

# DEDICATION OF A "NEW" ORGAN

*the Sanfilippo Residence Wurlitzer*

by Tom B'hend

As Snoopy frequently portrays authorship in the famed "Peanuts" comic strip — "It was a dark and stormy night . . ." And truly, it was just that as a multitude of organ-happy motorists meandered merrily along Illinois State Highway 14 on their way westward out of downtown Barrington. The motorists had invitations on which a map was printed directing them to turn left on Plum Tree Road, a country-style lane they traversed approximately one mile which brought them to a sign on the left that was swinging freely in the wind-swept, sometimes rainy, sometimes sleety, and even sometimes snowy clime. It disclosed the entrance to the 29-acre Sanfilippo estate, and opened onto the lamp-lighted drive which took the guests through a small forest preserve, past a newly-created lake and terminated about one-half mile further on a slight knoll at the front door of the Sanfilippo Tudor-style residence.

It was Saturday evening, November 10, a day now recorded in theatre organ history as being probably the

greatest organ social event of 1984. It has enlarged the niche of theatre organ, greatly enhancing the importance of the King of Instruments, not only in the present generation but for years to come. It will help keep alive the grand tradition of this wonderful entertainment medium.

Some 200 invited guests would soon see and hear the Jasper B. Sanfilippo Wurlitzer sound out in all its glory, played by one of the nation's leading theatre organ virtuosos — Lyn Larsen. This was to be one of two dedicatory celebrations. For this first night, Jasper Sanfilippo had decreed it was to be David L. Junchen's special event, honoring the organ builder for his excellent planning and installation of the Wurlitzer. He most graciously told Junchen to issue invitations to anyone he wanted to invite for cocktails, buffet dinner and the dedication concert, an offer that was happily accepted.

Invitations were mailed out across the nation. Almost every one was answered with the RSVP, "We'll be there!" And guests came from as far

west as California (six or more, including the organ builder and relay designer); as far south as Arizona (at least four, including the concert artist); as far east as Boston and New York City; from Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin; and from several Illinois cities including Chicago, Hinsdale, Joliet and Wheaton.

But to return to our meandering multitude. As they drove up to the front door they were met by valet attendants who parked their cars. Unknown to guests, the attendants were the Sanfilippo sons and some of their friends. Each driver was handed one half of a torn playing card. It could have been the Ace of Spades, King of Diamonds, Queen of Hearts, winners in any game, but they served as a check system to secure return of all carriages to their proper owners at evening's end. The card meld was unique in that the other half of the torn card remained on the dashboard. Departing guests identified their vehicle and handed back the torn card half. Even though more than one deck of playing cards was used, there were no mix-up delays.

From carriage to front door was a brisk, quick walk. Guests were met by their hosts, Marian and Jasper Sanfilippo and David Junchen. Once defrocked of their outdoor winter wear, they were directed to a special table where name tags had been prepared. This served as entry into the inner sanctum, starting with the Library where stands a magnificent Welte Orchestron, the first mechanical musical instrument to be acquired by Jasper Sanfilippo. The Library also serves now as a grand entry salon leading to the Music Room and adjacent atrium, both of which comprise the extensive Tudor-style upper level addition to the main residence.

Coming in from the frosty night, guests were enthusiastically directed to the grand stairway at the north end of the Music Room which led them to the lower level of the new addition. Here they found the panelled English-style Pub and fully equipped casino with real embossed tin ceiling, and the commodious stand-up console of the many-bottled bar. Two very busy mixologists were filling anti-freeze libation orders.

From here the guests could inspect some of the initial collection that in-

Jasper Sanfilippo, center, standing in his English Pub. On the left, Jim Glass and Don Springer. Behind Jasper is Mrs. Dave Broskowski, and on the right, lone Tedei. (Tom B'hend photo)



terested their owner before he became exclusively musically minded — the stationary toy steam engines that were popular with kids in the earlier part of this century; slot machines that require coins to make them operate and sometimes spew out fortunes; and arcade machines, the hand-cranked units that display “mov’n pitchers” for just a nickel. Guests could also view the inner workings of the Wurlitzer which are located directly under the organ chambers. Here the blowers, tremors, reservoirs, relays and special airconditioning unit for the instrument are housed. Or they could sit in the family room which is located in the original basement area of the residence. And they could return upstairs to the Music Room and atrium to inspect all the mechanical musical instruments on display as well as the four-manual Wurlitzer console, unenclosed percussions, and organ chambers.

Invitations announced festivities beginning at six o’clock with cocktails and buffet, the concert to follow at eight. The buffet, which included several superb gastronomical delights, was still being served at eight o’clock. Every nook and cranny was filled with guests balancing plates on knees, or eating from occasional tables, or remaining downstairs where banquet tables and chairs had been set up.

By 8:30 everyone had assembled in the Music Room. Jasper Sanfilippo was introduced and spoke briefly about his collection and told how he became an “Organ Nut.” Following this, Lyn Larsen was announced and took his place at the Wurlitzer console. He opened the dedicatory concert in a novel manner by starting on just the Spitzflöte Celeste, adding a Quintadena solo for the rarely heard verse of “There’s No Business Like Show Business.” And, just as everyone had been lulled to seeming musical contentment, Lyn slammed on full pedal. Lethargy was quickly supplanted by seat-leaving startled listeners as the 20-inch-powered Posthorn ripped the airwaves. It was a real rouser!

Lyn’s finale, a bit premature, perhaps, but requested by Host Junchen, who thought it apropos of the evening and coming holiday season, was a Christmas medley. It was a fitting closure that expressed musically the full enjoyment of the evening.

Snoopy never finished his book-



Organist and organ builder — Lyn Larsen and David Junchen pictured before the Sanfilippo console following the dedicatory concert. (Gib Petzke photo)

writing episodes, but it can be stated here that even though the night was dark and stormy without, inside it was an evening of much pleasure made possible by the cordial, hospitable Sanfilippo family.

On the following day, Sunday, November 11, at noon, another dedicatory concert for a large group of relatives, friends and neighbors was scheduled, beginning with a luncheon. Larsen also played this program.

If anyone came to the dedication prepared to give the installation critical rating, the only check marks possible would have been “superb” on all phases of the organ. Junchen was complimented on the job he did by several well-known organ builders who attended the event.

#### Statistically Speaking

The Music Room addition to the residence measures 72 feet by 24 feet, with a ceiling height of 19 feet. Its full basement connects with the original residence basement and has kitchen and storage facilities in addition to the pub, casino and organ areas.

Installation of the Wurlitzer required less than ten months, being started in February and completed several days prior to its dedication. Actually, the job was finished in half of stated physical time period.

Steve Adams assisted Junchen throughout the entire project, just as he did with the Pasadena Civic Auditorium job several years ago. Chris Feiereisen of Manitowoc, Wisconsin,

became associated with the project toward its close. Dan Horenberger of South Pasadena, California, was responsible for restoration of percussions. Los Angeles organ builder Ken Crome fabricated new stoprails for the electric stop actions in the console. John Hovancak, Jr. restored the Vibraphone. Robert Trousdale, Santa Ana, California, electronics expert, restored the console and installed his electronic relay system in the instrument.

The organ, Opus 1571, shipped February 4, 1927, to the Paramount Publix Riviera Theatre, Omaha, Nebraska, was originally four manuals, 15 ranks. Purchased by William Brown of Phoenix, Arizona, for his Organ Stop Pizza parlor in Tucson, it was enlarged to 23 ranks. Junchen added five more ranks for its present installation — “soft, pretty things — a pair of dulcet Spitzflöte Celestes, Horn Diapason, and the authoritative Trompette en Chamade,” he noted. The design for the en Chamade set was inspired by Joseph DuciBella, well-known Chicago organ and theatre personality. The unit was voiced by Junchen in the Sanfilippo Music Room.

At the request of the owner, a majority of the organ percussions were mounted unenclosed in the roof rafters above the console for visual impact. “We softened them considerably,” Junchen explained, “so they do not jar eardrums as similar pizza parlor placements manage to do.”

There are two blowers to supply wind — a ten-horsepower main and a

five-horsepower step-up for the high pressure ranks. These are a Hope-Jones 16' Bombarde, 16' Wood Diapason and Posthorn, all on 20 inches wind pressure. The blowers, electronic relay, tremulants, reservoirs and special airconditioning unit for the organ are located in the new addition basement directly under the organ chambers.

Two chambers measuring 12 feet by 16 feet each are located at the south end of the Music Room. They have bevelled glass doors and windows, permitting visitors to view pipe ranks. Shutters are installed above the window areas.

The Music Room has a specially-milled floor of solid oak; all other trim and the staircase between the two floors is also solid oak.

There are approximately 40 mechanical musical instruments on display in the lengthy room and adjacent atrium. Several of these are not duplicated in other collections in the United States.

#### Organ Recorded

Noted Midwest organist Kay McAbee recorded the Sanfilippo Wurlitzer during the last week of December. Junchen directed the recording sessions while he was in the area to spend Christmas with his father. Entertaining organist Don Springer of Sally's Stage has also made several digital tapes for the Sanfilippo family's evening enjoyment, and several other noted organists have been scheduled to tape the organ.

#### Spellbinder

Internationally famous classic organist Carlo Curley recently visited the Sanfilippo installation and was invited to try it out. Within a few min-

utes after he had started playing the instrument, it was reported that several of the Sanfilippo children stopped whatever they were doing, came into the Music Room and were sitting on the fireplace hearth totally engrossed in what they were hearing. Curley is noted for his forceful style which has a way of compelling rapt attention from listeners. It is no secret he patterns his playing along the style of the late Virgil Fox — and undoubtedly has gained a great many new converts for the organ.

#### Visitors Welcome

Visitors are welcome to see the Sanfilippo collections and Wurlitzer by making advance arrangements either by calling Jasper Sanfilippo at home or at his office in Elk Grove, so that convenient scheduling serves both parties.

#### Novel Contract

David Junchen's contract with Jasper Sanfilippo for installation of the organ differed from what is considered a normal legal agreement. It was verbal and sealed by a handshake.

"I was invited to spend a weekend with the Sanfilippo family in Las Vegas to discuss the residence installation," Junchen recounted. "During our talk I was told the job must be of the highest possible quality. And in reply to that I asked, 'Do you mean like restoring your nickelodeons?'"

"A very positive 'yes' was the answer to that. I countered with 'Do you realize what that will cost?' 'Well, how much?' he asked.

"I told him and his response was to shake my hand, look me straight in the eyes and say, 'you just do whatever it takes.'"

The final clincher of satisfactory

performance took place following the two dedicatory concerts just prior to Junchen leaving for the West Coast. "I had dinner with the family and Jasper said to me, 'It has been a real pleasure to do business with someone of real integrity.'"

#### No Way a Wurlitzer Widow

Marian Sanfilippo initially was headed in the direction of becoming a "Wurlitzer Widow" — a wife who tolerates hubby's organ hobby indulgence but has little or nothing to do with it.

"When my house was cluttered with pipes, chests and all the other Wurlitzer 'junk,' I thought I would never see the end of the mess — and, furthermore, I thought the organ was just an overgrown nickelodeon.

"However, when I heard Lyn play it for the first time, and he played 'Embraceable You' and 'Clare de Lune' both favorites of mine, I was overcome with tears and intense joy. It was at that point I realized that all the fuss Jasper had been making all those months suddenly became a thing of gorgeous beauty.

"Now Jasper and I sit and listen to the organ played by the digital player every night."

#### Meet Jasper B. Sanfilippo, Theatre Organ's Newest Convert

Ever since word was first heard about "that Wurlitzer installation up there in Barrington, Illinois," there have been questions arising concerning the person responsible for it. As the installation progressed and a few organ enthusiasts made a trip to view it, more information was circulated. The general news revealed that it was a "Nut King" who had become almost overnight an "Organ Nut" after

The bar in the English Pub.

(Tom B'hend photo)

Sanfilippo Music Room looking toward north end which is the entry area.

(Tom B'hend photo)





This Welte Orchestrion, which stands in the library of the residence, is Jasper Sanfilippo's first venture into the world of mechanical music instruments. (Tom B'hend photo)



South end of Music Room. Wurlitzer console just visible in center at rear, with glass doors and windows of chambers on either side; closed shutters directly above. (Tom B'hend photo)

hearing the famous San Sylmar Museum organ in Sylmar, California. Basically, that information is correct. But there is a bit more to be said about Jasper Sanfilippo.

A successful business man, he is a leader in his industry and heads John B. Sanfilippo and Son, Inc. He is the third generation in the family business which processes and packs nut meats. Two of the firm's accounts are Mars Candy Company and the MacDonald restaurant chain. The general public throughout the Chicago area is supplied packaged nut meats by his firm under the Evon trade name.

Starting about ten years ago, he first collected toy stationary steam engines, and from this he expanded his collecting to include slot machines, and a little later started acquiring arcade machines. "After this," he recalls, "I purchased my first automatic musical instrument, the large Welte Orchestrion that stands in the library. After that I gave up collecting other things and concentrated on the music makers because they appealed to me not only for the beautiful musical qualities, but for their visual beauty as well.

"It was on a trip I made to the West Coast that I became a confirmed theatre organ enthusiast. During February 1983 I scheduled the trip west to see a collection of instruments belonging to Bill Allen in Santa Ana, California. Several of his machines were purchased. Then I visited other collectors and one of them recommended a trip to J.B. Nethercutt's San Sylmar Museum to view his magnificent collection in the special building he had constructed to house not only his musical collection, but primarily his antique cars. It was here I heard the beautiful Wurlitzer theatre

organ.

"I had heard theatre organs as a kid growing up in Chicago, both in theatres and local skating rinks, but at that time they did not make a lasting impression, possibly because I never paid much attention to them and really didn't know what they were. The San Sylmar organ was played during my tour there by means of a digital recording that had been made previously by an organist who was not identified. It could have been Lyn Larsen, I suppose. (Larsen is one of several artists whose digitally recorded music is played during regular tours at the museum — Ed.)

"Upon returning home, my enthusiasm for having my own organ continued to grow, and through John Hovancak, of Dodgeville, Wisconsin, who has been doing my restoration work for the past four years, the name of David Junchen came up. John recommended Dave as the man to find and install an instrument for me. I contacted him and subsequently we started looking for an organ. The 3/14 Barton then in Cicero's No. 2 restaurant in Edina, Minnesota, was investigated and purchased. Plans were then launched to enlarge the instrument and get it ready for installation. Orders had been placed for several ranks of pipes at the time another organ was put on the market — the 4/23 Wurlitzer installed in Bill Brown's Tucson Organ Stop Pizza restaurant. Dave suggested we take a look at it, which we did, and then purchased it. Upon acquiring this instrument, I thought of donating the Barton until the opportunity presented itself to buy Sally's Stage restaurant in Chicago. It was equipped with still another Barton. As an interim project, Dave was engaged to rebuild the

instrument using most of the former Cicero organ.

"All of this transpired in the summer of 1983 at the time we were starting construction of the addition to house the collections. The Barton work was completed during the time the Wurlitzer was undergoing its additions and changes, and its installation was not delayed by the restaurant project."

Everything in the collections is fully operable. "Some of the arcade machines are always out for repairs," Sanfilippo noted. "They are rather fragile antiques, but breakdowns are often unwittingly caused by visitors who do not realize they are putting the wrong coins in the slots to operate them."

Unaware that his wife had said something about the Wurlitzer, Jasper answered the question "How does your wife feel about the collections, especially the Wurlitzer?" in a philosophical manner. "She sometimes got upset after construction was underway and the organ was spread all over the place. She certainly wasn't too happy, but now that it's complete she enjoys it. We also enjoy our antiquing, which means that I still find items to add to the collections."

There are five children, four boys and a girl. "They are all interested in the musical collection, and my youngest boy takes piano lessons. He occasionally plays the Wurlitzer and may become really interested in it," the proud father noted. In line with this, Jasper Sanfilippo would like to see more youngsters become involved with theatre pipe organs. "The instrument is too beautiful to let it die for lack of interesting young people in learning to play and maintain it." □

# STOP LIST

## PEDAL

- 32' Contra Tibia
- 16' Bombarde
- 16' Ophicleide
- 16' Diaphone
- 16' Tibia Clausa
- 16' Diaphonic Horn
- 16' Bourdon
- 16' Solo Strings
- 8' Trompette en Chamade
- 8' English Horn
- 8' Tuba Horn
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Horn Diapason
- 8' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 8' Flute
- 8' Quintadena
- 8' Oboe Horn
- 8' Clarinet
- 8' Salicionals
- 8' Strings IV
- 16' Piano
- 8' Piano
- Sizzle Cymbal
- Tap Cymbal
- Bass Drum
- Kettle Drum
- Triangle
- Reit. Cymbal
- Accomp. Traps to Pedal
- 8' Accomp. to Pedal
- 8' Great to Pedal
- 8' Solo to Pedal
- 4' Great to Pedal

## SOLO

- 8' Trompette en Chamade
- 8' English Horn
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Tuba Mirabilis
- 8' Tuba Horn
- 8' Style D Trumpet
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Horn Diapason
- 8' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 8' Quintadena
- 8' Oboe Horn
- 8' Clarinet
- 8' Kinura
- 8' Krumet
- 8' Orchestral Oboe
- 8' Saxophone
- 8' Vox Humana (S)
- 8' Vox Humana (M)
- 8' Salicionals
- 8' Strings IV
- 4' Piccolo (S)
- 4' Piccolo (M)
- 4' Vox Humanas
- 2 2/3' Tibia Twelfths
- 2' Tibia Piccolo (S)
- 2' Tibia Piccolo (M)
- 1 3/5' Tibia Tierces
- 8' Piano
- 8' Marimba
- 8' Chrysoglott
- 8' Vibraphone
- 2' Glockenspiel
- 2' Xylophone
- 2' Sleigh Bells
- Chimes
- 16' Solo to Solo
- 8' Solo Unison Off
- 6 2/5' Solo to Solo
- 5 1/3' Solo to Solo
- 4' Solo to Solo
- 2 2/3' Solo to Solo
- 2' Solo to Solo

## ACCOMPANIMENT

- 8' English Horn
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Tuba Mirabilis
- 8' Tuba Horn
- 8' Style D Trumpet
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Horn Diapason
- 8' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 8' Quintadena
- 8' Concert Flute
- 8' Flute Celestes
- 8' Oboe Horn
- 8' Clarinet
- 8' Krumet
- 8' Saxophone
- 8' Vox Humanas (S)
- 8' Vox Humanas (M)
- 8' Salicionals
- 8' Violes d'Orchestre
- 8' Solo Strings
- 4' Octave
- 4' Horn Octave
- 4' Piccolo (S)
- 4' Piccolo (M)
- 4' Flute
- 4' Flute Celestes
- 4' Salicets
- 4' Viols (VDOs)
- 4' Vox Humana (S)
- 4' Vox Humana (M)
- 2 2/3' Twelfth (flute)
- 2' Piccolo (flute)
- 1 3/5' Tierce (flute)
- 1' Sifflothe (main tibia)
- 8' Piano
- 8' Marimba
- 4' Piano
- 4' Marimba
- 4' Chrysoglott
- 4' Vibraphone
- 4' Accomp. Octave
- 8' Solo to Accomp.
- Chinese Block
- Tom Tom
- Snare Drum
- Sand Block
- Maracas
- Castanets
- Tambourine
- Sleigh Bells
- Sizzle Cymbal
- Hi Hat Cymbal
- white blank stop
- Traps to 3rd Touch
- Pedal Traps to Accomp.

## ACCOMPANIMENT

### 2nd TOUCH

- 8' English Horn
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Tuba Mirabilis
- 8' Tuba Horn
- 8' Style D Trumpet
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 8' Clarinet
- 4' Piccolos
- 8' Piano
- 8' Marimba
- 8' Chrysoglott
- 8' Vibraphone
- 1' Glockenspiel
- Chimes
- 4' Great to Accomp.
- 8' Solo to Accomp.

## GREAT

- 16' English Horn TC
- 16' Trumpet TC
- 16' Style D Trumpet TC
- 16' Diaphone
- 16' Horn Diapason
- 16' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 16' Tibia Clausa (M) TC
- 16' Quintadena TC
- 16' Bourdon
- 16' Oboe Horn TC
- 16' Clarinet TC
- 16' Orchestral Oboe TC
- 16' Saxophone TC
- 16' Vox Humana (S) TC
- 16' Vox Humana (M) TC
- 16' Salicionals TC
- 16' Strings IV
- 8' English Horn
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Tuba Mirabilis
- 8' Tuba Horn
- 8' Style D Trumpet
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Horn Diapason
- 8' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 8' Quintadena
- 8' Flute
- 8' Oboe Horn
- 8' Clarinet
- 8' Kinura
- 8' Krumet
- 8' Orchestral Oboe
- 8' Saxophone
- 8' Vox Humana (S)
- 8' Vox Humana (M)
- 8' Salicionals
- 8' Violes d'Orchestre
- 8' Solo Strings
- 5 1/3' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 4' Octave
- 4' Horn Octave
- 4' Piccolo (S)
- 4' Piccolo (M)
- 4' Flute
- 4' Salicets
- 4' Strings IV
- 3 1/5' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 2 2/3' Tibia Twelfth (S)
- 2 2/3' Tibia Twelfth (M)
- 2 2/3' Flute
- 2' Tibia Piccolo (S)
- 2' Tibia Piccolo (M)
- 2' Piccolo
- 2' Fifteenth (VDO)
- 1 3/5' Tierce (flute)
- 1' Flute
- Mixture IV
- 8' Piano
- 4' Piano
- 4' Marimba
- 4' Chrysoglott
- 4' Vibraphone
- 2' Glockenspiel
- 2' Xylophone
- 2' Sleigh Bells
- 16' Great to Great
- 8' Great Unison Off
- 4' Great to Great
- 16' Solo to Great
- 8' Solo to Great
- Correcting Sostenuto
- Open Harmony
- 8' Bombarde Melody
- 8' Bombarde 3rd Touch
- 8' Bombarde 4th Touch
- 8' Solo Pizzicato

## GREAT 2nd TOUCH

- 16' English Horn TC
- 8' English Horn
- 8' Bombarde to Great

## BOMBARDE

- 16' English Horn TC
- 16' Trumpet TC
- 16' Tuba Mirabilis
- 16' Ophicleide
- 16' Diaphone
- 16' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 16' Tibia Clausa (M) TC
- 16' Krumet TC
- 16' Saxophone TC
- 16' Vox Humanas TC
- 16' Strings VI
- 8' Trompette en Chamade
- 8' English Horn
- 8' Trumpet
- 8' Tuba Mirabilis
- 8' Tuba Horn
- 8' Style D Trumpet
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 8' Tibia Clausa (M)
- 8' Saxophone
- 8' Vox Humanas
- 8' Strings VI
- 5 1/3' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 4' Piccolo (S)
- 4' Piccolo (M)
- 4' Strings VI
- 3 1/5' Tibia Clausa (S)
- 2 2/3' Tibia Twelfths
- 2' Tibia Piccolo (S)
- 2' Tibia Piccolo (M)
- 1' Fife (S)
- 16' Bombarde to Bombarde
- 4' Bombarde to Bombarde
- 16' Great to Bombarde
- 8' Great to Bombarde
- 4' Great to Bombarde
- 4' Marimba
- 4' Chrysoglott
- 4' Vibraphone
- 2' Glockenspiel
- 2' Xylophone

## TREMULANTS

- Tibias
- Voxes/Saxophone
- Main I
- Main II
- Main III
- Solo I
- Solo II
- Tubas
- Vibraphone
- Percussions Reit.
- Celestes Off