

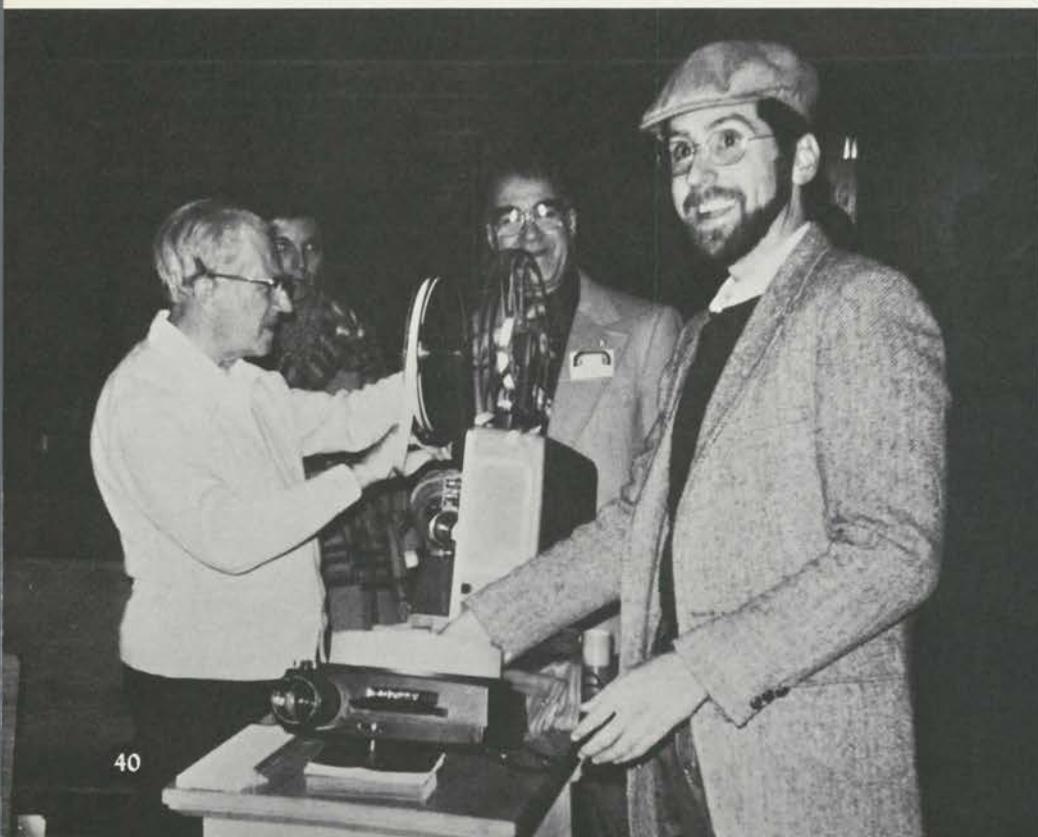
With the
Unaffiliated
 Clubs
 Lloyd E. Klos



(KTOS) — Kingston, Ontario

Since our successful opening last fall, as reported in the Nov./Dec. THEATRE ORGAN, we have added two double concerts by celebrity artists to the KTOS record. Every one was sold out in advance, giving the impression we must be doing something right. In November, Dennis James brightened the scene with energetic concerts on two successive

Dennis James, right, tries out the projection equipment before his November concert at the Church of the Redeemer in Kingston, Ontario, with assistance from Norm Hughes and George Raynes. (Frank Pratt Photo)



nights. His "Roaring Twenties" theme included Laurel & Hardy in *Big Business*, which kept the 3/21 Kimball's sound-effect buttons busy between laughs. After his masterful treatment of Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor," there were no doubts about the Kimball's suitability for classical organ repertoire, and it seemed right at home in its ecclesiastical surroundings in the Church of the Redeemer. While in town, Dennis taped a 20-minute segment for the syndicated national radio show *Sunday, Sunday*, part music and part interview.

In mid-January, a very relaxed Kay McAbee from Chicago played two fine concerts, ranging from a schmaltzy *Showboat* medley to his noted Chicago-style "Tea for Two," full of spectacular razzle-dazzle. Each of our artists has been amazed by the local response to sing-along slides, but it sounds great every time. Walt Strony has been booked for our series closer in April, and Tom Gnaster will open the 1982-83 series in September.

The enthusiasm built up in Kingston by our concerts has been a bit overwhelming. Our daily paper has given each concert a good advance buildup (the first filled an entire page) and a rave review. Local FM radio has also been very kind to us. It



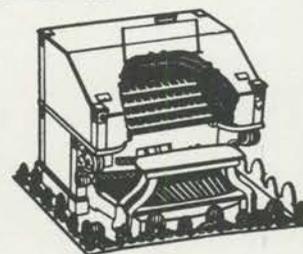
Kay McAbee's "Chicago-style" playing was a big hit on the Kingston Kimball. (Frank Pratt Photo)

doesn't hurt to have a local business underwrite our newspaper advertising and accommodation for artists, either!

Despite some tag-end jobs still underway in the chambers, we are finally getting around to social nights for members.

FRANK PRATT

RTOS



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

Rochester Theatre Organ Society (RTOS) — Rochester, New York

RTOS is experiencing its most ambitious season since it began in 1964. Kicking off the club's eighteenth concert season, English organist Ernest Broadbent royally entertained 1614 people at the Auditorium Theatre in September. He was followed by Rex Koury's third RTOS appearance, his best yet, in October with an audience of 1136 in the Auditorium. Came Halloween at the Eisenhart Auditorium, 299 saw Irv Toner accompany *Phantom of the Opera* on

the 3/8 Wurlitzer. That performance featured the unscheduled antics of a live bat which flew about, dive-bombing several attendees and sending several women shrieking from the scene!

In November occurred the fourth visit of Lawrence Welk's organist, Bob Ralston, who drew 3259 for two concerts at the Auditorium. The second show attracted a large number of senior citizens, many arriving in a half-dozen buses, two from Toronto.

Resuming the concert series in December, pizza organist Donna Parker made her initial RTOS appearance before 901 with a thoroughly enjoyable program. Frank Cimmino, organist at the Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque, New Jersey, (hit by fire last August but being rebuilt) was a first-time performer in January, delighting 1362 people with some lively music, light banter and an expansive personality. Given a spot in the second half was a youngster, Ralph Ringstad, from whom more will be heard in the future. He was excellent in duets with Frank, and in solo work.

Besides the above programs, three crews of RTOS personnel are engaged in restoration or maintenance work on three instruments. One crew has been working since last summer to restore the 4/70 Aeolian in the George Eastman House of Photography. A second has been working to refurbish and reinstall the 4/22 Wurlitzer's upright piano in the Auditorium Theatre, while a third group completes projects on and maintains the Eisenhart Auditorium's Wurlitzer. A busy time is being had by all RTOS workers!

LLOYD E. KLOS

**Rush!
Hurry!
Hop-to-it!**

Send in your ATOS Convention Registration today so you can enjoy the music and have fun in the beautiful, exciting city of Detroit! See the back of the mailing cover for the registration form.



(ROEC) — Richmond, Virginia

As this item goes to press, Richmond's Virginia Center for the Performing Arts (ex-Loew's Theatre) has raised over \$5 million to completely restore the house. It will need \$1 million more. The atmospheric features are being retained — almost. Sound engineers have cut a ten-foot square opening in the ceiling through which a speaker rig can be lowered. The pit is being enlarged so that the two-section hydraulic lift can accommodate a 65-person orchestra. A "scissor" lift will raise and lower the organ console.

The Wurlitzer organ, donated by the Surf City, New Jersey, Hotel, needs much work before it can play for the public. A Tibia, Kinura and four other ranks were either mangled or missing. The chests will be completely re-leathered. The console combinations, in terrible condition, will have a new Peterson relay-coupler system, installed by Phil Klann. Acquired locally are a second Tibia, French Horn, French Trumpet and solo string.

Incidentally, if anyone wishes to make a tax-deductible donation to the Center, the address of the Virginia Center for the Performing Arts is 600 East Grace Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

The January meeting of the ROEC was held in Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The occasion was a concert by Earl Miller on a Bartholomey organ. The church has ordered a \$200,000 tracker for the gallery, and considered removing the schmaltzy-romantic Bartholomey as soon as the new instrument is installed. The Organ Historical Society, however, convinced the powers-that-be that two organs, each representing a different type of musical approach, would be a decided asset, so apparently the old organ will remain.

Earl Miller performs in a Danville, Virginia, church and hails from Montana, where he grew up playing a Robert-Morton theatre organ. His specialty is performing the great

transcriptions of overtures, and he explained that this musical form was used when no orchestra or band was available in small towns. Long-hairs in the past frowned on transcriptions.

BILL FLOYD

Empire State

*theatre and musical instrument museum
Syracuse, New York*

(ESTMIM) — Syracuse, New York

Our most recent project was to dismantle and move a 2/9 tracker organ, which was donated to us by the Geddes United Church of Christ. It was built in Syracuse in 1902 for \$1300 by the W. J. Staub Co. One of its pipes is marked "August 9, 1898." Some of our members helped with the dismantling and moving of the organ to the New York State Fairgrounds. We couldn't reinstall it in the Art & Home Center, the home of our museum and Wurlitzer, because the tracker was too high for the ceilings. Therefore, the Fair management chose the Pioneer Museum Building, and Arnold Briggs and Ron Stevens installed it there. Mini concerts were played on it every two hours during the 1981 New York State Fair.

We recently did a short sequence on the TV program, *Bud's Journal*. John Mazzae played for a silent comedy, doing his usual fine job. He was also interviewed about theatre pipe organs and playing silent movies.

Our December program was played by Utica's Tim Schramm. Though he has a good musical background and has played pipe organs before, this was Tim's first concert on a theatre instrument. It was a great program and any group which books this young man will be very pleased.

The State Fair administration closed the Art & Home Center during January, cancelling our monthly concert, but the series was scheduled to resume in February.

Like most groups, we have a few very faithful members who show up week after week to volunteer their services. Carl Shea is one of these, having done a superb job for six years in booking artists. He has volunteered to continue his duties in 1982 and has been engaging some good talent for this period.

CHARLES E. RICH □