

preparation of the book, so I can attest to that section being factual. (Ben did make one error; the Roxy Kimball auditorium organ had not 29 ranks but 34.)

Several pieces of literature in recent times have landed on my desk, not any two agreeing on the size and cost of several of the largest movie theatres in the land. Some of the statements have the aroma of wishful thinking, but, again, the truth is far more interesting and fascinating. The final cost of the New York Roxy was *twelve million* dollars, more than the total investment Fox had personally in all his other theatres, studios and film exchanges prior to that time! There was one Roxy ad saying ten million, but that was someone guessing in the public relations office who failed to check before going to the printer. Imagine . . . twelve million dollars and, remember, that was in terms of money value of the *twenties!* A minimum of five times that would be required in dollars of the eighties, meaning sixty million today. Never before, never since, has there been such a theatre of its expense and with all its features and decor. Noting this infers no depreciation of the Music Hall in Rockefeller Center, for the RCMH is a collection of wonders on the same quality level. However, it did cost less and it did, and does, seat less. The Roxy, in the course of its stage history, also ran a greater gamut of variety and presented spectacular stage shows and effects fully the equal of any in the Music Hall.

The New York Roxy seated 6200-*plus* at its opening and for about three years more. Then top balcony seats were rearranged and the total seating then came to slightly over 6100. Next came the Music Hall with 5800, the New York Capitol with 5300, the Detroit Fox 5042, the St. Louis Fox 5035, the San Francisco Fox 4651, the Atlanta Fox 4535 (until new seating in the sixties reduced it to 4464), the Brooklyn Fox 4060 and the Washington Fox with 3434. (New seating for the Atlanta Fox in the near future will restore that magnificent palace to its original capacity, 4535.)

So, whenever you wonder about some latter day romantic declaration, do what you would do before placing a bet at the horse races: Be certain *all* the critturs in harness are horses. As any Southerner can tell you, a mule in horse harness . . . is still a mule. □

Keep Fit; Keep Playing

by Preston "Sandy" Fleet

For a number of years now I have spent a considerable amount of time sitting at the organ, and while I derive a great deal of pleasure from this experience, I have been aware for some time of a great danger to those of us who enjoy the fruits of this labor. Those who started playing piano or organ at a very young age and have progressed to the ranks of the pro or semi-pro with full- or part-time jobs as performers in the music business should especially take note. We all love you dearly and want you to continue to entertain us for many years to come . . .

Take better care of yourself! Today there is much interest in keeping fit, more so than in the past. Diet is regarded as all-important to good health, and there is plenty of assistance and information available. In my childhood days I remember radio advice: plenty of fresh air, sleep, and exercise, and a well-rounded diet (three squares a day) consisting of a balance of protein, carbohydrates and fats, calories to be balanced with physical activity; more for more, less for less. We have all heard these things before. As we get older we should eat less; the American standard of living is high, and therefore we tend to overdo and overeat. (This is now true for Europeans and the U.K., too.)

Not much has been said about this to musicians, however — organists and piano players in particular. How many artists do we know who let themselves go? Arthritis, stiff joints, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, anemia and an ample-sized rear are all aggravated or caused by *the bench syn-*

drome. Sure, I know, there is not enough time to exercise and *everyone* knows hotel and airline food is hardly appetizing, let alone healthfully balanced . . . and fresh air, what's that? Did you ever see an organ outside? (. . . I mean, *other* than San Diego's in Balboa Park.) Enough excuses! I am concerned about you, friend!

Organ technicians generally do all right — they bend and stretch for a living. But how about you? You know the exercises: calisthenics, aerobics, walking, swimming, bicycling, exercycle. Yes, I know exercise can be boring. Watch television or listen to your favorite music on a portable radio or cassette player. Plan your day. Think sweet thoughts. If you have difficulty finding the time, split your exercise routine into two sessions, morning and evening or just before your practice sessions. I know you can find two 10- to 20-minute periods during the day for you and your body. By the way, rhythm is very important in any exercise routine, as it is in your music. It keeps you from tripping over your own feet and entangling your arms *and* it aids breathing — remember to begin your exercises with some deep breaths; you will be surprised what it does for your stamina in *all* situations.

AND you know how to eat properly: watch the fats, the carbohydrates and the salt; include fiber and roughage; alcohol in moderation.

Follow these simple guidelines and, believe me, you will feel better and be more mentally alert. Here's to your good health and many years of organ playing! □