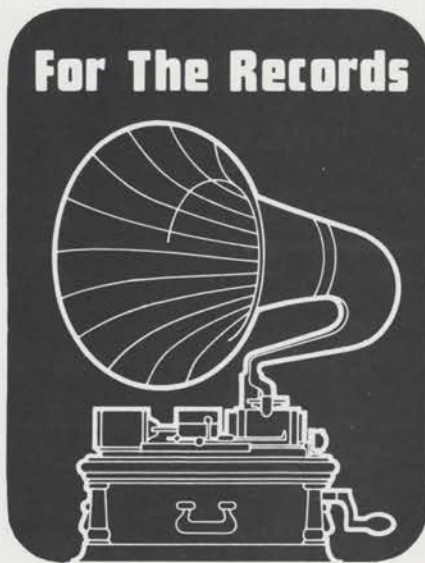


lence is intended to recognize technicians who have exhibited knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects of theatre pipe organs, and the ability to carry out their work through maintenance, installation and improvement of the instrument as a contemporary musical instrument in an efficient and workmanlike manner. Involvement with instruments used for public presentations is a prime consideration in the selection of candidates for this award, as is the degree of excellence of the recipient's work.

The 1985 Technical Award Committee included Lowell Ayars, Ken Crome, Brant Duddy, Lyn Larsen, Dale Mendenhall, Ed Stout, Walt Strony, Dick Taylor and Allen Miller, Chairman. □



*Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the **Record Reviewer, THEATRE ORGAN, 3448 Cowper Court, Palo Alto, California 94306.** Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.*

THE REAL HAMMOND SOUND, Howard Beaumont plays the Hammond 146 K2. Grosvenor Records, Birmingham, England. Available in the U.S. from The Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184. \$9.00 plus \$1.50 postage per order.

The unsung heroes of the electronic organ world are those resourceful musicians who can sit at the console of any instrument in the dealer's showroom and make even the dinkiest spinet model sound so great that the customer decides to buy one. Of course, by the time the buyer realizes

that his/her purchase may never again sound quite so thrillingly professional, the warranty has run out!

What British organist Howard Beaumont does with the two 44-note keyboards and scant octave of pedals on the 146 K2 is first-rate salesmanship. We are led to believe there is nothing "K-9" about this little K2. It is true that microprocessors and digital technology have recaptured that distinctive Hammond sound of the early tone wheel/drawbar instruments. A big bouquet of long-stems should also be given to John R. Taylor of Grosvenor Records who engineered the recording. It is perfection.

The first cut on each side of "The Real Hammond Sound" is an extended medley of tunes strung like beads against a fast, strict "digital" rhythm unit. These strings of songs are very popular with U.K. audiences and remind one of those "Hooked On . . ." records in the U.S. If you like that sort of thing, Howard does it well. Tunes from left to right include "Get Happy," "Nice People," "Chicken Reel," "Chinatown," "You Were Meant For Me," "I'll Never Say Never Again, Again," "Lover, Come Back to Me," "Opus One," "I'm Beginning to See the Light" and "Song of India." No one tune gets singled out for preferential treatment.

The first chorus of "Nearness of You" demonstrates how a Hammond used to sound. Howard's lovely, uncomplicated interpretation captures the heady nostalgia of a Rosa Rio playing her heart out during those daytime dramas on radio. This mood is broken all too soon by a "piano" and boogaloo chorus. Remember, the aim is to sell the percussion features of the K2 — not the song. Howard knows his business.

In the "Bring Me Sunshine/Sweet Lorraine" medley Beaumont convinces us that he has the swell shoe technique critical for good, jazzy Hammond playing down to a science. Somewhat less perfect is the "Live Drummer" out of digital land which at one point can best be described as a VW engine with a noisy valve. Whatever solo voice Howard uses in the opening bars of "Nature Boy" is distinctive — but strictly from Transistovania. But the organist more than makes up for letting this vampire voice out of the coffin with his clever jazz solos.

"On Broadway" is seldom recorded on multi-keyboards and a welcome treat. Howard Beaumont's counter melodies for the tune are very creative. Except for a brief "trombuzz" solo, "I Won't Send Roses" is another fine tune beautifully played. Howard saves it by switching to a "glock" and "piano" second chorus. "Some Day My Prince Will Come" royally closes out Side I with some fiendishly clever jazz lines. The treatment is upbeat and unmistakably Hammond.


A highlight of Side II for this reviewer is

"The Shaker Song." The digital bossa nova beat in no way spoils Howard's clear and creative jazz improvisation. Not so incidentally, Beaumont's skillful pedal work saves many a tune in this album from the irritations of a too perfect "Live Drummer." Other songs such as "Out of Nowhere" (Latin beat) and "Lisbon Antigua" (featuring a fast attack string-like something-or-other) serve to demonstrate that when Howard Beaumont gets away from the real Hammond sound there are many surprises — not all of them pleasant. With a final nod to Bach and the Beatles, Howard shows how close the K2 can get to a "churchy" sound and hard rock. Not very!

Howard Beaumont is a very successful salesman of the K2 because he is first and foremost a most talented organist. Few artists in recent memory have made an electronic sound better. Although Glynn Madden comes to mind (see *THEATRE ORGAN* January/February 1985, p. 23), one must remember that the Yamaha FX1 retails for about \$30,000 in the U.S. "The Real Hammond Sound" is recommended with reservations for those, like this reviewer, who have a soft spot for the old B-2's and C-3's. Howard Beaumont convinces us that the sound is still there!

WALTER J. BEAUPRE □

ARTISAN



ELECTRONIC ORGANS

Kit, or Custom Built

Kits for electronic or pipe organ renovation.

- Microprocessor-controlled, modular circuitry for ease of construction
- Authentic pipe organ voicing using active filter circuitry.
- Built-in capture system.
- Self-financing purchase plans.
- 7 basic models: 3 Church, 4 Theater, in 2-, 3-, and 4-manual sizes.

Attn: PIPE ORGAN BUILDERS
 Incorporate, or replace, your stacks of switching relays with μ P-controlled latches. System will control up to 16,000 pipes and/or oscillators.

Write for quotation.

ARTISAN INSTRUMENTS, INC.
 6450 N.E. 183
 Seattle, WA 98155
 PH: (206) 486-6555 TLX: 4998676 ARTSN

MILDRED ALEXANDER ON PIPES AT THE PORTLAND ORIENTAL THEATRE and BECAUSE I LOVE YOU (on Hammond "Elegante"). Available only on cassettes; either tape \$8.00 each postpaid from Mildred Alexander Promotions, 3124 Camino Crest Drive, Oceanside, California 92056.

Reviewing these two cassettes is a sad task for this reviewer; the late Mildred Alexander has been a friend ever since we met at a Home Organ Festival then held at Hoberg's Resort in northern California in the early '60s. For the ensuing 20 years we carried on a sorta "love-hate" relationship, the latter with regard to disagreements about organ registration and playing techniques (we often felt Millie was too much influenced by the then radical departures from the mainstream by Ethel Smith) and the former due to Millie's warm and loving personality. One couldn't resist it. The Mildred Alexander story was detailed in a previous issue (Jan/Feb 1984) so we will not repeat.

Throughout her playing career Millie worked on and off as a Hammond concert artist, which gave an impression, sometimes, that she was limited in concept to the tonewheels. It has been generally forgotten that one of her first professional jobs was broadcasting on pipes over a hometown (Durham, NC) radio station. She was about 15 then and later became music director of the station. Her first husband was, and is, a well known southern theatre organist who played the Atlanta Fox Möller.

True, the electric and later electronic organ have been the mainstay of her playing career. But that was a matter of economics; the jobs were with the electronic organs.

Yet, when she planned her first major recording, she took on the 4/37 Los Angeles Wilern Theatre Kimball organ. The majority of her organ records have been played on pipes. That's one reason her until now unreleased record of the only ATOS convention she played, is so appropriate. It was at the 1966 convention in Portland, Oregon. The organ was the 3/13 Wurlitzer in the lavishly-decorated (some say "tastelessly") Oriental theatre. It had been given some noteworthy TLC by Dennis Hedberg and they don't come more skilled in caring for pipes than Dennis. He had increased the air pressure on some ranks and had created an instrument of much charm and power. It is interesting to note that this Wurlitzer became the nucleus for Portland's famed Organ Grinder restaurant. Dennis has since built it up to 44 ranks of pipes.

But let's get back to Mildred Alexander's 1966 convention concert. No formal arrangements had been made to tape it. In fact, the tape from which this cassette was made was probably "unauthorized."

Millie never knew about it; the person who recorded it with unprofessional equipment apparently taped it for his own use. Yet despite the limited range recording equipment, the over-all quality is remarkably good. True, there is some distortion on peaks but what fuzziness shows up doesn't mar the music much — except to the hi-fi enthusiast. We don't recommend this cassette to him; rather we feel that it is a proper memorial to a remarkable organist, one who deserves the ear of pipe fans. That was what Millie's widower, Bill Appleton, was looking for, a tribute to the Alexander style, and recorded during her prime years. There is so little of Millie on records that we will gladly endure a little distortion.

We have no information about the actual recording, other than that it was done during the concert. There isn't much "audience noise" to distract the auditioner, and the applause at the close of selections is quickly faded out. Let's examine the selections.

Sound of Music medley, includes the title tune "I'm Just Sixteen Going on Seventeen," (combo action audible) "Edelweiss," "Do Re Mi," "My Favorite Things," and "Climb Every Mountain," all mostly on big bravo combinations and played in the grand style.

"Clair de lune," with an untrem'd Vox intro, soon goes into lush Tibias, then to percussions (Marimba) with trem'd Vox support. Very offbeat registration with Kinura in the early measures and very conspicuous dependence on percussions.

"Serenata" (Leroy Anderson) is played

big organ style on full combinations.

Millie's tribute to theatre organ includes a syrupy, Tibia-dominated "Diane," "The Perfect Song" played in Gaylord Carter mode. Then she takes a whack at the Eddie Dunstetter signature, "Open Your Eyes." All goes well until she hits the release which she apparently forgot and substituted an improvisation. Not bad but it isn't Eddie. The closer is a full organ "Strike Up the Band" with plenty of traps.

"Once in a Dream." We remember the music very well — because this reviewer wrote it — so very long ago. Millie's rendition is a tender and loving arrangement with many of her own touches. The registration is most appropriate and the mood just right. What more can a tunesmith desire?

"My Old Flame" is a sentimental ballad of the '30s (once brutally lampooned by Spike Jones with a pseudo Peter Lorre narration). Millie just plays it pretty.

Then directly into a bombastic "Cherokee" in spirited up-tempo and lots of instrumentation changes. Whew! (This selection is not listed on the jacket tunelist).

Millie was especially adept at South American rhythms and a nicely phrased "The Girl from Ipanema" is a good example of the then strong Ethel Smith influence. She closes with a sampling of Jobim's "Meditation" then segues into a grand style "Begin the Beguine," which during climaxes goes into a full organ bolero.

Her salute to youth is a smoothly played "Michelle" and a big organ "Spanish

This photo, shot by then official photographer Bill Lamb, was made during the concert from which the released tape was made during the 1966 ATOE Convention. Note the intense concentration reflected by Millie's face. The figure sitting Buddha-like in the pit is former THEATRE ORGAN staffer Stu Green, as always, waiting for the perfect picture. The 3/13 Wurlitzer later became the nucleus for the 44-ranker in the Portland Organ Grinder restaurant. (Bill Lamb photo)



Eyes." A very sentimental "September Song" follows, especially significant for a nearly 20 years later release date.

Next an unidentified classical piece whose title we can't recall. Is it Chopin? or von Suppé? No matter; Millie demonstrates dramatic music of the silent film variety through it.

"My Bill" and "The Second Time Around" are Millie's tribute to Bill Appleton, the husband who made this release possible after Millie's death. Needless to say, both are played with great tenderness. The featured brass reed has a few slightly out-of-tune notes, but Millie uses it sparingly.

"Lover" gets a wild up-tempo reading during which Millie sometimes right-foots the melody on the pedals. It's a gasser!

"The closer is a ballad from Gordon Jenkins' *Manhattan Tower Suite*, a tune which will ever be associated with Mildred Alexander, "Never Leave Me." She loved it very much. To those of us who knew and loved Millie it's a heart breaker.

An encore has been added, "St. Louis Blues" which starts out on the slightly out-of-tune piano. The organ soon takes over for a slambang finale.

There are often batches of spontaneous applause. Millie had a talent for generating enthusiasm in her audiences. At the close, when the applause has died down, the MC says "Millie — you don't play like a man, you don't play like a woman — you play like an angel!" He was 20 years early.

But that's not all. Millie's final electronic recording effort is also available on cassette. Made over a period of two months during the final year of her life, it is played on a Hammond "Elegante" and recorded by husband Bill Appleton and business associate Preston "Sandy" Fleet. Millie was very ill with emphysema and recording sessions were brief. Yet, they taped 26 titles (not all appear on the tunelist). The tape is named after one of the selections — "Because I Love You." One might assume that the playing would be somewhat subdued because of Millie's terminal illness. Not at all! She plays with all the verve, skills and imagination which characterized her entire career. Even though one may not be an electronic organ enthusiast, this cassette will be a memorable addition to the record collection. The selections, of course, are generally more modern and reflect the Alexander later years. To those who are not informed, Millie was one of the most successful organ teachers; her books on technique and styling (often illustrated with her compositions), will be around as the authoritative source for a long time. Her voice is heard on the pipe record making brief introductions, but sparingly.

If there are flaws in these two cassette presentations it is probably due to the haste with which they were put on the market. There is a complete absence of jacket

notes clarifying the occasion, and a few of the selections are not listed, important tunes such as "Serenata," "Cherokee" and Jobim's "Meditation" on the pipe record, for example. "Singin' in the Rain," "Look for the Silver Lining" and a bit of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes" on the Elegante cassette.

But despite these small flaws, these two cassettes may be regarded as the last will and testament of a wonderful lady of the organ. We can't say more; our spectacles fog so easily.

AT HOME AT THE TOWER, Arnold Loxam plays the Blackpool Wurlitzer. Grosvenor Records, Birmingham, England. Available in the U.S. from The Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184. \$9.00 plus \$1.50 postage per order.

It's funny what tricks memory can play. This reviewer cannot remember the occasion of his first kiss, cigarette, or alcoholic beverage — but he does remember vividly being introduced to "Dambusters March" by Arnold Loxam in the Ossett Town Hall on Sunday morning, July 25, 1976, as a member of the first ATOS Safari. Arnold was an enormously popular local artist (via the BBC in Leeds); but while we're being truthful, this witness to the occasion enjoyed Mr. Loxam's wit more than his playing. Ironically, the wonderful color photo of Arnold at the Tower console has him the spitting image of Ed Wynn, the Fire Chief comedian of the 1930s. However, one of us has mellowed during the intervening years, because Loxam's album, without benefit of his stage humor, is good listening.

This recording of the Tower Wurlitzer is

up to the usual high standards of Grosvenor producer/engineer John R. Taylor. Arnold launches his album in the Reginald Dixon tradition, "With My Little Stick of Blackpool Rock," a happy quick-step. Just as Salt Water Taffy is a confection indigenous to American seaboard resorts, Blackpool Rock is the favorite aid to tooth decay on other shores. Loxam's playing is accurate and free from over-registrations. It has bounce. Drum rolls introduce "American Patrol," which is soon naturalized to the Blackpool sound. Loxam holds off the percussions; his own natural rhythmic sense is most adequate.

"Druid's Prayer" is another offering which hasn't made the charts yet in the U.S. A melodic waltz reminiscent of "Deep In My Heart, Dear," it fares well under Arnold's skillful balance of oompah-pah accompaniment vs. song line: The Tuba solo is lovely. The organist succumbs to the epidemic of "New York, New York" renditions. Hardly definitive, this one has some skillful interplay of solo voices in the second chorus. The slowed-down final chorus doesn't really build, and the coda is routine tacky.

The Thorn Birds was certainly one of the best TV mini-series, but the theme music is less than memorable. Arnold's playing is glass smooth with expert use of the smaller scale Wurlitzer ranks. "Love Me Tender" is almost church-like: ethereal Tibias with Vibraharp interludes. It's a pretty tune played with considerable feeling. The final cut on Side I is a medley, Blackpool style, of "A Sky-Blue Shirt and a Rainbow Tie" (peppy), "Blue Skies" (nice pedal line but not much else), and "We'll All Go Ridin' on A Rainbow" (vintage ricky-tick).

The reviewer was unable to track down

Billy Live at Wichita Pops

Brilliant New Recording Puts **You** In The Audience
For An Experience You Long Will Remember
From Billy Nalle and The Great Wichita Wurlitzer.

Postpaid, USA: \$11.00

Canada: \$12.50

British Isles: \$14.00

Europe/S. Amer.: \$16.00

Australia/N.Z.: \$17.00

BILLY NALLE MUSIC

Suite 2205

400 West Central Avenue

Wichita, Kansas 67203-4109

USA



the origin of "March — Schiedam," but a German professor colleague explained to the reviewer that it's a typical Austro-German galop. Arnold's playing says much the same: a fast march on full organ with lots of dash and spirit. Of course, if the reviewer had bothered to look at the record label credits he would have known that Arnold Loxam wrote it! So much for consulting with erudite German professors! "Tell Me I'm Forgiven" is tango'd within an inch of its musical life.

Next Arnold Loxam celebrates the four seasons in a medley. "It Might As Well Be Spring" gets the soft-shoe treatment with Orchestra Bells for a half chorus. A sloppy modulation puts us into Gershwin's "Summertime" with a slow, steady beat. "Autumn Leaves" (complete with wind schmears) becomes a beguine, while "Winter Wonderland" has loads of percussions and a "Sleighride" interlude. The big finish lumbers through 18 inches of snow.

"Drauben In Sievering Blüht Schon Ver Fliever" is a Strauss waltz. The title roughly translated means "the flievers (little blue posies) are already blooming over in Sievering (a town outside Vienna)." Does that help? Anyway, Arnold's playing is appropriately Viennese. Blackpool then invades Times Square for "42nd Street" and "Broadway Medley." My sheet music says the correct title for Herb Nacio Brown's song is "Broadway Melody," but printers (like German professors and T.O. reviewers!) occasionally make mistakes.

Although not noticeable in prior cuts, the piano is out of tune for the finale. "For All We Know" precedes "We'll Meet Again" (a lovely British ballad ruined for all time by its satiric use at the end of the film *Dr. Strangelove*). "The Party's Over" completes the medley. The 16' stops will tax the bass-reflex responses of your stereo. Loxam's dramatic last chorus is commanding, but not overpowering.

Yes, Arnold Loxam — the organist — is a much better musician than this reviewer remembered. *At Home at the Tower* could be the best of the recent recordings of the Blackpool Wurlitzer. Arnold has been warmly received in recent years as a State-side concertizer. This record is reason enough to say "Welcome back next year, Arnold!"

WALTER J. BEAUPRE

WISH YOU WERE HERE, David Graham. Grosvenor Records, Birmingham, England. Available from The Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184. \$9.00 plus \$1.50 postage per order.

This is one of those albums you'll want to own if you are hooked on the dance organ style of playing or if you have heard David Graham playing pipes and admire his artistry. You might also be curious about the sound of the electronic Technics

U90 recorded under excellent studio conditions. The jacket notes claim that the U90 is a "firm favorite with organists throughout the world." If you believe that, then you will also believe "Its versatility is matched only by the flexibility of his [Graham's] performance which will delight the listener however often it is played."

The program itself cannot be faulted. David's generous serving of 31 tunes, strikes a nice balance between the familiar and the seldom heard, between big show pieces and intimate pops, between ballads and novelty numbers. Each record side follows the British tradition of opening with a march. It's common in this *genre* to be cavalier about melody lines. This is particularly true of Graham's zestful approximation of "Stars and Stripes Forever." Americans who know the Sousa classic note-for-note will cringe. Harmonic progressions in such ballads as "Again" and "Misty" are over-simplified — almost "chord organ" style. This reviewer particularly liked "Return of the Cuckoo" but could have done without the dubbed-in "live" cuckoos fore and aft.

If you don't happen to be dancing while listening to this album, the electronic rhythm accompaniment of the U90 has all the relentless charm of a Chinese water torture. Jacket notes clearly delineate the tempi of various medleys: "Rumba 28 bpm," "Quickstep 50 bpm," etc. If you know, for example, that you Tango best at 32 bpm (beats per minute), this advance information could be a real plus!

The front side of the album cover has four colorful postcard scenes of Blackpool. David Graham, we are told, plays at the famous Tower Ballroom in this English seaside resort. The recording, however, was made at the Grosvenor Recording Studios, Birmingham. Graham's fans on both sides of the Atlantic will find *Wish You Were Here!* next to the next best thing to being there.

WALTER J. BEAUPRE

DANCETIME AT THE TOWER, David Graham. Grosvenor Records, Birmingham, England. Distributed by The Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184. \$9.00 plus \$1.50 postage per order.

This album (Volume Two in the Potomac Dance Club Series) from the U.K. may be for those Americans who long to hear what Ken Griffin or Phil Reed might have sounded like on the Blackpool Tower Wurlitzer. The jacket notes assert that David Graham "plays in strict tempo." The claim is all too true. Has anything been more strict since Sister Mary Ignatius in the 6th grade? Perhaps not. And some of the tempi are toe bruising. The record would be great for Aerobics classes. This reviewer gave up dancing that fast many

puff-puffs ago.

David's playing is neat and accurate. The full ensemble registration he uses throughout is occasionally seasoned with a dash of piano (in tune, incidentally). The song list, from "Best Things in Life are Free" to a closing "Saints Go Marching In," is loaded with standards on both sides of the Atlantic. The tunes are grouped in tempo medleys: four quicksteps, two fox trots, four waltzes, two rumbas, two sambas, two cha-cha-chas, and a jive. Fill out your dance programme accordingly.

The reviewer does not agree with the notion that the artist plays in "his own inimitable style." David's style is supremely imitable on all shores of the Big Pond — and the real estate abutting same. That may be its charm: no unpleasant surprises and no rude awakenings. The engineering and record surfaces are first rate. Although the last three tracks on the flip side are played by Graham on the Technics U90, the quality of his performance remains consistent throughout.

It's probably fair to say that the audience west of Blackpool for this sort of theatre organ dance album is limited.

WALTER J. BEAUPRE □

Closing Chord

Frank Lybolt, theatre organist in the first great era, later a church musician for many years, died on April 15. He was 73.

A native of Queen's Village, Long Island, Frank began his career at 13, playing in a small chain of theatres. Later, he played the Queens, Fox Metropolitan in Hempstead and Glen Cove, Loew's Hillside in Jamaica, and vacation stints at New York's Astor and Rivoli. While earning his music degree at Rochester's Eastman School, he played several theatres and was on the staff of WHEC in 1933-35.

After stints at Auburn, New York's WMBO, Schine's Geneva, and the nearby Kirkwood Hotel, Frank moved to Norfolk, Virginia, and was musical director at churches and a synagogue. Dean of Norfolk's AGO, he was organist at Trinity Episcopal Church for 27 years, taught piano and organ, and did concerts for ATOS chapters. He was featured at the 1972 ATOS Convention in the Washington-Richmond area.

Frank is survived by a sister, Mrs. Jane Utterson.

LLOYD E. KLOS

William Roller, former film accompanist and entertainer in the Puget Sound area, died of cancer at the age of 89. Mr. Roller was organist at the Bremerton Rialto Theatre (now torn down) and the Bremerton Masonic Lodge, and later appeared at the Neptune Theatre in Seattle, the Se-