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# THE 1983 ATOS SAN FRANCISCO ADVENTURE

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(BV)



(BV) (CN)





Rudy Frey and Claude Neuffer check the next event on the schedule (in a BART station). (BV)



Leaving BART and heading for the Paramount Theatre. (CN)



Entrance foyer of the Paramount Theatre. (CN)



## Convention Highlights

by Grace E. McGinnis

If the 1983 National Convention in San Francisco might be characterized by one word, that word would be *contrasts*. For six memorable, music-filled days and nights, conventioners found themselves shifting back and forth between the "now" and the "then" of the concert settings, of the music they were hearing and of the city itself.

The initial and most consistent contrast was between the quiet elegance of the Sheraton-Palace Hotel and the noisy, fast pace of the city streets. Stepping into the lobby of this beautiful old San Francisco landmark was like moving backward into an era of gracious living when people were less rushed and time was not a commodity. Even as the hotel filled with 800 ATOS members, the serenity and dignity of the hotel staff remained a constant, and organ music in the lobby added to the mellow mood that prevailed all day on Friday, July 1.

As members arrived, registered and received their convention packets, it was fun to observe the handshakes, hugs and "Howdy's" being exchanged between people who hadn't seen each other since Detroit, or who were being introduced for the first time. Before long it became evident that ATOS people are unique in their common love of theatre organs and the phenomena which relate to them. Overhearing bits of conversation in the lobby, questions such as, "How is your Wurlitzer?", or, "What's new with that theatre installation?", took precedence over the usual, "How are you?", or, "How's the family?"

Nor-Cal's Isaleen Nadalet and her assistants dispensed registration packets with such charming efficiency that each new arrival was made to feel that this convention had been planned for his or her personal pleasure. Opening and reading the material in the convention packets kept us occupied for some time as we first had to check to see who was assigned to which busses and then study the program to learn how much time there might be for tourist-type activities. We were impressed with the excellent booklet Nor-Cal had included in the packet which contained biographical sketches of the artists and technical information about the organs we would be hearing, and we sensed a growing excitement at the prospect of so much to be seen and heard in a few days. The information regarding the BART so tantalized one group of members that they set out for a ride to Concord and back that afternoon "just to see how it worked."

For the less adventuresome, there was always someone to visit with as people arrived from as far away as South Africa and Australia and as near as Palo Alto, California. Cheerful Convention Chairman Dan Lovett, who was always on his way to a meeting, was stopped and greeted so often by new arrivals that there was some concern about whether he ever did get to the meeting.

The next striking contrast became apparent as we left the hotel that evening and boarded the BART for Oakland. Those who had not yet experienced BART quickly realized that they were in the age of computerized transportation where time was of the essence. What would have required an hour or more in traffic was achieved in less than twenty minutes by BART.

We had hardly adjusted to such speed when we found ourselves thrust back again into the atmosphere of the 1930's as we entered the Paramount Theatre. This magnificent theatre is a beautiful testimony to the fact that old theatres can be revived and made viable again. We were instantly caught by the splendor of the waterfall of light which dominates the lobby and by the green-lighted center of the lobby ceiling which draws the eye to the graceful staircases on either side leading to the balcony. As we filed into the auditorium, the lighting effects from the grillwork in the ceiling and the gorgeous applied curtain, which was background for the Wurlitzer console, contributed to the growing sense of anticipation that developed as the time approached for the opening concert.

Dan Lovett appeared in the spotlight and, as he officially welcomed the ATOS to the convention, a camera flashed, and Dan reminded the audience that flash cameras were not permitted at concerts. Another camera flashed and Dan repeated his admonition against using these devices at concerts. As a third flash exploded, a huge "gorilla" appeared from the wings and dragged the offending photographer up the aisle. The amused audience applauded, and we are pleased to note that the lesson was well-learned; we were not bothered by flashing cameras during subsequent concerts.

Dan then introduced Warren Lubich, who was to be Master of Ceremonies for the convention, and Warren presented Lyn Larsen, the artist for our opening concert. Lyn's performance sustained the mood of electric anticipation and 800 ATOSers were "off and running" for their annual musical marathon.

Making the shift again to the "now," we returned to BART for the ride back to the haven of the Sheraton-Palace. There, some of us were reminded that all in the days of yore was not roses. Some people did not believe the signs in the elevators which said to limit each load to ten passengers, and seventeen people in one stalled car had to wait forty-five minutes to be rescued. Others found that an hour of quiet relaxation in the lounge made elevator riding much more expedient.

This was reinforced Saturday morn-

ing as the large crowd of conventioners descended *en masse* for breakfast before loading busses for the day's concerts. Early birds had filled Lotta's Coffee Shop, and late-comers found themselves without time for breakfast. We learned to be early-birds!

For Saturday's events we were divided into four groups; ours was the "C" group, and we boarded busses for Redwood City. As we headed south, our tour guide pointed out the huge TV tower on Mt. Sutro which was half buried in mist and resembled the ghostly mast of the Flying Dutchman hovering over San Francisco. At the Redwood City Capn's Galley we were brought to consciousness by hot coffee, doughnuts and Jonas Nordwall, a great opening for what was to be a *full day!*

Our second Saturday concert was at the Serramonte Capn's Galley, and our bus missed the freeway exit so we had a "bonus" tour of a residential area where the surprise registered on the faces of the residents matched the surprise on the faces of the bus passengers. We were not too late, however, for the lively program by David Reese and a pizza-and-salad lunch served by owner Bob Paterson and his staff. Lunch was highlighted by an impromptu concert by Lew Williams whose "Rhapsody in Blue" would make any meal exciting.



Phil Freeman, organ technician, and Bob Paterson, owner, at the Redwood City Capn's Galley Pizza & Pipes. (CN)

Boarding buses at the Palace Hotel.



John Batho, Edith Rawle and Sheila Batho, all of the London & South of England Chapter, waiting for the music to start at Serramonte Capn's Galley. (CN)



Dave Reese's special license plate. (CN)



Convention Chairman Dan Lovett demonstrates the fate in store for those who ignore his admonition concerning taking flash pictures during concerts. (Lovett photo)

(BV)



Four ladies try a lounge in the lobby of the Oakland Paramount. (CN)



In the mezzanine lobby of the Castro Theatre. (CN)



Checking the registration packet. Smiling Nancy Hilgert at the left. (CN)

Oregonians Paul Quarino, Mary Jo and John Olsen, Terry Robson, Grace McGinnis and Joe Gray pause for a picture during a coffee break. (CN)



A mid-afternoon return to the hotel allowed us to relax and visit before dinner, to shift gears and slow down again. A group of us chose to play tourist and have dinner at Fisherman's Wharf after which we taxied to the Castro Theatre and found ourselves with some extra time to explore this beautifully preserved historic landmark which was designed by Timothy Pfleuger, the same architect who was responsible for the Oakland Paramount. The Castro is Pfleuger's first theatre and, although it is not nearly as grandiose as the Paramount, it was never allowed to deteriorate to the point where his original decor was lost.

When the rest of the ATOS arrived and the theatre was quiet, Warren Lubich introduced Walt Strony whose captivating program was the *pièce de résistance* of a day of musical potpourri.

On the ride back to the hotel, people appeared to be quietly assimilating all that they had seen and heard during this first full day of concerts. By one o'clock the hotel, too, became quiet except for a handful of night owls conversing in the lounge. These late night "seminars" led to some most rewarding friendships for those of us who participated and added to our conviction that ATOSers are truly special people.



Stowing away the lunch in the Empress Theatre. (CN)

Sunday morning promised a beautiful day as the usual San Francisco mist failed to materialize. Our group was the second to load that morning so we were able to enjoy an extra cup of coffee before leaving for Cinema 21 in the Marina District where artist Larry Vannucci transported us once more into a time that was less hectic and music more melodic. Cinema 21 houses the last remaining original theatre installation in Northern California, and, although the lobby has been modernized, the auditorium remains basically the same as it was when the organ was installed.

When the music ended, we again boarded our busses and were off across the Bay Bridge to Vallejo where we noted a definitive contrast between the crowded streets of San Francisco and the nearly empty streets of a small town barely thirty miles away. The Empress Theatre in Vallejo is a charming family-owned theatre with a pleasantly nostalgic milieu which was appropriate for the program presented by Dave Quinlan.

Coming out from the darkness of the theatre into the bright California sunshine, we found box lunches being served in front of the theatre. Some chose to picnic back in the theatre while others accepted the hospitality of the neighboring tavern. Back on the busses after lunch for the return to San Francisco, some of us took advantage of the brief interlude to catch a nap.

Once again we experienced the contrast between the "then" and the "now" as we relaxed in the Sheraton-Palace lounge before tackling the complexity of the BART for another ride to Oakland. On this ride, however, we were entertained by a young man playing his guitar and singing American folk music which made the trip even shorter.

Conventioners filled the lobby of the Paramount for a pre-concert cocktail and conversation hour and, with six concerts behind us, discussions about organs, installations and artists seemed to be the order of the day. As the auditorium filled for Bill Thompson's performance, there was time to observe more of the Paramount's unusual decor and lighting, and to wonder how the audience might have looked back in the days when the theatre was new. The lighting effects from the ceiling were quite impressive during the concert as the

colors changed slowly from warm red tones to cool greens and yellows and back to a rosy glow.

Then it was back to 1983 and BART for a quick return to the hotel and the after-concert quiet hour in the lounge. This time, some people were beginning to move a bit more slowly as they settled into the easy chairs to reflect on the intensity of the past three days.

But there was more to come, and Monday morning found the 800 enthusiasts lined up and ready for a bus ride to Oakland and the Grand Lake Theatre. We could not help but marvel at the friendly efficiency of the Nor-Cal Bus Captains who managed to keep both the crowd and the busses moving smoothly, and who contributed so much to the pleasant atmosphere of the entire convention. Considering the logistics of transporting 800 people around San Francisco Bay Area can, in fact, boggle the best of minds.

Wake-up entertainment awaited us at the Grand Lake Theatre as David Kelsey and his group, Pure Trash, brought us to the full awareness that this was Independence Day and we were not going to miss a minute of it. Kelsey's baton-twirling act set a holiday mood that was sustained throughout the day.

Our second holiday concert took us to the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco where two smiling Nor-Cal members manned a refreshment stand in the lobby which had been appropriately decorated with red, white and blue streamers. With the festive mood so established, we filed into the auditorium to hear winsome Donna Parker on the 3/20 Wurlitzer.

Lunch was served in front of the theatre and people found places to gather and eat picnic-style, some in the theatre and others in the sunshine outside.

After lunch we reassembled in the theatre for the annual Membership Meeting which was preceded by a slide preview of next year's conclave to be held in Indianapolis. The enthusiasm of our membership was inspiring and the entire meeting reinforced the idea that this is a group going places and doing things even though it is linked by memory to an era in American history that was completed in the 1930's. There was a moment of silence as we honored ATOS members who are deceased, and re-



Rodgers organ demonstration, Palace Hotel. (CN)



Allen organ demonstration, Palace Hotel. (CN)



Conn organ demonstration, Palace Hotel. (CN)



Brass resonators exhibited by Windsong Studio. John Ferguson of Windsong (foreground) discusses them with Gordon Belt. (CN)



Rob Calcaterra at the Grand Lake Theatre console, following a post-midnight special concert. (CN)



Except when photo flashes were going off, the lighting at the table for the annual meeting left something to be desired. Hence, Dan Lovett tried to help Lois with a flashlight. (CN)

Box lunches at the Avenue Theatre before the Annual Membership Meeting. (CN)





"Skill Potpourri," Chaumonde Porterfield speaking. (CN)



"Rhythm: The Organist's Adversary," Jonas Nordwall speaking. (CN)



Jonas and Chaumonde. (CN)



Lance Johnson answers a question during his seminar on "Organ Chamber Layout." (CN)



Editor Bob Gilbert and Associate Editor Grace McGinnis conducting the "Writing for THEATRE ORGAN" seminar. (CN)



Allen Miller at the microphone, "Organ Maintenance" seminar. At the table, l to r: Lance Johnson, David Junchen, Brant Duddy and Bill Klinger. (CN)



"Concert Planning and Promotion" seminar. L to r: Peter Botto, Ralph Beaudry, Rex Koury, Lowell Ayars, Russell Shaner. (CN)



Chapter Representatives meeting at the Palace Hotel. (BV)



(BV)  
(CN)



sounding applause as Lois Segur told of the progress of our scholarship program. And again, the contrast was evident between the past and the present as we sat together in a theatre representing the 1920's and looked ahead optimistically to the future of our organization.

The trip back to the hotel was short and pleasant and the talk seemed to focus on the plans and dreams that were generated in the membership meeting. This mood was maintained in the conversations which continued throughout the afternoon in the lounge and coffee shop of the hotel. People were already making their plans to meet in Indianapolis next summer.

Still in a holiday frame of mind, we boarded the buses that evening for a return trip to the Avenue Theatre and a triple treat. Organ music by Warren Lubich and Jim Riggs set an opening tempo that was continued by Bob Vaughn accompanying a delightful old Harold Lloyd movie complete with firecrackers in the alley outside the theatre. On the return ride to the hotel, we could see bits and pieces of fireworks displays around the city and we felt a sense of pride that we, too, are preserving an important facet of our country's history — a nice thought to sleep on.

Tuesday morning brought a more startling contrast as the city was back to business-as-usual and our morning ride to Oakland on the BART was shared with the working people of the two cities. We were relieved to enter the peaceful atmosphere of the Paramount Theatre and settle into the comfortable seats for a morning of music. And what a morning of music we had! Jim Roseveare, at the organ he helped build, knew and loved, touched us with an intimacy between organ and organist that is rarely experienced.

This time we were more than a little reluctant to say "Goodbye" to the Paramount and shift again into the hectic pace of the megalopolis.

Faced with an unstructured afternoon, some conventioners chose to go sightseeing while others attended workshops, visited the electronic organ display rooms, shopped in the record and book room or slipped away to their own rooms for a few hours of rest before the evening's activities.

The festivities actually began in the

late afternoon as members gathered for cocktails in the Rose Room. Jerry Nagano enhanced the hour with his engaging organ arrangements, and a wistful mood evolved as we came to the realization that this was the final night of the convention and we had not yet met and talked with everybody there.

Dinner was announced and we moved into the Garden Court. The most opulent room in the Sheraton-Palace, its two-story high ceiling of leaded glass gave the room a soft glow which was augmented by brilliant crystal chandeliers. The tasteful music of Cheryl and Wayne Seppala provided just the right accompaniment to the banquet. When the accolades and announcements were concluded and the last drop of coffee consumed, we again filled the busses for our final caravan to the Castro Theatre and Tom Hazleton's closing concert.

Once more we stepped back in time into the muted coolness of the Castro auditorium and relaxed in the comfortable seats to wait for the music. The sentimental feelings of the attendees were almost dominant as they realized that their 1983 Convention was actually about to end. This, however, did not inhibit their appreciation of, or their responsiveness to, the music, and when the last note faded into yesterday these intrepid organ lovers were already projecting their fantasies to Indianapolis in 1984.



Newly-elected President Rex Koury displays the symbol of the office. At the conclusion of each president's term his or her name is engraved on the plaque mounted on the pipe. (CN)



At Convention '83, for the first time, "Maintenance Technician of the Year" awards were presented to three outstanding technicians. Ken Crome is shown accepting his award from Director Allen Miller. Dick Taylor and Ed Stout were unable to be present at the banquet to accept their awards, as they were busy at the Castro Theatre tweaking things in preparation for Tom Hazleton's concert that evening. (CN)



Marian Miner Cook was named Honorary Member for 1983. She was unable to attend the banquet because of a previous commitment, so Lyn Larsen accepted the award for her. (CN)



L to r: Dick Taylor and Ed Stout. (RF)



Ashley Miller acknowledges his selection as "Theatre Organist of the Year." Lowell Ayars has just introduced Ashley, while MC Warren Lubich looks on. (CN)



Past President Lois Segur shows the plaque she has just received from her successor, and outgoing Director Preston "Sandy" Fleet clutches his while reaching to shake hands with Rex. (CN)



President Lois Segur presented charters to three new chapters during the banquet at Convention '83.  
 Betty Darling, Southwest Michigan Chapter. (CN) Eric Wicks, Australia Felix Chapter. (CN) Bonnie Ciauri, Tri-Counties Chapter. (CN)





Jerry Nagano played the Allen during the cocktail hour before the banquet. (CN)



Four who have been responsible for installing organs in theatres in the San Francisco Bay Area in recent years: l to r, Jack Bethards (Paramount Oakland); Bill Elliott (Empress, Vallejo); Ernie Wilson (Grand Lake, Oakland); and Bill Taylor, representing brother Dick (Castro, San Francisco). (CN)



Wayne Seppala at the Allen organ provided background music during the banquet. (CN)



Lois Segur and Don Thompson have a little chat during the pre-banquet cocktail party. (CN)

AT THE BANQUET.





**Encore**

Two events were scheduled for Wednesday, July 6, for those who were fortunate enough to have planned ahead. The first 300 to register for the Encore in Sacramento were treated to a day of concerts, sight-seeing, and a barbeque, and the Castro Theatre management held open house and open console for those who did not make the Sacramento trip but were able to spend another day in San Francisco.

Emil Martin and Rex Koury were the organists for the Encore concerts: Emil at the 4/20 Wurlitzer in Arden Pizza & Pipes, and Rex at Sierra's own 2/11 Wurlitzer in the Fair Oaks Community Club House. Between concerts, members visited the State Railroad Museum in Old Sacramento and "talked to the trains." A barbeque was served at Fair Oaks Park which definitely upheld Sierra Chapter's reputation as top-flight hosts.

Those who attended open house at the Castro heard several refreshing cameo performances by organists from around the country. Among those we heard were Allen Miller, Kurt Von Schakel, Patti Simon, Clark Wilson and Tim Needler. This was one of the nicest ways imaginable to wind up — or down — the five magical, memorable days that were Convention '83!



Mel Robinson.



Patti Simon Zollman.



Jerry Nagano.



Dan Meyles.



Dave Hegarty.



Allen Miller.



Stella Gilbert of Buffalo, Raymond Allen and Eric Schröder of Knysna, South Africa, and Earl Gilbert. (CN)



Clark Wilson.



Kurt Von Schakel.

Open House at the Castro Theatre was an alternate event on Wednesday, July 6, for those who did not go to the River City Encore. Elbert La Chelle, Castro staff organist, and Bill Taylor played in addition to those pictured.

Father Gerard Kerr and Ron Downer. (CN)



Tim Needler.



John Gendvilas.





Post-midnight jam session at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt.

(CN)



Carsten Henningsen, owner, and Don Thompson at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt during late night jam session.

(CN)



Dave Moreno.

(CN)



Peter Panos.

(CN)



Calliope at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt.

(CN)



David Shepherd.

(CN)

Gregg Owen.

(CN)



Harry Koenig.

(CN)

Orrill Dunn.

(CN)



### Epilogue: A Personal Note

Reflecting on the six wonderfully exciting, musically enchanting days and nights of Convention '83, it seemed impossible to condense all that happened into a few hundred words that would convey the quintessence of the convention to those who weren't there and enhance the memories of those who were. This was my first convention, and it was unforgettable. I met people who had been to every convention since 1955 and others who had attended only a few, and I learned that ATOS people are the most interesting, friendliest, brightest people imaginable. Dan Lovett and the Nor-Cal chapter did a flawless job of organizing and managing 800 of us with no fluffs or mix-ups to mar the total event. It was awesome! I found, too, that these meetings renew our resolve to preserve and keep theatre organs playing for posterity. For this, and the people who are making it possible, I would like to say simply, "Thanks!" □

## Convention '83 Who, What, When and Where

by Eloise Bouyé

After checking in at the beautiful Sheraton-Palace Hotel in downtown San Francisco, on opening night, July 1, we were treated to a ride under the Bay through the BART tube. We emerged in front of the magnificent Oakland Paramount Theatre for the first of three concerts on the 4/27 Wurlitzer in this theatre.

To the strains of "California Here I Come" our artist of the evening, California-born Lyn Larsen, rose from the pit to begin a concert that had something for everyone.

A toe-tapping "Jay Walk" by Zez Confrey gave way to a Victor Herbert melody, "Fleurette," then "My Hopeful Heart," "Ritual Fire Dance" by Manuel de Falla and "I'll Take An Option On You," which Lyn said was the old radio theme song from the Chapel of the Chimes in Oakland, where regular concerts were given by organist Richard Purvis, using the name Don Irving so as to not disgrace the family name by playing "light" music.

This bit of nostalgia was followed by the best college "fight song" I have ever heard, written by a young and pugnacious Virgil Fox and entitled "Princeton Loyalty." This vintage 1930 fight song is so perfect a collection of all the styles we expect from

such a song that only the most dedicated pacifist could not be aroused to get up and fight for dear old "P.U." Lyn calmed us down by playing a beautiful ballad, "My Secret Love," done with exquisite phrasing.

We were then surprised with a most exciting "Trumpeter's Lullaby," with a fine trumpet player in the Solo chamber playing to Lyn's accompaniment — a wonderful combination of sound that highlighted the first half of the program.

The offstage trumpeter later came on stage to be introduced as Dwight Hall, and he and Lyn played two other duets, "You Go To My Head" and "Bugler's Holiday," both numbers delighting the audience. "Aunt Eff" and "Spin A Little Web of Dreams," an uptempo "Abba Dabba Honeymoon" and a beautifully orchestrated "Battle Hymn of the Republic" brought us to the finale.

In honor of all the friends from England who were in our group, Lyn played Sir William Walton's "Orb and Sceptre March," written as Lyn expressed it, "to honor the Queen when she inherited her 'queendom' and went to live in the 'Big House.'" As the organ descended into the pit, a rousing "San Francisco" sent us out into the night and back via BART to our own "Palace," eager to start a wonderful four days of music.

Saturday, July 2, was beautiful, cool but sunny, and a perfect day to board the buses, first to hear Larry

Vannucci at the Cinema 21 Theatre on a 2/6 Robert-Morton, the smallest of the organs we were to hear at this convention.

Mr. Vannucci had had a cast removed from a hand just two weeks prior to the convention and his fingers were not as limber as he would have liked. After the opening number, "Too Marvelous for Words," which got off to a rough start, Larry seemed to settle down and played "The Whistler and His Dog" with the usual bow-wows and whistles we have heard many times.

"Angela Mia" was played with nice phrasing, as were "Diane" and



In the foreground, Ted and Helen Lloyd of Australia. (BV)



L to r: Frances Moorehead, Lorraine Saile, George Elles and Dorothy Van Steenkiste of Motor City Chapter. (CN)

Entrance foyer, Paramount Theatre.

(CN) Crowd in the main lobby of the Castro during intermission.

(CN)





Larry Vannucci at Cinema 21.

(CN)



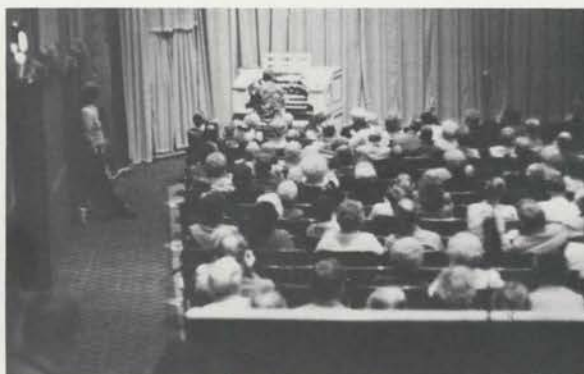
Dave Quinlan.

(CN)



"Valiant Annie" Olive and Nor-Cal member Oliver Etzel.

(Dan Lovett photo)



Dave Quinlan at the console, Empress Theatre.

(BV)

Box lunch in the park, Vallejo.



"Beloved." "Like Young" by Andre Previn was a much-needed change of pace, done with a good beat and jazz phrases. "But Beautiful" displayed the lovely Tibia on this organ, then another uptempo piece, "The Day You Came Along" provided contrast, as did "Sabre Dance" played very cleanly, then "The Nearness of You" and "Althea," a composition of Larry's. "For Once In My Life" closed the program and we got back on the buses for the half-hour ride to the neighboring city of Vallejo.

*Reviewer's comments:* To be honest, I will have to say that to me this concert was the least interesting of any heard at this convention, lacking the spark of excitement or the dash of the unexpected that make concerts more than just the playing of the predictable.

*Audience reaction:* There were many around me taking naps!

Arriving in Vallejo, we were deposited in front of the Empress Theatre where we were to hear organist Dave Quinlan on a 3/12 Wurlitzer. This artist did something unique for this convention: he refused to talk and waste time telling us the titles of the pieces he was playing, which I personally applauded, as many organists would do well to keep quiet and let the music speak for them.

The songs Dave played were all old standards and needed no announcing. In rapid succession we heard, "Muskrat Ramble," "Open Your Eyes," "Peanut Vendor," "Blue Spanish Eyes," "Diane," "Cumana," "Yellow Bird," "St. Louis Blues," "Sugar Blues" and "Birth of the You-Know-What," "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," "I'm Beginning to See the Light," "Sentimental Journey," "White Cliffs of Dover," "Mairzey Doats," "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "Stairway to the Stars," "It Must Be Jelly 'Cause Jam Don't Shake Like That," "Blue Danube Waltz," "Petite Waltz," "Merry Widow Waltz," and "Chinatown, My Chinatown," plus many more I'm sure I missed, as Dave plays faster than I can write.

*Reviewer's comments:* I am amazed at how many melodies Dave knows. I would enjoy very much listening to him in a pizza parlor, as he plays music we all enjoy and remember, but this was not a concert in the strict sense, nor is Dave a concert artist.

*Audience reaction:* They loved him! Dave Quinlan got a spontaneous standing ovation at the end of his performance.

On Saturday evening we were taken by buses to the Castro Theatre, where we heard Walt Strony on the 4/16 Wurlitzer installed and owned by the Taylor brothers. The Castro Theatre is a small jewel, and next to the bigger Paramount in Oakland, the most beautiful theatre we visited during the convention, with an organ that fits the theatre like a glove.

Walt Strony began his concert with a beautiful "Bolero" (Ravel), followed by "Ain't Misbehavin'," "I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling" and Al Melgard's theme song, "My Vision." Walt studied with Al Melgard and this was a nice tribute to his mentor. "Jealousie" gave way to the most-played song of the convention, the melodic "Memory" from *Cats*, all of which served to warm us up for the musical "big guns" to follow.

An exciting "Bacchanale" from Saint-Saëns' opera *Samson and Delilah* displayed Walt's excellent technique and pedal work, plus his ability to make an outstanding transcription of an orchestral work. After leaving us on the edge of our seats with that number, Walt let us relax with "That's Entertainment," "Lisa,"

"Bess, You Is My Woman Now," followed by a delightful "Rialto Ripples Rag" and the theme from the movie *An Officer and A Gentleman*.

This musical interlude served to cleanse our musical palates so we could better appreciate Walt's next big number, "Hoe Down" by Aaron Copeland. This was another musical gem, beautifully played and orchestrated, and very fine in it's conception and execution. Dave Rose's "Our Waltz" led to the musical "fireworks" Walt had saved to end his program, a show-stopping rendition of Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture." Done with all the panache and fervor Walt is capable of, it brought down the house at the end as everyone jumped to their feet and many calls of "Bravo" were heard as people shouted their appreciation for a marvelous program. The encore piece, "Sabre Dance," could have been omitted, as nothing should have followed the "1812 Overture."

*Reviewer reaction:* Bravo, Walt!

*Audience reaction:* Great! Unanimous praise for a fine young artist.

Sunday, July 3, the buses took us to Daly City and the Serramonte Capn's Galley Pizza & Pipes, where we were to hear Dave Reese, who plays there five nights a week. This pizza "theatre" is the most beautiful of the Capn's Galleys in the area, and the audience enjoyed the surroundings as we waited for the early morning concert to begin.

Dave opened the show with "Every Street a Boulevard in Old New York," followed by "San Francisco," the theme from the movie *Tootsie*, and a rousing "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy from Company D" that made all the sleepy-heads in the audience wake up and pay attention! "Hernando's Hideaway" was next, followed by "Blue Prelude" done in a raunchy style that sounded like a cross between "Minnie the Moocher" and "The Stripper." The pizza styling spoiled the plaintive beauty of this lovely melody and it sounded as though it should be re-titled "The Stripper's Lament."

A bird whistle introduced "Never On Sunday," and from there Dave went into "Satin Doll." One of the nicest pieces was a lovely "Over the Rainbow," done with feeling and a sensitivity to the music and the lyrics.

"The Little Red Monkey" was a

delightful bit of fun, as Dave introduced the Pizza Organist's Pal, the wind-up monkey clapping the cymbals to amuse the kids in the audience, and who, according to Dave, is much hated by the organist who has to put up with him night after night. Dave got his revenge on his simian friend by "blowing him up" at the end of the piece with a firecracker exploding at just the right moment.

My favorite of the numbers Dave played came next, Albert Ketèlbey's "In A Persian Market," beautifully done. This was a favorite of the audience as well.

The grand finale was patriotic, with "You're A Grand Old Flag" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Dave's encore was "Memory," sung with his heart and fingers, and done with a feeling that reached out to the audience.

*Reviewer's remarks:* Dave is quite a showman and must fill the pizza parlor on the nights he plays.

*Audience reaction:* They enjoyed his playing and his personality and despite the early hour, no one slept or even catnapped.

A short ride from Serramonte brought us to the Capn's Galley in Redwood City to hear Jonas Nordwall on the 4/23 Wurlitzer which is one of the nicest-sounding instruments in any of the local pizza palaces. Jonas got his concert off to a flying start with a very rapid "Hindustan," which then settled down to a more normal tempo for this piece, full of snake charmers and all the lovely sinuous rhythms this song possesses.

The next selections were a musical sandwich of two waltzes with a ragtime filling. The first waltz, "Wedding of the Winds," was followed by a clever modulation into "Elite Syncopations" by Scott Joplin, then another modulation to "Nights of Gladness."

A lovely, very plaintive introduction set the mood for "Birth of the Blues," which then picked up tempo to go into an upbeat style which faded away at the end into a blues wail. "Hora Staccato" followed in a dazzling display of digital dexterity, each note clearly articulated as they chased each other around the keyboard. The theme from the movie *Arthur*, "The Best That You Can Do," was so infectious and beautifully arranged that I would like to see Jonas publish



Jim Hubbard, Assistant Banquet Chairman, and Jack O'Neill seem to be enjoying a break. (BV)



Chris Elliott entertains on the Allen organ in the Palace lobby. (CN)



Dave Reese at the console, Serramonte Capn's Galley. (CN)

Clockwise from the left: Dorothy Tizzard, Ralph Rathbun, Bruce Grukke and Jack O'Neill. Bruce's mother, Gladys, is peaking around Jack. Dorothy (Jack's mother) looks as if she is wondering what her son is up to now! Serramonte Capn's Galley. (CN)



it to share with the rest of us.

Jonas then announced that as a dedicated "Male Chauvinist Pig" he didn't usually play music written by women, but he was going to make an exception for the beautiful Carol Beyer Sager ballad "Don't Cry Out Loud." Much as I admire Jonas, I don't think he did justice to this song. He failed to "cry" on the inside, which is what the piece expresses. He should listen to Debbie Culbertson play it so he'll know how to "weep" with the lyrics of the song. He redeemed himself with his next number, the theme from *The Greatest American Hero*, which was everything an M.C.P. could ask for in a song, and Jonas made the most of it.



Kevin King entertains on the Allen organ in the Palace lobby. (CN)

"12th Street Rag" was next, using the Wurlitzer Pizzicato Touch. As I had never heard of the Pizzicato action before Jonas announced he was going to use it, I thought many of the ATOS listeners there had not encountered it either, so I asked the young concert artist, Jerry Nagano, to explain it to me, and here is what he said: The Pizz coupler was a Robert Hope-Jones invention. It couples Solo to Great momentarily to add "bite," then instantly becomes silent. This coupler is found on the Detroit Senate Theater organ, on the Organ Grinder organ in Portland, and on the Pasadena Civic Auditorium organ.

Now, back to the music, as Jonas had our toes tapping with a rousing rendition of "Yankee Doodle Dandy," followed by "Memory" done with great taste and feeling.

Bach's "Tocatta in B Minor" displayed the excellent classical sounds of the Redwood City Wurlitzer, and as Jonas said, was a change of pace from "the other toccata that we associate with *The Phantom of the Opera*. He did a splendid job with this piece, with exciting pedal solo passages and all the brilliance and speed on the manuals that we associate with a toccata.

He concluded the program with a beautiful orchestral arrangement of "The Dance of the Comedians" from Bedrich Smetana's opera, *The Bar-*

*tered Bride*. This transcription was so outstanding it demonstrated why the theatre organ was designed to replace an entire orchestra.

The encore piece, "Bridge on the River Kwai," was such a beautiful arrangement that again I would like to see it in print for the rest of us to enjoy. Perhaps some publisher could come out with a sheet music series, "The Best of ATOS," with the top artists' best arrangements available for purchase at the convention along with their records. (Are you listening, Dave Hegarty and Richard Bradley?)

*Reviewer's reaction:* Jonas Nordwall is a concert artist in the best sense of the word, and the varieties of style and taste he displays make him outstanding.

*Audience reaction:* All favorable. Jonas got fine "reviews" all the way home in the bus.

Before leaving the Redwood City Capn's Galley we were treated to an excellent lunch, not only of pizza, but soup, salad and dessert, plus some extra dessert in the form of cameo appearances by two young organists who really know the Redwood City Wurlitzer, as they have each given concerts on this organ for the local chapter.

The first young man, Clark Wilson, is a staff organist at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, Indiana, and is very active in pipe organ restoration as well as concertizing. Our second musical "dessert," Jerry Nagano, has played many concerts throughout the United States and is the staff organist for the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. Each artist only had time to play two short numbers before we had to leave, but the crowd obviously enjoyed the extra treat, and were all smiles on the way back.

For our evening we returned via BART to the Paramount Theatre, this time to hear Bill Thomson.

To the strains of "I Feel A Song Coming On" Bill rose from the pit to open a concert filled with musicality and refinement. His variety of musical selections were designed to show his skills as arranger and interpreter, and to make the most of the magnificent organ he was playing.

"La Rosita" was played with such smoothness that the fingered glissandos were like whipped cream pouring over the keys, with the traps used to



Eager buyers helped the Record & Book Shop do a land-office business. (CN)



subtly enhance the rhythm, but never to overpower the melody. "Valse Triste" opened with just the right mysterious, sad quality this lovely piece requires, both for lovers of the old "I Love A Mystery" radio series, and for lovers of the music of Jan Sibelius. The uptempo, more rhythmic "B" theme gave way ultimately to a soft ending that seemed to die away with the lovely celeste strings and a chime accent that returned to the melancholy feel of the opening.

A quartet of ladies followed in a medley dedicated to Laura, Louise, Stella and Valiant Annie. "Laura" had the plaintive sound we have come to associate with this lady, but "Louise" was a lively gal indeed! Bill returned to a more sedate "Stella" with lush harmonies and enough variety to give the lady some spice, but her place was quickly taken by a darling little old lady in her old Plymouth Valiant as she headed down the freeway to hear a concert by her favorite organist. This piece was composed by Bill and dedicated to the real "Valiant Annie," Anna Olive, who was in the audience to hear her musical counterpart zip in and out of traffic honking furiously at the bigger cars in her way. The composition ended in a cacophony of sound as various auto horns sounded impatiently to shove Annie aside, but the final triumphant blast came from the Valiant as Annie made it to the concert on time.

"Moonlight Serenade" was the next song, but not the one we expected. This one, not as well known, was written for a Bette Davis film, *The Star*, and was composed by Victor Young. The melody is so beautiful and so right for the lovely theatre-style arrangement Bill gave it, that I'm hoping this will appear also in the ATOS sheet music series.

The theme from the movie *Arthur* picked up tempo and gaily carried us along to Bill's next number, Chopin's "Nocturne in E Flat," which featured the creamy sounds of the Tibias. Chopin's "Military Polonaise" was next in a stirring and rhythmical performance which displayed the splendid reeds on the organ.

A change of pace again, this time for some Duke Ellington, a medley opening with a fragment of "A Train" that led to "Mood Indigo," "I'm Beginning to See the Light," "I've Got It Bad and That Ain't

Good," and "Satin Doll," ending with "Take the 'A' Train" again in a fuller version.

"It's Almost Like Being In Love" sent our toes tapping with its pulsating beat and uptempo style, to be followed by "Memory" from the Broadway musical *Cats*, a favorite this year as four organists used it, and I loved it all four times.

Another original composition of Bill's, "Gladys P. Muelbach Boogie," was bright, bold and brassy, and a nice contrast for Barry Manilow's "I Write the Songs," played with such sensitivity to the lyrics that you were impelled to sing along inside.

Rachmaninoff's stirring "Prelude in G Minor" was an excellent choice to show off the fine pedal reeds on this organ, as well as the piano and strings.

As this was the Fourth of July weekend, a patriotic medley concluded the program — "Stars and Stripes Forever," "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" and "America," then a reprise of "Stars and Stripes Forever" in a blazing triumphant finale.

*Reviewer reaction:* This was Bill Thomson at his best!

*Audience reaction:* What a great concert.

Monday morning, July 4, was another gorgeous day in San Francisco, and we woke up bright and early to take the buses to Oakland, across the Bay above the water this time via the Bay Bridge, instead of underneath the Bay as we had done with the BART system.

Our destination was the Grand Lake Theatre, where the 3/13 Wurlitzer had only been in playing condition for a month, and even the night before this concert the problems were such that not only the organ crew, but our organist for the day stayed up all

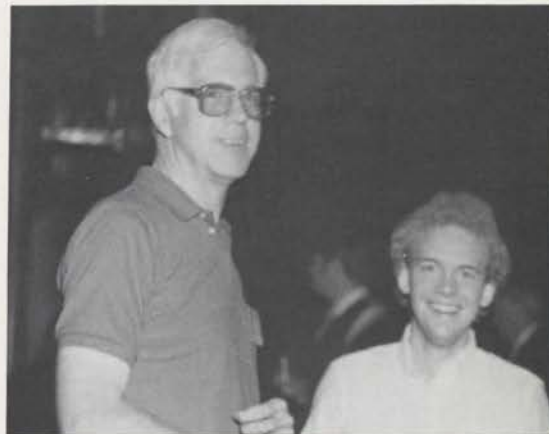
night to get out the last-minute "bugs."

The organist for the "premiere" of the Grand Lake organ, Bay Area organist, pianist, entertainer and band leader, Dave Kelsey, should be given much credit for pulling a delightful entertainment experience out of the musical hat, for despite the best efforts of everyone involved, the organ was out of tune for this performance, and the combination action was giving trouble, too.

Despite problems with the instru-



Jerry Nagano at the Redwood City Cap'n's Galley Wurlitzer during lunch. (CN)



Alden Stockebrand and Chris Elliott. (CN)

De Johnson honored the Fourth of July by wearing a red-white-and-blue shirt and tie. (CN)



At Ye Olde Pizza Joynt during late nite jam session. (CN)



ment, Dave played a beautiful "One Alone" from the *Desert Song*, plus "Charmaine," "Mountain Greenery" and a sing-along that matched the organ as we all obligingly sang off key.

The hit of the show was Dave's group, Pure Trash, who joined him on stage for what started out as a classical, or traditional if you will, version of "Rhapsody in Blue," with a young clarinetist playing a great intro, but then the fine trumpet player took up the theme, to be joined by the saxophone and drums in a terrific jazz version that would have delighted Gershwin, I'm sure, just as it did this audience, who gave the group a tremendous ovation.

"The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise" gave each musician a solo, and all four of them plus Dave Kelsey were outstanding, with Dave eliciting a roar of laughter at the end by playing the organ with his left hand and expertly twirling a baton with his right.

*Reviewer reaction:* Dave Kelsey has wit and charm to spare, and what could have been a dreadful experience for anyone who does not dote on out-of-tune instruments was turned into a triumph for Dave and his group. I understand they are coming out with a record in a few months and I, for one, will buy it and any subsequent records they issue. When "Trash" is played as this group plays it, I want to



Dave Kelsey (at the console) and his group, Pure Trash, in the middle of a number at the Grand Lake. (CN)

become a "Trash Collector!"

*Audience reaction:* All smiles and laughter going to the bus.

The Avenue Theatre in San Francisco was our next destination, with young Donna Parker at the 3/20 Wurlitzer.

Donna opened her concert with a novelty fox-trot, "Hey, Diddle, Diddle," then Irving Berlin's "Reaching for the Moon," "Rockin' Robin" and a very nice "Ecstasy Tango." A lovely waltz, "Two Hearts in Three-Quarter Time" was followed by "Lady," as recorded by Kenny Rogers.

Raymond Scott's "Toy Trumpet" was beautifully played and showed Donna's fine technique in keeping all the rapid passages clean and perfectly articulated. A charming "Music Box Dancer" led to my favorite of all Donna's pieces, a stunning perfor-

mance of Richard Purvis' "Fanfare," done with great panache and rhythmic élan.

"The Raccoon" was another novelty number done in the "flapper" style of the Roaring '20s, then another Raymond Scott composition, "Powerhouse," showed Donna at her best with fine pedaling, great articulation and compelling rhythm. "La Danza," followed by "Black and White Rag" set our toes dancing, until Donna settled us down with "More Than You Know," played in lush theatre styling. "The Stray Cat Strut" was a perfect evocation of our feline friends out for a nocturnal prow!

"I Wish I Were In Love Again," the theme from *Ice Castles*, and "American Bolero" concluded this exceptionally varied program, with the grand finale a stirring "Stars and

The Grand Lake Theatre.

(CN) In the lobby of the Grand Lake Theatre.

(CN)





Stripes Forever" with a film of a huge American flag projected on the screen to wave in the breeze as Donna played.

*Reviewer's reaction:* This was a concert with something for everyone.

*Audience reaction:* They applauded her fine playing, and some in the crowd who had known her as a "kid" in Los Angeles had tears in their eyes.

A nice box lunch at the Avenue Theatre followed Donna's concert, and was in turn followed by the Annual Membership Meeting.

The evening performance was again at the Avenue, with our friendly bartenders still holding forth with their brand of "entertainment" before the show. Warren Lubich, who was an excellent master of ceremonies during the convention, played a few songs for us in a "Double Bill" with organist Jim Riggs. Warren opened his part of the program with a nicely phrased "What'll I Do?", followed by "Peter Piper," "Georgia On My Mind," "When I'm 64," "Lullaby in Ragtime" and "Mandalay."

Warren then gave way to young Jim Riggs, who accompanied a film of the old San Francisco Fox, and while Jim played "Who's Sorry Now?" we saw this irreplaceable theatre with its great beauty as it was in its heyday.

Here is a first-rate artist, whose arrangements make you sit up and take notice! His first number, "Varsity Rag," was followed by the most unusual and beautiful arrangement of "Blue Moon" that I have ever heard. I hope this is included in the "ATOS Folio of Favorites."

A lovely medley of folk songs followed, with "What'll We Do With a Drunken Sailor," "Red River Valley," "Shenandoah" and "Tell Me Why." Again the rich imagination of this young artist and his feel for registration made this a jewel of its kind, and would that we less-gifted mortals could buy this to play at home.

"Makin' Whoopee," followed by "Nobles of the Mystic Shrine" with Jim in a red fez to set the mood, were greeted with much applause. The next song, "Spring Is Here," demonstrated Jim's sensitive ballad style, with musicality shaping every phrase.

The final number was the Sidney Torch arrangement of "12th Street Rag," which was greeted by loud cries

of "Bravo" from the appreciative audience.

*Reviewer reaction:* An ATOS "Star" is born. This was Jim Riggs' first convention, but he will be invited to play again and again; he is a real find.

*Audience reaction:* The same! During intermission the talk was all of what a fine artist this man is.

After the intermission, our feature film for the evening was Harold Lloyd in *Hot Water*, and the Avenue's own Bob Vaughn accompanied this very funny film. Bob said that a good silent film organist makes himself disappear during the film so that you are not aware that he is playing, but his music constantly enhances the action on the screen. In this, Bob did a splendid job, as we all were so doubled up with laughter that I doubt if most of us even gave a thought to the organ. Thank you, Bob, for the belly laughs and a happy ending to a lovely evening.

Tuesday morning, July 5, our last day of the San Francisco portion of the ATOS Convention, we took a final ride under the Bay via BART for a concert at the Paramount. Despite the early hour, the large theatre was full of conventioners who knew it was their last chance to hear this magnificent organ and admire the beautiful theatre.

A stirring "King Kong March" brought organist Jim Roseveare up on the lift for a chance to play his "baby." The musicality Jim displayed in his opening number was continued in an exquisite "Journey Into Melody" by Robert Farnon. For a change of mood and tempo, the next song was a very rhythmical "Dancing in the Dark," followed by the *Voice of Firestone* radio theme "In My Garden," written by Idabelle Firestone, who would have loved the way Jim made her beautiful melody come alive.

Another change of mood, the up-tempo "Trolley Song" from the movie *Meet Me in St. Louis*, then an expert rendition of Jesse Crawford's "Save the Last Dance For Me." Again a change of pace, with a lively Cole Porter tune, "I Get A Kick Out of You." The old Chesterfield cigarette radio theme, "Carefree" was so beautifully arranged that I hope we can look forward to having it in our ATOS music album.



Donna Parker.

(CN)



Viki Hansen and Dr. Ed Millins add spirits to the Convention programs at the Avenue Theatre.

(CN)

We were next treated to "Guess Who I Saw Today?" from *New Faces of 1952*, then an excitingly-played "Masquerade" by John Jacob Loeb, which featured the "second touch" on this organ. Another Robert Farnon tune, "A Star Is Born," then "By the Fireside" led to a lovely song from an unlikely source, the old Boris Karloff movie *The Mummy* gave us the Victor Young ballad, "Beautiful Love."

Jesse Crawford's "A Broken  
*Continued on page 42.*