

banquet too, and the writer could not keep his eyes off Mary's mother, Charlotte Pickford, whom he still thinks had one of the most beautiful faces he ever saw — lovely kind eyes, and an expression like the mother of whom we all dream. There were a lot of drinks at the tables, and someone asked Mrs. Pickford if she would have one more drink. She replied, "Only a spot, please." It was the first time the writer had heard the expression.

To get back to Bushman and Bayne: he had a wife and several children in Baltimore, Maryland, but in those days this was all kept a secret from the public, as romantic stars were not supposed to be married or have children. When the news leaked out they both lost their popularity, almost overnight, as it did not sit well with the public when Bushman left a family to marry Beverly Bayne (who divorced him some years later). In the old days the people demanded good morals and decency in their stars. But while they lasted they were sitting on top of the world, and I suppose they thought it would never end. Bushman had a lavender limousine, or town car as they were called then, that seemed to be a mile long. He had two lavender-liveried footmen and a lavender-liveried chauffeur.

Bushman wore a huge lavender ring (as large as a half dollar) and when he drove up and down Michigan Avenue it truly was "A Royal Lavender Streak." The police and merchants in the Loop asked him as a favor not to come into the Loop, as the people mobbed him and the pickpockets and shoplifters had a field day whenever he went into a store. The clerks forgot their jobs, as well as the customers, and bedlam reigned.

How different things are today! In 1917 sex was a dirty word and no stage or movie setting was allowed to have a bed or a bedroom scene. Legs were called "limbs," and busts were "bosoms." Ladies were frail, and fainted on the least pretext. In fact, "they all enjoyed poor health, and complained of feeling better." As a side note to this story of the silent movie days, the writer remembers being called on the carpet for a "risque" line in the chorus of one song used in a sing-along. It read "You can bet your bottom dollar." The management made him change it to read "You can bet your only dollar." *Alas Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis* (Times change, and we change with them too). □

There is still time to get five new members and be a part of the membership contest.

Closing date December 31, 1985.

1979, and his three children, for this was an active and involved family.

I was always treated as one of his family and was privileged to be the last organist to play for Reiny on his Publix #1. It was, therefore, with a genuine sense of pride that I was able to play Reiny's favorite song, "To A Wild Rose," at his funeral on the Aeolian organ once owned by Colonel Little and now installed in Trinity Lutheran Church in Bismarck.

PAUL J. QUARINO □

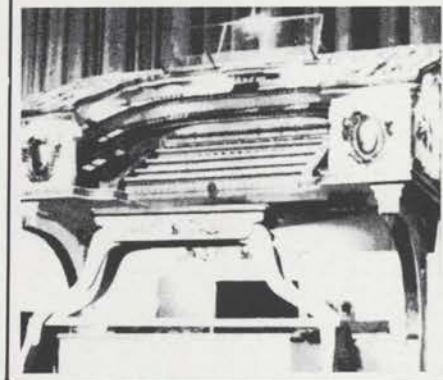
Clyde M. "Sandy" Balcom passed away in Seattle, Washington, on September 3 at the age of 86. He was founder of the well-known Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs, Inc. and was, for many years, the leading organ builder in the Pacific Northwest.

Sandy was born at Fourth Plain, Washington, on December 23, 1898 and grew up in Portland, Oregon. His first job was as a street newsboy selling the *Oregonian*. In 1914 he moved to San Francisco and worked as a "dust boy" at the Eilers Music Company. Sandy served as helper on installations of Murray Harris, Johnson and Kimball organs sold through Eilers. He worked with Leo Schoenstein, Babe Jacobus and Red Loller on many theatre organs.

In 1921 Sandy became the head of the organ department of Sherman, Clay & Co. and supervised the installation of the Robert-Mortons in the American Theatre in Bellingham, the Palomar in Seattle, the Vining in Ashland and the Bob White in Portland. He

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

from
Members of J.A.T.O.E.
and
The Rialto Theatre, Joliet, Ill.



Closing Chord



The theatre organ world lost a true friend on August 21 when **Reinhold (Reiny) Delzer** passed away in Bismarck, North Dakota. Reiny was born in Bismarck on July 21, 1905, and worked as a homebuilder until 1940 when he became a general contractor. His company, Delzer Construction, built bridges, streets and utility piping in a four state area.

Theatre organ followers, however, will remember Reiny best as the man who saved the 4/20 Publix #1 from the Minnesota Theatre in Minneapolis in the late '50s, and who was one of the hosts of the 1963 ATOE Annual Meeting in Bismarck. In the Fall, 1961, THEATRE ORGAN there is a four-page supplement picturing the installation of the Publix

in Reiny's house. On the back page of this insert it says, "Organ enthusiasts are welcome to inspect and play this organ at the Delzer home." And this statement characterizes this man whose great love of theatre organ was made manifest in his hospitality. His home was always open to organists and listeners who shared his love for the instrument.

The main reason that Reiny's home was always open was, as he told it, because of an incident that happened when he was nine years old. He had wanted to see the Aeolian residence organ in the mansion of a local banker named Colonel Little, but he was turned away. The disappointed child told the banker, "When I get big, I'm going to have an organ bigger than yours, and I'm going to let everyone see it." And he did!

Through the years, thousands visited and heard the Delzer's Wurlitzer. It was, in 1961, rededicated by Eddie Dunstedter who had originally dedicated it in the Minnesota Theatre in 1928. Organ events were both formal and casual, and included annual visits by groups of school children. For many, this was their introduction to theatre organ, and there were even some who went on to become professional organists; two, in particular, are Dr. John Ellis who teaches organ at the University of Montana and Rob Richards who now lives in Michigan. The console has been autographed by all of the old-time theatre organists who visited the Delzers and played the Publix.

There are more stories than can be told here about this generous and hospitable man, his charming wife Ruby, who passed away in



Reiny and Ruby Delzer celebrated their fiftieth anniversary, July 21, 1976, at their home in Bismarck, North Dakota. (Paul Quarino photo)



Clyde M. "Sandy" Balcom (left), pictured with Oliver Wallace, former theatre organist who later became musical arranger for Walt Disney Studios.

also installed many Fotoplayers in the smaller houses. Once he got to the Puget Sound area he fell in love with the climate, the scenery, the fishing and the opportunities in the theatre organ field. He took over the sales and installations of Kimball theatre organs and installed about 20, including two in Alaska. He also maintained most of the organs and soon became the leading theatre organ man in the Northwest.

In 1924 Sandy married Mary Young, and they had a particularly beautiful marriage for more than 61 years until she passed away on August 14 of this year. Their daughter, Susan B. Hammer, lives in Carmel Valley, California and is an executive with the Hilton Hotels.

When sound films ended the era of theatre organ, Sandy focused on servicing both church and theatre organs. E. L. "Pop" Vaughan had worked for the Robert-Morton Company so he and Sandy formed a partnership which became Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs, Inc. During the depression the company was active in relocating theatre organs into churches at minimal cost. Sandy felt that these used instruments served as stepping stones, and, in many cases, he did subsequently replace them with custom-built organs designed for churches. A number of organs were also installed in skating rinks, radio stations and even beer halls. In all cases Sandy insisted on first-class installations and would not tolerate shoddy workmanship.

In 1944 the company took over the Meridian Theatre and converted it into a workshop. Sandy had installed a Fotoplayer in this theatre in 1923. After the war the firm started building new organs for smaller churches and chapels, including about 80 for the Mormon Church. In time the firm built larger and larger organs of increased sophistication. In 1948 Sandy became the representative for Wurlitzer electronic organs and formed a separate corporation, Balcom & Vaughan Pianos & Organs, and was, for some time, the leading Wurlitzer dealer in the nation. He retired from the electronic company in 1964 and

from the pipe organ shop in 1966. His first love was always the pipe organ, and he was always dropping by to check on the progress of the work in the B & V shop.

Sandy was also a superb fisherman and knew every lake and stream within driving distance of Seattle. He was also a master storyteller. The late Justice William O. Douglas, a fishing buddy, wrote in his autobiography, *Go East, Young Man*, that he had once invited a New York lawyer friend, George Draper, on a fishing trip and that "Sandy Balcom, the great fisherman, had come for a vis-

it, fishing by day and telling his stories by night. Sandy is a cross between Danny Kaye and Groucho Marx with a touch of Jack Benny added. At the end of the third day Draper took me outside and said, 'For three days now I have laughed. I have never laughed so continuously and so long. I have laughed so much I am totally exhausted. Either Sandy must go or I must go!'"

Those of us who were privileged to know and love Sandy will keenly miss his enthusiasm, encouragement, humor and friendship.

BILL BUNCH □



CHAPTER NOTES

Edited by Grace E. McGinnis

ALABAMA Birmingham

205/942-5611 or 205/664-3606

"Busy" is the word that best describes our past few months. July found us traveling to the Saenger Theatre in Pensacola, Florida, for the dedication of the new Robert-Morton recently built and installed by Tom Helms. Several of our chapter members helped with this organ, and we are all very pleased with Mr. Helms' accomplishment. The second Sunday in August found us at Southside Baptist Church in Foster Auditorium, home of the former WAPI studio 3/6 Kimball. Tom Bagwell, 12-year-old virtuoso, provided a delightful program of various types and styles of music. The September program was our second annual Young Artist program. Tom Bagwell, 12; Bryan Black, 16; Brian Preston, 14; and Michele Radue, 14, provided a marvelous program on both the Kimball and the piano. This program, designed to promote younger artists in the area, was a tremendous success for the second year in a row.

The Wurlitzer at the Alabama Theatre is going through some changes, including the permanent installation of the new Trivo Post Horn. This brings our Publix #1 to 21 ranks with more on the way. Larry Donaldson and crew have been busily preparing chambers, chests, pipework, relay and console for all the scheduled additions. The master Xylophone has been moved to its new location outside the swell shades and, along with the ability to select a single or reiterating stroke, will certainly give the organ a much needed "kick" in the percussion area. Other scheduled additions include a Flute Celeste, 16' Violone, a more unified console, several traps and a few more surprises. Prior to the Post Horn installation, Larry and crew spent several weekends adding a new regulator to take the Solo Tibia

pedal off the tremulated Tibia regulator, adding more stability to the rank. Results are very favorable. More work has been done on the 3/6 Kimball. Several traps and percussions have been completely releathered, regulated and adjusted, enhancing the already beautiful sound of the organ.

GARY W. JONES

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This has been a busy year for us. In February John Seng played a concert at the fabulous Fox Theatre on the 4/42 Möller and utilized the new 32' Diaphones obtained from Roy Davis in McMinnville, Tennessee. In March Kurt Von Schakel presented a well-received chapter program on the Walt Winn Warehouse 4/17 Page. The organ was in great shape with the exception of a squeaky Howard seat. Kurt played several unfamiliar novelty tunes and presented a really outstanding program.

In April we sponsored programs at two local churches. Member Rick McGee presented a program on the 3/7 Kimball at Grant Park United Methodist Church, and Paul Stockhammer performed at St. Paul United Methodist on the historic 2/13 John Brown Organ built for the 1895 Cotton States Exposition in Piedmont Park in Atlanta. Rick is currently one of the organists at the Excelsior Mill, a local restaurant with a 3/23 Wurlitzer.

In May we were presented a slide and sound program by Theatre Historical Society members Charles Walker, of Theatrical Paraphernalia, and Clay Holbrook and John Tanner on Atlanta's long-forgotten theatre palaces. Theatres involved were the Roxy, the