

examine the tastes of the young. Accept and embrace what you can and try to tolerate the rest. Remember, you were young once and someone most likely had to tolerate your tastes. (I wonder what people born in the 1880s or 1890s had to say about music of the 1920s and '30s.) Go see *Back To The Future*, it's loaded with '50s nostalgia, or see Ron Howard's *Cocoon*. They are both great flicks and if they make you smile and see today's entertainment in a slightly different light they've served their purpose. Also, demand that today's concert artists play music from today. When you find an artist who embraces modern music and styles, don't run away . . .

**SPREAD THE WORD!** Take your grandson or granddaughter to the concert. Expose today's youth to their music performed on a theatre organ. Don't take them to a concert of dated music. I can practically guarantee they won't like it and won't go again. To involve today's young people you must meet them on their terms and give them what they want to hear or they will go elsewhere. There is too much going on musically that appeals to them for them to take the time to understand that which they think they don't like. We must educate them from where they are to where we want them, not the other way around.

One final important point and I'll get off my soapbox. Those of you who are artists or producers of theatre organ concerts must consider yourselves part of the entertainment industry. In order to compete in today's competitive entertainment business, artists and producers must learn to entertain through more than just the auditory portion of the brain. Spectacular lighting, backdrops, staging variety and perhaps positioning the console in such a manner that the artist's back is not always toward the audience (the weakest of all staging positions) must be considered.

How many of you have noticed that I have consistently used the word "artist," rather than "organist"? Why? First, like it or not, the term "organist" or "organ concert" turns off the majority of people today. So, why use it? Find some other way of saying the same thing. Who knows, you might pick up several unsuspecting audience members who might otherwise not have attended the concert. Secondly, for an artist to appeal to the area of potential audience that is going to be needed in order that the theatre organ movement may survive and expand, he or she will need to be more than an organist. Superior musicianship, knowledge of orchestration, versatility in staging techniques and the ability to communicate with the audience in a unique and entertaining style will all have to be shown by the artist if we are to move forward.

Certainly, all of this is going to take time, effort, money and, above all, creativity. But if we don't aim for the top we certainly can't ever come anywhere near it. New blood must be infused into the movement in order for it to survive. Emphasizing contemporary music performed in a contemporary style and staged with contemporary theatrical techniques is a possible solution. The challenge is there; are we capable, both creatively and innovatively, to meet it? To surmount it? □

# PIPES & Personalities

## 15th Annual Mid-Tennessee Organ Bash a Hit

Cumberland Caverns, Tennessee — Roy Davis' Cave Crawl and Organ Bash was again well-attended on November 2. The Chattanooga ATOS Chapter hosted the first stop at the Tivoli Theatre, where manager Clyde Hawkins made the three-manual Wurlitzer available to the tourists. Next stop was the Henry McKinney residence in Chattanooga with its 2/6 Wurlitzer. A new addition to the safari was lunch aboard a moving steam-powered train at the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum. \$8.75 bought a train ride, a BBQ sandwich, chips and a drink. The annual trek is accomplished by auto and Roy Davis provides a detailed description in his brochure for the benefit of drivers. On to the Allee residence in Manchester, but unfortunately Roy didn't include data on the size of the Allee organ, but describes it as a four-manual Estey. Burt and Ann Allee also have an Ampico grand piano, an orchestrion and jukebox. So the time spent there was lively.

Next, back to McMinnville and the Roy Davis warehouse. For the uninitiated, Roy is a dealer in pipe organs and parts; he maintains a generous supply of goodies to tickle the appetites of collectors. He has three three-manual Wurlitzers set up in the warehouse but doesn't say whether they are in playing condition, although we suspect that at least one is. To quote him, there are "old theatre furnishings, theatre antiques, toys, trivia and junk — enough to confound, confuse and disgust you! Bring your U-Haul trucks!"

At 7:00 p.m. there was the annual banquet in the cave, followed by a tour of the caverns.

There can be little doubt that Roy Davis is upholding the best interests of the theatre organ hobby — even if he is "in the business."

## Calcaterra a Hit With Kids

Nearly 1000 students in Hudson, Wisconsin, were entertained by Rob Calcaterra in several sessions at Phipps Center for the Arts. He played the Wurlitzer formerly installed in the studio of radio station KSTP, St. Paul. In addition to playing popular tunes and silent movie music, he talked about music and his experiences as an organist. Closing the series was a night concert for the public.

In October Rob demonstrated another facet of his musical talent by conducting an or-

chestral concert at Symphony Hall in New York. The program featured two world premieres: a piano concerto by Swiss composer Ruth Schmid-Gagnebin entitled "An American Rhapsody"; and "Spielmusik" by Paul Hindemith. Rob has also been busy composing a variety of musical works.

## Oakland Paramount Installs Sennheiser Hearing-Impaired System

The Paramount Theatre has installed a Sennheiser hearing-impaired system for public use. Listening receivers for hearing-impaired patrons, including those who utilize hearing aids, are available free of charge.

One of the main benefits of the Sennheiser system is that it only picks up sound originating on the stage and not noise around the patron using the system, according to Peter J. Botto, General Manager. Emitters mounted on the walls of the auditorium send infrared light containing an audio signal throughout the theatre.

There are two different receivers which can be used with the Sennheiser system. Lightweight earphones can be worn under the chin, attaching comfortably to the ears much like headphones one uses in an airplane, or a person with a more profound hearing loss who relies on a hearing aid with high amplification may choose the second receiver, which consists of a small induction loop which hooks behind the ear right next to the wearer's regular hearing aid. The audio signal is fed directly to the induction loop; instead of going through earphones. This over-the-ear device also comes with a small, lightweight energy pack which the user can clip to his or her belt,

Rob Calcaterra conducting an orchestral concert in Symphony Hall, New York.



pocket or purse.

In the San Francisco Bay Area many major facilities have installed the Sennheiser hearing-impaired system: the Curran, Geary, Golden Gate and Orpheum Theatres, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and the War Memorial Opera House. Sennheiser systems are soon to be installed in Davies Symphony Hall and Herbst Hall. Individuals who regularly attend theatre and music events can purchase their own receiving units from a hearing-aid dealer for use in theatres utilizing the Sennheiser system.

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Three people who devoted a great deal of time and effort, largely behind the scenes, to organizing and handling details of the "Pipes Alive in '85" Chicago convention were not properly recognized in THEATRE ORGAN. For this oversight, the staff members extend their sincere apologies. Bill Rieger was Vice Chairman of the CATOE Convention Committee, Charlotte Rieger handled the Record & Souvenir Shop, and Beverly Barton was Registrar. That they handled their jobs well was evident to all who attended the convention.

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When Rochester's Eastman Theatre was renovated in the early '70s, the 4/155 Austin organ was removed, much of it consigned to the scrap heap, though the echo organ still remains in its chamber above the auditorium. The console, which had been in storage, went elsewhere. Now, we have specific news of its ultimate destination. According to New Jersey organist Warren Clark, the ex-Eastman console is in the Cathedral of Sts. Peter & Paul in Philadelphia. It has been modified, with numerous stop tabs removed.

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Bert Buhman's annual organ concert extravaganza for the School of the Ozarks' Scholarship Fund came off very well on October 13. General opinion seemed to be that the event was the best of all the programs thus

Charlotte and Bill Rieger.



far. Bert and his "twin" practiced at least six hours a day to get things the way he wanted them. The PA system in the Nettie Jones Theatre was completely reworked, and this time, the sequences of 3/15 Wurlitzer and piano, and organ, piano and orchestra turned out excellently. The theatre pipe organ continues to be alive and well at Point Lookout, Missouri.

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The Organ Literature foundation has recently issued its "Catalogue T," which lists substantial additions to its vast stock of organ books, recordings and sheet music. Of the 323 theatre organ recordings, 68 are newly listed. Readers may obtain a copy of the catalog for \$1.00 or four International Reply Coupons (for sea-mail, eight for airmail), which is refundable with the first order. The Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Massachusetts 02184.

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Mercia Publications of England has recently published a hardback book titled *Odeon*, which is a photographic survey of the 145 streamlined Odeon cinemas specifically built for the original Odeon circuit. Mercia also offers a series of illustrated booklets covering many of the "picture palaces" in Great Britain. Detailed information may be obtained from Hugh Sykes, 78 Hawthorne Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham B44 8QP, England.

### "I Remember Mama" Is Remembered

The Museum of Broadcasting in New York City sponsored an exhibition honoring the classic domestic comedy series "Mama," which ran on CBS-TV from July 1, 1949, to March 17, 1957. What is interesting to theatre organ buffs was that Billy Nalle played the music for every episode of the series. The instruments used were a CBS-TV studio Hammond with special speakers and a reverberation chamber, and a celeste, with the occasional addition of a piano. According to Rob-

(Chuck Wlodarczyk photo)

Beverly Barton.



ert Batscha, president of the museum, "I Remember Mama" was apparently the only nighttime TV series to use organ music.

### Vancouver Orpheum Scene of Tribute

Mayor Mike Harcourt of Vancouver, B.C., proclaimed October 30, 1985, as "Ivan Ackery Day." Who is Ivan Ackery, and why the special day? Well, 50 years earlier, he took over management of Vancouver's Orpheum Theatre, the flagship of the Famous Players chain. He continued to manage it for 35 years.

In the golden age of moviegoing, an enchanted evening at a picture palace meant double features, extra added attractions, stage shows, contests and prizes, and the sound of a theatre pipe organ. And Ivan Ackery made it all happen for the people of Vancouver.

Theatre managers were expected to promote the films on very limited budgets, and to provide incentive the movie industry set up competitions and large cash prizes. With his love of show business and flair for publicity, Ivan won more prizes and awards than any other manager. Competing against more than 19,000 others in the English-speaking world, he twice won the Martin J. Quigley Award, known as the theatre managers' "Oscar." There was virtually no business or organization in Vancouver that he did not involve in promoting a movie. Something special was always happening at the Orpheum, attracting a million people a year, who were made to feel special just being there by the friendly staff and warm atmosphere.

A company rule required Ivan Ackery to retire in 1969 at age 70, but he retained his interest in the Orpheum and participated in the "Save the Orpheum" campaign in 1974-75.

The Fiftieth Anniversary Tribute program included Dal Richards and His Band, the Royal New Westminster Regiment, two pipers, a magic presentation and a ballet number, followed after intermission by an organ solo played by Frank Mankin on the 3/13 Wurlitzer. He then accompanied the silent film *Son of the Sheik*, which starred Rudolph Valentino and Vilma Banky.

ATOS member William G. Hale, who pro-

(Chuck Wlodarczyk photo)



Manager Toni McSwain and organist Paul Quarino share a laugh before the show at the Egyptian Theatre in Coos Bay, Oregon.



Paul Quarino and former owner Stan McSwain stand to show the height of the birthday cake at the Egyptian's sixtieth anniversary party.

vided the information for this article, is a member of the tuning and maintenance crew for the Orpheum Wurlitzer.

## The Egyptian Is 60

The Egyptian Theatre in Coos Bay, Oregon, celebrated its sixtieth anniversary with three nights of vaudeville and silent films on November 17, 18, 19. The Egyptian is one of six theatres on the West Coast that still houses its original theatre pipe organ in playing condition, this one a magnificent Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra Organ installed in 1925. Portland organist Paul Quarino did console honors for the three nights of nostalgia.

Paul opened each show with a program of music from old movies and then accompanied a newsreel from the 1920s, a *Felix The Cat* cartoon and *The Playhouse*, starring Buster Keaton. The light and lively vaudeville shows featured seven acts including belly-dancing, comedy, singing and magic. Eighty-year-old Doris Curtis, who had been in the audience the night the theatre opened in 1925, sang "Some of These Days" and "Last of The Red-Hot Mamas." Toni McSwain, manager of the Egyptian, masterminded this extravaganza, and Bob Diedrich served as producer/director. Toni has been associated with this theatre since she was a child and her father owned it. She was, however, as surprised as the stage crew to find five original hand-painted vaudeville backdrops hanging in the flyloft in almost perfect condition. These were used as background for the vaudeville acts.

The theatre, which is now owned by Luxury Theatres, still has its original hand-painted Egyptian motif throughout the auditorium, and the lobby is flanked by two enormous seated colossi. The organ speaks from behind plaster slaves playing Egyptian harps, and 1925 melds into 1985 only in the modern pro-

jection system and the computerized ticket booth.

This celebration involved many individuals in the community, and the audience response was most enthusiastic. The residents of Coos Bay are hoping that Toni will make vaudeville and silent films a regular feature at the Egyp-

tian.

Toni will be happy to show the theatre and the Wurlitzer to any ATOS members who may be traveling along the Oregon Coast. She can be reached by calling the theatre at 503/267-6115.

GRACE E. MCGINNIS



## Closing Chord



**Squire Haskin**, Buffalo, New York's best-known organist and pianist with the city's Philharmonic Orchestra, was murdered in his room near Kleinhans Music Hall on October 11. There was no sign of forced entry or robbery. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, he was featured in the early years of radio on Rochester's WHAM.

Well known British theatre organ enthusiast **Reginald G. Mander** died October 12, 1985, of cancer. He was 64 years of age. He became increasingly ill during the year, and spent his last three weeks in St. Gemma's Hospice, Leeds. Early in the year, he took early retirement from work to cope with the situation, which also involved caring for his 91-year-old father, his invalid mother having died many years ago. In recent years Reg had been less able to participate in organ activities, but up to July he performed his duties at Ossett Town Hall, where he introduced the public concerts and operated the stage lighting, among other things.

Born at Peterborough, his parents moved to Leicester before he was two, and then to Chester, until settling in Leeds in 1932. Through hearing broadcasts and seeing some organs during cinema visits, Reg was already a cinema organ fan and had begun to collect records. He started work as an apprentice in the electrical trade, and during the war he served in the Royal Air Force, part of the time

in Australia, where he saw many organs and met several organists, as well as obtaining records which he brought home with him. Returning to his former work, he was soon to be-

Reg Mander, seated at the 3/8 hybrid organ in his home. Note the tone opening directly above the console. Photo taken in the mid-1960s.

