

eight-piece band and the organist made it sound twice that big because it was loud and fast. I once played for a Japanese circus. They had 52 performers, and not one of them could speak a word of English. We played three weeks at the Civic Auditorium and then took it over to Maui and the Big Island (Hawaii). I never enjoyed anything as much before in my life.

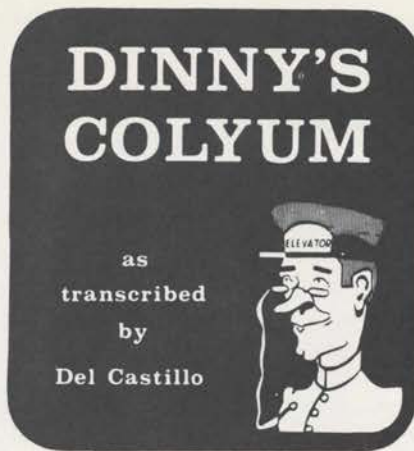
"One afternoon I came in between shows with the conductor, a very remarkable, handsome young man, very powerfully built. He was the manager of the show and he did a trapeze act also. They built a huge apparatus on Fort Street near King, and had him do part of his act to draw the people. After the show was over I took him driving and he wanted to drive so I took him up into a residential section. I found out later from the interpreters that it had been the first time he had ever driven a car. I guess he had watched often enough to learn how to turn the wheel. It was the dream of his life to drive a car, and he did. And he did all right, too."

In 1946 she and her husband adopted a three-week-old baby boy and named him Peter. Pete Smith later passed away and in 1962 Virginia married her son's real father, Joe Kahapea.

"I have forgotten a number of places. It was a colorful time and I enjoyed every minute of it. I retired as an organist when I had my two accidents; one on my hand and then my legs. That put me on the shelf."

But even "on the shelf," Virginia didn't quit; she exercised her hand until she had regained full use of it, although her doctor had said it couldn't be done. She played whenever she got the chance, and in 1973 was the Cameo Artist representing the Aloha (Hawaii) Chapter at the National ATOS Convention in Portland, Oregon.

She moved to the Big Island of Hawaii, near the tourist town of Kona, where she was rather out of touch with civilization, and with few of the modern conveniences that we take to be necessities. But she loved the beauty of the area, the fresh air, the closeness to nature. She occasionally visited Honolulu and played the organs she once knew and still loved. The song had not gone out of her heart. □



Mr. Harry Jenkins, who is a organ player I knowed from way back when I was a-runnin the elyvater at Mr. Walter Jacobs Publishin Company in Boston, has rit me with his shirt tale on fire on acct. he saw a notice about a organ concert that said that The Theatre Pipe Organ is not a Relict of the Silent Film but One of the Most Versatile Instruments Devised by man. Well that dint sound like no insult to me but Mr. Jenkins he dint like to hear the theater organ called a Relick. Mr. Jenkins he went on to say that down his way they is some people who dont want to have silent movies in organ concerts. He thinks most people do want it but they is some who dont.

Well, that sounds reasonable to me. Just like they is some Republick-ans and some Democrats or some Baptists and some Catholicks and like that there. You cant always expect that everybody is a-go-in to think the same way. As for me I am on Mr. Jenkins side. Seems to me every time I hear a organ player play for the silent movies he gets a great hand at the end even when the movie is a stinker. And beleave me some of them old movies is awful corny. But even the corny ones I get a kick out of when the Western hero takes off lick-ity split after the villin and the organ player cuts loose with Hi Ho Silver and like that there. And I am also a sucker for the sentimental ones when the organ player comes on with some sob musick on the Tibia and the Vox Humana and I aint ashamed to say that sometimes I get a good cry out of it, just like I get a good belly laff when Charlie Chaplin or Buster Keaton they fall down and the organ goes Gr-r-r-oomph.

I have to admit that all the organ players who are fittin musick to the

silent movies aint always up to it. They is some who jest kind of dribble along like they are gettin paid by the note and they think it is a sin not to have some musick a-go-in all the time. And I always get kind of irritated when they is a dog bark or a shot or a train wistle and the organ player dont give out with the bark or the shot or the wistle the first time you see it. I spose maybe it is too much to expect that the player had a chancet to see the movie enough times to know jest when them things was goin to happen, but after all aint that what he is gettin paid for? How long do you think a timpany player would last if he dint get in the first bang on the timpany where it was suppose to be. I will tell you how long he would last. He would last only to the first time the conductor got him in the anty room.

Now that I got steamed up on the subjeck it seems to me that they is more young organ players in concerts who dont know how to play for them the way the old timers like Oliver Wallace and Lew White and Emil Velazco and fellers like that did when I use to listen way back in the 20s when I first begun to go to the movies. When you went into them big movie palaces in the middle of a movie and you hear them great big rich sounds comin out of that big Wurlitzer you knew you was in for a musical treat even if the movie wasnt much good. And them organists, the best ones I mean in Noo York and Chicago and Detroit and Los Angeles, they knew how to use musick to goose up the movie. Why wouldnt they? They been doin it every day foe years, and by the time a movie got to the last day they had all them cues down so pat you could even tell what was comin if you had your eyes shut. Yup, them was the Good Old Days. □

Convention Note: Recording artists, authors and others who would like to have records, tapes, sheet music or books on sale at the Convention Store during the 1982 ATOS Convention in Detroit are asked to write to: Gil Francis, ATOS Convention Store, 37819 Howell, Livonia, Michigan 48154, or phone (313) 464-1314, for consignment information.