

Closing Chord

Frank Olsen, veteran theatre organist, teacher and church musician, died of a heart attack on September 4. He was playing a public concert on the Compton organ in the Odeon, Leicester Square, London when stricken. He was thought to be 72. His body was cremated and the ashes returned to Glasgow. A memorial service was held on Sunday, September 11, at the Morrison Street United Church in Niagara Falls, Ontario, where Mr. Olsen had been Organist and Choir Director since 1967. Ron Curtis, a friend of Frank Olsen, played for a short while to complete the concert at the Odeon.

Frank was on one of his many visits to Scotland, tending to the business of his music school, established in 1950 in Glasgow, while doing a concert tour. His home since 1967 has been in Port Colborne, Ontario. In addition to his church duties, he made many concert appearances and maintained a full teaching schedule.

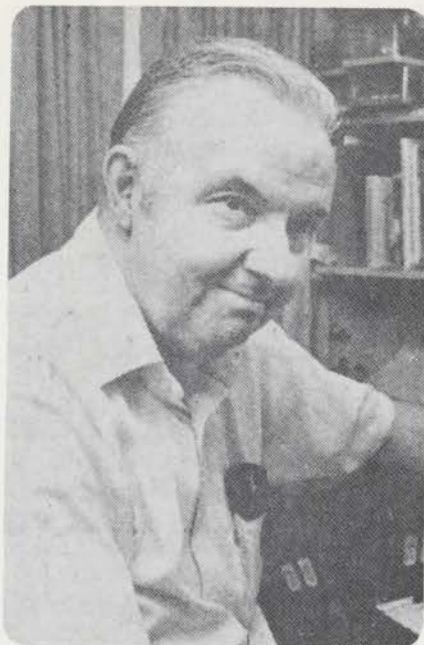
He began music lessons at the age of four, and at five years of age became organist at an Anglican church, a post he held for five years before transferring to another church. His theatre organ career began at the City Picture House in Peterborough when he was 17.

Perhaps his favorite theatre instrument was the East Kilbride 2/8 Wurlitzer, which he played during every visit to Scotland. The organ was installed originally in the Embassy Theatre in Baltimore, Maryland. From there it went to the New Victoria Theatre, Edinburgh, where Frank first played it, and then into the home of Tom Lockhart, Kirkcaldy, Scotland, before its installation in East Kilbride.

In the words of his friend James Donald, "We have lost another fine organist and wonderful person in Frank Olsen."

Everett S. Bassett of Ridge Manor, Florida, one of the founders and past president of the Connecticut Valley Chapter of ATOS, died on June 24 in Waterbury, Connecticut, while on vacation with his family. He was 68.

A lifelong theatre organ enthusiast and an excellent "ear" player, Ev had



Everett Bassett.

a 2/4 Robert-Morton which he kept in excellent condition. While in the Waterbury area, this Robert-Morton was played by a "who's who" of theatre organists. Moving to Florida about three years ago, the organ went along and was played by visitors and members of the Central Florida Chapter. Ev was serving his second term as vice chairman of that chapter. He also had an interest in old theatre movie projectors and had an outstanding collection of silent 35mm films.

Ev was a graduate electrical engineer from the Pratt Institute in New York City. He played theatre organs throughout the U.S., and was one of the chief engineers in the installing of

the organ in the Thomaston Opera House. For ten years, he played the Wurlitzer at the State Theatre in Waterbury between Sunday shows. He was presently lending his expertise and moral support to the installation of a 3/12 Wurlitzer in the Tampa Theatre.

Ev Bassett was a gentle person, with quiet humor and a marvelous fund of memories which he would trot out on occasion. He was a mainstay of the Central Florida Chapter and will be sorely missed.

Ev leaves his wife, Eleanor, two sons and four daughters, nine grandchildren, two brothers and several nieces and nephews. Memorial contributions may be made to the Rice Memorial Fund, Connecticut Valley Chapter, ATOS, c/o Bert Rankin, 33 Brace Road, Newington, Connecticut 06111.

JOHN OTTERSON

Steve Jablonski, member of Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society, passed away June 5 after a year's battle with cancer. Even when he became too ill to serve as doorman at our concerts he continued to attend, sitting quietly at the back without complaining of his pain.

He was a diesel mechanic by trade who became interested in the theatre organ while visiting the Lamplighter Inn. This encouraged him to take lessons and become a member who frequently played for our monthly meetings and always participated in open console sessions.

His love for the organ included helping others relocate organs and in



Frank Olsen at the Odeon Compton, taken a few minutes before he was stricken.

(John Sharp photo)

chamber construction. He was instrumental in a partial rebuilding of the Lamplighter Kimball.

He composed two songs for the theatre organ and was delighted to have them played at one of our recent meetings.

Another of his hobbies was photography. He took many pictures for the Society, developing them in his own darkroom.

Steve is survived by his wife, LaVern.

DICK SHEPHERD

Dorothy Parker Langdon, organist in theatres, at sporting events, and on the concert circuit, died June 21 in Darby, Pennsylvania. She was 81.

In 1921 at age 19, she became the youngest organist in the Stanley Theatre chain when she started at Phila-

delphia's Regent. Later stints were at the Palace, the Arcadia, and the Mastbaum in its final years. Following marriage to Dr. Roy L. Langdon, she resumed her musical career, playing at Connie Mack Stadium for the Athletics and Phillies, a total of 154 games a year. She and Brooklyn Dodger organist, Gladys Goodding, were the only ones playing in major league baseball parks.

Mrs. Langdon also played for the Ramblers hockey games, boxing events, hosted radio and TV shows, and composed songs. Her "Waves of Blue" won her a Defense Department medal, and "Ring That Bell" observed the nation's 200th birthday. Until retiring six years ago, she performed at Holiday Inns.

She is survived by two sons, a daughter, and eight grandchildren.

LLOYD E. KLOS □

**1983 CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
July 2, 1983. Sheraton-Palace Hotel.
San Francisco, California**

President Lois Segur welcomed the representatives as she convened the meeting promptly at 3:30 p.m. She introduced the officers and directors and described the various committees and their responsibilities. Lois announced the formation of three new chapters: Southern California Tri-Counties, Southwest Michigan, and Australia Felix.

Thirty-three chapters had representatives present, and nearly all had glowing reports of various activities within their chapters and increased membership. Connie Reardon of San Diego Chapter announced a gift of \$500 toward the Fleet Foundation Matching Grant money and received strong applause. Lance Johnson of Red River Chapter announced the acquisition of the Fargo (North Dakota) Theatre and talked of their successful publicity venture with the local public radio station which emphasizes jazz. Lance advised other chapters to contact their local public radio stations and donate theatre organ records to them. During request shows, members of the Red River Chapter call and request theatre organ selections be played, and the station responds. They invited the station's Program Director to the Fargo Theatre to see and hear the organ there, and he became quite enthusiastic about the instrument which has helped garner additional publicity. Lance also suggested offering to be interviewed on public radio talk shows as a means to heighten public awareness of ATOS and theatre pipe organ.

Irving Light of the North Texas Chapter announced the donation of \$150 to the matching fund. Motor City Chapter's president, Harold Bellamy, announced that they are increasing the number of theatre-organ equipped theatres by two in the Detroit area and that the Redford continues to be successful even though it costs approximately \$150,000 per year to operate. Harold suggested that ATOS compile "white papers" on such topics as artist's contracts and attracting young people to join ATOS. President Segur commended Bellamy on his recent article in THEATRE ORGAN on running a Convention and suggested that he consider authoring articles on other topics in the future. Ralph Sargent of LATOS stated that Los Angeles is considering altering dues structure to encourage more Friends of Theatre Organ to become full-fledged members of ATOS. He encouraged chapters to go after grant money, stating that LATOS has been quite successful in this area. Their audience surveys are now showing that concerts in LA are attracting younger audiences who are more affluent, and that concerts ARE supported by their own membership, upwards of 55% of the audience. He finds their Newsletter is the most effective form of concert advertising, followed by *The Console*. Ralph also informed the reps that the Musicians Union Performance Trust Fund provides up to \$400,000 annually around the country for concerts and should be considered as a source of local revenue.

Orrill Dunn of Land of Lincoln Chapter announced the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Illinois, is now a National Landmark and that his chapter membership is up. Geoff Paterson of Kingston reported that local membership has increased from 10 to 40 in one year and

ATOS Minutes

MINUTES

of the

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, ATOS

June 30, 1983. San Francisco, California

1. President Segur called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m., June 30, 1983. In attendance were President Segur, Treasurer McGillivray, Secretary Needler, and Directors Rex Koury and Preston "Sandy" Fleet. Also present: Guest, Bob Gilbert, Editor of THEATRE ORGAN.

2. Minutes of the January 7 and 8, 1983, meeting in San Marcos, California, were read and discussed. Rex Koury asked if letter to new members had ever been drafted and sent. Lois said the letter drafted by the secretary had needed revision, and the procedure had not been implemented as yet. Sandy Fleet was asked if the Advisory Council had been implemented, and he replied that he had not completed his work in this area. Bob McGillivray was asked if he had investigated the cost of printing a membership roster. Bob replied that it would cost approximately \$1500 and it was questionable whether the Society should spend that kind of money on something we've been getting along without. Editor Gilbert was asked to see if he could determine how much interest might exist for such a roster.

3. Treasurer and Membership Chairman Bob McGillivray reported that at the present time there are 5,152 members, and that the net increase from 6/30/82 to 6/30/83 was approximately 175-200 members. Somewhere over 1,000 members had not renewed for 1983.

4. The telephone conference regarding buying additional binders which was held in April was confirmed and made part of these minutes. The secretary was directed to publish minutes of all telephonic conferences to be sent to all board members in the future.

5. After discussion regarding problems in the membership office created by the chapters' reporting of renewals and the desire to make membership less of a problem in other respects, Fleet moved and McGillivray seconded that ATOS membership run for twelve months from date received by Membership office. Unanimous.

6. Motion Fleet, 2nd Koury: That the Editor of THEATRE ORGAN be invited to attend appropriate portions of Executive Committee and Board of Directors' meetings. Unanimous.

7. Editor Bob Gilbert was commended highly for his continued dedication and fine efforts on behalf of ATOS in his work with THEATRE ORGAN Journal.

8. Lois Segur suggested that the board be encouraged to establish additional classes of membership for ATOS.

9. Rex Koury suggested that representatives from involved chapters be invited to address the board on territorial questions with the decision of the board being final. After discussion, this was moved by Rex, seconded by Fleet, and passed unanimously.

10. Meeting adjourned sine die at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Needler, Secretary