

for his trip to hear and observe Mr. Adams at the Rivoli at 50th Street on Broadway. If the picture is poor, send up a prayer for Mr. Adams, too, for he is having a miserable time."

ADAMS, MRS. FRANK STUART (Maiden name Anne E. Frank)

In 1925 played Loew's State Theatre, New York City, then moved to the American Theatre in New York City where she was playing in 1927, and in 1928 on to Loew's 83rd Street Theatre in New York City.

ADAMS, R. LLOYD

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 17, 1896, Adams studied piano and organ with local instructors. In 1914 he took his first theatre job as pianist with the orchestra in the Best Theatre in Little Rock, Arkansas. In 1917 he moved to the Palace Theatre in the same city where a Kilgen pipe organ had just been installed. He played the concert-style instrument in addition to continuing as a pianist with the theatre orchestra. At the same time he served as organist of the Scott Street Methodist Church in Little Rock.

In 1918 Adams moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where he took the job of organist and pianist with the orchestra in the Strand Theatre (Robert-Morton organ). On June 22, 1921, he moved farther west to become pianist in the Belvedere Theatre orchestra, in Pomona, California. When the management later installed a Robert-Morton organ, Adams became the organist. Five years later Adams moved to the California Theatre in the same city, as pianist. A Wurlitzer theatre organ was installed and he became the organist. When sound films arrived, the orchestra was discontinued but Adams remained as organist.

In 1933 the Pomona Fox Theatre was built and the Wurlitzer was moved to it from the California Theatre. Adams continued as organist of the Fox through World War II until April 1946. When Kay Kyser and his band played the Fox Theatre in the early forties, Kyser remarked that Adams must be the last full time theatre organist on the Pacific Coast.

After leaving the Fox (because the organ needed major repair and the management considered it too costly) Adams played occasional theatre presentations and became organist of the Trinity Methodist Church in Pomo-

na, a post he was to hold for 21 years.

During his years as organist of the Fox, Pomona, Adams played the Wurlitzer at the Los Angeles County Fair, the largest county fair in the United States. He also served, at the same time, as official accompanist for the acts appearing on the stage in front of the grandstand.

Adams has had a career as a composer and arranger as well as performer. In 1945 he arranged music for the *Merry Widow* by Franz Lehár, presented at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium starring Jan Kiepura. In 1950 he composed and arranged music for *Guachoma*, a pageant which celebrated the Mormon trek to Utah. The pageant featured the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. In 1952 Adams won first place in a nationwide competition sponsored by the W. W. Kimball Company for his song "In June," subsequently published by Carl Fischer. In 1955 he composed and arranged music for the Santa Barbara Fiesta and for the California State Fair at Sacramento, where such stars as Jeanette MacDonald, Gordon McCrea and Margaret Whiting were featured. In addition, he arranged the song, "Summer Time," from *Porgy and Bess* for solo, chorus and 45-piece orchestra conducted by Paul Whiteman.

From 1957 to 1958 Adams served as president of the Musicians Club of Pomona Valley. At present he is pianist for the Lions, Rotary and Optimist Clubs in Pomona. For 22 years he served as pianist with the Host Lions Club Band made up of professional musicians. This band played for 18 international Lions Club conventions. Adams was made an honorary member of Rotary in 1978 and received the Paul Harris Fellow Award in 1979 in recognition of his 47 years of service as pianist for the Pomona Rotary Club.

Dr. John W. Landon is Professor of Social Work, University of Kentucky, Pastor of a Community Church in Indiana and has been organist of the Paramount Theatre, Anderson, Indiana (3/7 Page) since 1955. He authored the book, Jesse Crawford, Poet of the Organ; Wizard of the Mighty Wurlitzer, published by Vestal Press in 1974. His latest book, Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer: The History of the Theatre Pipe Organ, has just been published. □

For The Records



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address,) if applicable, and a black and white photo of the artist which need not be returned.

CHRISTMAS! Don Thompson playing the Ye Olde Pizza Joynt Wurlitzer. Available on cassette only at \$7.50 postpaid from Pipe Organ Presentations, 3678 Arcadian Way, Castro Valley, California 94546.

This is Don Thompson's first release (note it's a cassette) played on the grand daddy of all pizza organs, the Wurlitzer in Carsten Henningsen's "Ye Olde Pizza Joynt" in Hayward/San Lorenzo, California. There has been some promotional misrepresentation about the origin of this organ, so let's try to clear it up. It started life as a 2/9 Wurlitzer in the Fresno State Theatre. After the usual hiatus and neglect caused by "talkies" it was removed and installed in the residence of Bob Kates in the '50s. Bob, a church organist, cut two outstanding pop records on it played in theatre style ("Pipe Dreams" was one). Both are no longer available, regrettably, because they were brilliantly executed.

Then Carsten Henningsen got the bright idea of presenting "pipes and pizza." The 2/9 was available and the Pizza Joynt opened in Hayward/San

Lorenzo in the '60s. Many organists have played the Joynt organ for pizza chompers but the name most closely associated with it is organist-entertainer Bill Langford, whose "Gangbusters and Lollipops" record is still a best seller although Bill has been long gone from the Joynt. Over the years the organ was enlarged to 13 ranks and the three-deck former San Francisco Warfield Theatre Wurlitzer console replaced the 2/9 console. We repeat: only the console came from the Warfield Theatre.

Don, of course, is back home after a lengthy stint playing in Toronto's Organ Grinder (no relation to the one in Portland, Oregon) where he built up a large audience of loyal fans who became "regulars" at the Grinder. During this period Don busied himself with concerts and many records played on the Grinder organ in addition to his almost nightly appearances at the console there. No one could claim that there is a lazy hair on Don's well-endowed pate.

This time Don has produced an album of Christmas music. Registration includes lots of percussions, both pitched and monotone, in accordance with the mood projected. At no time are they overdone. There are 29 titles and none is truncated for time reasons. We won't list all titles because they are exactly what we expect of a Christmas album, a pleasant mix of the traditional standard and popular. Yes, "Frosty" is on hand, as is "Good King Wenceslas" and he of the rose tinted proboscis, "Rudolph." There are two "Sleigh Rides," one by Russia's Prokofiev, the other by the USA's Leroy Anderson (minus whip snaps but with a good manual-produced horselaff). Then come "Silver Bells," "O Holy Night" and "Jingle Bells" — all the fine old chestnuts. But there is more. One of Don's attributes is a very wide and varied repertoire.

Victor Herbert's "March of the Toys" gets a generous playing, although Don omitted a part of the verse. Succeeding choruses become ever more dramatic, the last verse being appropriate to accompany the doughboys tramping across no man's land, should the listener recall *The Big Parade*. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" is not the familiar tune, but rather a Richard Purvis arrangement of an old English melody, "Pastorale on Forest Green." Purvis also did the



Don Thompson.

arrangement of "What Child is This?", an offbeat treatment of "Greensleeves" with interesting melodic and harmonic diversions. Don uses some strange registration to add atmosphere.

There is also a very good rendition of Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy." Don closes with "I'll be Home for Christmas." Very appropriate because he recently returned after seven years of engagements beyond USA borders. It is embellished with an attractive counter tune in places.

This one should please Don Thompson's many fans. It is a generous serving of yuletide music plus some of the specials for which Don is noted. Except for the special selections, Don doesn't alter the traditional moods and harmonies, although he sometimes tends to be a little speedy.

Recording is good and the Joynt organ provides plenty of registration variety. We don't know about Don's plans for an informative enclosure because we reviewed the cassette before its release. A list of titles would be helpful but who needs a commentary on familiar Christmas music? It's a lot of organ for the price.

HO HO HO, JONAS NORDWALL AT THE ORGAN GRINDER (Portland, Oregon) JN-107 (stereo) \$8.95 postpaid from Dennis Hedburg, 1303 SW 16th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201 (\$13.50 postpaid in the U.K.)

As mentioned previously, we have observed the progress of Jonas Nordwall since he was 16, playing a Rodgers electronic during a long-ago

Portland-based ATOS convention. He was good then, and he is now a seasoned organist with a flair for arranging. It's the latter, plus Jonas' playing skill, which lifts this platter from the realm of the ordinary to the exceptional. There's further good news: if the cost of Jonas' *Bits, Bytes & Pipes* (\$12.00) was a little steep (as a digital recording), here's the same organ and organist recorded conventionally for \$8.95! Not too many auditions have the playback equipment (if they have the ear) to notice much difference.

Jonas lets his imagination soar as he plays these familiar Christmas selections, yet he never throws them out of focus.

"Sleigh Ride" (Anderson), is a well-orchestrated version played with spirit and a very wide dynamic range. One can almost feel the cold snowflakes landing on one's face. Lots of Glock, Xylophone, Bells and registration changes. Final chorus is real jazzy. There are not whipcracks nor closing horselaffs as prescribed by the composer.

"Christmas Song" (Tormé) is one of the most recent additions to the Christmas repertoire. Jonas gives it the charming ballad treatment it requires for full realization, soloing the Brass Trumpet which alternates with well-quoted Flutes.

"Jingle Bells" naturally calls on the percussers. Jonas makes it interesting via his bag of tricks, especially an energetic "Grunt" chorus plus some dramatic stabs. The low end of the pedal register is really something.

"O Holy Night" rates a Tibia/Vox first chorus. Jonas plays it reverently on full theatre organ combinations (they change constantly).

"Santa Claus is Coming to Town" is played in bouncy swingband style with appropriate between-phrase riffs and plenty of bell passages.

"Silent Night" gets the reverent treatment while we are still recovering from the previous tune's gusto. Jonas takes some interesting liberties with the melody in spots (mostly for key changes). Again it's full theatre organ registration, which includes some lovely Celeste voices and a sea of Voxes.

Side 2 — "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" becomes a little "churchie" in the instrumentation department, an interesting diversion. Jonas plays it rather like a César

Franck *Piece Heroïque* with fugue overtones. Some of the bells are not quite in tune with the organ — or vice versa. But what an improvisation!

"Our Lady of December" is a new one to us. It has the proper spirit and shows off some thumpy percussions as well as some ethereal combinations. Rather like "Coventry Carol."

"Rudolph" sticks his highly-tinted schnozz into the doings via a long ago George Wright technique: playing an octave lower and recording it at a slower speed. When played back at normal speed the organ takes on a hurdy gurdy aspect, a special superficial brilliance which fits "Rudolph" perfectly. Incidentally, Wright didn't like the effect, but his Hi-Fi Records boss did.

"White Christmas" includes the rarely heard verse and a Tibia/Vox chorus (the combination is especially appealing on this instrument). To add to the realism we are allowed to hear a combination button thump between phrases.

"Winter Wonderland." Jonas goes into the chorus after an exquisite intro on a Vox-heavy combination followed by some well-quoted phrases relieved by a solo brass voice. Lots of Tibia, too.

"The First Noel" features Chimes and Tibia the first time around, then pure theatre organ combinations to the close.

The organ, of course, is the 4/44 composite Wurlitzer assembled by Dennis Hedburg in the Portland "Organ Grinder" pizzeria. It's truly a beauty.

The recording is good but we have a reservation; on some of the loud passages there was a hint of the kind of distortion associated with over-modulation (note "Jingle Bells," "God Rest Ye" and "Christmas Song"). The recording has a very wide dynamic range, from a whisper to near thunder. We review such a recording after playing it on at least three playback systems of varying power, sensitivity and cost. This recording sounded best on the lowest-priced playback, from the distortion viewpoint. Note we said "a hint . . . of distortion." Your playback may choose to ignore it. There was a slight side-to-side movement of the cartridge when Side 2 of the review pressing was played but not enough to result in "wow." Both surfaces were glassy smooth.

Jacket notes are mostly about the



Jonas Nordwall at 16.

organ and recording technique plus a good in-chamber photo of the organist. It's a fine package.

DON SIMMONS PLAYS THE ORGAN GRINDER. \$8.00 postpaid from Don Simmons Recordings, 1610 SE Glenwood Street, Portland, Oregon 97202.

This one is a reissue; originally released in 1976. It is timeless in content and well worth a second time around. It is exactly the same platter released previously, with no changes in balance or frequency emphasis.

The organ was a 4/38 composite Wurlitzer when this recording was taped (it is now a 4/44). But that would not explain the vast differences in sound and emphasis between recent Jonas Nordwall recordings and this one by Don Simmons, all played on the same instrument. These organists have entirely different approaches to music which are worthy of comparison.

Those who file their copies of this publication may want to reread our original review in the December '76/January '77 issue. We liked it then and we like it now. Yet our comments which follow were written before we located the aforementioned back issue.

Don Simmons is one of the few organists with the gift of playing jazz on pipes. It isn't usually the improvisational type of jazz as "Fats" Waller played it, but rather jazz riffs, effects and endings to embellish the standards. He keeps the melodic line intact. Don's experience includes over 20 years playing the four-deck Wurlitzer in Portland's Oak Park Roller Rink (an 18-ranker last we heard, un-

enclosed) plus three years playing for Organ Grinder patrons. He's an original; his stylings are his own. He plays happy music. It has a "lift." Let's examine the tunelist.

Side 1 — "Mama Don't Want No Music Played Around Here" is a rowdy jazz opener with lots of automatic traps and a bouncy "bull fiddle" interlude. Wild!

"Thou Swell" is played at a lively clip on well-quoted voices plus Xylophone answers. It's styled as a show tune, which it is (*Connecticut Yankee*), but with plenty of interesting melodic injections and percussive registration.

"Winchester Cathedral" brings back the traps and jazz effects. Definitely not church music but ear-catching.

"Night Train" is given a boogie-woogie treatment with lots of sharp stings and brassy melody while that insistent boogie pattern dominates the accompaniment.

"Love Will Keep Us Together" is rife with jazz effects and automatic traps against a usually brass or percussive lead. It bounces nicely.

In contrast, "You" is performed as a show tune, and at a speedy pace. The bright brass and Xylophone are prominent; so are the smooth flutes, often with Quint and other mutation coloration.

Don hands out the coconuts with a cheery "Pass Me By" (remember Cary Grant singing it in that movie about a tropical island-bound hermit invaded by adolescent female!). Brief, but exciting.

Side 2 — "Old Man River" is first

*We Hope Y'all Have
An Extra Nice
Holiday Season*



**NORTH
TEXAS
CHAPTER**

given a broad ballad treatment then a fast staccato chorus with the percussors doing their stuff. But it's back to the "father of waters" mood for the closer. This one is no "lazy stream of dreams."

Not many listeners will recall that "Bidin' My Time" is from a long ago Broadway musical entitled *Three Men on a Horse*, one of whom was comic Jimmy Savvo who actually sang it mounted on a bangtail on stage while his two cronies chimed in. Don plays it with due respect to its show tune origin, a rhythm-ballad.

"A Foggy Day" alternates between mutation coloring and burnished brass registration. It's an ear-catching tune which many organists have recorded (e.g. Al Bollington, Jim Melander). Don takes a much different approach but he makes his point.

"Watch What Happens" gets a well-quoted beguine treatment, with a later Tuba solo (in the Trombone range). A goody.

"That's All" is the slow fox closer with intriguing jazz progressions.

Dennis Hedburg supervised the miking. He has captured the sound of the big Wurlitzer with the expertise we have come to expect of him. The surface of the review pressing was smooth and pop-free. The front cover of the jacket bears the original photo



Don Simmons at the Portland Organ Grinder 4/38 console (in 1976).



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of Don (see cut) at the then-4/38 console (from the Boston Metropolitan Theatre where it controlled 26 ranks). The tunes are listed on the back and the jacket notes consist of five lines of Don Simmons biog. He deserves more.

Don puts on a good show in his very individual style.

It is time to nominate candidates for the National ATOS Board of Directors for a one-year term, July 1984 through June 1985; and three three-year terms from July 1984 through June 1987. (See special notice below.)

All regular ATOS members are eligible for nomination, and may nominate themselves or be nominated by others. Written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received before the nominee's name can be placed on the ballot. In addition, each nominee shall furnish a small black-and-white photo of him/herself, together with a statement not exceeding 100 words in length which should include personal data, work and theatre organ experience, and a short platform statement.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The new Bylaws approved in 1982 increase the Board of Directors from eight (8) to nine (9) members and increase their term in office from two (2) to three (3) years and also limits their stay in office to two consecutive terms. The following excerpts from the Bylaws will be in effect:

Section 4.4 ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

a. Elected Directors. Each Elected Director shall serve for a three-year term, except that in order to achieve staggered terms, the terms the first Board of Directors shall serve after the adoption of these Bylaws shall be staggered as follows:

(i) At the first election following adoption of these Bylaws, the three (3) Directors receiving the highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of three (3) years; and the two (2) Directors receiving the fourth and fifth highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of two (2) years; and

(ii) At the second election following adoption of these Bylaws, the three (3) Directors receiving the highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of three (3) years; and the one (1) Director receiving the fourth highest number of votes who is elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall hold office for an initial term of one (1) year.

b. Subsequent Elections. Thereafter three (3) Elected Directors each, shall be elected each year by the members as provided in these Bylaws.