

# Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to Tom B'Hend and staff for *THE International NEWS*. They have activated the "UP" button on the console lift, and now we are getting news of concerts and other events before they happen, as well as the ones which have occurred.

To Kim Dildine, who wrote about saving the Hammond, Indiana, Paramount, welcome to ATOS. Theatre organ enthusiasts are always interested in efforts to save theatres; however, a primary concern of most ATOS members was not covered in your letter. At the onset of theatre recovery endeavors, members should know: 1) the seating capacity of the theatre and whether or not it had (or will have) a pipe organ; and 2) if the theatre had a pipe organ, what size, make, and console style did it have, and were (are) there pipe chambers? All of this helps members conjure up (almost hear) the organ playing again in the theatre which is being renovated.

Be that as it may, I can, perhaps, be of some immediate help. Kim needs only to travel a short distance east to Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he will find the Embassy Theatre. This sparkling, refurbished, renovated downtown movie palace still contains the original pipe organ which is featured at most attractions and in concerts. While in Fort Wayne, Kim should try to see Bob Goldstine, who did the footwork, while Buddy Nolan held forth at the grand pipe organ, and organized a foundation to save the Embassy. This story should provide Kim with a chronology of the process of a theatre recovery, step by step.

If he travels west to Chicago, Mr. Bill Rieger can provide information concerning the Chicago Theatre project.

I commend Kim Dilworth's endeavors and wish him success, because, after 16 years with ATOS, I believe the "only place a theatre pipe organ sounds like a theatre pipe organ is in a theatre."

Sincerely,  
John Mecklenburg  
Hartford City, Indiana

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the letter from Billy Nalle in the July/August 1987, *THEATRE ORGAN*, and whilst I'm sure it was an innocent oversight, may I lay claim to the second longest running local radio programme of the same kind as Don Robinson. Don and I have swapped programmes and material on a couple of occasions, and my good friend Billy Nalle has been one of several notable American organists who have taken the time and trouble to supply me with recordings that have been enjoyed by my listeners.

Sadly, I have to report that at the end of this month (October 1988), my programme will be taken off the air after an 18-year association with this station; the local (BBC) scene is to change and with 30 hours being deducted each week from schedules, specialist music programmes, such as mine, have had to be axed. What concerns me most is that the platform for up-and-coming organ stars has now been dismantled forever in this area.

In addition to Billy Nalle, I would like to thank such other greats as Al Bollington, Lowell Ayars, Leon Berry, Terry Charles, Dennis James, Buddy Nolan, Don Thompson, Lyn Larsen, Ron Rhode Hector Olivera, and many others who have been so generous. So ends an era in English broadcasting, but may I congratulate Don Robinson on the WLFH in Utica, New York, and hope that his programme may continue for many years.

In 1977 I had the pleasure of meeting brothers Ralph and Buddy Bonds, whose electronic organ playing I had always admired. It was, therefore, upsetting for me to learn of the passing of Buddy a few weeks ago. Sadly, I have lost the address of the music shop in the Philadelphia area which is still run by Ralph. Can anyone please supply me with this?

Sincerely,  
Alan A. Ashton  
58 Leverhouse Lane  
Leyland PR5 2XN  
Lancashire, ENGLAND

Dear Editor,

During the weekend of October 14-16, approximately 250 ATOS members were treated royally with southern hospitality by the Alabama chapter. The entire weekend of music was wonderful. Concerts were well-spaced, well-planned, and the bus and shuttle services were always on time — and never got lost! The meals were first-rate and top-notch.

The artists all provided attendees with a wide variety of music and styles. Each prepared a concert to do the instrument being showcased the best justice. For veteran theatre organist Lee Erwin the weekend was a reunion of man and theatre organ, as Lee had been house organist at the Alabama in its earlier years.

Congratulations and hats off to Alabama Chapter! God bless!

Sincerely,  
Jim Koller, Assistant Editor  
*ATOS International NEWS*

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank all of the kind people who wrote to me and sent information and pictures of the Wanamaker organ in Philadelphia. Since I last wrote, I have had lots of information from Nel-

son Bucchner, Curator of the Grand Court Organ.

I have also received much information about the Midmer-Losh organ in the Convention Hall in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

My thanks and best wishes to you all.  
Kindest regards,  
Laurie Morley  
Cleveland, England

Dear Editor,

I am a new member and regret that I did not know of the American Theatre Organ Society many years ago.

In 1953-54, while attending college on Long Island, I traveled into New York City to attend the Jesse Crawford organ courses which were given at Steinway Hall on West 57th Street. Unfortunately, I never got to meet Mr. Crawford because he never put in an appearance at any of the classes. The courses were taught by Fred Feibel, who had been an organist at the New York Paramount and who, I note, is a member of the ATOS Hall of Fame.

In the past few years I have purchased organ arrangements and instruction books written by Mr. Feibel, but have heard nothing further from him. Do you have any information on the current whereabouts and activities of this very fine organist and teacher? I'd like to send a note to him from a former pupil.

Thanks for any information you can provide.

Sincerely,  
Richard Rodman  
50 Blevens, Drive  
Candia, NH 03034

Dear Editor:

Just a brief note to say how much I am enjoying the installments of "Organizing Popular Music" by Al Hermanns. I well remember using Mr. Hermanns' books when studying with Gordon Kibbee, one of the greatest theatre organ teachers of all time. Gordon recommends and uses the "Organizing" books with his students and it certainly is one of the finest "texts" for playing theatre organ. There is so much good material packed in these books that it could easily overwhelm a student (or professional!) so it is especially nice to have "bite-size chunks" in the *THEATRE ORGAN* installments.

I trust that every aspiring young theatre organist who is serious about success in this field will take advantage of this great opportunity and diligently study Mr. Hermann's contributions to *THEATRE ORGAN*.

Best wishes,  
Chris Elliott  
Menlo Park, California