson, October 21st. Sufficient interest was shown in the Ashley Miller and Lee Erwin concert at Radio City Music Hall on November 12th that a bus will be arranged for members to attend.

As an experiment next spring, our concerts will be on a Friday and Saturday evening sequence rather than the present Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon arrangement.

Tim Holloran then introduced our former EMC member, Richard Giglio, as the entertainer of the evening. With Mildred Alexander having had a major influence on his playing, Dick always gives the Wurlitzer a thorough workout even though his "daily bread" has been demonstrating Hammonds and now Yamahas. He enjoys pipes even though "more work" and is awed by the power and variety of sounds possible, by his own admission. Carefully worked out registrations and arrangements made his opening *Sound of Music* selections good

listening. His program included a group of Latin numbers, theatre songs and styles in medley form and his all-time favorite, "Waltz of the Flowers" — a real tour de force. His encore was "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" with stop after stop being added and building to a climax of complex, yet harmonious sound, untremmed then tremmed.

Customary open console and refreshments brought the evening's events to a pleasant close.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

GULF COAST

For years our chapter has worked to "Save the Saenger" (theatre) here in Pensacola, Fla. Our efforts have borne fruit, since the theatre has been saved, but then the politicians took over. Committees were formed, planners hired, meetings held, budgets reviewed. The prices were in six figures; which boggles the imagination. Seven figures were also mentioned. Architects were advised to bid. Plumbers, electricians, acousticians, painters, plasterers and more, were all on alert for consultations. Then the city council, under whose auspices the theatre will operate, appointed a Cultural Affairs Board to guide the Saenger. Estimates were estimated, hearings heard, then all this was scrapped and sent back to the drawing board to start the process all over again. For a year or more this went on while we continued the maintenance and enjoyment of our Robert Morton. Now we can finally see some positive results. The popcorn stand has a new Formica top!

Last year, when we staged our first production of *The Phantom of the Opera*, we learned a lot. The advance advertising went well, thanks to the helpful advice of Lee Erwin.

season's
greetings

wolverine

a.t.o.s.



Merry Möller
and a
Happy Wurlitzer

FROM

FRIENDS OF THE FOX INC.
DETROIT

A nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the Detroit Fox Theatre Pipe Organs and their original settings.

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and we were pleased with the gate. We had stately pallbearers carry in a coffin, as in all good Phantom shows. Our own "Phantom," Tom Helms, jumped out of this unique coffin, designed especially for us by member Barclay D. Rhea, M.D., and literally flew off the stage, with his black Phantom cape flying, to the console to start the Phantom's Overture, Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*. At the end of the film our "Phantom" literally swirled out of the orchestra pit, leaped back upon the stage, reentered the once-again present coffin and the pallbearers prepared to depart. As they closed the lid, Tom realized his long Phantom cape was partially hanging out of the coffin. With the aplomb of a master, he lifted the lid himself, swished the cape inside, closed the lid and off went the entourage.

This year, a local TV station asked to tape a preview of Tom's coffin sequence on the Saenger stage for the evening news, along with some of the music for the film. This would be great publicity for our *Phantom* show and we surely didn't want to miss the opportunity. Unfortunately, the coffin was still in Dr. Rhea's garage and Tom had no way to get it to the theatre for the taping. Upon revealing his plight to a prominent local priest, Richard J. Bowles, Fr. Bowles called a local funeral director who supplied his big, black, shiny hearse for the occasion. Many eyes must have popped in the neighborhood as the hearse pulled up to Dr. Rhea's garage, accepted the empty coffin and with formal dignity proceeded to the theatre for the filming.

Our chapter was delighted to display our work when our organ and staff organist of the Saenger, Tom Helms, was featured in a series of five television programs. One of

these programs featured the governor of Florida, Reuben O'D Askew.

More and more organizations are asking us to use the organ for performances they are sponsoring at the Saenger.

In October, SPEBSQSA, asked our organist to play for their vaudeville night at the Saenger. And the United Methodist Church Music Festival requested that the organ accompany their 500-member choir, and the organist be featured in a short concert before their own program. Again we reached people who had never heard "Lola," our beloved Robert Morton.

We are looking forward to establishing a regular schedule of concerts as soon as it is feasible in the being-restored Saenger.

DOROTHY STANDLEY

JOLIET AREA

They came by car, station wagon, vans, RV's and Amtrak. Talk about devotion to the king of instruments! Several members took advantage of the perfect weather and an early arrival to walk almost three miles from the depot, even though our host would have willingly met the train. They all converged on the home of Leo and Sally Kikendall in Springfield, Illinois, on Saturday, September the 16th. The guest register listed twenty-four members and friends in attendance, plus the gracious Kikendall family.

From the first view of the flashing marquee welcoming JATOE, to being ushered into the residence theatre, we were awed by the ingenuity, craftsmanship and the care that went into the making of this entertainment center built around the Wicks pipe organ.

Our most genial host presented



L. to R. Les Mathews, Harry Koenig, Sally Kikendall, Leo Kikendall and Norm Martin at Kikendall's Wicks pipe organ in Springfield, Illinois.

us with the history of the instrument, from its original installation at the Princess Theatre in Alton in 1927, to the Christian Science Church in Granite City, Illinois, then finally to his home in the early thirties. This was followed by Norm Martin playing a series of popular melodies, religious hymns and then a variety of songs. Then Les Mathews took over the console and entertained the group with his baseball tunes and a sing-along. Harry Koenig then took to the keyboard with his repertoire followed by open console and the usual picture taking.

This event will be remembered and treasured by the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts.

WILLARD E. BRIER

LAND OF LINCOLN

In October, our chapter again produced an outstanding stage show for the Coronado Theatre on the occasion of the 51st Anniversary of the opening of the Coronado. Chad Weirick was the organist for the occasion, assisted by Bob Coe, who filled in at the organ when Chad moved to the piano for a fine organ-piano duet. Also on the show were Myron Floren of Lawrence Welk



*Season's Greetings
to all our
ATOS Friends*

The Rochester Theater Organ Society

Dedicated to preserving the sound of the "King of Instruments"

*Season's Greetings
from the*

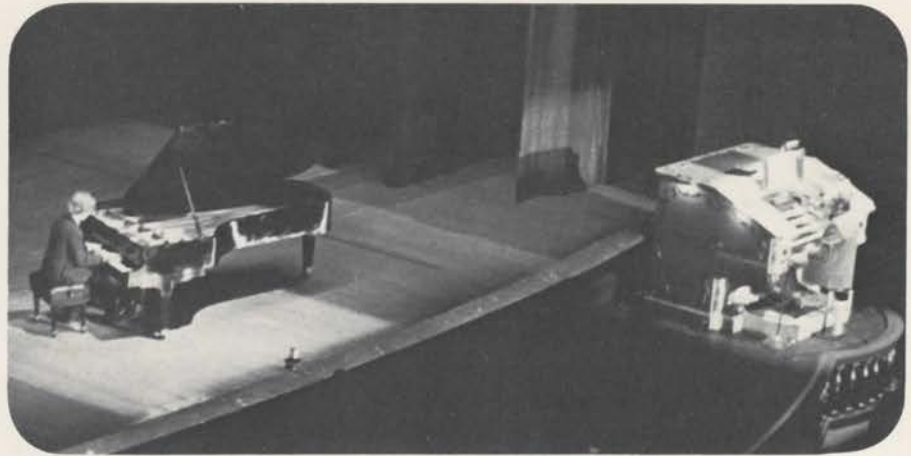
**Theatre Organ
Capitol of the World**

C.A.T.O.E.



fame. De Yip Lu, magician, and the balancing feats of Martin Lamberti. Jay Marshall was MC for the day and Larry Guline conducted a 13-piece orchestra in the pit. Two shows were presented with good attendance at both shows. Harry Koenig played the lobby grand piano during intermissions. In preparation for the event, LOLTOS members replaced 824 red light bulbs that have been missing for many years from the coves under the balcony. The new lights created a rosy glow in the theatre, much like the inner glow that many of the members felt after a most successful and enjoyable day. The annual LOLTOS Christmas party will be held in December at the home of Bob Weirick.

LOLTOS will present two shows in early 1979 at the Coronado. On March 15, Bob Ralston will visit and Hector Olivera will bring his



LOLTOS members Chad Weirick and Bob Coe at the 51st Anniversary Show.

(Bob Schmoock Photo)

distinctive styling to Rockford on May 12.

BOB SCHMOOCK

LAND O' LAKES

Activities in Red Wing, Milwaukee and "at home" (Minnesota) provided LOL members with a fine series of organ concerts in late summer and early fall.

Four members made their "concert" debuts September 23rd when they entertained the chapter at the 2/8 Kilgen in Sheldon Auditorium in Red Wing, Minn. Rhonda Livingston, John Zetterstrom, Don Johnson and Gene Bryant gave a varied and entertaining program.

Forty members enjoyed a charter bus trip to Milwaukee in October as guests of that chapter. Their chairman, Gregory Felardo, hosted our group on a well-planned safari in the Milwaukee area. At the Avalon Theatre (soon to be closed) the group heard resident organist William Campbell play openers at the 3/8 Wurlitzer, then took turns at the instrument during open console.

An unexpected thrill awaited members when they visited Fred

Hermes' Basement Theatre, Racine, Wisconsin. None could have anticipated the sheer magnitude of it; as the curtain parted the 5/31 Wurlitzer rose on its lift to the brilliant strains of "Another Opening, Another Show", played by Fred Hermes Jr. It was a console riser in true theatre organ tradition. It did not matter that the Hermes theatre is far from completed. What mattered to those who cherish the tradition was that this great instrument was vibrantly alive and speaking. Following several selections played by Fred Jr., Fred Sr. produced some fine, traditional music, following a brief description of the organ's specs. The organ was purchased by Mr. Hermes (from the Michigan Theatre, Detroit) in 1960, and has been going through complete rehabilitation ever since, including a stunning refinishing of the console, in ivory, with tasteful decoration. Fred also accompanied an entertaining Laurel and Hardy silent.

The courtesy of open console was then extended to visitors. Four LOL members eagerly took the opportunity to play: Alan Gerber, John Zetterstrom, Gene Bryant and Margaret



While most theatres are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year, the Coronado boasts 51.

(Bob Schmoock Photo)



**Convention
1981!**

***Yuletide Greetings from Puget Sound Chapter
Seattle, Washington***

*The Bluegrass Chapter
wishes fellow ATOSers . . .*

**The Best Of
Holiday Greetings**





Alan Gerber, along with other members, played the 5/31 Wurlitzer in the Hermes residence theatre during the chapter's visit to Milwaukee. (Edwin C. Hirschhoff Photo)



Greg Filardo, chairman of the Milwaukee Chapter, and Marjorie Shepard, Land-O-Lakes Chairman, at Kalvalage Schloss. (Edwin C. Hirschhoff Photo)

Buending, as well as Greg Filardo. With dedicated afficiandos like the Hermes team, the theatre organ tradition will live on.

Other stops on the LOL-Milwaukee tour were the House on the Rock, the Pabst Theatre (the organ was inaccessible) and Kalvalage Schloss, owned by Milwaukee Chapter Chairman Greg Felardo and operated also as a historical restored instruments museum.

October also heralded the reactivation of the Small Home Groups program following a summer hiatus. This program gives members a closer association with other members, exposes them to different organs (including pipes) and provides an opportunity to gain performing experience.

Other recent LOL events include a concert by Karl Eilers at the KSTP-TV Wurlitzer, a program given by member Alan Gerber for the Cedar Rapids Chapter and the regular monthly concerts by Paul Bowen at the Twin City Federal Atrium.

Under the capable leadership of Chairman Marjorie Shepard during 1978 the Land O' Lakes Chapter is going strong and still growing.

EDWIN C. HIRSCHHOFF

LONDON AND SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Dennis James launched our winter programme in sparkling style at the Gaumont State Kilburn 4/16 'Torch' Wurlitzer on September 17th on which he gave a truly brilliant recital maintaining the very high standard that we have now come to expect at our Kilburn presentations. In true ATOS style the concert was augmented by an imaginative 'After-glow' when 70 chapter members and friends took part in a river trip by launch from Westminster Pier to Greenwich and back with supper on board. There was also music on a Yamaha electronic organ provided by Len Rawle and played by Dennis James, Len and a number of members. A fitting end to a most enjoy-

able day.

Dennis had earlier appeared at the British-built 3/7 Compton in the Regal Cinema, Henley-on-Thames and the famed 4/20 'Queen' Wurlitzer in the Free Trade Hall (home of the world famous Halle Orchestra) during the Manchester International Organ Festival, organised by our colleagues of the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust.

Other notable Stateside performers at the festival were Lyn Larsen, Hector Olivera and Maria Kumagai. Hector later also appeared on national television and paid a welcome visit to the convivial home of our well-known members Edith and Les Rawle at 'Wurlitzer Lodge' in the London suburb of Northolt.

Both Hector and Maria are planning to return to the UK next year for electronic organ trade promotions.

Dubbed 'Micro-Safari,' the 1978 American contingent numbered only 16 but fortunately several chapter members were able to join the party

**merry
christmas**

*"It was good to
have you in Alabama"*

ALABAMA CHAPTER



SEASON'S GREETINGS

from

**WESTERN
RESERVE**
Cleveland, Ohio





Hector Olivera and Dennis James at Wurlitzer Lodge, home of Edith and Les Rawle.

on the numerous trips specially arranged for them in London and the South of England in mid-September.

After attending the Manchester Organ Festival this Safari of visitors moved south to become the chapter's guests for five days. The party first visited Bath where, after a tour of this historic city, the Pavilion Wurlitzer was demonstrated to them by resident organist Ken Morrish. Also visited in this area was member Graham Kent's beautifully-installed Compton at Almondsbury, near Bristol, which our chapter visited in July on the occasion of the opening. On following days, visits were made to the Granada cinemas at Clapham Junction and Harrow (Wurlitzers) and Churches at Clayhall and Hornchurch (both containing Comptons), the Music Museum at Brentford (Wurlitzer) and, of course, Wurlitzer Lodge. Although on a much smaller scale than the previous two Safaris, our visitors were thus given a good sample of

the British theatre organ enthusiasts scene — and of chapter activities.

Our monthly Chapter Club Nights at Wurlitzer Lodge continue to be varied, enjoyable and well-patronised. Popular chapter member Tim Moody and his colleague Colin Godfrey from Bristol entertained in September, and Ron Rogers (former County Cinemas organist — notably at the Capitol Wembley Compton — in the halcyon days) in October.

Now we are embarking on what we have justifiably dubbed 'The Theatre Organ Double Event of 1978' at the Gaumont State on November 26th.

In the morning we are staging, in conjunction with Rank Leisure Services (the proprietors of this famous theatre), the first 'Young Organist of the Year' Competition.

Open to contestants aged up to 16 years, our adjudicators for the competition will be George Blackmore, FRCO, Jan van Weelden and Len Rawle.

Conceived by Mr. Bill Weir, genial general manager of the Gaumont State and good friend of our chapter, the most imaginative competition has attracted 22 entrants. The winner is to receive a handsome 'chain of office' to be held for one year plus a monetary prize. The two runners-up will also receive money and all entrants will get a consolation prize.

A unique function, this competition is in direct accord with our central chapter aim of encouraging young people and new interest in the joys of theatre organ music.

In the afternoon we are promoting Dutch international console stars Jan van Weelden and Han Notrott in concert at the Wurlitzer.

Looking further ahead, we have already booked Gaylord Carter a full year ahead to play for us on September 16th at the Gaumont State, and are near to finalising our three other major functions planned during the year.

A census is also being drawn up of the numerous pipe and electronic organs owned by our chapter members and several of them will doubtless be featured in special events.

LOS ANGELES

Of course the big news from Los Angeles is the destruction by brush fire of the John Ledwon pipe organ-equipped home, which is reported elsewhere in this issue.

Bill Thomson is no stranger to LATOS and each concert creates witty moments which are discussed until his next performance for the chapter. Sunday, September 24th, at San Gabriel's 3/16 prize Wurlitzer was no exception. After a brief introduction by MC Mike Ohman, all expected to see the talented mu-

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Christmas**

**Motor City
Theatre Organ Society**



Happy Holidays

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LA Chapter Chairman Bob Power turns over ownership of the chapter's 4/28 Marr & Colton organ (originally in the New York Piccadilly Theatre) to Valley of the Sun Chapter members Ron Rhode, Don Reasor (Program Chairman) and Bill Carr (Chapter Chairman). (Zimphoto)



They fixed the Kimball. Members of the Wiltern technical crew step to the stage for a bow. L. to R.: Mike Ohman, Paul Birk, Bruce Meyers, Ross Farmer and Ted Lutz. Not shown are Harold Donze and Hill Hood. (Zimphoto)

sician ride the sterile white console up with a rousing opener — but, not Bill. He motored on stage in one of the beautiful additions to his ever growing car collection.

This year there were no voluptuous girl chauffeur's as last year, "because I gave each girl a car and a credit card. I just had a phone call from one who said she was having a wonderful time in Vegas, and thanks for the loan of the car," Bill quipped.

Well, anxiously, Bill stepped to the Wurlti and mesmerized his appreciative audience with beautiful theatre style organ playing including "Crazy Rhythm," a medley from *The Sound of Music*, the complete score of *Man of Lamancha* and all too quickly the show closed with an excerpt from Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue."

As Bill was about to leave the stage in his car, someone had removed it. Mike Ohman stepped to the microphone to announce that one of those beautiful babe's had returned to the auditorium to pick up Bill's transportation and to leave hers. So Bill exited on a bicycle with one flat tire.

Bills statement? "I never did trust

women anyway." Always expect the unexpected from Bill Thomson.

On October 15th, it was a return engagement for Maria Kumagai at 9:30 a.m. at the LA Wiltern's 4/28 Kimball (that's the count minus the Echo division which isn't used). Maria's console riser was a lively "Belle of the Ball" (Anderson), fol-



An old smoothie, Bill Thomson did it again. (Zimphoto)

lowed by a well Chrysoglotted "Clair de Lune" (Debussy). Maria tends toward suites and show medleys, thus we were treated to Ponchielli's "Dance of the Hours" and 15 minutes of selections from *Song of Norway*.

During the intermission, members of the Valley of the Sun Chapter accepted the gift of the LA chapter's 4/28 Marr and Colton organ, promising to give it a proper home, installed intact in either Phoenix or Tucson Arizona. The M&C became excess baggage to some members of the L.A. chapter when J.B. Nethercutt donated the Reg. Foort 5/27 Moller to the city of Pasadena for professional installation in the Civic Auditorium, the M&C's intended home. There was scant comfort in this development to the chapter technical crew which had devoted so many hours over many months getting the M&C ready for installation. The techs finally approved the donation to the Phoenix Chapter where a good home was assured the M&C in an atmosphere where its very special characteristics will be appreciated.

Next on the program was a tribute to the technical crew which had

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Maria Kumagai

gotten the Wiltern's Kimball in good shape for the Maria Kumagai concert. Crew Chief Ross Farmer led his group to the stage for a bow and a round of applause for the time, skills and patience involved in readying a huge instrument for a concert. The LA Chapter is proud of its technicians who labor to help "put across" a concert.

With the formalities over, MC Rod Skelding introduced Maria for the second half of her program. Her opener was the Strauss "Tritsch-Tratsch" polka. Then came an atmospheric "May Night" followed by selections from *My Fair Lady*. On the classical side, Maria played a toccata by her teacher, Richard Purvis. Her encore was Puccini's "One Fine Day" from *Madame Butterfly*, a selection fitting Maria's scenario — a Japanese who made it on her own in the US of A without wasting time waiting for a Lieutenant Pinkerton.

Maria was her own announcer, and she was quite clearly conversant with her audience when the PA levels were right.

MAGNOLIA

An invitation was extended to the public for our September meeting, at which time Frank Evans was to give a preview of his upcoming concert for the Alabama Chapter, at the Alabama's Mighty Wurlitzer. The turnout of the public was quite surprising, considering the local newspaper had the notice under the headline: "Ocean Group to Meet." As a result the chapter gained four new members and some inquiries about school groups touring the Temple Theatre and hearing the Robert Morton.

The chapter would like to welcome new members Mr. and Mrs. Adam Jensen and Mr. and Mrs. Ray Surratt. These people have proven their interest in ATOS just by attending the meetings, and actively supporting the programs that have been presented.

We want to pay special tribute to a charter member of the Magnolia chapter, Ms. Cathrine Sullivan. Ms. Sullivan has supported all facets of ATOS. She served as chairperson of the chapter, has helped in the sale of tickets for all our concerts and in the last rebuild of the Temple Robert Morton. A bouquet of roses to this fine lady, who recently celebrated her eighty-fourth birthday.

The October meeting was at the home of Sam Feltenstein, where the chapter has use of a fine Lowery organ. The basement area has been recently redecorated, and you could say that this meeting was a housewarming. Before the meeting had adjourned eighteen people were in the room. Frank Evans usually is the only one on hand that will play before a group, but tonight he wasn't. Effie Evans (Frank's mother), Adam Jensen, and for the first time, Sam Feltenstein entertained for the

group. After all this a short business meeting was held to cover future plans.

We wish to thank Don and Alleen Cole for the hospitality that was extended to the Meridian group that attended the Alabama meeting October 8th. Effie, Pop and Frank Evans, plus the writer and his wife, Ouida, made the trip to Birmingham. The Alabama Theatre is a most beautiful building, and the so-called "gaudy" red, black and gold Wurlitzer console grows on you. Before you leave, the instrument really is beautiful.

TOMMY DARSEY

MOTOR CITY

The 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in September was a big success, and attracted an audience of 1050. Walt Stroney was featured at the 3/13 Barton and accompanied a silent comedy. Stage acts included a barbershop chorus and a magician who sawed Walt in half. Fortunately it was only an illusion, and Walt pulled himself together and finished the program. Champagne at intermission added to the gaiety of the evening.

We were guests in September at the Detroit Theater Organ Club for a concert by John Ferguson at the 4/34 Wurlitzer. John is currently musical director at the Roaring Twenties pizza emporium in Grand Rapids.

On October 8th we took our second chartered bus excursion to the Roaring Twenties in Grand Rapids, where we heard Dave Russell at the 3/33 Wurlitzer.

Karl Cole, and his synthesizer, appeared at the Redford Theatre 3/10 Barton in October. Karl played an enjoyable concert offering a num-

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Walt Strony played for the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in September. (Marjorie Allen Photo)



Twenties costumes and champagne added to the festivities of the celebration. (Marjorie Allen Photo)

ber of vocal selections. He also accompanied Miss Harriet's Sophisticats, a local group of precision dancers, and the comedy-tap team of Teri and Erik on the Redford stage. In addition to a sing-along, Karl provided a nice change of pace by performing at the grand piano on stage. Champagne was available during intermission, a rather unique way of "fund raising."

Members were invited to an open console session October 15th at the 4/36 Wurlitzer at the Fox Theatre.

Harry Koenig appeared at the organ, and piano, for our Second Sun-

day program at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in September. In October, Greg Yassick was the featured Second Sunday artist at the Michigan's 3/13 Barton.

Lance Luce stepped in as the Fourth Sunday organist at the Royal Oak Theatre in September, when scheduled artist Velma Burnham broke her arm. In October Kevin Werner appeared at the Royal Oak Theatre's 3/16 Barton for the Fourth Sunday program.

Chapter artists are given plenty of opportunity to play overture and intermission music for the public, at

the Barton, as our bi-weekly series of Hollywood's greatest hits marches on and on and on at the Redford.

DON LOCKWOOD

NOR-CAL

Nor-Cal enjoyed a concert by Bill Langford at the 4/23 Wurlitzer on September 24th at Pizza and Pipes in Redwood City. Attendees at the 1975 convention will remember that Bill played at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in San Lorenzo. We witnessed a new Langford, a slim and trim serious musician, displaying his spellbinding musicianship. His program was well-



Karl Cole and his synthesizer at the Redford Theatre in October. (Marjorie Allen Photo)



Harry Koenig was featured at the Second Sunday program at the Michigan (Ann Arbor) in September. (Fred Paer Photo)

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Bob Baese, Nor-Cal chairman, at left and Bill Langford, Organist of the Month.
(Don Creswell Photo)



Bill Blunk at his Marr & Colton, in the Sherwood Oriental Theatre, where the Oregon Chapter held a party in September.
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

balanced with dance tunes, old standards and a religious "Holy City" taught to him by his organist grandmother. ATOS member Jacob Jonker and his family, visiting from Amsterdam, Holland, received a dedication of "Tulip From Amsterdam." Another tune was dedicated by Bill to his wife, "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World." His program concluded with lofty renditions of "You'll Never Walk Alone" and "Climb Every Mountain." Bill Langford certainly can extract the most from any Wurlitzer and provide sheer entertainment for the listener.

Everett Nourse appeared in concert in October, also at Redwood City's Wurlitzer. Everett was the staff organist at the San Francisco Fox Theatre for the last 19 years of its existence until February 1963. Many of the melodies which fascinated theatre patrons were recreated for our enjoyment such as "Sundown," "Lady's In Love With You," "Who" and "Rosalie." Newer tunes from *Oliver* and *The Sound of Music*, were also included. The concert was a delightful pure theatre organ

presentation done by a man who knew how. A well-filled house showed its appreciation by demanding several encores and a good sale of his Doric records made during the closing of the Fox Theatre.

Nor-Cal participated in the worldwide Wurlitzer operation on October 20th. The performance was at Bob Baese's home with Bob playing his 2/10 Wurlitzer for the board of directors and a few members.

OREGON

In the small town of Sherwood, near Portland, there is a tiny little theatre whose modest and innocent appearing exterior hides what must surely be the greatest organ/theatre ratio in history. This was the scene of our September meeting.

After being closed by television long ago, this theatre was later purchased by Bob Rothchild and Eugene Stoller, who, after several years of labor, have created a diminutive masterpiece of artistic renovation. Many of the ornaments and decorations in the lobby are from the late

Oriental Theatre in Portland and their beauty is enhanced by subdued lighting. Hence the name Sherwood Oriental.

Imagine the surprise of an old-time theatre organ buff, unsuspecting and not forewarned, seeing the giant 5-manual console rise out of the pit of this small theatre with all 24 ranks bellowing in full glory! This is the largest Marr and Colton ever built and was purchased by Bill Blunk from the Loew's Rochester Theatre, Rochester, New York. Bill used it for some time in a skating rink in Astoria, and then moved it to a studio in Portland, where it was heard by ATOS conventioners in 1966, when played by Dick Schrum.

To install the organ in its present location, it was necessary to extend the stage a few feet forward to make room for the two huge chambers. Bill also replaced the old relays and switches with a new solid-state system which provides fast and dependable action. An ingenious adaptation of a fork-lift mechanism provides the slow and dramatic rise of the console.

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Lee Erwin at the Weinberg Center (formerly the Tivoli Theatre) Wurlitzer.
(Harold R. Richman Photo)



Leon Clark at the Allen 425 Digital Computer organ and a Lowrey Celebrant at the Jordan-Kitt Music Co. in Bethesda.
(Harold R. Richman Photo)

Flanking the stage are two very large ornamental grilles with beautiful indirect lighting from which the sound seems to originate.

The program included a short organ concert and an expertly-cued silent comedy accompanied by Bill Blunk. There followed an open console session played by those brave enough not to be intimidated by the five manuals and a sea of stop tabs.

Our chapter is indebted to Bill Blunk, Bob Rothchild and Eugene Stoller for the rare opportunity to hear and play this great organ.

BUD ABEL

POTOMAC VALLEY

The Jordan-Kitt Music Company at Montgomery Mall, Bethesda, Maryland, hosted our August 27th meeting. Eighty members and guests filled the spacious showroom. The concert portion of the meeting was performed at an Allen Electronic, Model 425 Digital Computer organ and a Lowrey Celebrant. Personable Leon Clark presented a pleasing group of organ pieces from a repertoire of many years as a performing organist and musical consultant. Leon, manager of a suburban J-K store, is an avid theatre organ en-

thusiast.

Open console followed with selections by our Ardis Sneed, Dick Haight, Ron Kragler, Doug Bailey, Earl Sharits and Rolland Miller.

Two eagerly awaited special events brought us together in Frederick and Thurmont, Maryland on September 17th. In the afternoon we met at the Weinberg Center for the Performing Arts (formerly the Tivoli Theatre); now owned by the city of Frederick, for a paid pipe organ concert. The old movie house, flooded during one of last year's hurricanes, has been completely and beautifully refurbished by the city. The 2/8 Model F Wurlitzer console, badly damaged by flood waters, has been meticulously cleaned, completely rebuilt and looked radiant.

For the first half of the program at the center, our good friend, and celebrated theatre organist and recording artist, Lee Erwin, presented theatre organ favorites, including his *Moon River* music and a medley of tunes from the great Broadway shows of the 30s.

After intermission, Lee accompanied Buster Keaton's *Sherlock, Jr.* Needless to say, Lee's interpretations at the organ console en-

hanced our enjoyment of Keaton's antics on the screen.

After the Weinberg Center program in Frederick, PVC members were invited to the Dick Kline residence organ studio in nearby Thurmont, Maryland, for an evening of open console. Visually and technically, Dick's 4/28 Wurlitzer never fails to thrill us. In its incomparable setting, the wholesome and full voicing of the organ is one of a kind. Open console included performances by PVC members Mark Hurley, John Terwilliger and Doug Bailey. Then Lee Erwin, at the Wurlitzer, was joined in duet by Doug Bailey at a concert grand piano. Lee continued, with more tuneful arrays of songs of yesteryear, including those closely associated with his long and active career in theatre and radio/television scoring. It was Dick's Wurlitzer at which Lee made his Angel recordings several years ago.

A third priceless treat was the open, gracious hospitality of Dick Kline and his mother. Our grateful thanks to Dick, Lee and Mrs. Kline for providing us with another memorable evening.

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A picture of a picture of Andy Crow's private railroad car.



Andy Crow on the rear platform of his private railroad car.

PUGET SOUND

In October, the chapter was privileged to spend the day in Olympia, our state capitol, to enjoy the artistry of Andy Crow. Many members arrived in time to attend the 11 a.m. service at First Methodist, where Andy is resident organist. The balcony had been reserved for ATOS and special music programmed. After the service, members were invited to try the 17-rank Wicks.

At one o'clock we met at the Olympic Theatre, owned by Andy and his partner, Marshall Woodbridge, and housing a 2/10 Wurlitzer, including a new Moller Post Horn. Here we heard a fine concert by Andy featuring a Laurel and Hardy film, followed by open console. From there we proceeded to Government House for a buffet and short business meeting.

As a climax to the day's events we proceeded to the railroad yards to tour the private railroad car which Andy and his partner have obtained from the estate of a former railroad executive, and on which they make a yearly vacation tour together with a complement of friends. What a way to go! To quote Andy: "That's

really traveling Fuuuurst Claaaass!"

The Bremerton Pipe Organ Society (across Puget Sound) invited the chapter to the first open house and concert of their finally installed composite theatre organ in the Community Theatre. Featured were Lew Wells, who, as a former technician with Balcom and Vaughan, provided much of the guidance in installation, and as a former theatre organist, had actually played this same instrument in the silent movie days, and John Nafie, a young newcomer to theatre pipe organ. The organ is a 2/8 obtained from the estate of Dan Adamson, who had been an active and fondly remembered member of our chapter, as well as the now defunct Granada Organ Loft. Open console followed the program.

Later in the month, the Home Organ Society, formerly the Hammond Organ Club, presented Dick Kimball in one of his rare concert performances, and generously made the chapter welcome. A full house at Haller Lake Clubhouse enjoyed his performance, capped by a number done at the chapter 3/8 Wurlitzer in his unique jazz-liturgical style.

A newcomer we are delighted to

welcome to Puget Sound is Tom Cotner, who has joined Associated Organ Builders of Auburn. They are producing custom electronic instruments.

GENNY WHITTING

RED RIVER

The beginning of fall has meant many new and exciting things for us.

At our first meeting in September, we all cheered the bank note stamped "Paid" as it was passed around — our chapter organ finally belongs to us! A celebration is planned later. Entertainment at this meeting was provided first by Mary Nyberg, a two-year theatre organ student of Mrs. Melita Nelson, our hostess. Mary is a freshman at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, N.D., majoring in business. She played an all-too-short, delightful program of five numbers, two of them her own arrangements. Following that was a jam session using all the instruments in Mrs. Nelson's living room — a Baldwin piano, a Lowrey Berkshire Deluxe, the Lowrey Citation Theatre Console, and an RMI electric piano, played by Hildegard

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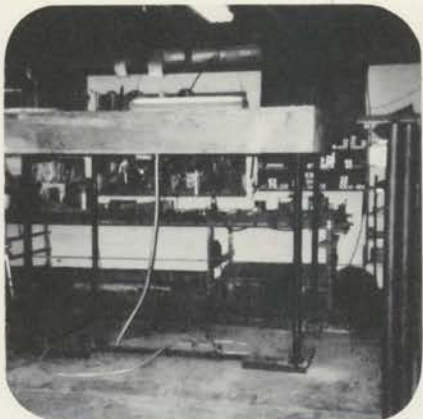
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A lift for the Fargo Theatre. (S. Carlson Photo)



Lance Johnson and Dave Knudtson at the Fargo Theatre, remove pit floor. (S. Carlson Photo)



American Institute of Organ Builders tour the Fargo Theatre. (S. Carlson Photo)

Kraus, Lance Johnson and Pat Kelly.

The 2/8 Wurlitzer at the Fargo Theatre continues to get much use, besides the usual weekend film intermissions. On October 4th, Hildegard played a special concert for the Fine Arts Club and was a great success. The organ was featured October 9th during a noon program as part of the National American Institute of Organ Builders Convention, (see story elsewhere in this issue). The console is now ready to rise in glory as it sits on our four-poster lift, installed the weekend of October 21st. Fairly soon, the two-manual console will be moved to the side of the orchestra pit, to reside where it did originally. Our own satin-finish ebony three-manual console will be placed on the lift. After much thought and the failure of plans A through D, it was decided that the Fargo Theatre would be the logical home for our organ, at least for the present. We will wire our console into the existing organ in such a way as to not disturb the original instrument. The restoration of the two-manual Wurlitzer (Style E) continues and will be kept in its original situation. Both consoles will be playing

the same organ. As we find time, our own ranks will be added, playable from just our console.

Our most ambitious show to date at the theatre will take place in November. We will present the greatest actress of the silent screen, Miss Lillian Gish, in person, to share anecdotes about her fabulous career and introduce scenes from some of her best-known films. The film feature will be one of her greatest and most popular film dramas, D.W. Griffith's *Way Down East* made in 1920, scored by Lance Johnson on the Mighty Wurlitzer.

SONIA CARLSON

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

What we as organists greatly fear has happened here in Denver, Colorado. Almost to the day of 'Remember the Wurlitzer Day,' someone tried to "jimmy" open the business office of the Paramount Theatre. Not being successful, he, or she, went backstage and "torched" the curtains. The fire curtain dropped and saved the front. The Denver Opera Company was preparing the stage for *Madame Butterfly* and had

built platforms out over the two Wurlitzer consoles and the orchestra pit.

When the burning front curtain dropped to the floor, only these platforms saved the consoles, which had been covered with heavy plastic sheeting. The sheeting also kept the firemen's water out. Our work crew was down there the next morning to examine the damage. The stage was badly scorched, and the curtains, wings, flies, switchboard, screen and sound system totally destroyed. The front rows of seats were soot-covered and the rest of the house suffered smoke damage. Even the glass in the projection booth ports was broken.

No doubt it will be two months or better before shows and stage productions can be resumed, but the Mighty Wurlitzer is saved.

On October 30th, George Wright honored us with his presence and music at the Allen Organ Studios. The place was packed and even the organ purists (church and concert) loved his theatre stylings. After intermission the chapter presented George with an honorary membership in the chapter.



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L. to R.: St. Louis board member Paul Coates, Sally Kikendall, Secretary Betty Tyler, Chairman Ken Iborg and former Vice Chairman Ed Plitt.

When the Aladdin Theatre was running *My Fair Lady* three of our organists, Bill Johnston, Ron Graham and the writer, played selections from the film and other tunes before the show. However, one Saturday night the writer warmed up the blower, set some combinations, put the music on the rack, struck an opening chord and — nothing. An examination downstairs revealed that a coupling had come apart joining the motor to the generator. There was no music that Saturday or Sunday night, but all has now been repaired.

Bill Arthur's Marr & Colton is ready. The pipes are in, tuned and voiced. Several members have stopped by to play it and are pleased with it.

Fred Riser's Wurlitzer has had the cable connected to the back of the console and to the relay. Another regulator is being fixed to the main wind trunk under the chambers to handle the shutters and all of the percussions. Charlie Herman has become the world's finest plastic drain pipe layer we have known.

Everything is wined with plastic pipe and the place looks like one big "bathroom."

The Organ Grinder Restaurant here in Denver is due to open very soon. Examination of the interior makes one wonder if they are going to have everything in place in one night. We haven't seen a sign of a console or pipes as yet. We will keep watch and let you all know what develops.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all from Rocky Mountain Chapter.

FRANK R. GANDY

ST. LOUIS

Maryan Harrison, St. Louis' best-known blind pianist and organist, hosted our September meeting in her home. The musical portion of the program consisted of several numbers by Maryan at the piano then several more at her Conn two-manual Deluxe theatre organ. Joe Page followed at the piano to give

his brilliant interpretation of the classics, then accompanied Maryan while she sang one of her own compositions. The grand finale was "Glow Worm," a fabulous instrumental trio by Earline Medlock, a blind pianist from California, Missouri, who played an upright, while Maryan played the organ and Joe the grand.

Members received an "on the spot" report in October on the progress of the 2/9 Wurlitzer installation at the Kingsland Theatre in South St Louis. A figure of 30% completion was announced by Joe Barnes. A special part of this evening was a show put on by Ed and Jan Plitt. Jan sang while Ed pumped out a fantastic variety of music on a modified Hammond C-3 with piano. Ed showed the great form he displayed during a recent engagement at the Plantation Dinner Theatre with the famous singer, Frankie Laine.

That talented theatre organist and funny man, Stan Kann, briefly returned to St. Louis this past month. It was a sad note to theatre organ enthusiasts because Stan did not return in concert, but merely to pick up the remainder of his antique vacuum cleaner collection.

BILL ANTHONY

SAN DIEGO

On October 8th, chapter members drove down to Chula Vista for a meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Vern Bickle. After the meeting came the fun time. Besides open console at the beautiful Rodgers, there was a delightful concert from piano rolls on their newly-restored Fisher Ampico grand piano. In sad condition at the time of purchase, the piano now is resplendent, beautifully re-finished.

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Work, work, work, month after month, but the night of October 28th, finally came when, with great excitement, the doors to the California Theatre at 4th and C streets, downtown San Diego, were opened to the public for an evening of silent movies with organ music — organ music played on *our* organ.

Dreams do come true! Some people were there very early just to wander around and reminisce about the days long gone by when they could come often and hear a Wurlitzer organ putting life into a movie.

What a thrill to see so many people lined up getting their tickets at the box office as others jostled each other in their eagerness to get through the door into the theatre.

I'm sure that the beautiful old theatre smiled and chuckled with satisfaction to see again happy people milling around in the foyer, strolling down the main floor aisles or climbing the stairs to the balcony to find a choice seat, expressing their emotions as they gazed up at the ornate grills of the organ chambers high on each side of the stage, and chatting with expectation of the night's performance.

The moment did come when the beautiful old curtain, the colors mellowed with age, rose slowly and the show was on. But only one person could have made the evening so perfect, the one and only "Flicker Fingers" himself — Gaylord Carter — King of silent film organists.

"The Perfect Song," his long time trademark, rippled out; and San Diego's Wurlitzer D came into its own. In time the second chamber will be complete with seven more ranks to enhance the present installation, all a gift from Sandy Fleet.

Hats off to our chapter's faithful crew! They are: Ray Krebs, Marty Stuhler and student technician

Marty, Jr., George Bryam, Charlie Porter, Bob Naill, Joe Forand, Bob Meyer, Coulter Cunningham, Tim Kreifel, Bob Cochrane, Dave Miller, and two nonmembers, Carrol Cunningham and Neil Campbell, who did ductwork fabrication. These people put in a lot of time and hard work to have this organ right for this special night. They also stripped the organ console and restored its natural beauty. Besides all this they smothered it with TLC.

No wonder the organ sent out its melodic blessing in closing with the lovely tune "When The Organ Played at Twilight." May there be many more such nights for San Diego.

GWEN O'CONNOR

SIERRA

The following excerpts are from a feature story by William C. Glacklin that appeared in *The Sacramento Bee* and are reprinted here with permission.

Even the introduction sounded like an old-time movie: "The Return of George Wright!" said the man from the Theatre Organ Society.

The smiling fellow who stepped into the spotlight on the stage of the Grant Union High School auditorium Sunday afternoon looked too young by almost half to have been 17 years old in 1938, when the huge theatre organ in this auditorium was introduced to the public by the young musical prodigy who had designed it. Nevertheless George Wright, who went on from Grant to become perhaps the most popular theatre organist in the world today, seemed downright pleased to date himself. He seemed, in fact, as happy as going back to Grandma's for Thanksgiving. And in between numbers in a concert of more than two hours, he regaled his near-capacity

audience of more than 800 with a lot of homecoming recollections, including old school songs and a brief demonstration of what used to be called truckin'.

The concert, cosponsored by the Grant music department, was, in short, the work of a master who has not lost his relish for music.

Still, one was warmed as much by the good feelings of the occasion as by the concert.

Because this was a special concert, George announced at the end that those who would like to stay for a question and answer session move down to the front rows after the regular audience had left. Approximately fifty accepted his offer. George shed his coat and, microphone in hand, spent more than an hour going from person to person answering questions about the organ, his own career and theatre organ in general. He was a most effervescent and gracious host and the audience loved every minute of it. It was after six o'clock when he finally sat down at the console and played a very beautiful "That's All." Our deepest thanks to George Wright for a truly wonderful afternoon.

KEYZANDPEDALS

SOONER STATE

After a long, hot, dry summer, our chapter (Tulsa, Oklahoma), finally got back into the swing with a picnic for our September meeting. We feasted on hot dogs, with all the trimmings, at Harvey Young's "island," which Harvey has built along his man-made lagoon at one side of the private airport which he owns and operates. Afterwards we moved indoors for open console at his Conn organ.

October found us gathered around

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the 3/8 Wicks at Phil and Laura Judkins' home. Business consisted mainly of discussion about our still-homeless Robert Morton, discussion of future activities and the announcement that Phil and Joe Crutchfield had been taking turns volunteering ghostly (ghastly??) organ music for the Halloween Spook House sponsored by the March of Dimes. We welcomed several prospective new members: Harvey and Janice Barbour, John and Pauline Price, Bruce Johnson and Terry Sherry. Afterwards we were entertained by open console.

DOROTHY SMITH

SOUTH FLORIDA

Always a favorite with South Florida members, organist Hector Olivera renewed old friendships and made many new ones during his return to Andre Hall in September. Despite a rainy Tuesday night, it was a festive occasion with the predictable audience enthusiasm and "... Bumble Bee" finale. As always, Hector displayed an enviable command of the instrument and of the literature chosen from his broad repertoire. He skillfully wove a mixture of familiar classics, modern pops, fine old standards and witty

comments into a well-balanced, crowd-pleasing extravaganza.

Because of the deadline for this issue falling when it did, you folks will have to wait for the outcome of Lee Erwin and *The Phantom of the Opera* scheduled for Gusman Hall on October 31st. Judging from the advance ticket sales, it should be sold out by concert time. Hope y'all have a snowy, happy Christmas and a very prosperous New Year.

STEVE FITZGERALD

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

The biggest news from SATOS is that last May a ruling, in our favor, came to us from the Internal Revenue Service.

In August Chairman Rudy Kotasek hosted an afternoon program featuring our own Lynn Staininger at Bea and Rudy's new Allen Digital computer organ, Model TH 435, a very theatrical sounding organ, especially in the hands of a very capable, talented performer such as Lynn. From "Alexander's Ragtime Band" to "If They Could See Me Now" the program went over very well. Also included were Bea's favorite hymn, "In The Garden," and "Voices of Spring."

Our first fall meeting was held



Southern Arizona chapter member Lynn Staininger at the Allen digital computer organ.

on September 10th at Broadway Keyboard, courtesy of member Allen Guirl. After a very short business meeting, the program began and featured Evelyn Crosby, Allen Guirl and Ralph Cloos at the 2-manual Conn Martinique. Open console was followed by dinner at Furrs Cafeteria.

BOB HIGH

TOLEDO

We are rapidly coming to the close of a very successful and eventful year. We are proud of our large increase in membership and of every member, both new and old, working toward completing our goal, the restoration of the 4/21 Marr and



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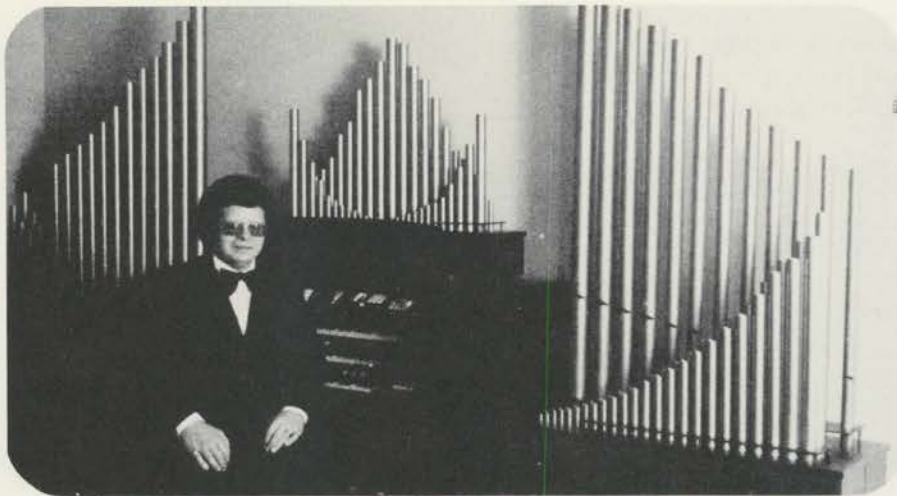
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Bill Yaney at a Conn theatre organ banked with pipes at the former Ohio Theatre in Toledo.

Colton theatre pipe organ we happily received from our city fathers. The organ is from the old Rivoli Theatre and was the property of the City of Toledo until September 1977 when it was given to our chapter.

We are restoring the organ in the former Ohio Theatre, now St. Hewigs Culture Center, the new home of TATOS. We are very proud that because we are restoring the organ for the enjoyment of the public, the month of October was proclaimed Theatre Pipe Organ Month in Toledo by Mayor Doug DeGood.

The restoration is in full swing un-

der the watchful eyes of our chairman, William Cottle, and our restoration chairman, Dave Ring.

During 1978 we had a number of successful ventures, which included taking an active part in the annual Old West End Festival held in an area of Toledo filled with beautiful old mansions. Two of our members, Joe Cantu and Charles Bradley, own one of these mansions, and have restored the old Eastwood Theatre two-manual Barton pipe organ there. We held concerts during two days of the festival and eight of our members played the Barton.

On September 30th we presented a two-hour concert at the (former) Ohio Theatre to a packed house. The concert featured a beautiful new Conn theatre organ and the stage was banked with pipes on both sides. The performing artist was well-known Bill Yaney. Bill did a superb job and the audience gave him a standing ovation. Our thanks to Mr. Yaney.

We hope to have the Marr and Colton completed in a few months, and extend an invitation to ATOS members to visit us here in Toledo, Ohio, and see our masterpiece.

ANN MOXLEY

VALLEY OF THE SUN

The pipe organ population of Phoenix grew by two recently. Early in September, chapter member Ken Resech brought back a 3/14 Robert Hope-Jones from New York, which he plans to install in his home. In October, the Los Angeles Chapter gave our chapter a 4/28 Marr and Colton which had originally been installed in a Hollywood theatre. This organ is presently in storage while the chapter decides upon a permanent home for it.

We originally planned to hold our election of officers in September, but postponed it until November.

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in the pages of the 50th Anniversary souvenir booklet published by Friends of the Fox, Inc. The booklet is full of original 1928 photos of the Fox, many from the offices of architect C. Howard Crane. Beautifully printed in sepia on cream enamel paper. Only 500 copies were printed, and we have just 150 left, so order today! Send \$3.50 + 50c for postage and handling (a total of \$4.00) to Friends of the Fox, P.O. Box 19081, Detroit, Michigan 48219. We will also include a copy of the flyer for the 50th Anniversary Celebration, which featured organist Dennis James, silent film "Wings" and its star, Buddy Rogers. (Oh, by the way, the booklet has one rather embarrassing typo in it; can you find it?)

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Instead we were brought up to date on the progress of theatre organ projects around town — the Wurlitzers at Phoenix College and First Christian Church, and the Meisel — Sullivan organ that belongs to the chapter.

October 4th, we were the guests of Bill and Barbara Brown for a mini-concert by Ron Rhode, at Brown's 5/22 Wurlitzer home installation. Ron presented for our enjoyment a sampling of some of the music he has played for other concerts, including his 1978 convention program and the recent nostalgia show at the Chicago Theatre. Following the concert, there was socializing on the patio and open console for the members.

In November we are expecting a visit from some of the Los Angeles Chapter members. We will join them in listening to concerts presented by Rob Richards, Ron Rhode and Walt Strony. How fortunate we are to have such talented organists living in the Valley of the Sun!

MADELINE LI VOLSI

WOLVERINE

September found our chapter at the Detroit Theater Organ Club to hear a very special program by John Ferguson. John was associate or-

ganist at the St. Louis Fox Theatre for seven years, and was one of those chiefly responsible for the success of the Roaring Twenties pizza palace in Grand Rapids. His experience at playing these large Wurlitzers was quite apparent — and the 4/34 responded to his every command. It was a great program, and we look forward to having him back again (and hopefully at *this* console, too!). We also wish John success on his newest venture — the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis.

October found us on the opposite side of the state, in Kalamazoo, to hear the inimitable Ron Rhode doing the honors at the grand premiere of the 3/12 Barton in that city's State Theatre. The State is a lovely, spacious house, undamaged by so-called remodeling done in so many other theatres. The Ebersson atmospheric house was shown off to its fullest — complete with cloud machines. The organ, with the recent addition of a Post Horn was in great shape, thanks to the crew of Bob MacNeur, John Catherwood, Bill Mollema and Max Brown.

Our first Saturday programs continue into their third year at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing. Pearl Carrels from Flint did the honors at our August program. John Lauter and Tony O'Brien performed in



John Ferguson at the 4/34 D.T.O.C. Wurlitzer.
(Ed Corev Photo)

September and October, respectively. All three did an outstanding job.

Da Capo, Inc. continues its efforts to purchase the 1500-seat Michigan Theatre for use as a performing arts center, which the Capitol City sorely needs. Many area ATOS members have graciously bought memberships in the organization, the price of purchase going directly towards a down-payment on the theatre.

Our thanks to our theatre organ artists, the Michigan Theatre management and Da Capo, Inc.

SCOTT S. SMITH



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