

# News, Views, and Events

DENVER, COLORADO. The newly refurbished Denver Auditorium reopened without the fine old (1917) 4m/35r Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra. When the plans to rebuild the "Old Barn" were made known to the public, a furor resulted over the architect's decision to abandon the organ. Public indignation led to a meeting with the Mayor during which it was announced that the organ would be utilized again with modifications. Now that the dust has settled after the gutting of the building and all the shiny new equipment is there to delight the eye and ear (the theatre has been proclaimed an acoustic success), it is all too evident that whatever consideration was given to the organ was to no avail. At present, the organ is disassembled back-stage (a disassembling which must have cost the city a considerable sum) where it probably will remain until its future is decided. . . . Writes Roy Gorish "One old movie organ still throbbing away in Denver—the Paramount 4m/20r."

RENSSELAER, INDIANA. Our fellow member, Jerry Critser, has arrived back after nearly three years in England with the American Air Force. With a Telefunken microphone and an Ampex recorder, Jerry has recorded several of the British organists playing some of the finest organs over there. This material is soon to be available commercially on his own label. Outstanding in the group of organists is a man well known to both British and American audiences, Stuart Barrie, whose retirement from the field was a great loss to both countries. Stuart Barrie, whose name should be accompanied with Mus.D., Ph.D., was tutored by Robert Hope-Jones, the inventor of the

Unit Orchestra.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI. Stan Kann who is still a spotlight attraction at the console of the 4m/36r Wurlitzer in the Fox Theatre playing "three-a-day" writes that his Mighty Wurlitzer is finally installed in Ruggeri's Restaurant and was dedicated on December 20th—an opening nicely timed for the mid-year convention of the American Guild of Organists who have had a dinner at Ruggeri's—the Wurlitzer being a featured attraction. The organ is a rebuild and enlargement (3m/16r) of the Loew's Theatre installation in St. Louis. An English Horn has been added as well as a piano which will be amplified. The installation has been in the hands of professional organ men, and Stan feels that it should be an outstanding success.

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS. Older organ enthusiasts will recall EARL ABEL, who, starting with a hamburger stand when the talkies did away with the organ, now owns a super-deluxe restaurant in San Antonio, Texas. He used to play the big theatres in Chicago and later the Brooklyn Paramount with Rudy Vallee. It was good to hear from Mr. Abel who enjoys THE TIBIA and we are looking forward to a future Profile on one of the organists who helped make organ history—"Earl Abel raisin' CAIN at the Wurlitzer."

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. Last November your Editor spent a most delightful evening with Miss Venida Jones and her charming mother reminiscing about days when Venida, "Queen of the Console," was broadcasting the big Kilgen over KMOX, St. Louis. Venida's love for the organ is reflected in her performances at the console. Such evenings pass all too quickly and it

was 1:30 a.m. when the writer stepped out into the fog-laden street to hail a taxi—and to the strains of a Mozart symphony. "Say, fellow, you enjoy good music, don't you?" "I surely do," he replied. "The other night I drove to a quiet part of town so I could sit and enjoy a half hour broadcast of Jesse Crawford. The organ is my first love and some day I hope to be able to play one." Thus an introduction to WILLIAM JOHANN. You can never tell where or when a real organ enthusiast will show up.

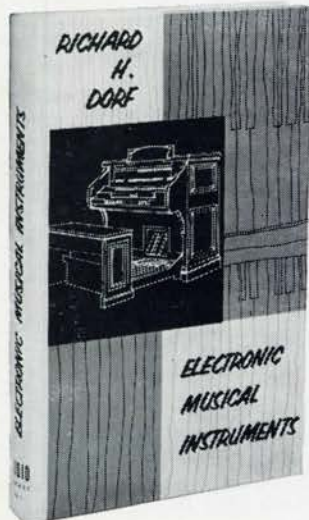
TORONTO, CANADA. . . . Clealan Blakely writes: "Last week (Oct., '55), I was in Toronto overnight, so I dropped in to see BOBBY JONES and the ODEON organ. Can you imagine a theatre in this day and age putting a huge photograph of the organist at the console (bigger than life size) right under the marquee, featuring the Organ Interludes?"

JACKSON, MICHIGAN. From Bro. Andrew Corsini comes an interesting human interest story by Fred Kruse to wit: On the occasion of my last call at the Michigan State Prison at Jackson, Don Young, the musical director, took me in to see their theatre organ, that has just been put in working condition by a couple of the convicts. I found it to be a two manual Wurlitzer of about 8 ranks with xylophone, chimes, and Glockenspiel. The pedal features a 16' Diaphone. This instrument also has a roll playing attachment. Their library of rolls featured quite a few Jesse Crawford numbers. They played a couple of rolls for me and they really sounded great. It was quite weird to hear the organ playing, console lit up, the expression shutters moving open and closed, registration being changed . . . all with no one on the bench. Unfortunately (?) there are no organists available in the brig at this time, so they have to rely largely on the player rolls.

I wonder if it would be possible that somewhere among the many organ fans, that some one might know where rolls could be obtained. Maybe I'm a sap, but I feel sorry for the poor devils who worked so hard to get this instrument back into shape, and would like to help them to this extent. The musical director wants to feature the organ on one of the broadcasts over the local station from the prison. Incidentally, there is a bronze plate on the console stating that the organ was donated to the prison by the mothers of inmates.

This organ, comments Roy Gorish, was originally Wurlitzer, Opus 1505, installed in the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida in November of 1926. Originally, this was a style "Special B" (a "B" being a 2m/5r Wurlitzer). Since it was a "Special," it is likely that it may have been a rank larger. In July of 1928, the organ was purchased by and moved to the Etta Theatre in Ocala, Florida. In February, 1932, the Wurlitzer Co. rebuilt and enlarged this organ to be installed in the State Prison in Jackson, Mich. At this time it was enlarged to a "special E"—as Fred Kruse states—this amounted to it being a 2m/8r organ with a player attachment.

WASHINGTON, D. C. Your Editor had the time of his life at Cere's Restaurant, Washington, D. C., where MILT SLOSSER entertains at his Hammond and three Leslie speakers. The response of the patrons proved that Milt continues to captivate his audience just as he did when he performed from the "Mighty Wurlitzer" in St. Louis, Memphis, and at the Capitol in Washington . . . An hour with Music Division of the Congressional Library, where, after checking the card indices on organs and organists, he lunged for an opportunity to spend days on end researching.



*The supply of pipe organs won't go on forever—Keep informed about the Electronic models*  
**ELECTRONIC MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**

By

**Richard H. Dorf**

In one big volume, you can now learn all about the intricacies of commercial electronic organs, including the Allen, Baldwin, Connsonata, Hammond, Minshall-Estey, Lowrey Organo, and others, together with many smaller instruments. Constructional details on the author's Electronorgan and the simpler Thyratone show you how to build one of these fascinating instruments for yourself. A compilation in book form of the author's articles in *Radio Electronics*, brought up to date and with many additions. Price \$7.50 (Foreign, \$8.00).

Customary discounts to dealers and distributors

RADIO MAGAZINES, INC., Book Division, Dept. T  
P. O. Box 629, Mineola, N. Y.

Please send me . . . . . copies of Dorf's ELECTRONIC MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. I enclose check  money order  for \$7.50 each (Foreign, \$8.00).

Name . . . . .  
Address . . . . .  
City . . . . . Zone . . . . . State . . . . .