



The John Dickinson Theatre Organ Society of the Wilmington, Delaware, area has announced the artists for their 1981-82 season: October 3, 1981 will feature Lyn Larsen; November 21, Hector Olivera; January 30, 1982, Lowell Ayars; March 13, Dick Smith; April 24, Tom Hazleton; and concluding the series on June 5 will be Kay McAbee.

The Dickinson Society has one of the finest and best-maintained Kimball theatre organs to be found anywhere. It has been greatly expanded since it was moved from Philadelphia's Boyd Theatre. It is probably the only theatre organ in this country with a movable stage organ section played from the main console. This season it is expected that the original Kimball console will be removed for complete rebuilding and modernization. In its place will be a completely refurbished Moller 3-manual console, for use until the Kimball console is ready to be reinstalled.

A number of members of ATOS from abroad, particularly those from England, use some of their travel time either before or after conventions to visit friends and organ installations. The Marshall Ladds of the Delaware Valley Chapter had the pleasure of entertaining William (Bill) Tipper from Derby, England, after the Seattle bash. Among the numerous activities the Ladds provided for their guest was a trip to the Bridgeton, New Jersey, home of

Lowell Ayars to play his 2/8 Wurlitzer, and a visit to the Colonial Theatre where Jim Brenneman houses his large 3-manual Kimball which was originally in Philadelphia's State Theatre. Also with the Ladds was Frank Lybolt of Portsmouth, Virginia, and Philadelphia's "old timer" Art Hinett, former theatre organist and for a number of years staff organist of Radio Station KYW.

LOWELL AYARS

U.S. Pipe Organ Opus 101 Begins a New Life

Sunnybrook Ballroom, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, a famous entertainment center, has installed a theatre pipe organ. The instrument was built by the United States Pipe Organ Company in 1926 and installed in the Lansdale Theatre, Lansdale, Pennsylvania. It was used until 1942, when it was removed and installed in a church. The traps were stripped from the instrument and stored in a garage for thirty years. In 1971, Roger and Dorothy Bloom, of Downingtown, Pennsylvania, bought the organ and moved it to their home.

The instrument was purchased from the Blooms in the spring of this year and installed in the Sunnybrook Ballroom to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the ballroom. The organ is a 3/10, with Marimba, Chimes, Xylophone, and a full toy counter consisting of Chinese Gong, Snare Drums, Siren, Fire Gong, Triangle, Castanets, Auto Horn, Tambourine, Cymbals, Sleigh Bells, Bird Whistle, Boat Whistle, and Police Whistle.

ROBERT K. HARTENSTINE

Do Boats Talk?

Maryann and I thought that the Seattle Convention was one of the most enjoyable we have attended. For us, the highlight was the 4th of July boat trip to Kiana Lodge for an Indian Salmon Bake. Our boat left Seattle at 5:30 p.m. We crossed to the far side of Puget Sound and then followed the shoreline to the Lodge. The shore was lined with many beautiful homes. It being the 4th of July, there were many visitors having a good time and as we passed they waved at the boat.

After a delicious salmon dinner at Kiana Lodge, we boarded the boat to return just as the sun was setting. As we passed the homes, I noticed that the house lights and porch lights were being flashed off and on. Then I saw that the searchlight on the boat was panning the homes as the boat progressed. We were in effect talking to the people on shore by the use of our searchlight and they were responding by flashing their lights.

This friendly display just highlighted the whole atmosphere of the convention, and answered the question, "Do Boats Talk?" They did on the 4th of July, 1981, on Puget Sound at the ATOS National Convention.

DALE MENDENHALL

Organ Models

Nor-Cal Chapter member Leo H. Thompson enjoys building models of theatre organ consoles. They are equipped with lights like the real thing. The models are for sale. Leo can be reached at 415/682-5975, or at 1768 Bishop Drive, Concord, CA 94521, for further information.



Leo H. Thompson.



The late Lois Miller, for many years Convention Hall organist, is pictured at the console.
(From the Lloyd Klos collection)

Organ Restoration to Require Two Years and Cost \$1.5 Million

According to a recent article in *The Atlantic City Press*, local resident Mildred Fox has been working for the last two years to stir up interest and raise funds for the restoration of the giant 7-manual Midmer-Losh organ in the Atlantic City Convention Hall. She was instrumental in obtaining a survey of the organ, which resulted in an estimated cost of \$1.5 million and two years of work to repair and rebuild.

The survey revealed a number of key problems, among which were: only two blowers out of eight are functioning; severe water damage to windchests and pipes of several divisions; antiquated relays that need to be replaced; the combination action was destroyed in the 1944 hurricane; and, of the 22 divisions, only four

are playable and they are out of tune and in extreme disrepair. It is proposed to install a computer system to control some parts of the organ.

Designed by New Jersey State Senator Emerson Richards in the late 1920s, the organ cost \$500,000 to build. It was first used publicly on May 11, 1932. Its seven manuals are somewhat unusual; the bottom two having 85 keys, the next above having 73 keys, and the top four 61 keys each. There are 1,477 stops arranged in 15 curved rows on either side of the manuals, seven expression pedals, and 33,112 pipes. Its eight blowers total 365 hp.

Emerson Richards was also responsible for the design of the large 4-manual Kimball organ installed in the gallery of the ballroom of the auditorium. The Kimball, with a theatre-style console, was completed in 1929, shortly after the auditorium itself.

RUTH E. DREHER

Ashley Miller Premieres New Canadian Theatre Organ

On September 17 Ashley Miller played the opening concert on Canada's largest theatre pipe organ, located in Kingston, Ontario.

The concert climaxed four years of effort by a local group of theatre organ devotees (musicians, aspiring musicians, and technicians) to bring live theatre organ music to Kingston. These members of the Kingston Theatre Organ Society heard their first musical sounds from the organ just over a year ago. Since last fall the organ has been used at regular church services at its new home, the Church of the Redeemer.

The organ is a 3/21 Kimball, plus piano and six tuned percussions. It was originally installed in a theatre in Youngstown, Ohio. The console contains 256 stop tabs and 70 combination pistons. It has been completely rebuilt with advice from a number of top performing artists and technical experts, and includes the use of solid-state technology.

DON CRESWELL □

BOOK REVIEW



by Lloyd E. Klos

ESTEY REED ORGANS ON PARADE by Robert B. Whiting. 150 pages. Available from Vestal Press, Box 97, Vestal, NY 13850. Price: \$15. New York State residents add 7% sales tax.

For those whose ancestors had one of the parlor pump organs in their homes, the status symbol of the day, or for those who have an interest in these instruments, this book will fill the bill most adequately.

A history of the company, from its beginnings in 1846 until its takeover in 1961 to become Estey Electronics, gives impressive background. Reproductions of several Estey catalogues show engravings of the numerous models. Descriptions of the stops, care of the organs, price lists, and bibliography round out the text. □