

## SIX SILENT FILMS CUED BY GAYLORD CARTER

These VHS films are available from Film Technology Company, 6900 Santa Monica Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90038. The price is \$29.95 each plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. California residents add 6.5% sales tax. Shipping outside North America add \$10.00 each.

**OLD IRONSIDES** (2786), starring Wallace Beery and Boris Karloff, and directed by James Cruze. For fans of the swash-buckling stories made popular in early silent, *Old Ironsides* will be of particular interest. There are plenty of grizzly looking men working the rigging, carousing when in port, and generally leading lives perpetually on the verge of mutiny. In the midst of this colorful world, a young greenhorn and an equally young and innocent wench color the otherwise black and white picture.

The story is based on the Oliver Wendell Holmes poem, "Constitution," written about 1830, and tells of the perils of U.S. ships at sea because of the pirating of the day. Screen writers Harry Carr and Walter Woods wove a tale full of Mediterranean intrigue that was so popular during the early part of this century. White slavery, a marketplace in Tripoli, even scuttling the ship, all lend flavor to this film.

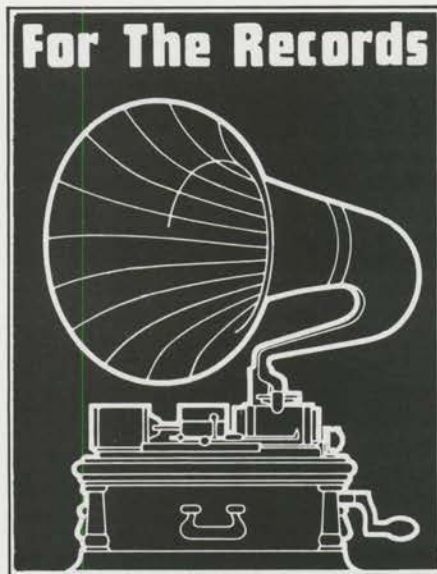
The print is excellent, considering the age and the material on which the original print was issued. The sound is superb, and like the other films, is recorded in Dolby and stereophonic sound. After viewing *Old Ironsides*, one cannot help being impressed with the amount of work that must go into preparing and playing a silent film score. Clearly, the industry blossomed in the 1920s in large part because of the talent of the musicians in the orchestra pit. Accompanying a silent film is much more than just playing bits and pieces of popular songs from the twenties.

Plan on plenty of popcorn. This film is 109 minutes long, and you won't want to stop it once you start it.

*Stephen L. Adams*

**THE DOCKS OF NEW YORK** (2807), starring George Bancroft and Betty Compson, and directed by Josef Von Sternberg. Some stories in life are timeless. This is the story of two desolate people in a tawdry setting of filth and abandonment, one of whom decides to give up and commit suicide. Star George Bancroft plays Bill Roberts, a boiler-stocker on a tramp steamer who comes ashore for a good time. Betty Compson plays Mae, who is rescued by Bill Roberts from her suicide attempt.

Unlike contemporary dramas which bear a great similarity to our own lives as viewers, this movie provides little with which to identify. Although viewers in



the 1920s may not have found anything to identify with, either, the basis of the story is quite familiar to all who have loved in life. Because of this, the viewer is able to become involved in the story without the constant reminders of our identification with the plot.

Once again, Adolph Zukor and Jesse Lasky produced a well-crafted film of substance, character, and a well-developed story line. The characters are cast with sensitivity, and only a modest content of 1920s styles and mannerisms are evident. Indeed, the film could almost be considered timeless in character.

Gaylord Carter's accompaniment on the Sargent/Stark Wurlitzer is masterful — the organist and the organ are nearly transparent, even to the theatre organ enthusiast. Had anyone unskilled in the art of silent film accompaniment provided the score, the film would have been dramatically diminished in its integrity.

*Stephen L. Adams*

**RUNNING WILD** (2744), starring W.C. Fields and Mary Brian; produced by Adolph Zukor and Jesse Lasky. This is the delightful story of Elmer Finch, the stereotypical, hen-pecked husband of a domineering second wife and her spoiled-brat teenage son. Elmer Finch, played by Fields, brings to the household his own daughter, from a previous marriage, to whom he is quite devoted in spite of his inability to provide the style of living she would like to have. Her frustrations lead her to the courtship of the son of her father's boss. Mix all of this with a small feisty dog that plagues Elmer's every step and a tongue-in-cheek poke at the Lyon's Club and Hypnotism, and you have an idea of the lighthearted plot by Gregory La Cava.

Produced in 1927, the story and situations seem timeless. The print used for this video exhibits little deterioration and no damage from commercial use. It is, in addition, presented with a style and

honor that is often completely lacking in films that may be purchased or rented from some of the better-known distributors.

Of particular interest to the theatre organ enthusiast is the accompaniment by Gaylord Carter. The association of Paramount Films, Film Technology, Carter, and the Sargent/Stark Wurlitzer is setting a new standard of excellence by which the rest of the industry must be compared.

*Stephen L. Adams*

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS** (2506):

This classic Cecil B. DeMille film is so well known that the only comment I can make about the film itself is that I am still amazed at how well DeMille handled large crowds, literally a cast of thousands. The print is excellent and shown at the proper speed. We are able to view this film much as it might have been seen when it was originally shown in 1923. Gaylord Carter's performance on the Sargent/Stark Wurlitzer is excellent. He truly is a master of silent film accompaniment. My only criticism I have here is that there are some non-Wurlitzer sound effects dubbed in — that, in and of itself, would not be so bad except that the dubbing is so obvious. It does not, however, ruin the experience and is the only thing that is not quite up to the otherwise high standards of this tape.

*Bob Shafter*

**THE WEDDING MARCH** (39501):

This is completely an Erich Von Stroheim creation. He, of course, is one of the stars, along with Fay Wray and Zazu Pitts. No expense was spared in the production of this film. Extravagant sets, lavish costumes and meticulous craftsmanship throughout mark this as a true classic. The first two reels are a little faded and lacking in contrast, but after that the quality is excellent. Carter's performance is equally meticulous except in one scene where he drew unnecessary attention to the accompaniment and away from the film.

*Bob Shafter*

**THE LAST COMMAND** (2785):

This story is set during the Russian Revolution, and Emil Jannings turns in a masterful performance as a Czarist general. This epic was nominated for "Best Picture" in 1928. The quality of the print is excellent throughout, and Carter's accompaniment is without flaw.

*Bob Shafter*



GAYLORD CARTER

**PIPE-POURRI, Dan Bellomy on Bob Trousdale's 3/23. Order from Beldale Records, P.O. Box 66392, Portland, Oregon 97266. Cost is \$20.00 postpaid.**

It's a compact disc unlike any other ever issued, as the music ranges from the lushest ballads ("Laura" and "My Romance") to the hottest, funkier jazz you've ever heard on pipes. Just sample "Funkiepipes," a completely off-the-top-of-the-head recording, and "I'm Walkin'." It is also unusual in that Dan uses M.B. Gordy on drums in several of the selections and proves that, beyond a doubt, drums and pipes go very well together.

You may not believe the sounds on some of the "cuts" as the Trousdale organ was in such perfect tune and regulation it sounds almost electronic! We suspected that Dan was using some "trick couplers," (which the Trousdale organ has), but he assures us that he was not — it's just the stop tabs and playing "Hammond style" that fooled our ears.

It runs just over 61 minutes, and the other selections are: "The Way You Look Tonight," "Blue Hawaii," "Undecided," a nine-and-a-half minute "Over the Rainbow," "Teach Me Tonight," "Why Should I Wake Up" (a little-known, but beautiful, melody from *Cabaret*), "When You and I Were Young Maggie, Blues," "A Nightingale Sang in Berkley Square," "Summertime" and "Willow Weep for Me."

First class in every way, with good liner notes about the music, this is a "must have" album for everyone who loves the complete versatility of theatre pipes.

*Ralph Beaudry*

*Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the Record Reviewer, THEATRE ORGAN, 4633 S.E. Brookside Drive, #58, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222. Be sure to include purchasing information (postpaid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.*

## Magazine Problems?

*If you are not receiving your magazines, write to:*

DOUGLAS C. FISK  
P.O. Box 420490  
Sacramento, California 95842

*For back issues and binders, write to:*

ATOS BACK ISSUES & BINDERS  
1393 Don Carlos Court  
Chula Vista, California 92010



**BRUCE ARDLEY**

Five local organists entertained during registration and the evening meal. The 2/12 was rather lost trying to compete with the excitement generated by friends and acquaintances as they mingled and exchanged greetings. The Jazz Jesters entertained for the remainder of the evening, providing a lively start to the convention and a stimulus to the many weary people who had travelled great distances for this conclave.

It was up with the birds the next morning to hear John Atwell at the Adelaide Town Hall organ. John was in top form with a program ranging from the classical to an exciting and rhythmic "How High The Moon." He excels in Sidney Torch styling, and played a delicious "Hot Dog." John also presented the first public performance of his own composition, "Celebration Fanfare." An excellent concert to set the pace.

There were two choices for the afternoon, the beautifully renovated Barr Smith Hall at Scotch College or the wonderful, historic Anglican Church of St. Peter at Glenelg. Barr Smith Hall drew an almost capacity crowd. An intimate building of late Victorian architecture, lighted entirely by gaslight, it provided the right atmosphere for Ray Thornley's concert of music from the turn of the century played on the 1910 Bechstein grand piano. Soprano Penny Kay and the Gary Beadell Singers added to the fun. Tony Whitehall, resident organist at St. Peter's gave a demonstration of this historic instrument using music of Purcell, Elgar, etc. Conventioneers were invited to play, and some enjoyed this opportunity.

Wyatt Hall was the site of the Saturday night program which featured Ray Thornley at the 2/12, Malcolm Ross on grand piano and Rosemary Boyle, a fine classical singer, in an interesting program.

Easter Sunday morning, those conventioneers who could stand the pace arrived at Wyatt Hall to listen to a number of organists each present a fifteen-minute program.

The Capri was the scene of the afternoon concert which featured Donna Parker. This may have been the first time that many conventioneers had seen the console mounted on the newly installed lift. As the lights dimmed, the console rose to the sound of Gershwin's "Oh Gee, Oh Joy." Coloured lighting is installed in the glass-fronted chambers on either

## THEATRE ORGAN NEWS

### FROM AUSTRALIA

Hello again from Australia. Since my last column, the big event on the organ scene has been the National Easter Convention in Adelaide, the South Australian capital, is a beautiful, graceful city situated on the banks of the Torrens River and nestled at the foot of the Adelaide Hills. The featured instruments at the convention were the 2/12 Wurlitzer in Wyatt Hall of Pultney Grammer School and the 4/16 organ in the Capri Theatre. Wyatt Hall was the venue for registration, and we welcomed a number of interstate visitors as well as folk from New Zealand and the U.S.A. for a total of 500 conventioneers.

side of the screen, and I imagine the effect is something like your pizza parlour installations — quite spectacular. Donna's programme was one of easy listening music, coupled with some excellent playing. I had heard her rendition, some years back, of Vincent Youman's "More Than You Know," and hoped she would include it in her program. The vibrations must have reached her, for she played it — and superbly. Her love and respect for her music and her bright personality make her a most welcome visitor to our shores.

After the convention dinner, those who could still keep their eyes open returned to the Capri for the Midnight Show where Melbourne's David Johnston accompanied Charlie Chaplin's *The Kid*. Great entertainment!

A Monday Workshop by Donna Parker was appreciated by an enthusiastic audience. On Tuesday, a number of guests visited the home of long-time member Geoff Smith to inspect the 2/8 Christie installed there.

During early February, Lance Luce paid his second visit to Australia for concerts in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne. He drew high praise for all performances. His presentation shows an increasing maturity, and his verbal exchanges with his audience were spirited.

Goodbye for now.



**Donna Parker had every reason to smile following her concert at the Capri Theatre in Adelaide.**

*(Photo - John Thiele)*