style. A standing ovation was rewarded with some jazzed-up numbers, notably Glenn Miller's "In the Mood."

LLOYD E. KLOS

Empire State

theatre and musical instrument museum

(ESTMIM) — Syracuse, New York 315/492-0465

This past spring, ESTMIM member John Mazzae, former theatre organist, played a series of silent films on an electronic in Utica's Stanley Theatre. The house once had a 3/12 Wurlitzer, which Mazzae, Harry Brecknell and others in an eight-year effort, rebuilt and installed in Utica's Proctor High School. It's a great sounding organ in its new location.

Our own 3/11 Wurlitzer got its annual ten-day workout during New York State Fair Week. It was used almost four hours a day for interludes, background music for fashion shows, concerts and silent movies. Organists included John Fiscoe, David Conway, Karl Moser and Catherine Thomas.

John Fiscoe, a member of the New York State Police, was the object of an August feature in the Syracuse Herald-American's Empire Magazine. Dave Conway is taking classical organ and theory as a college freshman. Karl Moser is also starting college. Thirteen-year-old Catherine Thomas was making her sixth public appearance this year. She is a five-time Yamaha festival winner, and in addition to her theatre organ and



Another of the young breed, getting a start in the theatre organ idiom, Syracuse's Dave Conway.





From NYS Trooper uniform to formal dress as a theatre organist. That is the varied life of Syracuse's John Fiscoe. He's at the ESTMIM 3/11 Wurlitzer console at right.

piano studies, is taking a classical organ course at Syracuse University.

Thanks to Bruce Carter, Mike Conway and Walter Shannon, we have a new theatre easel and newlypainted announcement signs for the Mills Building entrance and lobby. Manager Ron Squires of Syracuse's Landmark Theatre, had a very attractive Landmark exhibit near our auditorium entrance during Fair Week.

CHARLIE RICH



Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.

Address: Editor, THEATRE ORGAN 3448 Cowper Court Palo Alto, CA 94306

Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN magazine.

Dear Mr. Klos:

Your item in the May/June 1982 "Pipes & Personalities," requesting input on Sigmund Krumgold, brought back a rush of nostalgia for me.

I was born and raised in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and at a very early age became deeply interested in motion picture theatres. This was in spite of limited exposure to Poli's vaudeville theatre, and observing construction and opening of Poli's 3048-seat Palace and 2193-seat Majestic. The original Poli's never had an organ, a piano being used to accompany the silents in this large house. The Palace and Majestic had organs, but the customers couldn't see the consoles.

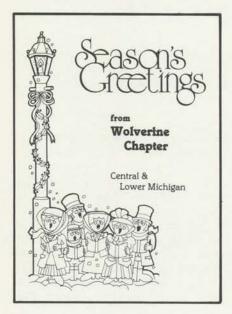
In 1926, our family moved to Flushing, New York. I visited every theatre possible, noting the organs. One of the best was in the Flushing Theatre, and it had a horseshoe console, one of the first I'd seen. Don

Baker had one of his first organ-playing jobs at this theatre.

In November 1926, the New York Paramount opened and we attended on the second day. I was spellbound by this theatre — amazed at the orchestra elevator, but absolutely stunned when I saw the gold and white Wurlitzer console rise into the spotlight. Jesse Crawford presented "Organs I Have Played," a resume of his musical career. As a boy of 15, I had never been so awe-struck at anything. It engendered a lifelong love of the theatre organ, though I never was able to play one.

I was attending high school then. The Paramount changed shows every week, and it was only 40 cents until 1 p.m. I spent many Saturday mornings there, enjoying the Publix stage shows, and always Jesse and Helen Crawford. Sometimes our family went on Friday evenings, arriving before the admission price changed at six.

With four shows a day, there was an interval which had to be filled before the evening's stage show. We were always treated to extra movie shorts and much to my pleasure, organ interludes. We had no idea who accompanied the silent films on the organ, but Crawford never did. The names of the "filler" organists were flashed on the screen, Sigmund Krumgold and Egon Putz among them. The latter, I had the feeling, was basically a pianist as he never seemed to change registrations. Krumgold's style was opposite to that of Crawford, rarely playing ballads, but specializing in the classics. One





thing about the Paramount organ: When you sat in the first row of the balcony, you had no trouble hearing it! I thoroughly agree with everyone who ever said or wrote about the instrument; it was the best Wurlitzer ever produced, including the Radio City Music Hall's 4/58. Nothing approached it for the ideal sound. The poor Roxy Kimball was lost under the stage!

The Paramount had a white-haired gentleman, attired in evening dress, who played in the music room of the Grand Lobby for waiting patrons. A nearby sign said he had a repertoire of 1000 pieces and would play requests. He had a typical middle-European name which I can't recall.

About 1929, my mother, aware of my deep interest in the theatre organ, arranged for us to meet Jesse Crawford in the studio which housed a 4/21 Wurlitzer. We had a short, cordial meeting since it was obvious I wasn't an organist. But I got to see the 4/21, and it was the thrill of the day. In later years, I was an avid fan of Fred Feibel when he played that studio organ daily on the radio.

I'm sure I haven't added to your background information on Sigmund Krumgold, but it availed me the opportunity to relive those very wonderful days when the New York Paramount was in its prime.

Sincerely, Charles M. Fletcher Logan, Utah

Dear Editor:

A special thanks to all those who took the time to return the election ballots which were mailed to all members in April. I especially enjoyed the notes which were included in some of the envelopes. Several people asked, "Is this an all-male organization? Why are there no females on the ballot?" The answer is simply that no women volunteered to run for the Board of Directors. Some sent personal greetings, others sent changes of address or made inquiries and a

few just vented their thoughts and gripes about ATOS. Whatever the comment, it spiced up the monotony of opening 2093 envelopes. Also, my mailman is still speaking to me.

Margaret Ann Foy Denver, Colorado

Dear Sir:

It appears to me that the National ATOS, as well as the chapters, have forgotten — ATOS, American *Theatre Organ* Society. At conventions it means theatre pipe organ concerts by artists of recognized excellence. At the convention in Detroit too much time was wasted on events ATOS unrelated.

At the Detroit Fox, the Friday evening showing of *Robin Hood* was certainly ATOS unrelated. It belongs at an assembly of the Cinema Historical Society. Here we sat in total darkness in one of the most elaborate theatres left in the United States with one of the few great Wurlitzers in the United States, watching a small-screen black and white vintage movie, listening to an orchestra! The so-called theatre organ artist for the evening did little to display the magnificent organ.

Is it any wonder that attendance at conventions is diminishing each year? When is our organization going to realize what ATOS stands for?

Yours truly, Donald Steadman Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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