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organ map as it should be. It has a great theatre organ tradition to keep up.

The Cinema Organ Society's London organ, the fabulous ex-Trocadero Cinema 270 Special 4/21 Wurlitzer made famous by the legendary Quentin Maclean is installed in the Borough Polytechnic hall. Organists are praising the recent refurbishment and naming it the greatest Wurlitzer over here. Len Rawle declared it to be the most satisfying installation he has ever played.

Len knows a thing or two about Wurlitzers. He has played so many great ones and in his living room has a 4/24 beauty from the MGM-Loew's Empire Leicester Square London. Played by Sandy Macpherson and by Jesse Crawford on his tours here. The new relays and re-arranging of ranks in the chambers have put this beautiful job, the largest ever imported into Europe, on top where it once was when in the cavernous 3300-seat Trocadero Cinema, itself just a memory.

Less happy news is the Cinema Organ Society's job of finding a new home for its Midland-area organ, the lovely 3/10 Compton which has had to be removed from its hall of the nurses home in the Marston Green Hospital near Birmingham. It once played in the ABC chain Tower Cinema in West Bromwich near Birmingham and was broadcast frequently. We hope the COS will locate a new and more permanent home for this delightful 1935-vintage organ.

Christmas brought us the usual flood of movies on TV over the long holiday as we have here. Amongst them I saw three with theatre organs featured. The movie *Yanks*, all about the great WW2 struggle and the things you service men got up to! There is a scene showing Ron Curtis rising to play a solo on the great little 3/7 Compton of the beautiful Art Deco shrine, The Davenport Cinema in Stockport near Manchester. Then there was a great favorite of mine, Jack Lemmon playing (?) a mock-up console in *The Great Race*, and a young lady playing a three-manual Wurlitzer in the film *Front Page Story* with Lemmon again and Walter Matthau. It was Balaban & Katz State Theatre, Chicago, so they said. It looked to me like the Orpheum, Los Angeles. Am I right, folks?

Finally, December 13 — a Friday, too — wasn't so unlucky for us on TV, as a week-long wallow in Jazz brought to our TV screens "Hyman & Braff, Inc." Yes, three quarters of an hour's sheer joy played by Dick Hyman on the Thursford Museum's fantastic 3/19 Wurlitzer with Ruby Braff and his cornet. They played "Sleepy Time Down South," "Them There Eyes," and Hyman had a solo with Fats Waller's "Jitterbug Waltz." A natural for the organ. Finishing with "America The Beautiful," as on their recording. It was a rare treat to see nationwide a theatre organ at peak time viewing. Let's have some more, please!

It seems cassettes are the thing and are outstripping the sales of disc recordings over here now. Theatre organ fans have two superb ones just out to add to their list of "musts" for their collections. The late David Hamilton

CINEMA ORGAN NEWS

FROM BRITAIN



by
 Ian
 Dalglish



1986 certainly started off with one of the coldest winters on record but, despite the chilly weather, there was warmer news regarding the saving and re-installation of several well-known organs in Britain.

I reported how the State Cinema in Grays, Essex, a wonderful 2000-seater "Super" of 1938 vintage complete with its sparkly 3/6 Compton was under threat from a supermarket. Fortunately a Canadian backer, Ben Freedman, has come to the aid of manager Roy Roberts who has worked so diligently to save the State from being demolished. After a spell of closure December 4 saw *Back to the Future*, a perhaps appropriate film, reopen the State Grays with a packed house and Ken Stroud playing the Compton which is featured at most performances each day. It now means the State is back in business for us theatre organ fans as it has a long lineup of big names for its concerts held several times a year. Restored to its 1938 glamour and not tripled or twinned, it's being given a lot of press and TV coverage and deserves to prosper.

The Regal at Henley near Oxford, also with a 3/7 Compton, has been battling for its life and we hope this cinema is saved, as permission has now been refused for a supermarket extension.

The 3/10 Compton that once graced the Black's Regal, later called the Odeon, in Sunderland in northeast England has now found a new home in the Ryhope Community Cen-

tre not far from its old home. The Sunderland Theatre Organ Preservation Society is going to reinstall it. Played in the early '30s by "Eagle of the Regal," as Arnold Eagle was billed, it was the largest organ installed in the flourishing "Black's Regal Cinemas" chain of luxurious cinemas in the northeastern corner of England.

One of the most loved and best known of the late-style Wurlitzers in Britain was the powerful 4/14 1935-vintage organ of the Gaiety Cinema Manchester. It was recorded many times, broadcast for nearly 40 years nonstop and made famous by Stanley Tudor, its resident for many years, and on recordings by Doreen Chadwick. This organ was bought by the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust some years ago and they have been searching for a good home for this gem. Now the trust has found at long last a home for the organ that Harold Ramsay designed in a purpose-built hall at the Woodhey High School at Ramsbottom, not far from Manchester. I for one can't wait to get up to the north and hear this one again. It was a Wurlitzer with charisma without doubt. A sort of "Ethel Merman" of Wurlitzers — a belter! With the Paramount-Odeon Manchester in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and the excellent dual-console Christie from the Pyramid-Odeon Sale in the Bluecoat School at Oldham, the Trust will have three fine instruments to their credit. Yes, Manchester will be right on the theatre