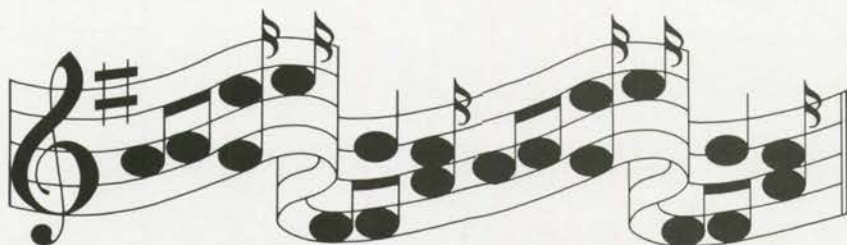


# Chapter Notes



Donna Parker graces the console at the Alabama Theatre. Madeline L'Volsi Photo

## ALABAMA Birmingham

205/942-5611 or 205/644-3606

July 16 and 17 brought us near the end of our silent film series as Jim Riggs "stole" the show with two performances of *Thief of Bagdad*. Jim's exceptional score and artistry kept audiences on the edge of their seats for this incredible adventure-packed film.

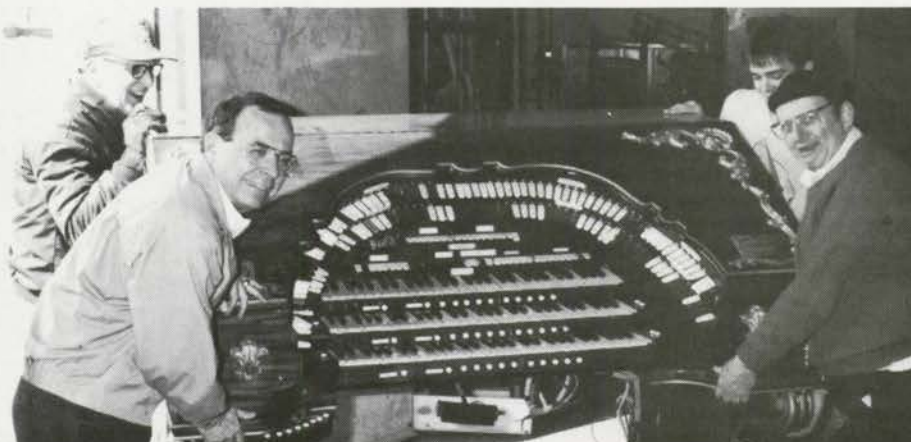
Chapter members gathered on July 31 for a welcomed chapter meeting with Roy Harrison at the console. Roy, who is from Chattanooga, Tennessee, dazzled audiences by performing many "pop" tunes and requests.

On August 14 Birmingham welcomed for the first time in over 50 years a professional female organist. Donna Parker headed south to Alabama, and her first performance in Birmingham will certainly not be her last — rarely has The Alabama embraced a performer so. Her versatility, charm, and sheer organ skills quickly won the audience over and kept them entertained for one of the most delightful pops concerts we've heard in quite some time.

Gary W. Jones



Jim Riggs scored *Thief of Bagdad*, for Alabama Theatre audiences. Gary W. Jones Photo



Jim Blande, Tim Needler and Carl Wright move the new Wurlitzer console into the auditorium at Manual High School in Indianapolis. Don Newswanger Photo



Jim Catalier and Kevin Aikman setting a wind trunk in the Main Chamber, Manual High School auditorium. Don Newswanger Photo



## CENTRAL INDIANA Indianapolis

317/255-8056 or 317/787-4865

Columbus, Indiana, about 40 miles south of Indianapolis, boasts the most concentrated collection of contemporary architecture in America. With over 40 buildings designed by modern masters from around the world, it is truly the "Athens of the Midwest." Our chapter held the August meeting in one of the more celebrated of these buildings — the First Christian Church. The church, designed by Eero Saarinen, houses a 4/81 Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ. The instrument was demonstrated by the resident organist, Daniel J. McKinley. His program, designed to show the scope of this magnificent organ, ranged from J.S. Bach to Hoagy Carmichael. Particularly well received were Rossini's Overture to *William Tell* and the "Toccata and Fugue

in D Minor" by Bach. Other selections included "Stardust," "Begin the Beguine," "Tea For Two" and the "Pennsylvania Polka." Mr. McKinley is a graduate of Indiana University's School of Music and has been with the First Christian Church since 1978. His performance for us was beautifully done. Open console and refreshments followed the program, and members were encouraged to tour the church.

Our own Jelani Eddington, winner of the 1988 Young Organist Competition, presented a cameo performance at the National Convention in Portland. It is always a treat to hear talented young artists and reports indicate Jelani's performance was well received.

Work on the Manual High School organ continues. The Peterson relay is installed; the new Wurlitzer console purchased; keyboards have been rebrushed, cleaned and repaired; and several ranks in the Main Chamber are playing. This instrument will consist of 24 ranks, when finished and will be one of the "stars" of the 1990 National Convention.

Barbara Johnson

## CENTRAL OHIO

Columbus

614/652-1775 or 614/882-4085

Dennis James played to packed houses at the Ohio Theatre for the summer movie series. People, young and old alike, turned out to see such oldies as *Mrs. Miniver* and *Can Can*. Organ overtures and intermission music revived tunes appropriate to the period of the film or the composer of the show tunes. It continues to be a thrilling spectacle to see movie patrons desert their television sets for the opulence and grandeur of the theatre and its famed Robert-Morton.

It was our pleasure to host the chapter at our home on August 28. In spite of the rainy, overcast skies, some 56 members and guests were present for our meeting and potluck. Following our business meeting, member/artist Bob Cowley entertained with a well-rounded program of selections among which were the ever-popular "Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered" and a medley from the timeless *The Sound of Music*. At the conclusion of Bob's program, we had a tour of the chambers and open console. Thanks to our many talented members we enjoyed continuous organ music concluding with a terrific organ/piano duet featuring Henry Garcia and Martha Hoyle. We're going to have that team back full program!

My heartfelt thanks to the many people who helped ready the organ for its first official public showing. Without the assistance of members Bob Cowley, Neil Grover, Jim Blegen and Mark Williams, the completion of the installation would have been indeterminably delayed. The mostly Wurlitzer organ has a Z-Tronics solid-state relay and a Trousdale combination action. Tonal finishing was done by McPherson and Ferguson of Indianapolis, Indiana.

The trek to Mansfield, Ohio, took about an hour from Columbus, but it was well worth the trip as we were privileged to hold our July 17 meeting in the beautifully restored Renaissance Theatre which houses the Warner/Kearns/Carson 3/22 Wurlitzer, splendidly decorated on its lift

at the left of the stage. Here a most gracious Virginia and her group of volunteers, along with members of the organ crew, provided for all our comforts. After a short meeting, we welcomed back member Trent Sims who presented a delightful program of ballads, light classics and stirring marches on this magnificent instrument. Trent, who is a consummate organist in his own right, we understand was tendered a position as part-time organist for the summer movie series at the theatre as a result of this appearance. His performance was followed by open console. We will cherish our experience at this theatre for a long time to come and plan to take advantage of their invitation to come back soon.

*John R. Polsley*



*Paul Renard at console of Maine North High School Wurlitzer.*  
*Bill Rieger Photo*



## CHICAGO AREA

312/282-0037 or 312/698-6898

As we take account of this past year, we are satisfied with all in general. There were good shows and socials, and only a few losses of theatres which put some organs on the silent shelf.

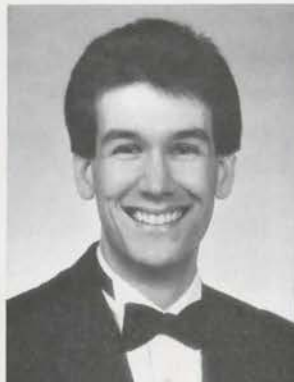
During the second half of the year, David Lowe from England presented an excellent program at Mundelein Seminary in July. Rosemary Bailey appeared in concert at the Chicago Theatre, giving us of her superb talent and experience, and a good portion of nostalgia in her selections. Paul Renard was at Maine North High School for a July Social presenting what may be the finale for that auditorium. We, of course, hope not, but have heard this before. Paul gave us a delightful program to remember.

The 1100-seat Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove, with its 2/7 Barton, is getting due attention these days. Bill Rieger and crew are attending to its needs, and several local youngsters are playing this instrument for intermissions and before and after film runs of the day. This is good experience for these organists, and we are all very appreciative of Willis Johnson's organ interest. He is a theatre pipe organ enthusiast which helps the situation as he had this organ installed not too long ago.

At this writing, the future of the Chicago Theatre is dubious. We hope that when this appears in print that all will be settled for a happy continuation of the theatre's activities and its beautiful Wurlitzer pipe organ.

Happy Holidays to all of you from all of us!  
*Almer N. Brostrom*

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215/566-1764

On August 28 we proudly presented our restored Philadelphia Civic Center organ to the membership and all organ buffs who wished to attend. Buffs came from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Michigan. Approximately 80 attended.

On entering the Auditorium (seating 12,000) one's attention is immediately drawn to the two four-manual consoles at either end of the orchestra pit, the classical console at the left and the theatre console at the right, both at the auditorium floor level. Both consoles are in excellent condition. The consoles, the orchestra pit and, yes, even a large portion of the stage are on screw-driven lifts. Approximately 90 ranks are located above the proscenium arch in four separate chambers. The theatre console controls 19 ranks, and the classical console controls all ranks except the Kinura. Ample time was allotted to members and guests to examine, photograph and "ooh" and "aah" the consoles.

There are organists, good organists, very good organists, and organists whose names alone denote a very special class of organists. Lowell Ayars is one name in that very special class, and we were honored to have him demonstrate the musical quality of our restoration efforts.

Lowell's first offering was in the classical vein from the classical console. Then he took a short break while the organ played "An American Fantasy" via the roll player. Lowell then returned to the theatre console and finished his, as usual, superb (but all too short) program. Thank you, Lowell Ayars!

We also owe thanks to Mr. Brantley Duddy, our technical advisor for the past nine years, and to Mr. James Breneman, our crew chief, and his crew for an excellent job.

NOTE: We are now starting the restoration and installation of the Sedgewick Theatre organ in the Keswick Theatre under the direction of Mr. Bernie Mc Gorrie and his excellent crew.

*Marshall C. Ladd*



## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Wellesley  
617/662-7055

Our season's final meeting at Babson on June 19 had Gary Phillips at the console. No stranger to our organ, having spent many hours in the chambers regulating and voicing, Gary gave us variety aplenty. A fast-paced "Cherokee" got his brief program rolling. He included a nice, slow ballad, a favorite of his, "Moonlight in Vermont," and ended with a spicy "Valencia." With Gary's voicing ability, good registration is assured and makes for pleasant listening.

Rosalie and Pat Fucci once again kindly hosted our members and friends for our June 26 picnic and organ gathering at their Waltham home. Bob Legon led the parade of organists at the Robert-Morton to which an upright piano has been connected, which makes an interesting addition, both aurally and visually. The Fuccis know how to "order" weather, and a wonderful day was again our good fortune. Nice musical memories linger.

*Stanley C. Garniss*



New Jersey

609/888-0909 or 201/445-1128

Headline News! In 1987 our chapter applied for a grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State. We were, at that time, turned down because our application had "definite historic intent and our future mission was unclear." We were encouraged to keep trying and to clarify our artistic intent and its impact on the State of New Jersey.

Many subsequent hours were spent by the grant committee, George and Denise Andersen, Tony and Carol Rus-



*Peter Panos (left) and Reverend Patrick Panos of St. Jude Church in Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey.  
Jinny Vanore Photo*

tako, and the prime mover and motivator, Bob Norris. In August 1988 they tasted the sweet taste of success. Garden State has been awarded a \$3400 grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State for the year 1988-89. It was very exciting to know that of the 1800 applicants only 562 were selected and we were one of them. Now we must demonstrate our artistic endeavors with organ restorations, top-notch artists and matched artistic ventures.

Our July 30 meeting was held in the large Asbury Park Convention Center which juts out over the ocean at the end of Asbury's famous Boardwalk. The theatre organ is a 3/8 Kilgen with a big sound. We have a contract with the city of Asbury and have occasional meetings there. Incoming President Bob Norris explained the \$3400 grant and outlined all the procedures that we must follow to insure future grants. Open console was held and we were delighted with the improved sounds of the organ, the result of many long hours of work by our new crew chief, Russ Sattur. Also helping were Bill Smith and George Worthington. A buffet picnic on the stage ended the day.

August 21: put together a cool, sunny day after many hot, humid ones; add a concert on a newly installed organ which is capable of theatre organ sounds; follow this with a picnic supper, and you have all the ingredients for a good time.

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## GARDEN STATE cont.

Both Peter Panos and Father Pat Panos, pastor of the St. Jude Roman Catholic Church in Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey, love theatre organ music. Father Pat commissioned Walter Froehlich to install a pipe organ capable of both sounds. Walter is not only known to our chapter, but also to the many chapters who received their theatre organs through his efforts and connections with RKO, Stanley Warner movie chain.

The artist for this concert was Harry Ley, who is well versed in pipe organ as well as piano. He has played with Fred Waring and the Pennsylvanians. Harry played a wide variety of popular music and he registered theatre organ sounds expertly. Of course, we enjoyed! The proof was the enthusiastic applause. A tour of the chambers, open console and a very social picnic followed in the Parish Hall.

Jinny Vanore

## GULF COAST

Pensacola, Florida

904/932-3133 or 904/433-4683

Our first meeting of the year was to elect officers. President Scott Brodie wears several hats for us, mainly those of program chairman and theatre arranger.

We worked like beavers getting our Robert-Morton playing again before Lyn Larsen played April 16 to inaugurate our coming concert season. As usual, Lyn displayed his unusual talent at the console plus heartwarming conversation with the audience. The whole program was a smashing success, and we can't wait to have him back — a true artist with which to work. In the meantime, to keep the Robert-Morton in shape, we have Tom Hazleton scheduled for September and Robert Wolfe in November. We are looking forward to hearing Walt Strony and Jonas Nordwall early in 1989.

Our chief go-between and advisor, B.C. Melvin, has arranged with the Saenger Theatre, home of our wonderful Robert-Morton, to install hurricane "props" for the console. Those who are unfamiliar with hurricanes may think that water is our worst enemy. Not so. Wind and then the lack of electrical power are the worst. So, if a storm threatens (which they do all the time here in the Gulf Coast area), "BC" is ready to hie down to the theatre, raise the console while the power is still on, and "prop" it up with these sturdy props so it won't get flooded — we hope! Of course, the whole theatre is in a flood plain of some five feet. Until the time of restoration, you could see the last high-water mark on the walls left from the last flooding.

The Saenger is cooperating beautifully with us to help us get our concert series going. Their management is even providing "Punch and cookies" for the post Tom Hazleton show.

The xylophone is down from its home in the chambers and into Dr. Rhea's workshop for a complete overhaul. Keeping up an organ is like woman's work — never done. As long as we have such expert help, we will succeed. Jim Scog-

gins, from Jackson, Mississippi, comes regularly to help with official maintenance, tuning and general chamber work. He is truly dedicated to helping us with our Robert-Morton and does a splendid job with much cheerfulness. Paul Sutton has also helped immeasurably.

Our mailing crew assembled at the home of Scott Brodie to mail out brochure/flyers about Lyn Larsen's concert and will do this again before the next concerts. We sure can lick, staple, fold and unmutilate flyers! Our response nationwide has been sensational, so we are continuing.

Lyn was most gracious to give Dr. Rhea a favorable critique of the organ which gives us a goal to work toward to constantly improve this instrument we worked so hard to produce. To see it resting in the Saenger is joy for the heart and beauty for the soul. Hearing it makes the "marrow dance in our bones."

Until then . . . Dorothy Standley



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We have relocated from the Babcock Theatre Building to larger, newly redecorated and carpeted, air-conditioned space with full kitchen facilities in the Fratt School Building. This headquarters is just a short distance from the boarding house where Jesse Crawford resided in 1913 when he began his theatre organ career at the Gem Theatre in Billings.

A "Headquarters-Warming" was held July 31 when Vice-President Steve Plaggemeyer played a concert for Billings members. He opened his recital on the Hammond organ with "A Wonderful Day" and then played Crawford's "Us And Company" followed by Zez Confrey's "Kitten on the Keys." Many in attendance were fans from the now defunct Pipes & Pizza, so Steve played some of the favorites from those days. He also played Young's "Toccata Pontifique" before accompanying the Charlie Chaplin silent *The Adventurer*. For an encore, he played Confrey's "Dizzy Fingers."

Open console and refreshments followed. President Kay Kayhill, Ed Mullins and guest classical organist Ms. Kinga Zawislak each played a few pieces for us, and we are looking forward to more of these get-togethers in the future.

Chapter membership is currently at 48, with members in England, Canada and Australia. Several charter members from 1987 are delinquent in their dues, and we hope they will renew their memberships.

*Dr. Ed Mullins*

*Photos from top, left to right: Steve Plaggemeyer, Ed Mullins, and Kay Kahill entertain on the Hammond. Ed Mullins & Duane Bondy Photos President Kay Kahill with poster made by member Bob Vaughn of San Francisco and displayed at ATOS 1988 Convention in Portland. Ed Mullins Photo Organist Kinga Zawislak gets help from Steve Plaggemeyer during open console. Ed Mullins Photo Amy, Jesse Crawford chapter mascot, tries her paws during open console when she played "Mutt on the Manuals."*



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## LAND O' LAKES

St. Paul-Minneapolis

715/262-5086 or 612/771-1771

The World Theatre in downtown St. Paul was the scene of much hilarity on July 15, when the Sons of the Desert Film Show was presented with special guests on the program, and our own Karl Eilers of Minneapolis at the Wurlitzer accompanying several of the silent films. This was their sixth International Laurel & Hardy Convention (July 14-17) held at the Radisson Hotel in St. Paul, and those of us who attended from the Land O' Lakes chapter met and visited with enthusiasts from Australia, California and Pennsylvania and other distant places, all primed for a happy time. Spanky McFarland of Our Gang Comedies was there in person!

During a wet, all-day rainfall, thirty-five passengers, including three couples from the 3M Vacation Club, boarded the "Foote-Note," a 51' cruiser, at the Afton House Marina at 1:00 p.m. on August 22 and headed up the St. Croix River toward Bayport, Minnesota. The steady down-pour did not seem to bother our passengers, all very congenial, because we were so thankful it was raining after our long, hot drought. A delightful buffet lunch was served and *once* the weather cleared up enough so that some passengers took their plates to the top deck and enjoyed the scenery, too.

After the cruise everyone returned to their cars and drove to Mike Erie's and Roger Dalziel's church/home in Prescott, Wisconsin, where we were treated to dessert and coffee, more visiting and a tour of the church, the upper level being the future home of their classical and theatre pipe organ installations. There were at least five consoles, piles of big wooden pipes, boxes of small metal pipes, boxes and boxes of other small parts stacked to the rafters, along with a few church pews.

Our lawns, shrubs, and trees are not pretty this summer because of the drought and everyone is wondering what our landscapes will look like in the spring. The squirrels in my yard are busy eating and harvesting huge acorns from my oak trees. Does that mean a rough winter for us hardy Minnesotans?

Verna Mae Wilson

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## LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

01-422-1538 or 093-256-6499

Since we all came back from the Portland Convention, our chapter seems to have been busier than ever. On July 17 we held a concert on our chapter Christie at Barry with a very appreciative audience that included two Mayors and eight distinguished guests. Our artist was Douglas Reeve on a return visit, and he gave a supreme performance along with his usual delightful chatter.

On July 24 we held our London meeting at the Top Rank Club Kilburn with two artists, Alec Leader and Paul Kirner, who charmed everyone with their contrasts of styles. These two are members of our chapter and have been a great help in many ways.

Friday and Saturday W/E was given over to the younger generation at Wurlitzer Lodge, a fund-raising day by a sponsored programme to hear six young artists, Dena, Martin, Emma, Suzanne, Peter and Paul, and one of our past winners, Michael Wooldridge, who gave his support. They gave a concert on Friday evening and raised 202 pounds, came along Saturday morning at 9 o'clock and finally finished the last tune at 9 that night. Members came all day long and kept sponsoring a tune. Food, food and more food kept appearing from nowhere, and to end the evening a barbeque was set up in the garden. A grand total of more than 1000 pounds was raised for the YOY competition. What an effort to be proud of!

August 3 found some of us trailing off to Barry, South Wales, for the monthly Tea Dance. Every table was taken this time, so our Team all feel the effort is worthwhile. Our thanks to all the organists who have given us another Happy Month of Our Kind of Music!

There is nothing like a busy chapter to keep the theatre organ movement alive. Congratulations from our chapter to new President John Ledwon. We are sure that under his leadership the ATOS will go forward with some new, fresh ideas.

Edith Rawle



Dena Cooper

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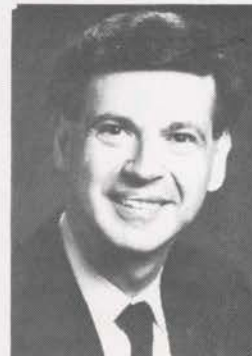
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Dan Bellomy played a concert of show tunes for LATOS on Sunday morning at the Orpheum Theatre in downtown Los Angeles. The concert was originally scheduled for the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium but had to be moved to the Orpheum as the San Gabriel is under reconstruction because of the recent earthquake. Even though the crowd was small, they demanded an encore and would have liked another if time had permitted.

Our August meeting is covered elsewhere in this issue, but we do want to note that a number of our chapter pictures were mis-routed to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and were not received in the Journal office, so we have submitted shots from our spring concerts for publication in this issue. *Wayne Flottman*



*Dan Bellomy at the Orpheum in August.*

*Zimfoto*



*Gaylord Carter at the 4/36 Wurlitzer in the Simon-ton residence in February.*

*Zimfoto*



*Bob Ralston at San Gabriel in April.*

*Zimfoto*



*David Lowe from England at the Orpheum in June.*

*Zimfoto*

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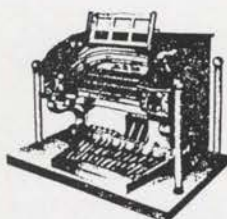
The Harmonica Varieties provide an alternative type of music for dancing.

Karen Howard Photo



Virg Howard at the Yamaha on the dance floor during the cruise.

Karen Howard Photo



## MOTOR CITY

Detroit

313/537-1133

Some 1300 people enjoyed our fifteenth annual private charter moonlight cruise on the 86-year-old excursion steamer *Columbia* the evening of August 4. Dance organists were Wilma Steslick, Jack Dommer and Virg Howard. Additional entertainment was provided by a harmonica band for dancing and a strolling barbershop quartet. Vocalist Fran Carmody, accompanied by Sharron Patterson, entertained on the bar deck and led a sing-along. The weather was hot, but there was no rain during the three-hour cruise on the Detroit River.

Ted Strasser was our guest at the Redford Theatre on Sunday afternoon, September 11, where he presented a workshop on improving speech and microphone techniques. Now retired from radio station WJR, where he was a favorite on-air personality for many years, Ted presented a very comprehensive workshop that included proper articulation, correct breathing, resonance and

other pointers that would be of benefit to a performer or master of ceremonies.

The Young Organist Competition Committee, chaired by Brian Carmody, has already begun to plan for next year's competition which will be expanded to include other age groups, including hobby organists.

Restoration efforts are continuing at the Redford Theatre where members are at work on major improvements in preparation for next year's convention.

Members of the Keyboard Kutups Organ Klub, of Windsor, Ontario, entertained for our Fourth Sunday program at the Royal Oak Music Theatre on July 24. Therese Romanick, Bob Ballard, Jim Copeland and Bernie Marchand, several of whom had never before played an instrument like the 3/16 Barton, did an admirable job.

The Sunman family provided the music for our Fourth Sunday concert on August 28 at the Royal Oak. Artists included Gloria Sunman and daughters Faith and Claudette, all of whom have previously performed for our chapter.

Ron Rhode and his brother, Chuck, will be featured at the Redford Theatre for our Christmas program on December 10.

For more information, write: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219, or phone 313/537-2560.

Don Lockwood



Gil Francis (left) and Ted Strasser at Redford Theatre workshop.

D. VanSteenkiste Photo



Jack Dommer, one of this year's moonlight cruise dance organists.

Karen Howard Photo



Wilma Steslick plays for dancing at the Conn organ.

Karen Howard Photo

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## NORTH FLORIDA

Jacksonville  
904/268-9537

This new group of theatre organ enthusiasts organized last January without benefit of a playing theatre pipe organ within several hours driving time from Jacksonville, as far as we know.

However, our hopes are high that the original Wurlitzer Style 260 SP, Opus 1569, can be returned to the renovated Florida Theatre Performing Arts Center. Much of our energies are devoted to that end.

Without a home base, we have held monthly meetings in organ stores, homes of members and in churches.



Byron Melcher at the 3/8 Robert-Morton in the Lakewood Theatre, Dallas.

Of particular interest was our June 17 meeting to which the public was invited and which was held in St. John's Cathedral by the good graces of church officials. Mark Renwick played "Pipe Organ Pops" on the cathedral's magnificent 3/62 Austin organ (new in 1984). About 250 people attended and exuberantly applauded the musical performance. They were enthusiastic in their approval of the new chapter and its goals.

Erle Renwick



## NORTH TEXAS

Dallas-Fort Worth  
214/256-2743 or 214/233-7108

We never cease to be amazed at the beautiful, evocative sounds that emanate from the limited resources of our 3/8 Robert-Morton in the capable hands of an experienced and talented organist. We, again, had this pleasure when Byron Melcher played for our August chapter meeting in the Lakewood Theatre. Byron, now a resident of this area and an ATOS member, was selected by major organ manufacturers as advisor and representative and has spent many years in this capacity away from Texas. We were delighted when he returned to this area with his family a couple of years ago, affording us the opportunity to have them with us and to hear Byron play. Because the Lakewood is a working theatre, we are obliged to have our chapter meetings

there in the mornings. Despite the early hour on a Sunday morning, about forty chapter members and friends gathered in the comfort and beauty of the Lakewood to hear Byron's program. Byron substituted his Howard seat for the organ bench, allowing him greater ease in turning to acknowledge applause and to announce his selections. His varied program included many ballads, several Crawford arrangements and a very sassy "How Come You Do Me Like You Do?" The very appreciative group would like to have heard more but the inevitable hour for us to clear the theatre came all too quickly. We all look forward to the next time. Many thanks, Byron!

We have had to forego plans for a public concert in September because of many factors, including theatre scheduling and our inability to secure a date commitment for our chosen artist. We are currently shooting for a date in early November, giving us ample time to complete plans to publicize the event.

Several of our members attended the Portland convention and report having a very enjoyable experience.

We have been invited by the Santa Barbara chapter to attend the dedication concert on their Wonder Morton on October 1. Several members are especially looking forward to attending this event since the organ was given by the North Texas chapter after many years of careful storage here while we sought a suitable site for installation in this area. We are glad that this beautiful instrument will again be charming theatre patrons.

Irving Light

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## OHIO VALLEY Cincinnati

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Feasibility studies for a remodeled Emery Theatre and the adjoining complex of University of Cincinnati's Ohio College of Applied Science have made only short-term plans possible in programming for the past year. If current plans succeed, Emery and the college building attached will become a Performing Arts Centre. This will entail extensive improvements to stage facilities, and since the organ chambers are upstage across the whole width of the stage, organ buffs all know the complications our chapter will experience before the dust clears.

Emery is the home of our chapter activities, of the former Albee Theatre 3/29 Wurlitzer, and one of the longest running series of nostalgic movies in the country. In July we celebrated the tenth anniversary of this weekend series. The film was *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad*

World, and it drew the largest audience in two years. The Mighty Wurlitzer is part of every show and is played by members of our organ staff of twelve. After each movie the screen is raised, the speakers moved to the side, and the remaining audience members come to the stage for a "look-see" at the inside of the chambers. This weekend several hundred took the tour. The fascination with the theatre organ never declines!

Organist Searle Wright has been featured organist twice in the past year. First there was a theatre benefit last fall when we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the dedication of the organ at Emery. He and Gaylord Carter had been dedicatory soloists in 1977. Searle was again featured soloist in June when National Public Radio had their annual convention in Cincinnati. A feature was a concert and silent movie at Emery. Many in attendance had never seen a silent movie nor had they heard a theatre pipe organ, and both were duly taken care of by Searle in top-flight style. The NPR host station was WVXU-FM, Xavier University in Cincinnati, which has been in the forefront of publicizing the need for public backing for Emery Theatre's future. This show was climaxed with a late evening boat trip on the Ohio River. ATOS conventioners would call this the Afterglow.

Cincinnati was home to Mr. Wright for several years in the '70s when he served as Director of Music at Christ Church (Episcopal) and as adjunct professor at U.C.'s College-Conservatory of Music. Though he was president of the American Guild of Organists, his organ performances have encompassed both the classic literature and lighter music of the theatre organ. He has appeared as soloist at several ATOS conventions.

The chapter ended its season with its annual meeting at the home of Jack and Joan Strader, also the home of the former Cincinnati Paramount Theatre 3/17 Wurlitzer. Members always look forward to a meeting here — a good combination of a gorgeous organ, gracious hosting by the Straders and a generally fine ambience for organ buffs.

Hubert S. Shearin



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**Portland**  
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Chapter members took time out in August to relax and enjoy a picnic at the home of its newest theatre organ, Roxy. John and MaryJo Olsen were our hosts, and Roxy was very happy to perform at open console. It is always exciting to hear the sounds of a new installation, and the number of members who played elicited most of the tonal variety that one would expect from a happy Wurlitzer.

It is no surprise that the thing we enjoy second best is food. And, of course, our potlucks are always delightfully overstocked with the very best.



*Bud Abel gives Roxy a workout at Oregon chapter picnic.*  
Claude Neuffer Photo



*Chapter members enjoy Irv Ewen's album of convention pictures.*  
Claude Neuffer Photo

*Oregon chapter picnic always brings out the best.*  
Claude Neuffer Photo



**PINE TREE**  
Old Orchard Beach, Maine  
207/839-5700 or 207/625-3397

The exciting news from here is that another step has taken place in the Bower's organ transplant. The organ was donated to the chapter in 1987 by Dave and Christine Bowers of Wolfeboro, New Hampshire. It was originally installed in the RKO Keith Theatre in Dayton, Ohio. Chapter members agreed to donate the 2/9 Wurlitzer to a non-profit group called Johnson Hall, Inc., which is currently working to restore an historic theatre in Gardiner, Maine. We are particularly pleased with the association between the two groups since we both have similar goals: To preserve, restore and promote awareness of theatres and theatre organs and their significance in America's past. The organ will be installed and maintained by Johnson Hall; Pine Tree members will have access to the organ for practice and programs.

We held our annual summer concert at Old Orchard Beach on July 27. Douglas Rafter, the former Municipal Organist for Portland, Maine, played a concert entitled *The Wurlitzer* at the Schoolhouse. It was a varied program that included well known favorites such as Purvis' "The Little Bells," Lemmens' "Fanfare," and Ketelby's "In a Monastery Garden" which featured a bird whistle.

Imagine the surprise of the new principal at the school which houses our organ, when she walked on to the stage the morning of the concert and with wide eyes asked "WHAT'S THIS??" Someone had neglected to tell her of the treasure in her new school. Douglas Rafter was setting up the pre-sets. Ironically, she had been to many of the Christmas concerts he played in years past in Portland. Now we are all looking forward to a new series of children's programs at Loranger School.  
Edith J. Pennock

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## POTOMAC VALLEY

Washington, D.C.

703/569-6206 or 301/652-3222

We met on Sunday afternoon, August 21, at the University of Maryland's Center for Adult Education, College Park, Maryland. It was a major event — attended by about 130 persons — for the re-dedication of Potomac Valley's resurrected 3/10 Kimball theatre pipe organ, originally built for the Cosmopolitan Theatre in downtown Washington, D.C., which opened in 1924 under the shorter name Earle, in honor of a former governor of Pennsylvania, sharing the name of a theatre in Philadelphia by the same owners. In 1947 the Earle became the Warner, a name mandated by its new owners, the Warner Brothers.

When Doug Bailey, proud owner of the 2/11 Moller organ from the Palace theatre in downtown Washington, heard that the Warner theatre might be torn down, he arranged for the Kimball ownership to be transferred to tax-exempt WETA, a local Public Radio/TV station, with tax benefits for the Warners. Over the years, WETA could not find a suitable location for the Kimball, so ownership was transferred to Potomac Valley Chapter, also tax-exempt, which has been laboring with volunteer help, mainly from Warren Thomas, George Johnson, Horace (Barney) Johnson and Frank Vanaman, along with others, to get the organ into playable condition after many years of neglect. Because of extensive Perflex in the Kimball, the chapter decided, at considerable expense, to convert most of the original electro-pneumatic relay controls to modern Z-Tronic electronic relay controls, which gives the organ much faster response time.

A brief off-stage introduction brought the organ to life as Doug Bailey opened the program with "Blue Skies." He then gave a fascinating narration of the Cosmopolitan/Earle/Warner history, playing

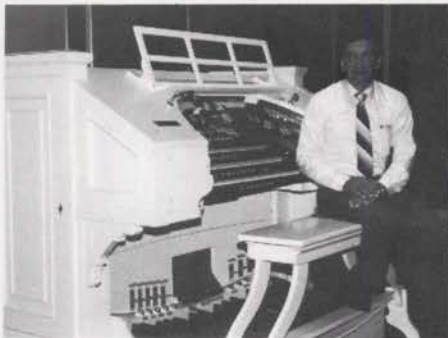


Frank Vanaman at the 3/10 Kimball. Dan Swope Photo

appropriate musical selections from the era then current at the Earle.

After intermission, Chairman Don Faehn introduced our special guests, members and friends of the Free State Theatre Organ Society of Baltimore, Maryland. Warren Thomas, curator of the Kimball, then reviewed the extensive work that had gone into the organ renovation.

Following that, further selections were played by youthful Potomac Valley member Frank Vanaman, who is also a member of the Free State Theatre Organ Society, an engineering student at the University, and one of the main workers on the Kimball modernization. His snappy theatrical-style renditions, ending with "Mr. Sandman," were a great delight to the audience.



Warren Thomas, proud curator of the 3/10 Kimball at the University of Maryland. Dan Swope Photo



Doug Bailey narrates the history of the 3/10 Kimball at the University of Maryland. Dan Swope Photo

Also in attendance were others from the public who had heard the event publicized on WMAL, a local radio station. At least one of these decided to join on the spot!

In his element at this gala event was Potomac Valley member Daniel Swope, a professor at the University of Maryland, and an ardent photographer. Dan inaugurated his newest acquisition, a video camera. Look for Dan's name under most Potomac Valley photos.

On September 2, many Potomac Valley members migrated to Frederick, Maryland, to hear our own member, Bob Stratton, accompany four silent short comedies on the famous 2/8 Wurlitzer at the Weinberg Center for the Arts.

Jack Little



Bob Eyer, Jr., at Dick Kline's 4/37 Wurlitzer. Dan Swope Photo

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January 29	University Chapel, Valparaiso, Indiana
February 5	Arlington Theatre, Santa Barbara, California
February 12	Clemens Center, Elmira, New York
February 17	Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
February 19	Trinity Presbyterian Church, Columbus, Ohio
March 5	Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania
March 10	Hershey Theatre, Hershey, Pennsylvania
March 11, 12	Wagnall's Memorial, Lithopolis, Ohio
March & April	Granada Theatre, Kansas City, Kansas
March 17 & 18	National Tour with DIE NIBELUNGEN
March 30, 31	International Film Festival, San Francisco, California
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Seattle

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Summer is almost over and we are looking forward to a busy new season. We had our annual picnic in July; the weather was perfect, a little smaller group than usual, but Bert Lobberregt's nice little Wurlitzer got a good workout during the afternoon.

We moved our annual fund-raiser auction up to August this year, with the result that we had a smaller crowd than usual, but we had a great time. Some of our more shy members, who generally won't play when we have a big crowd, enjoyed open console at our Marr & Colton; we even had music during dinner, and the potluck was delicious!

We discovered hidden talent that day, too. Ken Gallwey, our regular auctioneer, was ill, so we drafted our treasurer, Dan Raven, and he was a most satisfactory substitute. If there are rules and regulations for auctions, they were probably all broken that day, but we certainly had a lot of fun, and made a nice addition to our organ maintenance fund.

Members journeyed across the state to Raymond to hear Don Myers play for silent movies at the Raymond Theatre. Their pipe organ is in the process of restoration, and donations will go to that project. Co-sponsor was the Willapa Heritage Association.

Thanks to some generous assistance from the Paramount Theatre, we were able to realize a profit from the Encore. We are most grateful to them!

Margaret C. Hill



Bob Ralston (piano) and Colonel Jack Moelmann (organ) team up for a lively duet.

Tom Jeffery Photo



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Our July 23 meeting at the Orpheum Theatre was a work session in preparation for Bob Ralston's concert the next day. President Harold Kenney held a brief business meeting to firm-up work assignments for the concert. A highlight of the meeting came as a pleasant surprise to Harold; he was presented with the chapter's 1988 Tibia Award as a token of appreciation from all RCTOS members in recognition of his service to the chapter. The presentation was made by Joe Hoga who hand-crafted the beautiful plaque, including the Tibia pipe which whistles when winded. Our good

friend, Colonel Jack Moelmann was on hand to introduce us to Bob Ralston who treated us to a mini-concert on both piano and organ. While George Rice and Stanley Gross performed some final tuning duties on the Orpheum's 3/13 Wurlitzer, an installation lovingly restored and maintained by them, other tasks relating to ticket sales and concert production were efficiently completed by other members. Finally, all was in order for Sunday's concert.

On July 24 we presented Bob Ralston in concert at the Orpheum Theatre in *Turning Back the Pages*, with Colonel Jack Moelmann as master of ceremonies. Bob opened the show with an early Americana organ medley, including "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "Long, Long Ago," and "Just a Song at Twilight." Moving to the grand piano, Bob offered a medley of love tunes. Back at the organ, he offered a tribute to Steven Collins Foster with some of his best-known songs. Then the audience joined in singing "How Great Thou Art," accompanied by Bob on organ. The first segment of the show was concluded with a sing-along complete with slides, and a spectacular rendition of "Sortie Toccata."

After intermission, Bob returned to the organ playing familiar Lawrence Welk Show theme music (soap bubbles courtesy of about 20 chapter members). The silent film *Angora Love*, starring Laurel and Hardy, was skillfully cued by Bob, to the delight of the audience. Bob went into the audience, taking requests for his next medley. To close the program, Jack Moelmann (on organ) joined Bob (on piano) in a lively duet which included "Canadian Capers" and a novelty number, "Would You Rather Be a Colonel with an Eagle on Your Shoulder or a Private With a Chicken on Your Knee?" Finally, the audience joined with Bob Ralston in singing "God Bless America" accompanied by Jack on organ. *Turning Back the Pages* certainly was both an artistic and a financial success, thanks to our two talented artists.

Tom Jeffery

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Joe Hogya (left) presents Harold Kenney with the chapter's 1988 Tibia Award.  
Tom Jeffery Photo



On the day before his Orpheum concert, Bob Ralston puts the ivories through their paces.  
Tom Jeffery Photo



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The plagued, hot, dry summer didn't hamper our work crew from accomplishing what they set out to do on our 3/23 Wurlitzer at the Granada Theatre. The Main chamber is mostly completed; the console trouble-shooting is almost finished, and the blower is ready to go as soon as the three-phase power is restored to the building. We have been able to play a couple of ranks at a time using a small test blower. This is Joe Barnes' latest progress report from the Granada Theatre.

July 17, following ATOS President Jack Moelmann's return from the convention, he invited all of us to his spacious home in O'Fallon, Illinois, for another of his famous parties. Members and guests brought covered dishes and Jack furnished the barbequed meat. President Dennis Ammann led a short business meeting which was followed by Jack's report on the convention. Then it was chow time and the lines were formed. The drought was interrupted by a good rain and electrical storm that did not deter either Jack or Chuck Wiltsch or their helpers who were barbequing out on an open deck. In one hour's time, the hot day changed to a pleasant evening.

We were impressed by Jack's report on the convention and want to take this opportunity to wish our new President and Board the best. They can count on our continuing support. *Dale L. Boring*

## SAN DIEGO

California  
619/281-0531 or 619/727-2023

The long-awaited release of the recording by concert artist Walt Strony made on our Mighty Wurlitzer at the California Theatre has finally happened! A truly wonderful instrument in the hands of such a capable artist makes this cassette a MUST HAVE for all who like the sound of theatre organ pipes.

A preview of one number on this cassette was provided for a thrilled audience at our recent General Membership Meeting. The recording engineer on this project was our own Russ Peck and through his knowledge of recording equipment and acoustics, coupled with his musical abilities, the sounds on this cassette are breathtaking. The cassette was mastered using the latest state-of-the-art digital techniques and was duplicated in real-time versus high-speed duplication. This Walt Strony cassette is truly of audiophile quality. Our own Chris Gorsuch, concert artist, organ builder and design engineer, was the producer on this project. Cassettes are available by mail — be sure to see the display ad in this magazine.

The recent meeting of two long-time friends was a joyous occasion on the stage of the California Theatre when the famous 95-year-old Del Castillo was here to play our 3/22 Wurlitzer for the current silent film series. He was enthusiastically greeted by our own Lt. Col. Harry Jenkins, who is a mere 85 years old! The "Colonel" played silents for 17 years and later joined the circus where he was organist, band master, composer and arranger. His career also included composing official marches for the U.S. Army Air Force where he was a pilot for many years. These two very talented gentlemen had a great reunion, much to the delight of our San Diego Chapter.

ATOS visitors to San Diego:  
For organ visitation information — phone:  
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## SOONER STATE

Tulsa  
918/742-8693 or 918/437-2146

Our July meeting was held in the beautiful new home of Bill McMahon. It was truly delightful to hear his four-rank "Petite Ensemble" Kilgen in its new setting. The large living room is designed around the organ, Bill's magnificent sound system, and his 45" TV screen.

Bill demonstrated the organ's capabilities (and his musical progress) by playing a lovely "Clair de Lune," by Debussy, and by playing Clark's "Trumpet Voluntary," in which he used the Oboe for the trumpet part. The organ's other three ranks are Diapason, Dulciana, and Gedeckt (flute).

We also viewed a videotape hosted by Gaylord Carter, *Legendary Theatre Organists*. This was a collection of film clips from the 1930s, featuring a number of early theatre organists: Jesse Crawford, Lew White, Dick Leibert, Reginald Foot, Ann Leaf, Don Baker, and Gaylord himself. Unfortunately, as Gaylord noted, the clips didn't show nearly enough of the organists actually playing, but it was fun to hear them, even so.

The evening closed with open console for those who wished to play.

August was a change of pace for us. Instead of a regular meeting, we journeyed to the Fin 'n' Feather Resort on Lake Tenkiller, for an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner and to hear organist Curt Chambers entertain on a Conn 652. Curt is a very talented performer, and can play just about anything on his instrument. We especially enjoyed the country fiddle he coaxed from it! Twenty-eight persons from our chapter made the hour-and-a-half trip.

With the end of summer's hot weather, we are again taking up the wiring project on the electronic combination action for our club-owned Robert-Morton. The day is getting closer when we'll have it playing. *Dorothy Smith*



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**WESTERN RESERVE**  
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The welcome summer sunshine witnessed lots of activity for our members. We celebrated Father's Day with a concert by Tom Drake at the 3/10 Wurlitzer in the Civic Theatre in nearby Akron, Ohio. The beauty of Tom's artistry was accentuated by the ornate setting of this theatre complete with "clouds" and "stars" on the ceiling.

The "classical" lovers in the chapter were treated to a concert by organist Joseph Kolecki on the 1986 Schlicker in Cleveland's St. Thomas More Church. The 3/43 organ is in four divisions, favoring strong reeds, a horizontally mounted *Trompette en Chamade* and mixtures in the French style. This talented organist emphasized the versatility of the organ with selections including Bach's "Toccatina & Fugue in D Minor," Pachelbel's "Toccatina in E Minor" and several theatre selections, "Teddy Bears' Picnic" and the love theme from *Ice Castles*. The instrument and the artist also shined in a brief accompaniment role as vocalist Louis DiRenzo sang the favorite "Ave Maria" by Schubert.

Finally, members were treated to a tour and concert at the Renaissance Theatre in Mansfield, Ohio. The beauty of this restored theatre heightened the enjoyment of the concert performed on the 3/22 Wurlitzer by organist Charles Oberrath and Bill Morrison, whose program included "Honeysuckle Rose," "I'll Never Smile Again" and "Love in

Bloom." The trip from Cleveland was certainly an investment returning an exceedingly enjoyable afternoon for all who participated.

Western Reserve Chapter wishes to extend warmest wishes of the Holiday Season to all, with sincere hopes for a musical New Year. *Jim Shepherd*



*Melissa Ambrose reveals additional talent.*

*Bill Vogel Photo*

*Below: Gilbert Francis at the Horning's organ.*

*Bill Vogel Photo*



**WOLVERINE**  
Central & Lower Michigan  
313/284-8882 or 313/588-7118

In July a rather small contingent of Wolverines traveled to Ann Arbor, to the home of Norm and Gena Horning. Those who did brave an overdose of summer were rewarded by organ artistry by Melissa Ambrose, Lorraine Robinson, Brian Carmody and Gil Francis, while Fran Carmody added her voice to that of the organ.

August was picnic month. Nothing said that louder than the delicious ham Mary and Don McKinney had prepared for the event. Thank you, McKinneys. Host Dave Voydanoff opened grounds, home and console of Wurlitzer House II to his fellow chapter members to enjoy. And that they did. Algonac, Michigan, has become a favorite watering hole for us Wolverines. Outside, a great potluck feast, put together by the members, was being enjoyed, while inside good music rolled as evoked from the Wurlitzer by open-consolists Gerry Elliott, Fred Bayne, Steve Stephani and Bob Mills. Forgive us if we missed someone.

As you read these notes, it will be November. Therefore, let all of us Wolverines now wish all ATOSers a joyful Holiday Season, filled with happy music (organ, of course).

*Charlie and Betty Baas*



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