



Valley of the Sun contingent: Walt Strony, Madeline LiVolsi, Ron Rhode, Tom Lind, Arlene Gillman, Carl Gillman, Ray Danford, Don Story, Ione Danford. MLV



Dennis Hedberg's Secret Toy Counter. - Not on 256 Stop List. HW



Lew Williams and Ashley Miller going over a score. BH



Virginia Whitney and Jack Moelmann. HW



Lunch line at the Organ Grinder. DZ



ATOSers listening to staff organist Paul Quarino play Gospel music at the Organ Grinder. DW



Bob Hansen, Bob Shafter, Troy Nash. IE



Carl Bickel, Melissa Ambrose and Norine Castine at Multnomah Falls. RVS



Janet Lorenzo, Virginia Webb, Dick Webb, Evelyn Riser and David Sass. DZ



Margaret Hill (Seattle) and John Milholland (Ann Arbor, Michigan) are cousins who met again through ATOS. BH



Lew Williams and Richard Purvis. MLV



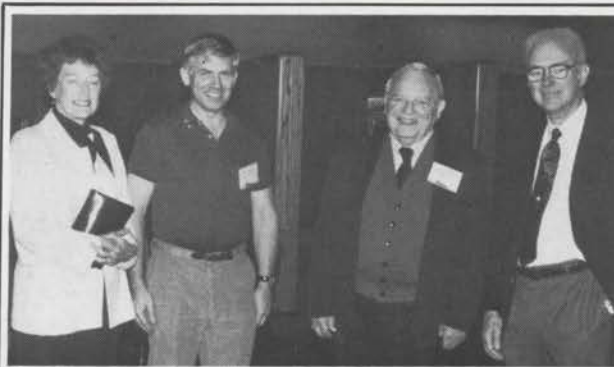
Relaxing at Fifth Avenue Theatre in Seattle: Jeff Goodwin, Priscilla Arthur, Steve McCormick, David Love and John Nianouris. DZ

1988 A.T.O.S. CONVENTION



Jack Moelmann, Charlene and Bill Rieger at the banquet.

BR



Mrs. Rodgers Jenkins, Dennis Hedberg, Richard Purvis and Mr. Jenkins at the Red Lion.

CN



Chicago's Leon and Mildred Berry.

BR



Los Angeles members Wayne Flottman, Jim Dawson and Tom B'hend.

CN



Richard Purvis.

BH



Bulletin board caught the attention of registrants.

CN



ATOSers filled the room whenever Walt Strony sat down at the Allen.

CN



Ray and Mary Warner from Nor-Cal check their convention packets.

CN



Ashley Miller shares a laugh with Lowell Ayars.

CN



Young theatre organ enthusiasts gather in the lobby of the hotel.

CN

Does Portland Really Have All The Fun?

by Steve Adams

In the world of theatre pipe organs, there are seven events that mark each year and create a legacy that future generations of theatre organ buffs will cherish . . . Six of these events are the arrival of THEATRE ORGAN in our mailboxes, and the seventh is
OUR ANNUAL CONVENTION.

With a great deal of care and concern, literally dozens of local and national members immerse themselves in details to the point of sleepless nights. Why dedicate this much time and energy to the 500 or more people you probably do not know and possibly will never see again? For each, the answer will be a unique variation on one simple statement: to share with each other the love that surrounds the outpouring of a musician's heart when playing a theatre pipe organ.

That is why we gathered in Portland, Oregon, in July.

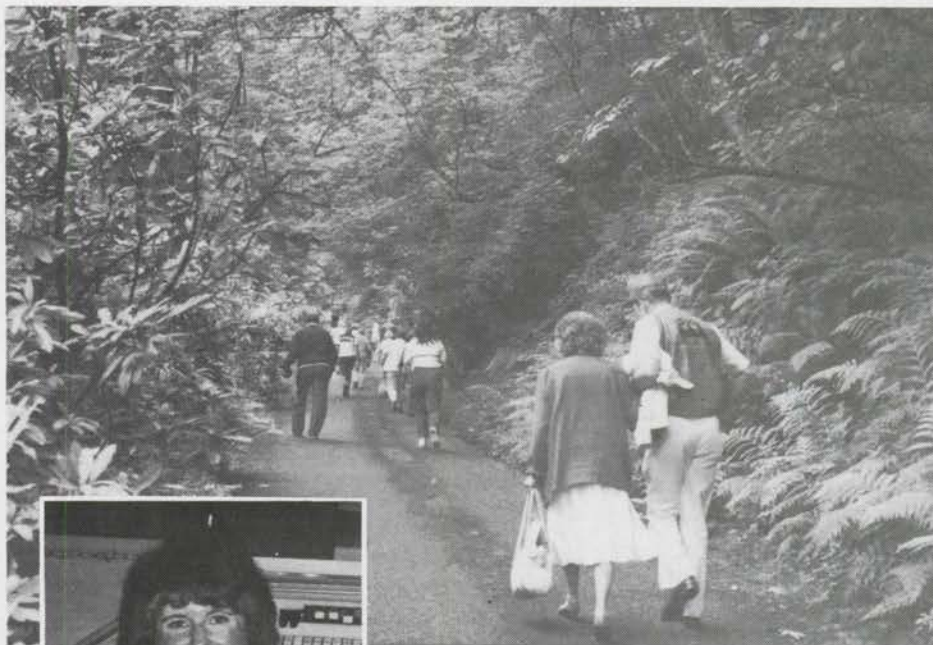
SATURDAY, JULY 2

Patti Simon

To the veteran who recalls the 1973 Convention hosted by Oregon Chapter, the mere mention of the Vollum estate evokes vivid memories. Nestled among nature's most beautiful foliage is a studio which houses the former San Francisco Paramount's 4/32 Wurlitzer (expanded now to 49 ranks). This special instrument, installed by Dennis Hedberg, was a birthday gift to Howard Vollum from his wife, Jean.

Organist Patti Simon presented a series of recitals on Saturday and Sunday as the studio only accommodates about 150 at a time. Her program teased the audience with hints of how the full organ might sound until her final number, the "War March of the Priests." In this selection, the full power of the 49 ranks momentarily thrilled the listeners.

The instrument performed flawlessly and was in excellent tune. Of particular delight to the technician was the distinctive aroma of Wurlitzer shellac in evidence in the building. Ed Zollman, Patti's husband, was the technician responsible for readying the organ for these programs. Oregon Chapter is most grateful to sculptor Patrick Philbin, current resident of the studio, and to Mrs. Jean Vollum and the late Howard Vollum for preserving this historic instrument and sharing it with ATOS.



The forest lane to the Vollum Studio. SLA.



The unique setting of the Vollum Wurlitzer.

CN



Benson High School Auditorium.

Ron Rhode

The first evening event was held at Benson High School which was only a short walk from our hotel. Welcoming remarks by Convention Chairman Dennis Hedberg and Oregon Chapter Chairman Paul Quarino set the mood for Ron Rhode at the school's 3/24 Kimball. Jet lag, vocal chords strained from all-day socializing, and tired feet were quickly forgotten when Ron began his tasteful, well-prepared program.

The Benson Kimball is actually more than a Kimball. It was installed in 1955 by Balcolm and Vaughan in chambers high on either side of the stage. To the original 3/9 Kimball, select pipework and chests were added to bring the organ to its present 3/24. After years of refinement, this instrument has taken on a

pristine quality that particularly suits Ron Rhode's tonal eloquence. The room is unusually live, even with a full house, and the famous Kimball strings are complemented by a massive Pedal division which is most impressive.

Clearly, in the Benson auditorium, with theatrical lighting, by the students at the school, coercing the imagination, the first day was brought to an exquisite end.



CN

DZ



An unbeatable team: Technician Ed Zollman and wife-organist Patti Simon.

MLV



Intermission.

CN

SUNDAY, JULY 3

The morning Chapter Representative's meeting is a tradition established for discussion of national and chapter activities, problems and solutions. Jack Moelmann opened the meeting with a summary of the accomplishments and achievements of ATOS this past year. Board and staff members also contributed news of their projects after which chapter representa-

tives were invited to present their yearly reports and to ask questions or offer suggestions. The two-hour meeting left the attendees with a good feeling for our potential in 1989. While more than 50 attended this meeting, it quickly became clear that more participation by members will result in a more informed membership.



President John Ledwon addresses the membership.
CN



Lois Segur, Beth Palmer and Sandy Fleet at Chapter Rep's meeting.

CN



Dennis Hedberg readying demonstration Wurlitzer.

CN



Tom Hazleton

Sunday night found us at the First United Methodist Church for the annual Membership Meeting (which is covered separately in this issue). Following the meeting, we heard a recital by artist Tom Hazleton who dedicated this concert to his long-time friend and musical mentor, Richard Purvis, who was in the audience. Those who know Mr. Purvis were not surprised to find him at a theatre organ convention as he is first and foremost a musician who speaks through his music. His career and the legacy of his music and personal inspiration were very much a part of this evening's concert.

The organ at this church is an 85-rank Wicks installed in 1965 and under continual tonal evolution by organist Jonas Nordwall. The instrument contains many unusual colors and solo voices normally not found in organs built in the past 30 years.

For his finale, Tom surprised Jonas by calling him to the console for a duet of the "Star-Spangled Banner." The result was a splendid rendition of this ever-durable piece by two great friends for a packed house.

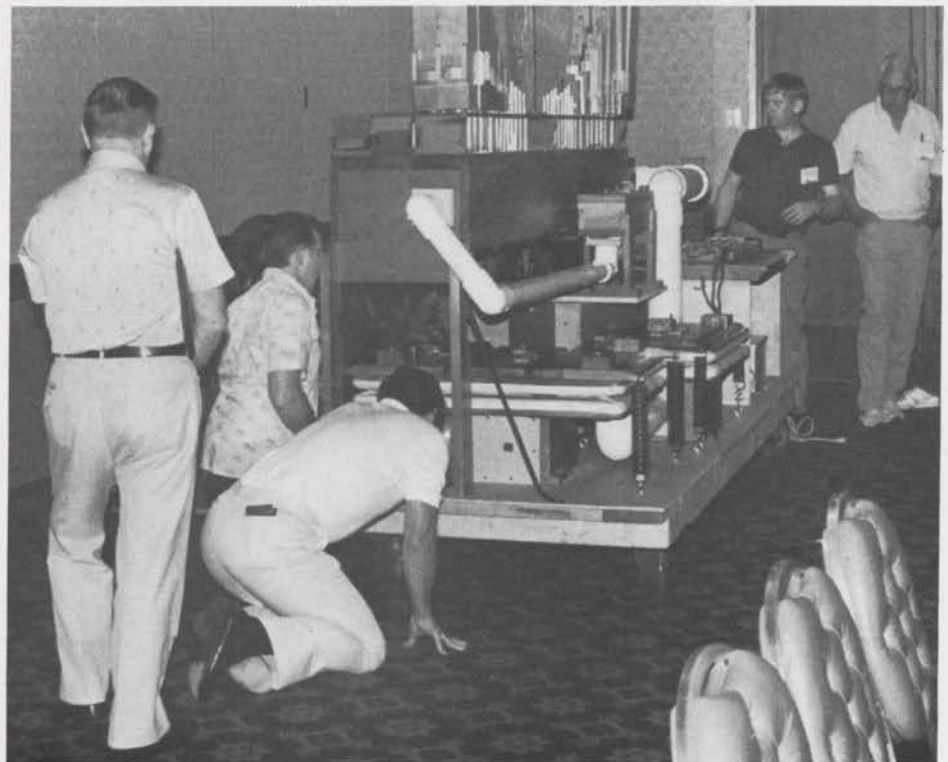
Membership Meeting at the First United Methodist Church.

CN

Dennis Hedberg Seminar

Workshops and seminars were scheduled for Sunday afternoon. Dennis Hedberg's seminar on the design and effect of an accurately engineered winding system drew a large group of interested organ buffs. The basic premise of Hedberg's thesis is that when the optimal volume of wind is present in the wind system affected by a tremulant, it will be possible to adjust the tremulant in depth and rate, from stall to chatter, and that at any of these settings it is possible to play a maximum number of musical notes from the keyboard and not stall the tremulant or encounter a sag or change in rate of the tremulant.

To illustrate his thesis, Dennis prepared a remarkable demonstration, a complete, one-rank (Tibia Clausa) theatre organ playable from a keyboard and fully equipped with test and display apparatus. At a glance, it was possible to see on an oscilloscope what was happening to the wind pressure in the chest. The contention was fully demonstrated to the nearly 200 attendees. Several had questions, and the consensus left the workshop with a remarkable new understanding of the dynamics of the theatre pipe organ wind system.



Having a closer look at the Hedberg Wurlitzer.

CN

Seminars were also presented by Grace McGinnis and Steve Adams on the Use of Robert's Rules and on Concert Planning respectively.

MONDAY, JULY 4

Monday's schedule called for four concerts (plus lunch) at the two Portland area pizza parlors, the Organ Grinder and Uncle Milt's, so we were divided into four groups, two of which had either the morning or the afternoon free. Simon Gledhill was featured at the Organ Grinder and Rob Richards at Uncle Milt's.

Simon Gledhill

To those who closely follow the world of theatre organ artists, the appearance of England's Simon Gledhill was eagerly awaited. Reports and rumors have circulated for some time about the unusual ability of this young man.

From the start of the concert it was clear that Simon had prepared carefully and honed his arrangements to perfection. While his program included many songs that might be thought of as British, the majority could certainly be considered good, solid American theatre organ. His introductions were done with style, dignity and respect for the listener. By the time the concert was over, it was clear that this American audience welcomed him enthusiastically. We will surely hear him again.



Simon Gledhill at the Organ Grinder.

CN



Rob Richards (left) and John Giardino at Uncle Milt's.

IE

Rob Richards

Rob Richards is rapidly gaining a reputation as one of the bright young musicians emerging in the theatre organ world. To some, he is best known for his recording, "Fusion," in which he uses a synthesizer to supplement the sounds of the pipe organ. Like many young artists today, Rob has the enthusiasm and musical freshness that has begun to characterize modern theatre organ.

John Giardino was an unexpected addition to Rob's concert. John is a talented tenor who sang several songs accompanied by Rob on the pipe organ. John's expressive, accurate vocal technique was very entertaining and, we hope, will be heard at future conventions.

Paul Quarino

Portland is fortunate to have theatre organs installed in a wide variety of venues including a skating rink, two pizza restaurants, a Scottish Rite Temple, a high school auditorium and a church.

The Portland Foursquare Church is a branch of Aimee Semple McPherson's Los Angeles-based Angeles Temple, established nearly 70 years ago. But to look at the Portland Foursquare building, you would never think that its roots date back that many years. Modern, yet sumptuous, this church houses a 3/10 theatre organ purchased from Balcolm and Vaughan in 1934. Composed of the better parts from several builders, the instrument is primarily Wurlitzer and, in this building, is located high above the main floor, speaking directly into the sanctuary.

Organist Paul Quarino, whose friendship with members of this church dates back many years, was the artist who played here for us. His presentation of how a theatre organ functions within the Gospel setting, along with traditional and modern theatre organ selections, showed off the tonal resources of the organ and reflected his love of both the instrument and the music.



Paul Quarino at the Foursquare Church.

IE

Jam Session

Jam Sessions are, for some, the most fun at a convention. Those brave enough to try their hands at one of the consoles in front of their peers have merely to "Sign up."

The session at Uncle Milt's began at 11:00 p.m. following a full day of activities; nevertheless, some 300 hardy souls stayed for nearly three hours of professional, semi-professional and amateur performances on Milt's Wurlitzer. Milt Kieffer provided a Hammond B-3 which was used in a duet with the Wurlitzer, and late in the evening we even heard a vocalist proving that a theatre organ in a congenial setting brings out the talent in all of us.

Late-night snacks, lots of good conversation, and some new friendships added to the sounds of the Wurlitzer to make this Jam Session a highlight in the convention.

TUESDAY, JULY 5

Gerry Gregorius & Kurt von Schakel

Gerry Gregorius and Kurt von Schakel are musicians of uncommon accomplishment, and their recital at the Scottish Rite was thrilling! On the stage of this late 1800's building was a Steinway concert grand piano, courtesy of Moe's Pianos of Portland, and in the balcony is a 3/12 Wurlitzer formerly in the Portland Egyptian Theatre. The chambers are in the side of the auditorium nearest the console, and the console is perhaps 50-feet from the stage.

In a program of classics, light classics and novelty numbers, Gerry and Kurt presented an hour of musical bliss. The sound of the Wurlitzer and the fabulous Steinway on a stage set with a forest scene, in this impeccably maintained Victorian building, was unforgettable.

Dean Lemire

One of the last skating rinks in the U.S. to have a theatre organ still installed, the Oaks Rink remains today an extremely busy venue for skating.

Located in the Oaks Amusement Park along the shores of the Willamette River, the Oaks Wurlitzer came from the Broadway Theatre in downtown Portland. It stands today just as installed in 1955 and continues to be used almost daily. It was on this instrument that the famous Don Simmons' recordings were made for roller skating rinks all over the world.

Dean Lemire provided conventioners with an interesting look into the art of playing in a skating rink. There were many traditions and requirements that must be observed when playing for skaters. Dean's love for skating and the Wurlitzer has been matched only by Don Simmons and a few others.

Hanging from the middle of the ceiling of the rink, the Oaks 4/18 Wurlitzer with its generous acoustics and the lack of swell boxes is a truly dynamic instrument.



On stage at Scottish Rite, Gerry Gregorius and Kurt von Schakel. IE



Dean Lemire at Oaks Park Rink. IE



Young organists at Benson High School: Martin Harris, Jelani Eddington, Melissa Ambrose, Norine Castine. RVS

Young Organists at Benson

by Don Feely

Tuesday afternoon we braved the elements for a short walk to Benson High School where a convention "first" was about to occur. Performing today was not another seasoned professional, but four "young artists." The Kimball console glowed with a strand of lights draped over it which served as a gentle reminder that innovation and the forward thinking of the young would prevail at this program. The artists, with the help of the high school stage crew, had planned the entire program and would produce it themselves.

Melissa Ambrose, 1987 winner of the Young Organist Competition, acted as mistress of ceremonies and principle performer. Her outgoing and upbeat manner on the microphone made it easy to see why she has gained such popularity in Motor City. She got the program off to a rousing start with a varied selection of songs ranging from "Bugler's Holiday" to the first movement of J.S. Bach's *Trio Sonata V*.

The highlight of the program had to be this year's overall winner, 13-year-old Jelani Eddington. From his "Dizzy Fingers" opener to the Irving Berlin medley, good musicianship plus tasteful tempos and registration prevailed. He displayed poise and skill beyond his years, and drew a very favorable response from the audience.

Featured in the second half of the program was Martin Harris, winner of the Age 16-18 category. All the way from England, Martin began with an enthusiastic "Strike Up The Band." His skills were also suitably demonstrated with a gentle performance of "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square."

Norine Castine, also from Motor City and winner in the 19-21 age category, performed a medley from *Funny Girl* that encompassed many moods and registration changes on the Kimball.

Melissa brought the concert to a close and history was made as the first Young Artist program ended. For those of us in the audience it was a new experience. The performances we heard were often polished and exciting, but ranged from almost perfect to mediocre. The young artist program embodies the future of ATOS, and programs such as this one will be a welcome addition to every convention providing that the standards we have come to expect from seasoned performers are embraced by the young artists themselves and by their supporters. With the excitement and drive demonstrated by the young artists, together we can ensure the growth and advancement of the ATOS.



Conventioners seated beneath the Wurlitzer at Oaks Park. SLA



530 Happy Conventioneers at the Annual Banquet

BANQUET

At six o'clock cocktails were served in the salon adjacent to the banquet hall at the Red Lion. In a setting of potted palms and crystal chandeliers, Dan Bellomy on a Hammond Elegante and drummer Gary Hobbs provided the jazz and blues arrangements for which Dan is nationally known. Dan and Gary generated a warm, congenial atmosphere.

By 7:00 nearly everyone was seated in the banquet hall where an excellent dinner was served as prelude to the featured event of the evening, an interview with George Wright. George's responses to Dennis Hedberg's questions were fascinating and filled with a wisdom and perspective that only a career musician such as George would have. His advice to the young organists of today was inspirational. While all too brief, George's appearance at this convention was most welcome as another "first" for ATOS.

At the conclusion of the interview with George, Dennis turned the podium over to Jack Moelmann for the presentation of awards. This, too, is covered elsewhere in this issue.



Dan Bellomy and drummer Gary Hobbs during cocktail hour at Red Lion.



Dorothy VanSteenkiste, Norine Castine, Melissa Ambrose and Carl Bickel.

RVS



Jack Moelmann passing the Tibia of Office to new President John Ledwon.

BR



George Wright and Dennis Hedberg providing banquet entertainment.

RVS



Len Clarke with Tony and Carolyn Pasquale at Banquet.



Wendy Kieffer at Uncle Milt's.

DZ



Walt Strony

At the Organ Grinder, Walt Strony's reputation for musicianship and friendship was never in better evidence. His comments between selections and the selections themselves seemed to show off the resources of both organist and organ. As with all of the other musicians heard at the convention, one rarely, if ever, tires of hearing music played with conviction and wisdom.



Lew Williams

On this, the final day of the convention, it was hard to conceive of an event that would not only maintain the high level of musicianship at this conclave, but also exceed it. Lew Williams, 1988 Organist of the Year, provided conventioners with musical excursions into the light classics and popular and novelty songs from all eras. Lew presented both himself and the instrument with complete dignity and style, but not to the exclusion of humor. His opening selection was "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," identifying with everyone else who was beginning to show signs of convention-fatigue.

WEDNESDAY JULY 6

The schedule for today was a repeat of Monday's routine, but the artists were Lew Williams at Uncle Milt's and Walt Strony at the Organ Grinder. On both days the lunch at Uncle Milt's was accompanied by his daughter, Wendy, at the console of the Wurlitzer.



Jonas Nordwall in duet with Judy Cervetto-Hedberg at Schnitzer Concert Hall.

CN

Jonas Nordwall

Although difficult to believe, the convention did have to come to an end at some point, and this, the last concert, could be nothing short of stellar in every respect. Jonas Nordwall and the Rodgers organ from Carnegie Hall could be counted on to do just that.

Portland's Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall is actually the former Paramount Theatre. Refurbished now, it still retains most of the character of the original Rapp & Rapp house which once held a Wurlitzer theatre organ. The Rodgers Organ Company has installed the five-manual electronic organ, designed by Virgil Fox, with speakers in the ceiling and on the stage. To describe this installation in any terms other than incredible

would do it an injustice. While many of the voices still retain an electronic character, the majority of the classical voices are virtually indistinguishable from their pipe counterparts, and the full organ ensemble is even more remarkable when one considers that it uses 15-year-old technology.

Jonas prepared a program of considerable variety which was flawlessly staged. Along with himself at the console and the Kurzwiel, Jonas presented a choral group, The Choral Cross-Ties directed by Bruce Browne, and accordionist Judy Cervetto-Hedberg in duets with the organ. Each provided a unique and memorable musical moment.

Jam Session

For those hardy devotees who can never get too much organ music, there was one last Jam Session at the Organ Grinder following Jonas' concert. The CBS affiliate TV station, Channel 6, covered the first few minutes of this session and its impressive array of artists who kept the pulse of the night high until 2:00 a.m. What better way to finish the day than by listening to top-notch artists playing one of the finest!

The 1988 National Convention in Portland was a fine example of dedication to the preservation and presentation of the theatre pipe organ. By the time this journal reaches your mailbox, the lives of those in Portland that are short some sleep, and the heads of which have some new gray hairs, will have returned to normal. Each will most likely say that he or she had a good time in spite of the long hours and lost sleep. The renewal of spirit that occurs as a result of these conventions is exactly the fuel that feeds the fire known as the American Theatre Organ Society, and its main benefit is the bonding of people together in a unified effort to magnify the message that theatre organ is alive, well and honored here in the Pacific Northwest. Each organ performed without fail, well-tuned and pleasing to the ear. Each organist presented a program of superb musicianship and integrity. Nowhere was there the slightest hint that someone didn't care.

Puget Sound

by Genny Whitting & Diane Whipple

Glorious sun and occasional banks of coastal fog greeted early risers traveling to the Puget Sound Encore opener at the home of Dick Wilcox. Many described the massive suspension bridge over the Tacoma Narrows to Gig Harbor as breath-taking and awesome, feelings which were heightened by the experience to follow.

Dick has a 17,000 square-foot home, built on many levels with panoramic views, to house the now 4/48 mostly Wurlitzer, which began as a Fox Special from the Brooklyn Fox Theatre. A Wilcox-designed computer system replaces the relay. It was adeptly demonstrated to an audience, nearly speechless with wonder, by Lyn Larsen in a program which was a veritable feast of tone and inimitable stylings. The organ is beautifully presented both visually and tonally (see THEATRE ORGAN, May/June 1988).



Encore banquet at Four Seasons Olympic Spanish Ballroom.

DW



Lyn Larsen



MLV Len Clarke, Paul Quarino, Dick Schrum at cocktail party in Fifth Avenue Theatre.

DW



Don Myers.



Adeline and Clyde Hook and Mel Whipple outside 5th Avenue Theatre.



Andy Crow at the Seattle Paramount.

DW



Luncheon at Point Defiance Park. Randy Rock introducing Lyn Larsen at Wilcox residence.

DZ
RVS

Following a delectable box-lunch catered on the beach at Point Defiance Park, seven busses and 80 cars traveled to downtown Seattle. Parenthetically, the most of Third Avenue and Pine Street are torn up for a transit bus tunnel, and there's a block-wide deep hole across from the Paramount where the underground terminus is being located. Straddling 12 lanes of I-5 is the Convention Center, in the agonizing final building phase, with numerous other construction projects nearby. Therefore, it was only mildly surprising to Encore planners that the chosen route was blocked, and the reserved bus parking was inaccessible. Long-awaited sidewalks bordering the theatre also had just been poured, so disembarking passengers filed singly across a catwalk.

The 3,000-seat Paramount is of opulent Louis XIV design, one of few large houses left with an original Wurlitzer. The organ is now enlarged to a 4/21, with considerable tonal improvements made under the care of a dedicated

chapter organ crew. Andy Crow's program reflected the richness and sparkle of the interior, often including a newly designed Vibraharp attachment. Despite some distraction by the noise of a crew behind the curtain preparing for an evening engagement, Andy's concert was well presented and warmly received.

Drinks were served at the elegantly restored 5th Avenue Theatre, of the same era as the Paramount. Its design was copied from the Imperial Palace of Peking, and many conventioners rested quietly in the auditorium, admiring its great beauty. Dinner was served at the also elaborately restored Four Seasons Olympic. The food and service were extraordinary, with tasteful accompaniment from a beautiful Steinway.

Enjoyment of very different organs and the extreme contrast of architectural settings conceived 60 years apart should provide ATOSers with excited discussion and warm memories. Due to the cooperative efforts of members of the host chapter, it was a superlative affair.



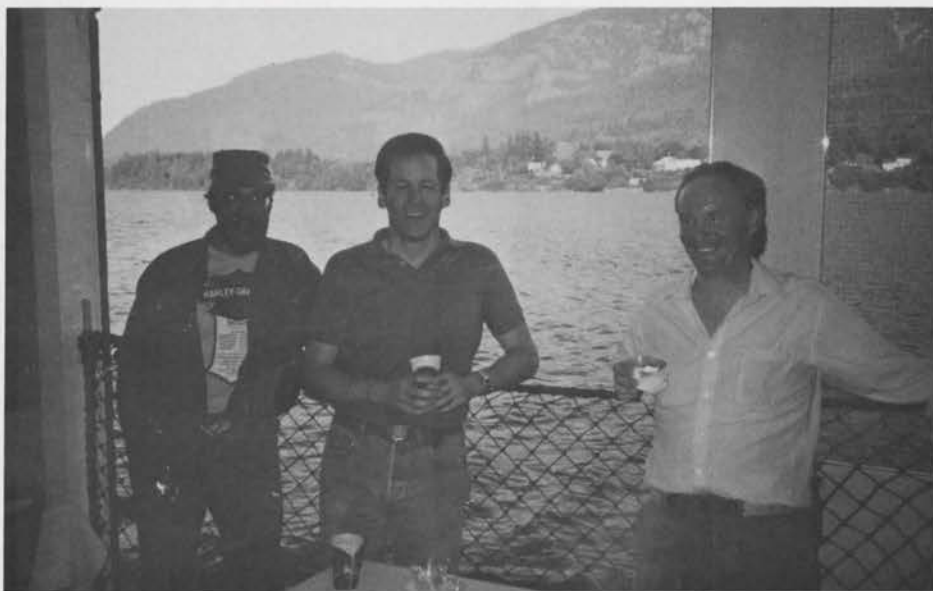
Sternwheeler Columbia Gorge ready to board.

BR



Salmon being baked Indian style at Cascade Locks.

SLA



Kurt von Schakel, Steve Adams, Terry Robson, Lew Williams, Dennis Hedberg and Jonas Nordwall unwinding on the Columbia Gorge.

ALL IE

Oregon Encore

For those who elected to spend the day in Oregon, an excellent trip was planned, one which started in the afternoon so tired conventioners could sleep late. Busses left at two o'clock for a drive up the scenic Columbia River Gorge where a genuine Indian Salmon Bake was served on the shore of the river. After dinner we boarded a sternwheeler for a two-hour cruise on the mighty Columbia River.

This excursion had naught to do with organs, but everything to do with friendship, fellowship and nature. The scenery was unsurpassed; the food was gourmet quality, and the glow inside that came from sharing the event with a group of people who were still high from the past five days made this an event that created for each of us some very special memories.



Open air dining pavilion at Cascade Locks.

SLA

The test of a host's success lies in the answers to the questions: Would you come again? Did Portland really have all the fun? Was it all worth the effort? Ask someone who was there. You are sure to get a positive answer!



Convention Chairman Dennis Hedberg makes a point. IE



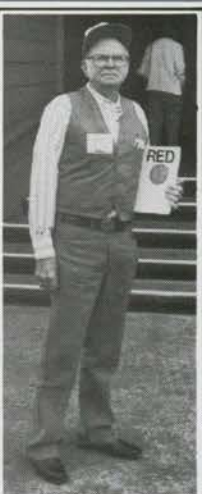
Terry Robson was responsible for the banquet at the Red Lion. IE



Al Wert. IE



Gary Zenk sounds call to load busses, as he had done all week... HW



and Paul Potter made sure he had the right bus. CN



MaryJo Olsen, John Olsen, Mike Baker, Melody Wooldridge, Lynette Wooldridge and Rachel Zenk in the country store. CN



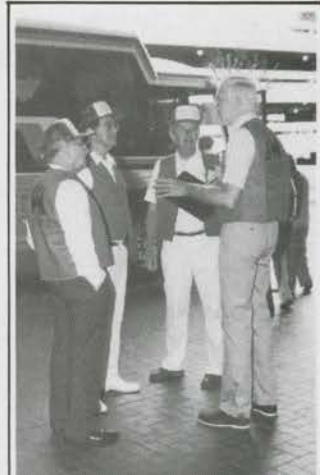
Convention registrar Don Feely is attached to his computer. CN



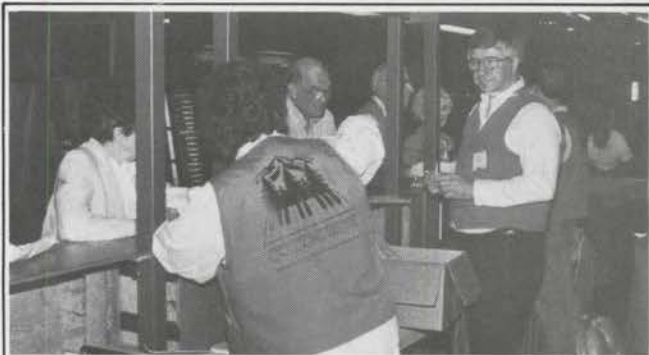
Don Feely, Grace McGinnis and Steve Adams "on the job." IE



Heidi Fenderson and Connie Hodges ready for registration to begin. IE



Ray Hughey, Dean Peden, Don James and Alden Stockebrand kept the bus colors straight. CN



Connie Hodges and Irving Ewen registering conventioners. CN

1988 Convention Workers