

Sources for this bag of goodies were *Around the Town* (ATT), *Exhibitors' Herald* (EH), *Local Press* (LP), *Metro-nome* (Met.), *Motion Picture Herald* (MPH), *Radio Guide* (RG), *Radio News* (RN) and *Variety* (V).

September 18, 1928 (LP) ...

At Rochester's Eastman Theatre this week, organist JOHN HAMMOND's solo is "Lovin' Sam." It is a demonstration of what can be done with a popular jazz number on an organ possessing the resources of the Eastman instrument. In playing this number, the organist calls upon the various instruments of the trap department, among them drums, xylophone and bells, and also plays a Steinway piano from the console. The combination of organ and piano is a most unusual one, and the effort is worth noting.

December 18, 1926 (V) ...

Instead of the regular pit overture at the Chicago Theatre, BASEL CRISTOL, organist, and Irving Kaplan, violinist, worked an "Ave Maria" accompaniment to an educational scenic reel, entitled "Sunbeams." Even the kids kept quiet for this combination. A good novelty of serious theme.

June 11, 1927 (EH) ...

MORILL MOORE opened the Robert-Morton organ in the Miller Circuit's new Rockhill Theatre, a splendid 1500-seat neighborhood house in Kansas City, Missouri. Moore is also broadcasting his organ music over station WHB.

September 1927 (LP) ...

LES HOADLEY is at the \$50,000 golden-tone Barton which he opened in Milwaukee's Uptown Theatre.

August 1928 (LP) ...

BILLY WRIGHT's presentation at Kansas City's Midland Theatre is entitled "The Straw Vote."

December 1928 (ATT) ...

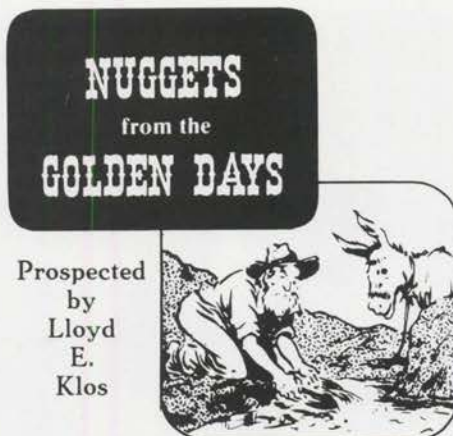
An unusually clever feature organist in his first year at Philadelphia's Kent Theatre is WILLIAM J. STEWART. His featuring is very picturesque and he has won the admiration of his patrons with his remarkable personality. He was formerly at the Logan Arcadia in Philadelphia where he also scored a hit.

December 1928 (ATT) ...

WILLIAM H. ANDREWS opened Philadelphia's Tower Theatre where he is featured as solo organist. He had previously played in the Frankford and opened the Roosevelt. He is very well liked at the Tower and has a nice following.

March 1929 (Roxy Weekly Review) ...

A short, personally conducted excursion behind the musical scenes at the Roxy Theatre in New York. Hear those chimes! Easter and chimes are appropriately paired here. And perfect chimes, more perfect than the great ones which



Prospected
by
Lloyd
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hang in cathedral spires. Each bell in a cathedral continues vibrating so long after it is sounded that it blurs the succeeding notes. Not so in the Roxy as a patented robot dampens each sound the instant the next note is struck. The organist can play them from the console, or in a big room by themselves. Clever shutters cut the sound or let it through. Electric hammers strike the cylinders of alloy. There are five tons of chimes, from seven to 11 feet long, and hung in a room 16 feet high.

There are three Kimball organs under one roof. A music roll plays the rotunda organ. But, it takes three specialists, all going full tilt to get all which is possible out of the grand organ in the auditorium. It is difficult to tell whether it or the orchestra is playing, so clever is its simulation of winds, brasses and strings. The main console, where LEW WHITE is king, rises throne-like in the center. He makes it talk, moan and sing. He's very good at teaching others how to do it, too. The console is of five manuals with pedals and a chime keyboard.

There are no pipes in chambers high above the floor to roll the sound overhead. All the sweet tunes, thundrous rolls, and throbbing tones come from the orchestra pit. The chambers are under the stage. Reason: Roxy needed the space the pipes would have filled for his choral stairways, a memorable feature here.

The organ console in the broadcasting studio has two manuals.

April 18, 1929 (LP) ...

OWEN JAMES has opened the Wurlitzer in Miami, Oklahoma's Coleman Theatre.

May 1929 (Met.) ...

The Senate Theatre in Chicago has gone from one picture a week to a split-week policy. More good news for the organists!

June 28, 1929 (LP) ...

The 5651-seat San Francisco Fox Theatre at Polk and Market streets opened today with Hollywood celebrities on the scene. With Will Rogers as master of ceremonies, the bill included a Fanchon & Marco stage revue "California Capers"; the all-talking film *Behind the Curtain*

with Lois Moran and Warner Baxter; and JAMIE ERICKSON at the 4/36 Wurlitzer.

December 1929 (LP) ...

At the 3436-seat Hollywood Theatre in Detroit, Marilyn Miller is appearing in the all-color, all-talking, all-singing picture *Sally*. On stage is "The Perfect Nut," Joe Christy, with the Hollywood Merry-makers. BOB CLARKE is at the 4/21 Barton.

Circa 1930 (V) ...

JESSE CRAWFORD's contribution for the week was programmed "A Yankee Concert," made up of a lot of real patriotic and popular flag-waving stuff and introduced "Yankee Rose." But the latter number failed to click with the audience. It hasn't the swing to give it popular appeal.

Circa 1930 (V) ...

HENRY B. MURTAGH entitled his offering "For No Good Reason At All," taking a lot of gag parodies and clicking like a million dollars with them.

Circa 1930 (V) ...

The Met has recently lost its featured organist, ALBERT HAY MALLOTTE, who has opened an organ school. His loss leaves a real gap in the show.

June 1931 (LP) ...

LEO TERRY is featured at the Wurlitzer in Chicago's Paradise Theatre.

August 1931 (MPH) ...

PAUL MILLER, who has been featured organist at the Hollywood in Gowanda, New York for the past three years, has been visiting friends in New York City.

August 1931 (MPH) ...

New York City organist DOLPH GOEBEL, who has returned from his European honeymoon, is awaiting a new assignment from Publix.

December 1931 (LP) ...

HAL BECKETT is presenting organ-ludes at the Brooklyn Fox Theatre's 4/36 Wurlitzer.

January 8, 1932 (LP) ...

"Eight big acts of glorified vaudeville" are playing this week at Baltimore's Century. *Two Kinds of Woman* with Marion Hopkins is the feature film, and AL HORNIG at the Wurlitzer plays a songfest.

April 8, 1932 (Roxy News) ...

Dr. C.A.J. PARMENTIER shares the Kimball's bench this week with CHARLOTTE TAUBER. Directing the Roxy Symphony Orchestra is Fred Waring.

August 1932 (MPH) ...

RUSSELL BICE at Detroit's RKO Downtown, brushed the dust off the console whose organ has been silent for a number of weeks. His opening performance seemed weak on selections, but with the assistance of the Schwab &

Wiegand banjo-accordion team, Bice got fair response and applause.

December 1934 (RG) ...

You will hear WILLIAM MEEDER on the new NBC organ instead of Lew White, Sundays at 8:30 p.m. and weekdays at 8:15 a.m. over the NBC Network from WJZ, New York.



SAN SYLMAR PRESENTS REX KOURY AT THE MIGHTY WURLITZER, No. KD 2025. \$10.00 postpaid from Rex Koury, 5370 Happy Pines Dr., Foresthill, California 95631.

The combination of Rex Koury and this 36 rank (or more) dream organ is a most enjoyable combination. As for Rex, he has been prominent in ATOS circles for many years. In fact he's a recent past president of the organization. His musical credits extend from 1930s theatre organ broadcasts which this then New York state reviewer picked up on his model 60 Philco from a Massachusetts radio station — "the youngest professional organist on the air." We recall (over many years) how we envied the talent he had for trumpet "rides" — the solo jazz improvisations heard in early 1930s dance orchestras. He was "with it" then and he still is. But not only as a pop player. For example, Rex was commissioned by the Sussex Theatre Organ Trust (England) for a "Concerto for Theatre Organ and Orchestra" to be premiered by the Worthing Symphony Orchestra (South Britain).

FIRST THE INSTRUMENT ...

The mostly Wurlitzer organ in the Merle Norman Musical Instrument Museum in Sylmar, California (near Los Angeles) is the brain child of J.B. Nethercutt, who heads the Merle Norman firm of beauty products. Organbuilder Richard Villemin and assistant Gordon Belt installed the original 3/17. Belt remained with the museum as organ technician and has supervised most of the additions (a 4-manual console and double the number of voices). Mr. Nethercutt is a very exacting man; he wants the many instruments in his museum in perfect condition at all times. This is to the advantage of performers. On this digital recording, the organ never sounded better.

Let's look at the selections ...

42nd Street Medley includes the title tune, "Shadow Waltz," "About a Quarter to Nine," "Shuffle Off to Buffalo,"

September 1935 (RN) ...

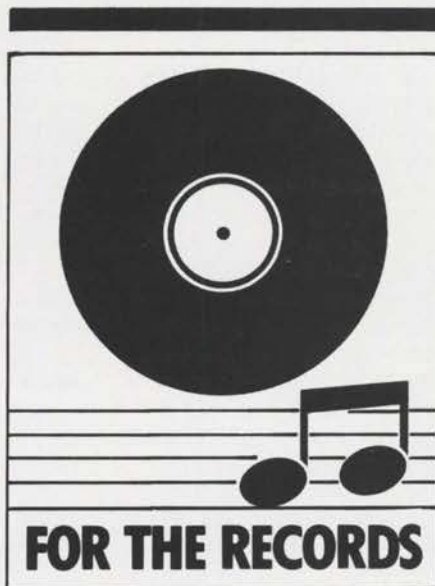
RICHARD LEIBERT, Radio City organist, will shortly inaugurate a series of organ recitals weekdays at 7 p.m. The concerts on WJZ, New York, replace the orchestra programs under Dr. Frank Black and Leo Spitalny.

September 1935 (RN) ...

FRANCIS J. CRONIN at the organ and Virginia Warren, soprano, will be heard today at 5:00 p.m. over the Yankee Network which includes WLBZ in Bangor, Maine; WANAC, Boston; and WORC, Worcester.

That should do it for this time. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector ■



and a somewhat surprising "Lullabye of Broadway" (was it in that film? - Nope!). Lots of instrumental and tempo variety here, and striking key changes throughout the 6:35 minutes of Harry Warren classics.

"Harbor Lights," an enduring favorite, enjoys fine expression and interesting key changes. We enjoyed the coda on the strings.

"Summer Samba" is a lighthearted, carefree tune in those catchy South American tempos. The piano is heard, also other percussers.

"Run for the Roses" is a familiar melody even if the title isn't. Fine solo Tuba and Tibia counter melody work.

Michael Landon fans will enjoy the David Rose theme which is strung throughout TV's "Highway to Heaven" with often inspiring effect. Rose's incidental music is right up there with that of Max Steiner and Eric Korngold, and Rex Koury makes the most of it with deft and sensitive interpretation.

To compare late and early David Rose, how proper to follow with "Holiday for Strings," an offbeat pop he wrote while conducting the orchestra on the *California Melodies* broadcasts in the early '40s. It was his first hit (long before "The Stripper") and its lively plucked string instrumentation and interesting key changes maintain its freshness today. Needless to say, the Koury interpretation does it full justice.

Side II opens with "Beyond the Sea," a long time favorite also known as "La

Mer." As presented by Rex, this sea is fairly calm; that is, the inevitable rolling waves are ephemeral and never overdone. We enjoyed the very different harmonies which lead up to the coda. Nice counter tunes against the opening brass melody, too.

Ellington's "Satin Doll" enjoys the bouncy treatment called for. It even has brief piano passages in the style of the Duke.

Rex's one semi-classic is Borodin's "Polovtzi Dance" which was adapted to become "Stranger in Paradise" in a popular musical, *Kismet*, in 1953. Rex injects the proper voluptuous and romantic oriental atmosphere.

A favorite "oldie" with this reviewer is "All Through the Night." Its fast-moving, downward chromatic melody is irresistible. Rex's arrangement maintains the proper tempo while adding some Posthorn punctuation, but briefly.

We have rarely heard a more introspective rendition of "Invitation" than the one Rex Koury presents here. Beautifully phrased and registered. This sensitive styling presents some deliciously impassioned moments.

Regarding 1932's "April in Paris," tunesmith E.Y. Harburg, was once asked how he could write about Paris, since he had never visited the City of Light. His sage reply was "I've never been over the rainbow, either! But I managed." So be it; "April" has a definite European atmosphere as presented in the Koury styling. There's a street organ sequence rife with percussions but mostly it's deliciously sentimental.

The digital recording (under the Klavier Audiophile label) is top quality. The review pressing was perfectly centered and the surfaces smooth and free of pops and other noise.

Jacket notes are adequate with some biography of Rex Koury (he's had an impressive career in the musical end of numerous well-known radio and TV programs) plus information about the organ and museum. It's a first class package.

Stu Green

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