

NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



The bulk of these nuggets is about the lady organists, our annual salute to all the hard-working gals of the ATOS. References were *Local Press (LP)*, *American Organist (AO)*, *Around the Town (ATT)*, *Metronome (Met.)*, *Exhibitor's Herald World (EHW)*, and *Variety (V)*.

February 14, 1921 (LP) Loew's State in Indianapolis opened today with RUTH NOLLER at the 3-manual Moller. (Later organists were L. EARL GORDON, LESTER HUFF and JUSTINE RAIRDON.)

September 2, 1922 (LP) When Indianapolis' Cadle Theatre opened today, Mrs. WILLIAM E. DUTHIE was at the 3-manual Smith-Geneva console. (Later, MYRON E. RODEBAUGH played it.)

July 1923 (AO) Mrs. GERTRUDE BAILY, organist at Chicago's Michigan Theatre, is an assistant to Frank Van Dusen at the American Conservatory's theatre organ school. Formerly a member of the Bradley Conservatory faculty, she is an experienced organist with a large repertoire of classics, and her musicianship has been tried and proved in church and theatre.

July 1923 (AO) HELEN SEARLES (WESTBROOK), a native of Southbridge, Massachusetts, a student of and assistant to Frank Van Dusen of the American Conservatory, began music study at 11 with her mother who was an organist. Her first engagement was at Norwood Park Methodist Church in Chicago at 14. Later, turning attention to the theatre, she has held positions in several Chicago houses and worked up to an enviable reputation as a theatre organist. She plays from memory, both classics and jazz, using both for picture work when the scene requires, and with a certain pep and style which are irresistible.

May 29, 1926 (LP) DESSA BYRD was at the Wurlitzer when the 986-seat Uptown Theatre in Indianapolis opened today. (Later, VIVIAN ARBAUGH played it.)

December 26, 1927 (LP) The 1200-seat Walker Theatre in Indianapolis opened today. MARY SINGLETON was at the 2/8 Barton console.

May 6, 1928 (LP) JUANITA BROWN and WEST MASTERS were the opening organists at the 3/9 Marr & Colton in Indianapolis' Fountain Square Theatre. The house seats 1428. According to publicity, "A divided pipe organ of the very latest type and design has been provided, and is so placed that the source of sound is entirely concealed. Arrangements have been made and proper facilities have been provided for broadcasting recitals."

December 1928 (ATT) A very able organist in Schenectady, New York, is WILLIAM A. MABLY. Mably is being featured at the new Proctor's Theatre, and broadcasts over WGY. He is recognized as one of the first to broadcast over the Marconi station in Toronto. ELSIE ADDISON MABLY is featured with her husband in organ novelties which have been successful. Previous to this engagement, Mably had been at the Colonial Theatre in Detroit and with

the Schine enterprises for two years. He also opened the Century Theatre in Buffalo, New York. Carl Landau directs the Proctor's Theatre orchestra.

May 1929 (Met.) By Chicago organist, RUTH GORMAN FARLEY. "Whoopie Time" has hit Chicago with a bang! It was started a couple months ago at the Uptown Theatre and the idea has been so successful that it is to be introduced at the Tivoli and Paradise. Whoopie shows consist of everyone in the show doing what he thinks he can do, not having the courage to do it elsewhere. I hear that at one performance, organist EDDIE HOUSE ran across the stage in his BVD's. Now I know B & K's reason for not wanting girl soloists!

Whoopie Nights have held one benefit for organists. It has given a permanent home for HENRI A. KEATES at the Paradise, EDDIE HOUSE at the Uptown, and CHAUNCEY HAINES at the Tivoli.

May 1929 (Met.) By Chicago organist, RUTH GORMAN FARLEY. LEONARD SALVO is visiting Chicago. He is the organist at the Gateway Theatre in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and is considered very Bohemian. To me, he is the whole of Greenwich Village. He and his charming little wife, Della, have an ungainly habit of dropping in on me anywhere from three to six a.m., my lullaby time. Len reports himself a great favorite at the Gateway.

April 26, 1930 (EHW) KATHERINE KADERLY at Brooklyn's Loew's Metropolitan Theatre, offered an organ specialty of community singing songs, which she played very well and the audience sang very well. The numbers included "I'm Following You," "I Love You So," "Singing In the Rain," "Congratulations" and "The Stein Song." Miss Kaderly's efforts always get the good reception they deserve.

Circa 1930 (V) New in the music department at Los Angeles' Boulevard Theatre is IRIS WILKENS, featured organist. This is Iris Vining, who was at the Granada in San Francisco for three years. She recently married Don Wilkens, band leader, changing her professional name to her husband's. Mrs. Wilkens is a crackerjack organist and a valuable acquisition at the Boulevard. They are featuring her.

Circa 1930 (V) JESSE CRAWFORD is using "A Military Concert" in his own style. The list of stirring march tunes gives him full scope for those smashing organ effects and is a capital idea for his finish with MRS. CRAWFORD's playing from the second console. This is a magnificent climax to a stirring moment of music. With two players combined, the full crash of the big New York Paramount organ is tremendous in these military numbers.

May 23, 1931 (MPH) ADA RIVERS at Loew's State in New Orleans, plays the role of interlocutor this week in her solo "Minstrel Follies," with the audience singing a chorus, after urging of "Alexander's Ragtime Band." This is followed by famous minstrel sings, with Bert Williams' "I Ain't Got Nobody" taking the biggest hand. A whistling chorus of "Swanee River" is next with Miss Rivers making the audience whistle, and using her wood block to suggest a tap dance which is supposed to accompany it. The close gets off in great style with "Dinah." Applause was prolonged; one of Miss Rivers' best solos.

See you in April. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □