



*“the time of our life”*



## The Story of Our 25th Annual ATOS Convention

by Walter J. Beaupre, Ph.D.  
photos by John Sharp



# THE 25th ANNUAL CONVENTION . . .



John and Vincent Dux, from the U.S.A., and Bernard Strocchi, from Kivi, New Zealand, at the Southampton Guildhall.



"Grandpa" Abernethy and Florence de Jong at Granada, Harrow.



Lowell Ayars, the "Organist of the Year," with William Davies and Judd Walton.



After finally arriving in England, "Dinny" (Del Castillo) meets with the two organists who performed during the banquet, Janet Dossett and Michael Wooldridge.

← PAGE 31 PHOTOS: Upper Left — Hampton Court Palace, built over 400 years ago; Middle Left — the ATOS Banquet at Europa Hotel; Bottom Left — Penta Hotel, the Convention Headquarters; Upper Right — two of the entertainers at the banquet from the Peggy O'Farrell's Stage School; Middle Left — conventioners, at Polytechnic, listening to the "TROC" Wurliitzer; Bottom Left — Pearly Kings and Queens at the Sherry Reception.



Registration at the Penta Hotel, where everyone received their complete convention information including an interesting "fact-packed" brochure.



Norman Barfield shared the M.C. duties with Len Rawle.

The Pearly Kings and Queens greeted conventioners at the Gaumont State. Their costumes are decorated entirely with buttons. Standing in back of the group are ATOS prexies (L to R): Past-President Paul Abernethy, newly-elected President Dick Haight and immediate Past-President Tommy Landrum.



Of the 302 officially registered for the "Time Of Your Life 25th" in London, two THEATRE ORGAN magazine staffers were the only ones to report travel mishaps. Your well-organized correspondent arrived at his Boston departure point only to discover that his airline ticket folder was empty. After a few heart-in-mouth moments he found that the tickets had been filed under Travelers Checks rather than TWA! Good ole "Dinny" wasn't so lucky. Del Castillo confessed that Dinny roared into JFK only to be told that his passport had expired in 1958. Dinny had to cool his heels in the Big Apple until Monday (missing two days of the convention) and apply for a new passport. There was of course a Marx Bros. style rubarb while the computer refused to believe that Dinny, Del and Castillo were all the same person. Dinny will probably report further atrocities in his column.

Registration at the London Penta Hotel progressed with Swisswatch precision on Sunday morning. Most hung around to greet old friends and to be welcomed by Edith, Les and others of the fantastic London and South of England Chapter crew. Some 200 stalwarts ignored jet lag, rain, a November chill in the July air, and the vagaries of the London Underground (subway) system to take advantage of a preconvention walking tour which included a brief visit to London's City Museum and Evening at St. Paul's Cathedral. On the way to St. Paul's Gordon Kibbee told of his first hike (and it's a killer!) to the top of the Christopher Wren dome. Public signs all over London say "Way Out" for Exit, "Way In," "Way Up" and so on. Gordon knew some American wag had been to the top of the dome before him when he noticed the appropriate sign with an ad lib — "WAY DOWN upon de Swanee Riber."

Naturally, our resourceful hosts had pulled a few strings at the cathedral, and many of us were lucky enough to sit in the choir stalls dur-

ing the service where we could hear to best advantage the magnificent voices of both choir and pipes. There were mini-tours of the organ loft for some while others were content to drink in the sublime beauty of it all. At a church, world famous for its music, St. Paul's seemed like an impossible "act" to follow. But follow it we did with an early evening bus tour of the city culminating in a sherry reception in the Circle Lounge of the Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn. George Blackmore was scheduled to fire the opening ATOS salvo at the 4/16 "Torch" Wurlitzer.

It should be explained that your correspondent chose to prepare, in advance of the convention, hundreds of concert review cards. A dozen of these cards were distributed at random for each artist throughout the convention. Well over 100 of these cards were carefully written and returned and form the basis for all concert reviews which follow. Your correspondent tried to remain faithful to the essence of each verdict concerning the artist, favorite selections and the organs played. Now, on with the show.

Len Rawle, as M.C., did the gala opening honors assisted by a cockney troop of costumed Pearly Kings and Queens on the orchestra lift (shades of RCMH). The Wurlitzer console was both elevated and rotated into position for this audio-visual spectacular.

ATOS reviewer reactions to organist George Blackmore were mixed but the majority were enthusiastic. Most agreed that Blackmore's original "ATOS March" was the high point of his program, sprightly and melodic with touches of Stephen Foster here and there. It was clearly a program with something for every taste.

Those who judged the Kilburn Wurlitzer were impressed with the clarity of sound and the fine condition of the console and pipes. One or two were shocked to find both chambers located on the left side of the theatre. Because most Americans are conditioned to some artists playing without benefit of printed music, we suspect that Blackmore — being numero uno — took the brunt of this audience bias. The chief complaint, however, was really a compliment: "could have played longer!"



William Davies and the Compton organ at Windsor Memorial Hall. This was one of the optional tours.



George Blackmore's original composition, "The ATOS March," was the high point of his program at the Gaumont State, Kilburn.



Irvine Weiss, Wolfgang Schaa and Herr Pitschke from West Germany; Jaap Jonker, Chris Jonker, F. Jonker and Jan Hofman from the Netherlands, in the Dominion Theatre.



Christopher Dearnley, organist at St. Paul's Cathedral, explains the acoustics of the building.

A "queen" and her "court." Mark Rider, John Ledwon, Byron Jones, Lowell Ayars, Doreen Chadwick, Warren Lubich, William Weir, George Harrison (chairman of the host chapter), Tommy Landrum and Les Rawle at the Dominion Theatre.



On Monday morning the six ranks of buses (Tibia, Vox, Trumpet, Viol, Clarinet and Diapason) braved the rush hour traffic for a rendezvous at the Leicester Square Odeon. The very popular Welsh organist Doreen Chadwick was to hold sway — and sway she did with what are probably the most musical shoulders in the theatre organ world. It took the likes of Doreen to draw eyes away from the ever-changing pastel colors of the jelly-surround console. Critic ratings were again enthusiastic. Most reviewers singled out her Fats Waller medley and Latin numbers as the show stoppers. Those who commented on the “Duchess” 5/17 Compton liked the Tibias and the console lighting effects.

There was a tense moment right after the “interval” (that’s British for intermission) when we wondered if we were going to see Doreen Chadwick again. The music sounded forth lustily but the console didn’t appear. Mechanism failure? No, Doreen thought she had activated the elevator switch and proceeded to play with such total concentration that she didn’t realize she was still down in the pit. Later in the convention we discovered that you can’t be around Doreen without catching her genuine enthusiasm and joie de vivre. She loves music and she loves people, and it shows!

This first full day was to be one of contrasts. The coaches whisked us to another part of London for a session with Byron Jones at the Dominion Theatre on a (gulp!) little Hammond spinet. Can you guess how ATOS critics reacted? Wrong. They loved it. Every reviewer marveled at the quality and variety of sounds he coaxed from the dinky electronic. It matters not that your correspondent thought Byron’s “Ebb Tide” should be spelled “R-O-L-A-I-D-S”; the jury verdict was “Bravo!” Later in the day Byron Jones showed us that he was equally at home on theatre pipes. London program planners had made their point and made it well: a thoroughly professional organist of the Byron Jones calibre can make anything sound good. We also learned that hopes run high for pipes in the Dominion Theatre before too long. As an extra, the Dominion technical crew treated us to a demonstration of projection and sound equipment by showing us the opening scenes from the film *Rollerball* which featured Bach’s “Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor” on stereophonic pipes. Wild!

Convention planners wisely

anticipated that many American organists would be itching to try the U.K. instruments early in the game, so off to the “Troc” Wurlitzer, a 4/21 instrument maintained by the Cinema Organ Society at London Polytechnic. This fine organ was formerly in the Elephant and Castle Theatre. Those who either volunteered or were “drafted” were Lowell Ayers, John Ledwon, Arthur Rutter, Gordon Kibbee, Warren Lewis, Lin Lunde, (sorry, didn’t catch the first name) Cunningham, Harry Koenig, and someone played “St. Louis Blues” whose name I didn’t catch in the melee. Each artist was allowed 10 minutes. We doubt if any open console session ever enjoyed a more formidable line up of talent or a more attentive audience. It was a solid two hours with only one massive cipher to tame.

Monday evening was reserved for home tours to Wurlitzer Lodge (packed solid), Tonawanda Lodge (sold out), Tony Manning’s installation at Farnsworth, and the Plough Inn which is really a pub in Great Munden. The home installations have been described in T.O. many times before, but the Plough Inn deserves special mention. This fabulous pub out in the “boonies” features antique ploughs around a lamppost and a 4 manual Compton with working Melotone. It’s a white console with gold swirls. Swell shades are horizontal. Organist David Shepherd gave a preview of his talents in a concert marred only by some local yokels who insisted upon playing the juke box. As a special added treat conventioners witnessed the landing of hot air balloons from a nearby race. Camera shutters clicked like crazy and Kodak stock shot up a few more points.

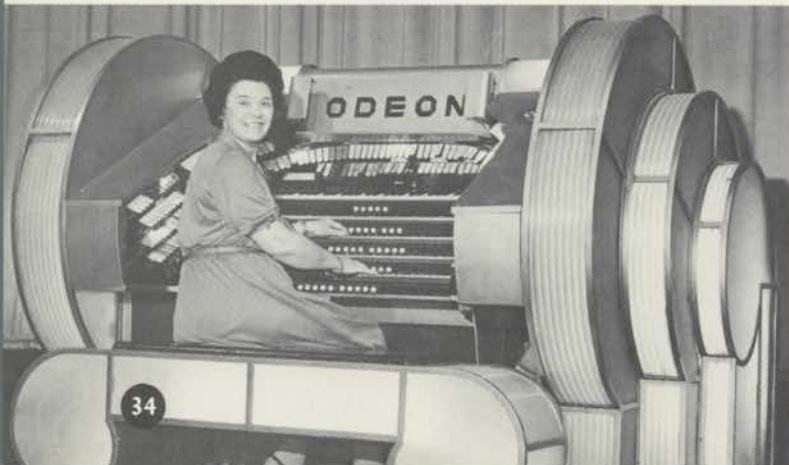


Byron Jones at the Hammond in the Dominion Theatre. He is equally at home on pipes.



Judd Walton (U.S.), Leo van Beeck (Belgium), Gordon Kibbee (U.S.) and William Brouwer (Netherlands).

Doreen Chadwick at the Odeon Leicester Square 5/17 Compton. The everchanging colors of the jelly-surround were intriguing.



Open console performers at Boro Polytechnic College 4/21 Wurlitzer were: (back row) Nina Adamson, Warren Lubich, Gordon Kibbee, Byron Jones; (front row) Mr. Cunningham, Lin Lunde, Arthur Rutter, Harry Koenig, Lowell Ayars and John Ledwon.



The Aylesbury Civic Centre is an impressive ultra-modern building with an ingenious foldaway stadium seating system and a 4/22 Compton/Standaart hybrid perched on the center balcony. After being introduced by Len Rawle as the busiest of all the organists in the U.K., John Mann ascended the dog-leg bench in one of the funniest sight gags this side of Charlie Chaplin. Every mini-reviewer gave John raves as a comic genius with incredible timing. Nor did his humor get in the way of his playing. "Outstanding, excellent, easy to listen to" were common adjectives.

Comments on the organ itself marveled at its excellent installation and resulting clarity. The reeds had zing; good arrangement of chambers; "beautiful sound — could listen for hours." A few minor kinks in no way detracted from the good humored fun of the occasion. John introduced "A Nightingale Choked in Berkeley Square" and "Strolling On the Strand" with one raised eyebrow and a Jack Benny pause, instantly conveying the notion that cruising the Strand no longer has quite the same innocent connotations. He is scheduled for a concert tour of the U.S. and Canada. For those who like to laugh between tunes, be sure to observe the Mann Act (little inside joke for U.S. fans).

Off to Blenheim Palace for a tour of Winston Churchill's birthplace, which is actually home for the current Duke and Duchess of Marlboro. The Long Library is also the home of a gorgeous 4 manual Willis organ. Alan Cornell played it competently, but let's be realistic. No one could compete with the mob

scene at Blenheim, the stunning library decor and the eager shutter bugs (your correspondent included) who were privileged to "fire at Willis" while Alan Cornell retained his composure and dignity — if not his eyesight — in the disco of strobe flash attachments.

Maybe this is as good a time as any to talk about good/bad news. The good news: never have photography and tape buffs had such complete freedom to capture everything at an ATOS Convention. Few realized, for example, that cameras and tape recorders are absolutely *verboden* in Royal Albert Hall. Someone managed to get the ban lifted for ATOS. That's great; we appreciated the unique opportunity. But the bad news is that many reviewers complained about the flash storms *during* selections, the chatter of sound movie cameras, and the clanking (sometimes program feedback) of tape decks. As one who is protapes as well as propictures, your correspondent must agree completely with those who think we should develop and adhere to standards of common courtesy both for the sake of the artists and for our fellow conventioners. That also goes for those without cameras and tape decks who gossip throughout concerts. Could we be a bit more civilized in Seattle?

The only musical casualty of the entire convention was the cancellation of the BBC Concert Hall appearance of William Davies. The musicians' strike wasn't settled in time. However, the fabulous Bill Davies did give an unscheduled concert later in the week at Windsor. The few who attended flipped over this "phenomenal artist" who "should be known in the U.S."



John Mann at the console of the 4/22 hybrid Compton/Standaart in the Aylesbury Civic Centre.

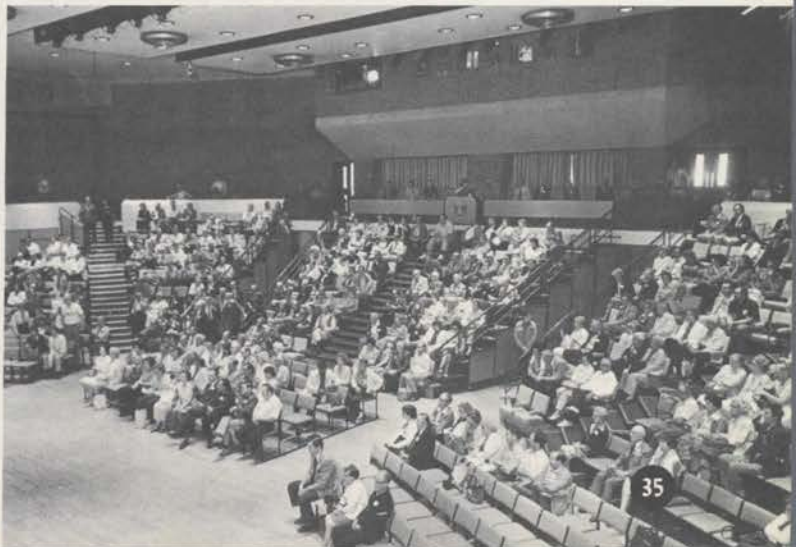


The ornate facade of the Father Willis organ in Blenheim Palace.

Alan Cornell at the Father Willis organ in the Long Library at Blenheim Palace.

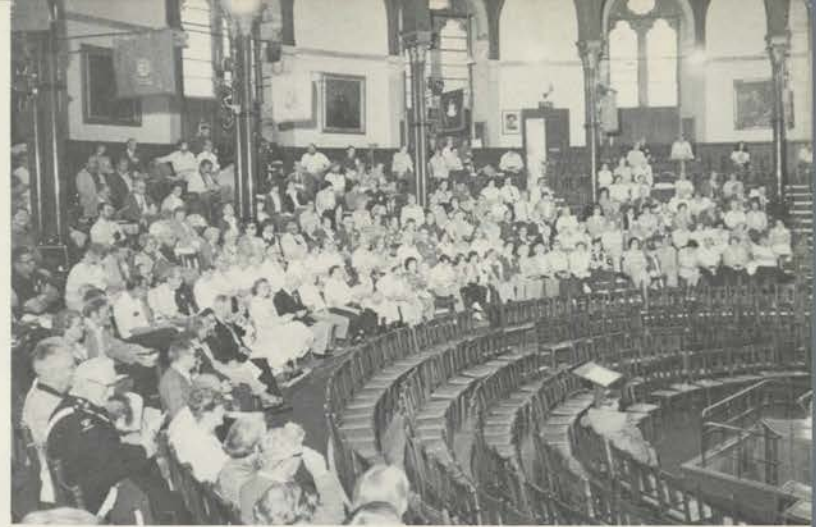


The seating platforms at the Aylesbury Civic Centre disappear when the multi-purpose building is used as a basketball court.





The console in St. John Vianney Church, Clayhall, is in the balcony, and matches the contemporary design of the church.



Conventioners assembled for the concert in the Speech Room at Harrow School.



Luncheon at the Regal Edmunton. Another excellent meal.



Outgoing President Tommy Landrum conducts the annual membership meeting at St. Mary's Hornchurch. The minutes will be found elsewhere in the convention coverage.



A London double-decker passes by the triple-cinema Granada Kingston.

John Sharp, the official convention photographer, herded the crowd. The outside of Blenheim Palace looks old, huge and almost ugly, which the guides pointed out during the tour of the palace.





Although Gordon Reynolds was scheduled to perform at the Royal Chapel at Hampton Court Palace, the Queen's request for his presence took precedence.



The dining hall in the Guildhall. One of several meals included in the registration fee was served here. Excellent food, terrific service and even ICE WATER!



Conventioneers gather in front of the Granada Walthamstow.



Stan Whittington during his concert at St. Mary's Hornchurch.



The first get-together of the convention was the sherry reception at the Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn, where excellent sherry and hors d'oeuvres were served as people renewed old friendships and made new ones.

Conventioneers together on the steps of Blenheim Palace for this photo. The inside is elegant, beautiful, and filled with historic furnishings





David Shepherd at the Granada Walthamstow 3/12 Christie. He also performed at the Plough Pub, where he is the regular organist, during the home tours.



The chartered buses proved to be light, airy and very comfortable.



It happens at every convention. This year it was the driver at the left who kept getting lost.

Stan Whittington at the 3/9 Compton in St. Mary's Hornchurch. Discovered by Father Kerr, the former Rialto Theatre (East London) was installed in the church and dedicated during the 1976 ATOS Safari.



Wednesday morning belonged to David Shepherd at the Granada Walthamstow 3/12 Christie. For a Lancashire lad who showed such promise in '76, all the '80 reviewers said *magna cum laude*. David has even developed a smooth BBC-type delivery when he speaks. Critics especially liked his Sidney Torch medley and there were also votes cast for his interesting trip through the voices of the Christie. Pipe chambers were installed above the proscenium, and most judged the organ to be bright, colorful, with unusual clarity. One claimed "I could seldom hear the pedal notes," but another singled out the Tibia and strings as terrific.

And it's off to Hornchurch, the genial stamping grounds of Father Kerr. Small children who happened to be playing around the St. Mary's churchyard when our buses arrived cheered and burst into "The Star Spangled Banner." It was one of those touching moments of spontaneous friendship we'll never forget. After a delicious lunch in the parish house, we gathered in the sanctuary for the Annual Membership Meeting. Adding to the dignity of the occasion (both meeting and concert) were the Lord Mayor of Hornchurch and his lady. U.K. observers marveled at the brevity and

efficiency of President Tommy Landrum.

For some, perhaps, the novelty of a genuine theatre organ in a church took a bit of adjustment, but who says hard pews must mean Bach! In the hands of Stan Whittington the lovely church became a theatre for an hour. Reviewers pronounced the artist relaxed, competent and experienced, but other than his *pot pourri* of French tunes everyone named a different favorite.

Installation buffs liked the organ and agreed that the console fitted the lovely decor of the church to a "T." The 3/9 Compton "Kinestra" was voiced well with impressive bells, chimes and vox. A brief transfer to St. John Vianney Church in Clayhall exposed us to a very modern sanctuary which boasted a 3/6 Compton with Melotone in the choir loft — and acres and acres of reverb! Organist Ena Baga conquered the Compton, the acoustics (3 seconds, yet) and the ATOS audience in nothing flat. The big favorite was her Leroy Anderson medley, although the Rossini overture to *The Barber of Seville* ran a close second. Our English friends, we found, are reluctant to give standing ovations, and most Americans had read recent criticisms in T.O. concerning the indiscriminate practice thereof. So, when conventioners jumped to their feet to show appreciation for Ena Baga's unstinting performance, you know this sweet lady was double-dynamite. It is said that Miss Baga took over for Reginald Dixon at Blackpool during World War II. We wouldn't be at all surprised to learn that she also won the war single handed with her pep and skill. Small wonder that a few mini-reviewers found her "quite tiring."



Melotone electrostatic unit is visible atop the chambers of the 3/16 Compton at St. John Vianney Church, Clayhall.

Ena Baga, the younger sister of Florence de Jong, at the console of the 3/6 Compton and Melotone.





The fifth day of the convention saw us back in Wurlitzerland, the Granada Cinema in Kingston. Bryan, the "Jazz King" turned out to be the most controversial of all the artists. Reviewers ran the gamut and there was no agreement as to what Bryan played best. Those who were turned on by him loved his "big band jazz" tunes. Others found his hilarious spoof of "Nola" as played by an enthusiastic novice too deep for tears. Your correspondent personally considers Rodwell to be wonderfully creative and original in his arrangements. Way out? But of course, darlin' — that's what makes ATOS Conventions exciting. A bit of challenge and controversy is good for the soul.

The sunny, warm, dry weather became too much of a good thing by the time our buses reached Hampton Court. This was the grandest of all the Tudor mansions with its fabulous apartments, gardens and complicated maze. Consequently, only the dauntless tore themselves away from all this regal splendor to

hear Trevor Bolshaw at the Regal Henley 3/7 Compton. He is a frequent visitor to the U.S. Critical reactions to his playing varied from excellent to good. Bolshaw's Gilbert and Sullivan medley took top honors. This was the first organ heard with a functioning piano attached, and the artist used it to excellent advantage in his "Rag." By this time, complaints all centered

around the absence of drinking fountains in British theatres, and the ever-present flash bulbs and whirring movie cameras.

Conventioners then had three choices: visit Windsor castle and the town shops, attend an added concert with a mystery artist (Bill Davies), or return to the Penta to rest. Only a small minority opted for the third alternative.



Tom Ford, Mr. Ryder, Edith Rawle and Mr. Hinton after the concert at Hampton Court Palace.



Bryan Rodwell, the postwar Jazz King of the Theatre Organ, at the console of the 3/10 Wurlitzer in the Granada Kingston.

The Compton was placed in the Regal in 1972, having originally been in the Ritz Cinema in Tunbridge Wells. The chambers are understage.



Trevor Bolshaw at the Regal Henley 3/7 Compton.

Frank Fowler demonstrated the organ at Hampton Court Palace in the absence of Gordon Reynolds who had gone to see the Queen. He is pictured here at the main console.





Reginald Porter-Brown at the classic console of the 4/50 Compton in the Guildhall, Southampton, which controls only the classical ranks in this instrument.

Royal Albert Hall is only a brisk stroll from the London Penta, a fact which didn't keep one of the buses from getting lost in the maze of one way streets and no-turn boulevards. Even the 4/146 Willis/Harrison was dwarfed by the immense concert hall. Norman Barfield served as M.C., introducing Jane Watts from the Royal College of Organists just across the street. Jane's concert was superb although there were a number of pedal ranks inoperable that day. Because one would have needed a telescope to see either the artist or the console, conventioners were invited to file past both at the end of the concert.

After what seemed like an endless bus ride in Friday afternoon traffic, we arrived late in Southampton and only had time for a brief "jogging" tour of the ancient city walls before settling down to a beautifully served dinner in the Guildhall Civic Centre. There was ample time to photograph

the dual consoles of the 4/50 Compton. One console is of straight organ design and controls only those ranks suitable for nontheatre music; the other activates all theatre ranks and percussions plus the Melotone (rather strange musical device similar to the tone generators in the first Hammonds). The British are accustomed to this big amplified sound on many Comptons, like it, and Reginald Porter-Brown used the Melotone judiciously.

Reviewers rated Porter-Brown all the way from "superb" to "better than ever." Porter-Brown has finger dexterity and technique to burn. What organist wouldn't turn green with envy when Reg does those effortless arpeggios during slow ballads? This man may well be the theatre organ world's answer to Virgil Fox. Oh yes, the acoustics in the Guildhall are almost as tricky as those in RCMH.



Reginald Porter-Brown also performed at theatre console of the Guildhall Compton.



Jane Watts needed assistance to pull all the necessary drawknobs on the 4/146 Willis/Harrison organ in Royal Albert Hall. The console was dwarfed by the immense concert hall.

Exterior of Royal Albert Hall.

Conventioners in the cavernous Royal Albert Hall.



Saturday morning the accent at the Granada Harrow was on the young and the venerable. Fortunately, the little 3/8 Wurlitzer had lots of snap and zing.

Pauline Dixon was first on the program and winner of the young organists' competition in 1978. The Dixon family bought a one manual electronic organ when Pauline and her twin sister were 13. The whole family learned to play in a music store with earphones. It was soon obvious that Pauline was the keyboard talent in the family and she quickly outgrew three successive teachers, presently studying with Matt Ross. Who are Pauline's musical idols? Hector Olivera, Ashley Miller, and the late Buddy Cole. She is also a Glen Miller fan. Pauline practices 3½ to 4 hours per day and spends one hour each week at the Rawle Wurlitzer in Northolt. An art major in school, Miss Dixon supplied most of the drawings for the Convention souvenir program. Does she intend to continue with art? No, Pauline said with the wholesome assurance of her 17 years, "I'll do it with music."

At the console Pauline Dixon looked smashing in a gold lamé jacket with her long brown hair cascading almost to her waist. Mini-reviewers marveled at her "concert poise," "great potential," and "chutzpah." Some suggested that Pauline use a greater variety of registrations, but it should be noted that preset pistons were reserved on the Wurlitzer for a later artist.

Stephen Vincent wore the "Chain

Frank Fowler and Joanna Fraser at the 4/71 Harrison and Harrison at Harrow School.



of Office" as the 1979 winner of the Young Theatre Organists' Competition. Stephen began piano at 11 and added organ lessons two years later, studying under John Norris at the Southern Music Training Centre (one of the charitable good works of Lady Suzy Jean). This 16-year-old is a sensitive talent with an incredible ear and a central nervous system that replays and reconstructs every concert selection and recording that comes his way. Obviously he hasn't had time to come to terms with his own gifts, and the butterflies in his stomach prior to his performance must have had a four-foot wingspread! Looking beyond momentary panic (when Stephen dropped his music, reviewers all saw tremendous potential in the originality and variety of his arrangements. They were impressed by his ability to play different styles and by his solid classical base. It's interesting that reviewers wrote more lengthy comments about Stephen Vincent than about any other artist featured during the convention. There were whole paragraphs of encouragement. Comments about the organ centered on the surprisingly big sound and specifically the Brass, Sax, Tuba, and Posthorn.

After intermission we returned to the Granada Harrow Wurlitzer to hear the "first lady of the British theatre organ" Florence de Jong (which rhymes with "still going strong" at 84). "Very professional and "outstanding" were among the verdicts of the jury. Florence had something nice for every taste. The little Wurli speaks well into the theatre, was well tuned and voiced properly — so said the experts.

Pauline Dixon, Young Organist of the Year in 1978, Florence de Jong and Stephen Vincent, Young Organist of the Year 1979, at the Granada Cinema Harrow 3/8 Wurlitzer.



The unique opportunity for the nonelect to visit the hallowed halls of Harrow School was not without its pomp, circumstance and genuine kicks. We were welcomed by the charming Lord Mayor of Harrow, a lady who is no slouch as a speaker or astute politician. Possibly the ancient Speech Room with its crumbling banners and plaques for outstanding valor stole the show from Joanna Fraser and Frank Fowler. Their attempts to popularize the classics for the masses were wasted on an audience already sold. Joanna's playing was impeccable, but no one selection emerged as a favorite.

Back to the Penta with almost two free hours to get "gussied up" for the ATOS Banquet and Cabaret at the Europa Hotel on fashionable Grosvenor Square. The 25th Silver Anniversary finale was class all the way. Judd Walton served as M.C. and organ music during dinner was beautifully played on a big Yamaha by Janet Dowsett and Michael Woodridge, two youthful talents from the London Chapter.



The ladies of the London Chapter form a guard of honour for Counsellor Mrs. Davis, Mayor of Harrow.

# the Banquet . . .







Michael Wooldridge and Janet Dowsett at the Yamaha during the banquet.



Father Kerr chats with Ena Baga at Clayhall. He was instrumental in obtaining and installing the Comptons at both St. John's Vianney Church, as well as at St. Mary's Hornchurch.



New ATOS president, Dick Haight, accepted the wand of office, a Tibia pipe, at the banquet.

Len Rawle doubled in gold bullion as interlocutor, sound technician and accompanist for the fantastic group of little tots from the Peggy O'Farrell Children's Stage School. The kids brought the house down with their tap routines, impressions of Fred and Ginger, Shirley Temple and Al Jolson. Len then introduced 15-year-old Jackie Marks who has to be the brightest singing talent since Judy and Liza. Like, wow! To quote Noel Coward in a far different context, "I couldn't have enjoyed it more!"



Edith Rawle accepts flowers from her granddaughter, Georginia, for a job well done.

## SIDNEY TORCH 1980 HONORARY MEMBER

Mr. Torch was selected as the Honorary Member by the ATOS National Board for his contribution to the art of theatre organ playing.

His jazz stylings of popular music, orchestral approach, and flawless performance have never been surpassed.

Although Sidney Torch has not played a theatre organ or made a recording since 1940, the vintage recordings available exhibit a freshness in sound that is as modern as anything played by the finest artists of today.

A great number of our current top artists are using innovations introduced by Torch forty or fifty years ago and in modern songs these Torch "touches" fit perfectly and do much for enhancing the stylings of today's artist.

Sidney Torch has been living quietly in retirement. His home is located in the South of England.

ATOS considers it a great honor to be able to salute one of the true greats in theatre organ performance.

Sidney Torch, musician, arranger and artist as he appeared in 1940.



### CONVENTION COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS

Chairman and Treasurer: George Harrison  
 Vice-Chairman: Mike Clemence  
 Secretariat: Edith Rawle and Joyce Taylor  
 Assistant Treasurer: Brian Stratton  
 Concert Manager and Compere: Len Rawle  
 Organ Maintenance: Les Rawle and team  
 Registration: Janice Morton assisted by Sid and Jean Perkins, Muriel Jackson  
 Transport Management: Ian McIver and Harry Warburton  
 Banquet: Edith Rawle and Ladies' team  
 Cabaret: Len Rawle  
 Programme Brochure: Norman Barfield, Teddy Crawford and George Harrison  
 Photography: John and Mavis Sharp  
 Record Shop: John and Noreen Foskett  
 Electronic Organ Provision: Len Rawle  
 Chief Coach Captains: Mike Clemence and Brian Stratton  
 Norman Barfield and Fred Watts  
 Beck and Terry Parson  
 Don Wharran and Father Kerr  
 Joyce and Bob Taylor  
 John and Noreen Foskett  
 Box Office: Mavis Sharp and Vera Crook  
 Theatre Stewards: Ron Allen, Bert Quaddy, Eddie Mowatt, Alf Jackson, Arthur Aldridge, Audrey and Pauline Dixon  
 Hospitality Desk: Gladys Quaddy and Ladies' team  
 First Aid: Les Dyer  
 Other Helpers: Nina, Veronica and Allan Trott, Roy and Sybil Smith, Jean and Tom Swift, Ted Lawrence, Les and Ruby Bennett, John and Beryl Chalmers, Les Birch, Tom Musgrave

All over? Not by a long bus ride. There was still Douglas Reeve with his "favorite wife" Joyce at the Regal Edmonton and a jaunt to the top of East Anglia for Len Rawle at Thursford Museum.

Reeve, to reverse an old hymn tune, has "cornered the Brighton" audiences for 40 years and was rated by critics as "top drawer," "super," "excellent British style." Every reviewer picked different favorites. Doug is very much at home on a Christie and brought out the lovely strings, ensemble sounds, and clarity of voices. Ironically, some praised the "very rich quality" while others noted a "bright — almost thin — sound." Guess it made a difference where one sat in the theatre.

The Thursford Collection in distant Norfolk held much to distract one from post-convention depression: a gorgeous Venetian Gondola Switchback Ride with Gaviola Or-

gan, mechanical band organs, steam traction engines galore, a functioning steam railroad, and a masterfully installed 3/19 Wurlitzer with Len Rawle at the console. Reactions to Len? "Best of the convention — bar none," "super," "sensational," "top drawer" — with no dissenters. Critics couldn't agree on their favorites.

The sound of the Wurlitzer in the vast tin-roof barn was "brilliant in the best sense" with a great range of tonal contrasts. One observer found the strings "harsh" — another praised them. All agreed that the Tibia was good. The damp, humid weather had raised havoc with the tuning consistency between pipe ranks and percussions, especially the piano and glock, but this was a small price to pay for witnessing Len's stunning performance. The second standing ovation of the convention was long and loud.



Susan McMaine (Potomac Valley) in the Record Shop.

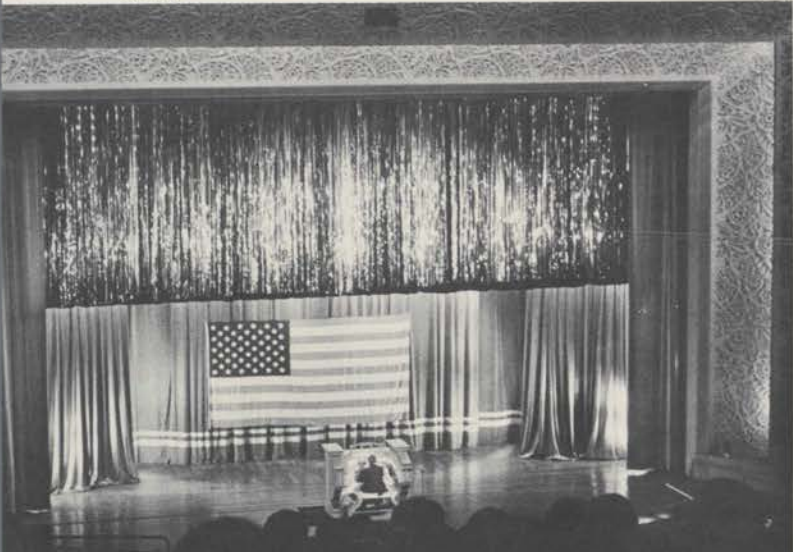


Ridin' the rails. Some members took advantage of the steam train ride at Cushing's Steam Engine and Organ Museum at Thursford.



Douglas Reeve at the Christie in the Regal Edmonton.

The grand drape rose to reveal "Old Glory" at the beginning of Douglas Reeve's concert at the Regal Edmonton. A very impressive sight, it brought lumps to many throats.



Len Rawle at the 3/19 Wurlitzer at Thursford. The instrument is from the Paramount (Odeon) Leeds and is now featured on all the open days (May-October) and is heard weekly in prime concerts.

Conventioneers Linda Rowlands and John Abson (left) and B. Mooney and Beverly Barton enjoy one of the musical rides at the Thursford Museum.

