

Chapter Notes



Ron Carter.

Gary W. Jones photo

ALABAMA Birmingham

205/942-5611 or 205/644-3606

August — a month for hot weather and a “hot” concert. Ron Carter from Atlanta ventured over with a wonderful group of friends and family to provide his first chapter meeting performance at The Alabama Theatre. Ron’s concert was exciting and showed his versatility as both organist and performer. His selections and arrangements were enjoyed by our whole crew and Ron was right at home with his Alabama Chapter friends.

Movie palaces and theatre organs are both grand and wonderful things, but are even more special when they bring two people together for a lifetime commitment. Theatre patrons Fred Osborne and Ola Jones had met through mutual friends over a year ago, and their first date together was a jazz concert in July 1988 at The Alabama. Things progressed and soon the jazz concerts, regular classic films and other public performances were a regular part of their dating routine. What more appropriate place to “pop the question” than at the theatre that had helped bring them together. A call from Fred to chapter Vice-President Gary Jones gained them access to the theatre and under the premise of a photo-session of the historic building, Fred was able to coerce Ola into helping. Once inside and down front near the console, Fred proposed, Ola accepted, and the rest is history (or will be in May 1990, the tentative date of the wedding!). Alabama Chapter members are all romantics at heart, and everyone here is thrilled to be a part of this young couple’s new life together.

Gary W. Jones



Fred Osborne and Ola Jones at the Alabama Theatre.

Gary W. Jones photo

ATLANTA

404/428-4809 or 404/948-0267

On July 16 we were invited back to the lovely Marietta home of Gordon and Linda Johnson to hear another performance on their 2/7 Wurlitzer-cum-piano, this time by Lloyd Hess. (See our report in the March/April '89 THEATRE ORGAN for description of the organ.) Lloyd grew up in Western Canada and then lived in Dallas, Texas, for twenty years before coming to Atlanta a year and a half ago. He studied piano with the Toronto Conservatory of Music for six years, and picked up organ on his own. He has been active in church music since the age of nine, and has played popular music all his life, too. He began playing theatre pipe organ in Dallas and for several years was one of the staff organists at the Lakewood Theatre. He served three terms as program chairman for North Texas Chapter. While in Dallas, he played accordion in German restaurants and for private parties. He is now a church organist here and has played in several churches other than the one where he is the main organist.



Lloyd Hess at the Johnsons' 2/7 Wurlitzer.

Lloyd opened his program with some Dixieland tunes, which used to advantage the organ’s brass, particularly the trombone in the pedals. He then moved through some expressive pops selections, a classical number and several German selections. The piano, playable from the organ, was used frequently on lively upbeat tunes. His very professional performance was very well received; the Wurlitzer never sounded better! Glad he’s joined our chapter!

The Johnsons served refreshments in their downstairs recreation area, and Gordy conducted tour after tour of the organ chambers. We appreciate very much the Johnsons’ hospitality and their continuing invitation to hold chapter programs at their home.

Then, on August 20, we returned to Charles Walker’s Theatrical Paraphernalia (“Tenth Street’s Largest Theatre” — 70 seats) to hear member Rick McGee play the 2/9 mostly Robert-Morton (“Tenth Street’s largest pipe organ”). The organ had started out as a 2/4 Morton in the Rialto Theatre at Macon, Georgia, in 1921. Charles acquired it in '80 or so, and installed it in his T.P. auditorium but with a different Robert-Morton console with more stop capability. About 1986, he added a Seaburg windchest and five more ranks: two (Pilcher) Strings, a (Pilcher) Clarinet, and (Austin) 16’ Trumpet and a (Stan-Dart) Tibia. He added a piano earlier this year.

Rick, a native of Atlanta, began studying piano at the age of seven. In his youth, he used to wander into the Fox Theatre here on Saturday mornings to listen to our “Mr. Theatre Organist,”

(continued)

ATLANTA cont.



Hosts Gordy and Linda Johnson serve refreshments.



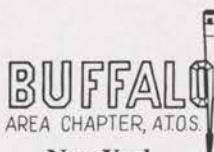
Rick McGee on the 2/9 mostly Robert-Morton at the Theatrical Paraphernalia.

Bob Van Camp, practice on the 4/42 Moller. He'd discuss organ playing with Bob, and before he knew it he was an organist, having learned pretty much on his own. Rick was staff organist at the Music-Grinder, and later Showboat Pizza in Marietta in the late '70s and '80s. He was staff organist at the Excelsior Mill in Atlanta in the mid '80s. Rick has played programs for Atlanta Chapter before, and for Alabama Chapter at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. He also played the year-end program for the Atlanta chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He has held a church-organist position since the age of twelve!

Rick played a very pleasant variety of numbers for us, including Porter's "From This Moment On," Joplin's "Solace," a *Mary Poppins* medley, some numbers from the Marx Brothers' film *The Cocoanuts*, and a few more. It was a most enjoyable afternoon. Rick plays beautifully.

Bill Hitchcock

**See You
In Indianapolis???**
AUGUST 4-8



New York
716/694-9158

Members of the chapter, comprising the Organ Committee at Shea's Buffalo Theatre, were pleased to be able to arrange visits to Shea's during the summer, for organists stopping in Buffalo to see, hear and try the theatre's 4/48 Wurlitzer.

Prior to the ATOS convention, we welcomed Barry Niven and English organist Martin Harris as they visited the Buffalo area before going on to Detroit. Martin made the most of his time at the console, playing with sensitivity and feeling, qualities rarely present in the renderings of young performers. Though admittedly he had not as yet played such a large organ, he executed both popular and light classical selections with ease. A scheduled tour of the theatre by about 70 people from Michigan received an unexpected private concert when Martin agreed to play while they relaxed in their balcony seats.

Following the convention, John Smallwood and organist David Lowe, members of the Cinema Organ Society, paid a visit, with David spending an enjoyable afternoon at the keyboards. In the evening hours, they enjoyed a tour of the QRS Music Roll factory, accompanied by Chapter Vice-President Maureen Wilke, who was able to arrange the private visit. Also visiting Shea's was Bryan Jensen, associated with the Free State Organ Society based in the Baltimore area. Bryan, who is employed by the Smithsonian Institution, had heard reports about the fine instrument at Shea's from others in the theatre organ world, and was anxious to try it himself. After both listening to and playing the organ, he pronounced the happening his most memorable experience of the decade.

August found our members traveling to Lockport, New York, to the First Presbyterian Church where we heard a Moller 3/43 organ (straight). The members were able to look into the chambers which were spotless and neat. Several members then took their turns at the organ.

Upon leaving the church we headed to the Erie Barge Canal where we enjoyed a supper cruise. We boarded our boat and traveled 12 miles east on the Canal while receiving a lesson in past and present history of the Erie Barge Canal. Arriving back at dockside, we went to the Lockport Senior Citizen Center where we were greeted with coffee and cookies and enjoyed playing the 2/8 Wurlitzer. The members of the Senior Center were great hosts and enjoyed the music by several club members at the open console.

We are looking forward to a good concert year at Shea's Buffalo theatre with five concerts. *Norma J. Marciniak*

All inquiries regarding membership matters should be addressed to . . .

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Bill Vlasak

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CENTRAL FLORIDA

Tampa

407/870-7861 or 813/251-8325

The June meeting took place at the home of John and Eloise Otterson, with some 35 members attending. Fellow member Al Hermanns, well known for his Organ-izing articles in THEATRE ORGAN, played a fine program on the Otterson's Hammond Concorde, illustrating some musical ideas from the 50s to the present. A loud and vicious rain and wind storm, for which this part of sunny Florida is well known, accompanied Al's program. At times it was hard to tell which was Hammond and which was nature. Anyway, it was a pleasant afternoon and everyone had an opportunity to play the Concorde and socialize.

Our July and August meetings were combined into a single get-together at the Tampa Theatre. For this meeting, there were 34 of our members present, 18 from the Mid-Florida chapter, and nine guests. After a brief business meeting, the several "house organists" — volunteer CFTOS and MFTOS members — played short programs. Then more than a dozen members of the two chapters had the opportunity to play the 3/12 Wurlitzer which is owned by the City of Tampa and which is maintained by CFTOS, with considerable input from MFTOS.

About a week later, a city employee walked across the darkened theatre stage and fell into the organ pit and onto the console. He was able to crawl out and left the theatre under his own power. Unfortunately, the console was badly damaged. A bolster was cracked on the right side, several Solo stop tabs were badly damaged as well as a few Great stop tabs. The piano hinge holding the top console cover was ripped loose, and the bench was broken into several pieces. Obviously the man who took the tumble was good size!

Although temporary repairs have been made, and the organ is still apparently playable for movie intermission work, its overall integrity and reliability are now in question. As the organ is the property of the city, it remains to be seen what will be done to bring the console back to almost concert quality. At present, the Central and Mid-Florida chapters have had to put on more or less permanent hold any planned concert series, and the resultant loss of what would have hopefully benefitted the two chapters, the organ, and greater exposure of the general public to theatre organ music.

Finally, we want to mention that the Central Florida Chapter is planning a fitting tribute to Don Baker, in the form of a Don Baker Memorial Theatre Pipe Organ to be installed at Lake Brantley High School in Altamonte Springs, a suburb of Orlando. CFTOS was involved in a benefit concert Don gave at that school prior to his death. It is planned that the organ, a Wurlitzer of modest size, will be in pristine condition when installed with details such as nickel plated screws and tension springs. It will do proper justice to the memory of Don Baker. We encourage all members to support this activity in any way possible.



Al Hermanns entertains fellow members of CFTOS.



CENTRAL INDIANA

Indianapolis

317/255-8056 or 317/787-4865

Between 60 and 70 members of the Central Indiana Chapter journeyed north to Fort Wayne for a two-day meeting in August. Saturday's agenda began with a visit to St. Mary's Catholic Church for a mini-recital by Louis Schindler on the 45-rank Kilgen installed in this magnificent structure. Then it was on to the Plymouth Congregational Church where Mr. Ken Stein, Director of Music, played the 4/72 Aeolian-Skinner installed in the front of the sanctuary and then played the classic Allen organ which is located in the balcony area. We were allowed open console at both churches.

After dinner we traveled to the home of Bob Goldstine to hear him play his three-manual Rodgers Marquis. In addition to the organ, Mr. Goldstine's living room also boasts a 7' Yamaha grand piano! We were privileged to hear Mr. Dyne Pfeffenberger and Mr. Mahlon Houlihan play the Yamaha. During open console, both instruments were utilized.

Byron Fogt's house was next on our agenda. Byron has installed a 3/17 Barton/Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ, originally from the old Olympia Stadium in Detroit. His program included "Probably," "Abba Dabba Honeymoon" and "The Entertainer." Open console followed, as well as a tour through the organ chambers.

Sunday morning we gathered at the Embassy Theatre for coffee and doughnuts and open console at the 4/15 Page organ. This console has been newly restored by our own Kevin Aikman and Carlton Smith and is a pleasure to play. Members of this chapter are not hesitant to perform during open console and the two hours passed quickly and were enjoyed by all. After a brief meeting, we were treated to a brilliant concert by this

(continued...)

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Barry Baker at the Embassy Theatre 4/15 Page Organ. *Barry Johnson photo*

year's winner of the Young Organist Competition, Barry Baker. This young man is exceptional! Some of his selections were "Let's Do It," "My Romance" (played with such sensitivity!), Leroy Anderson's "Promenade" and a big-band rendition of "Something's Gotta Give." Mr. Baker concluded his program with a Cole Porter medley. For an encore, he played a rousing "Varsity Drag." What a great talent. Be sure to catch his performance at the 1990 National Convention here in Indianapolis.

Work progresses steadily on the new Manual High School 3/25 Wurlitzer. Volunteers spend Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings (under the direction of J.K. Aikman) working to see that this instrument will be ready for the '90 Convention. Our chapter is very excited about this project. Much time and money have gone into making this installation one of the finest in the Mid-West. One of our latest fundraising ventures was a Gigantic Flea Market held in the lobby of the Manual High School Auditorium. Not only did the profits surpass our expectations, but also the extensive publicity brought us several new members. The organ was played during the sale by various members and generated additional interest from the crowd. Several patrons made donations to the organ fund over and above their purchases. All in all, a most satisfying day.

From all of us to all of you: a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year!

Barb Johnson

CENTRAL OHIO

Columbus
513/652-1775

We were privileged to have sixteen chapter members attend Father Jim Miller's performance at our home on June 18. Some sixty attendees heard the "Padre of the Pits" put our 3/13 mostly Wurlitzer through its paces. He opened with his familiar theme, "The Best Things in Life Are Free." His lilting, nostalgic arrangement of the 1939 Johnny Burke "What's New?" featured the Vox and strings. Reaching far back in yesteryear, we heard a straight-laced version of "When You Wore A Tulip" become a lively Ragtime melody and eventuate in some real jazzy improvisation. To our late, departed member, Alice Lombard, for whom this was to be the last concert, Father Jim dedicated "When Your Hair Has Turned to Silver" and "Alice Blue Gown." This event was a successful fundraiser for the Champaign County Arts Council, and Father Jim endeared himself to many of our local residents, some of whom had never heard a theatre organ, let alone an artist of his magnitude.

On June 25 our chapter held its meeting at Worthington High School. We learned that we now have 89 paid memberships and that we had been the recipient of a donation from Worthington Food Industries toward the further restoration of our organ. We then welcomed back member Lois Hays who, incidentally, is a former cheerleader and a graduate of Worthington High School. Lois opened her program with the all-too-familiar "Romance" in tribute to the late Roger Garrett who used this tune as his theme song. Emulating the late Dick Leibert, Lois played the beautiful "Come Dance With Me" and "Autumn Leaves." Appropriately, she concluded by honoring the coming Independence Day with "America, The Beautiful."

Through the generosity of the Renaissance Theatre group in Mansfield, Ohio, we held our August 27 meeting in this beautifully restored performing arts center. To have the Warner/Carson 3/20

Wurlitzer at our disposal was a thrill, indeed. We were impressed again how right this instrument is for the size of the theatre; the resonance, the depth, the echo so essential in embellishing the rich tones developed by the organ are all there — in tribute to its initial voicing as well as its careful maintenance.

The usual business meeting was dispensed with, and Vice-President Jim Blegen, after thanking the host organization for graciously accommodating us, introduced the featured organist, President Henry Garcia. Henry began with a stirring rendition of "The Birth of The Blues." The memorable "You And The Night And The Music," with his generous use of 9th and 13th chords, produced a lilting and haunting refrain which was indelible. In fond remembrance of his late good friend, Roger Garrett, Henry dedicated "Romance," which had been Roger's theme song. Appropriately, Henry concluded his Sunday performance with "How Great Thou Art" and "In The Garden." His playing style certainly earned him plaudits from his appreciative audience. One could not help but admire his precise timing and careful, deliberate registrations.

At open console, a whole array of talent stepped forward to make this a truly great afternoon and a great opportunity. We won't forget the generosity of the Renaissance group. *John Polsley*



Central Ohio's Margo Burkhart brings the Renaissance Theatre's mighty Wurlitzer to life. *John Adams photo*



At right: Central Ohio members enjoy Renaissance Theatre volunteers' hospitality. *John Adams photo*



CHICAGO AREA

312/951-1098 or 312/282-0037

Theatre pipe organ functions and baseball games are not the best of mixtures! Especially when they occur on the same day and a few blocks from each other. It so happens that the Music Box Theatre and Wrigley Field, home of the Cubs, are nearly neighbors which causes grave parking problems. Wrigley Field was a sellout on August 13, the day of CATOE's Music Box Theatre social. Yes, there were some empty theatre seats. Regardless, Perry Petta presented a great program on the theatre's Allen organ which was greatly appreciated. Perry has a lot of organ-playing experience in this area and in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, sector, his home base. We are sorry for the competition, but appreciate Perry's presentation and look forward to more.

SOLD OUT are welcome words when presenting a program of almost any sort. It usually means that general appeal is one of the requisites. Also, that other items in the program are appealing. What was originally an appeal to augment the funds for rejuvenating the Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer organ has blossomed into popular appeal and includes the Geneva organ in the Baker Hotel in St. Charles. This hotel has a beautiful setting on the Fox River and has been used several times in the past for our gatherings.

To Mildred and Leon Berry goes the credit for a successful fund-raising program this past fall. It is titled "Baker Bash" (this year is #2), and sold out a month before its scheduled date! It consists of a banquet and raffle, plus an organ program by Leon Berry and also a cash bar, all resulting in a delightful afternoon of entertainment for a good purpose.

The Gateway Theatre home of Copernicus Center, the Polish Center for Performing Arts, and general use for many occasions, is managed by our Vice-



Perry Petta at Music Box Theatre Allen 6500.

President, Dennis Wolkowicz. Dennis launched a successful summer season with local talent presenting organ intermission music. He is to be congratulated for his innovative ideas and we anticipate continued events to come our way in the future.

And now we are approaching the final decade of this century with hope for peace throughout the world. Help if and when you can.

Joyous Holidays to all from all of us.

Almer Brostrom

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**ATOS
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95841**



CONNECTICUT VALLEY

203/357-4581 or 203/261-5269

On September 8, Governor William O'Neill led the participation of a capacity audience in the opening night ceremony of the sixtieth anniversary of Hartford's Bushnell Memorial Hall and the rededication of the recently restored Austin 4/75 pipe organ. Thomas Murray presented a program of Dvorak, Schumann and Mendelssohn, among others, and although before the restoration the instrument had been allowed to deteriorate through years of neglect and abuse, it could never have sounded better. The instrument is in the tradition of symphonic organs but also includes effects built into theatre organs such as drums and cymbals.

The restoration was undertaken by the Austin Organ Company, the original builder, and because of the size of the project several former employees had to be lured out of retirement to work on it. Members Allen Miller and Don Hyde were involved in the restoration. A large number of chapter members were in attendance for the rededication ceremonies.

A number of our members were permitted to witness a testing of the organ before the rededication. Bushnell organist Doug Tester played a popular tune, a light classic and a classical selection. Wade Bray demonstrated the full capabilities of the instrument with several popular melodies, and Brian Colton and Allen Miller each played a number of popular melodies associated with theatre organ. Don Hyde, as narrator, and David Senek accompanied a parody of "Peter and the Wolf" which left no doubt that this major instrument should be seen and heard by all organ enthusiasts who can find their way to Hartford's Bushnell Memorial Hall. Happy Birthday and welcome back Austin opus 1627.

Barry Goodkin

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CUMBERLAND VALLEY
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania
717/263-0202

Restoration of the Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Capitol Theatre's original 3/14 Moller continued unabated over the summer months. Chapter President and technical director Mark Cooley has spent time almost every day in the organ workshop above the theatre, and was joined nearly every Saturday by members Dean Faulk and Gil Singer.

Among the many improvements Mark has made to the design of the organ is the re-engineering of the Solo chamber's main chest. Each rank of pipes now has its own reservoir — rather than sharing reservoirs as before — so that the tremulant can be used with individual ranks or in any combination. Formerly, the tremulant could not be used selectively — it was either on or off for all of the ranks playing. Also, for each rank, the speed and depth of the tremulant are adjustable. Mark's innovations will add considerably to the versatility and sound quality of the Moller.

Plans for our growing chapter's 1989-90 social and restoration activities will be discussed at the September meeting. Our membership is looking forward to another busy, active year. *Bob Maney*

**See You In
Indianapolis?
AUGUST 4-8**



DAIRYLAND
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
414/271-0277

August 27 was the date of our annual picnic. Held at the lakeside home of Fred and Veryl Hermes, this year's outing featured a pig roast. We were blessed with perfect weather as over 100 happy picnickers "pigged-out" on chicken, corn, salads and, of course, delicious, roasted pig. After the meal the crowd moved to the Hermes' "Basement Bijou" for a program by Clark Wilson. Clark showed off the lovely Solo voices of the 5/38 Wurlitzer while being accompanied by the unusual visual effects of a Brenograph; he also rattled the plaster with full organ. Open console followed for those not intimidated by the huge Wurlitzer. Our hearty thanks go to the Hermes for their hospitality, to Clark for the lovely program, and to Clark and Gary Hanson for preparing the organ so beautifully.

Carrie Nelson



**EASTERN
MASSACHUSETTS**
Wellesley
617/662-7055

One of our most distinguished members, Earl L. Miller, age 43, died suddenly

on June 24. This Board member was not only a fine church organist and choir director, but an able composer, writer, lecturer, recitalist, and teacher who also recorded several LP's. Earl was currently Municipal Organist on the big Austin, City Hall, Portland, Maine and was installing a theatre pipe organ in the Andover Old Town Hall.

Under the direction of Dick Linder, Organ Crew Chairman; Tim Holloran, Organ Crew Chief; Gary Phillips, Technician, our stalwart crew of Dave Marden, Stu Hinchliffe, Murray Bubar, Vernon Miller and John Del Balso plus occasional help from Walt Wilson and Carl Getz have been laboring on our pride and joy Wurlitzer all summer.

The original relays and switchstacks have been disconnected, and our new Z-Tronics relay system is being installed. This also entails revamping our console stop rails to accommodate future additional ranks.

With Babson College using the Richard Knight Auditorium, work has to be scheduled for no interference, plus most of the crew are still fully employed. Several items are taken home to keep the project moving.

As the tedious undertaking cannot be completed in time for our first fall meeting on September 24, we are returning to our old "home," Stoneham Town Hall, with its splendid 2/14 Wurlitzer, after an absence of several years — a nice change of venue. *Stanley C. Garniss*

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New Jersey
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A summer business meeting was held at the Pascack Theatre in Westwood, New Jersey, June 24. The main attraction for our members was a mini-concert by our favorite, Ashley Miller, well-known concert artist and member of the National Board of Directors. He lives nearby and is very generous with his talent and support of our chapter.

In June, Ashley also played the Kilgen theatre organ at the Convention Hall in Asbury Park for a two-day Gem show with 30 exhibitors, many of whom had never heard a theatre organ. They loved the sounds which are a specialty with Ashley.

In July 18 Garden State members attended the National Convention in Detroit. We enjoyed the variety of concerts, new talented organists performing, and we especially appreciated the fine organs. The *piece de resistance* was the Detroit Fox Theatre — opulent, resplendent in color and size. My reaction: "Wow!" We look forward to the thrilling sound of the great Fox Wurlitzer after the dedicated crew puts the finishing touches to it. Compliments go to Motor City who sponsored the convention which was interesting and fun-filled.

Labor Day heralds the end of summer, especially at the Jersey Shore. Almost everyone wants to enjoy for the last time the ocean and great sandy beaches. The people who traveled to Asbury Park were treated to a special new attraction. On September 3 a free "pops" theatre organ concert was given in the huge convention hall, situated at the north end of the famous Asbury Park Boardwalk. The theatre organ is a 3/8 1/2 Kilgen with pipe chambers either side of the huge stage. The artist was Leroy Lewis who is a well-known performer in the New Jersey shore area. He was responsible for the



Ashley Miller at Pascack Wurlitzer. Jinny Vanore photo



Leroy Lewis at Kilgen organ, Asbury Park. Bob Raymond photo.

Wurlitzer installed behind glass in the Surf City Hotel. Leroy also installed a similar organ in the Hilton Hotel, El Panama, where he played about five years. This was Leroy's final "Farewell to New Jersey" concert sponsored by Garden State. He leaves very soon for Florida.

The day was beautiful, and as the many visitors strolled the boardwalk, they were enticed into the hall by the music. About 500 pamphlets describing the artist, organ, Garden State and the coming Rosa Rio concert at Trenton were handed out.

The atmosphere was informal, Leroy varied his program playing music from countries around the world, show tunes and other popular music. Quite a few inquiries were made about our chapter and the afternoon was very successful. The Chamber of Commerce has requested more concerts. Jinny Vanore

GULF COAST

Pensacola, Florida

904/932-3133 or 904/433-4683

"The song is ended but the melody lingers on." This is the way our chapter feels after closing our first concert season on our 4/23 Robert-Morton in the restored Saenger Theatre in downtown Pensacola.

Donna Parker was our last guest in our first series. She was a delight to work with and listen to. Either our organ is, (1) as great as we think it is, or (2) our technicians, Jim "Sleazy" Scoggins and Curt Goldhill are supermen (true), or (3) our artists are exceptional (true again) and go that extra mile for us, or (4) all of the above. Whatever it is, we like it. Donna's program was varied, enjoyable and her accompaniment of a funny, short, silent comedy was an audience pleaser.

Our general step-and-fetch member, B.C. Melvin has been busy in the blower room making a door for the relay. Both he and our President-of-many-hats, Scott Brodie, have seen to the repair of the organ lift. Now if we can just get through another hurricane season without a hurricane!

We held election of officers at the historic district home of B.D. Rhea, M.D., who built our magnificent console and did so much work on restoring abused pipes, re-leathering and outfitting the second chamber, etc. (continued...)



Officers of Gulf Coast Chapter: B.D. Rhea, MD, Ed Burton, Curt Goldhill, Dorothy Standley, B.C. Melvin, Scott Brodie (with Mrs. Rhea) at the Rhea home.

ashley miller
a.a.g.o.

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GULF COAST cont.

Carol Pollock, Manager of the Saenger Theatre, was our guest at our last meeting and she decided to join our chapter officially. She provided excellent insight into staging and presentations of our efforts at re-introducing theatre organ music to the general public. After all, let's face it, several generations have passed through those hallowed doors at the Saenger since the old organ played. We have to play catch up.

We voted on our artists for the coming 1989-90 season. We decided it was time to open membership to several who have requested this privilege. Letters of application will go out to these prospective members. This will bring us into the parameters of National guidelines.

Ms. Pollock assured the Chapter that the theatre will cooperate and allow us to enjoy open console for our members when the occasion arises.

Also on our agenda was a discussion concerning our local Arts Council grant. We filled out multi-papers, presented our format to them, then met with the governing body. The result was not favorable at this time, but we were told we could re-apply at a later date if we still showed good intent. We do. *Dorothy Standley*



Donna Parker at the 4/23 Robert-Morton, Saenger Theatre, Pensacola.



Jesse Crawford's first organ position was at 2/8 Kimball in Billings, Montana. Steve Plaggemeyer located the organ in the First Church of Christ Scientist. It now boasts a Moller console.



Mullins at Midnight. Ed Mullins tries out the 3/10 Robert-Morton theatre organ at the Wilma Theatre in Missoula, Montana, after the house closed.

Steve Plaggemeyer photo



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MONTANA MAGAZINE, July/August 1989, featured member Ken Kajkowski of Deerlodge, Montana, where Ken and his wife, Juanita, operate Kajkowski Family Organs. An ex-New Yorker, Ken relocated to Montana in 1978. He recently built a tracker pipe organ which is for sale. Ken also restores player pianos and operates a full piano shop in his home.

In August, President Steve Plaggemeyer and Secretary Ed Mullins took a trip to Bozeman where they played the 2/7 Wurlitzer in the Ellen Theatre, the only original theatre organ installation in Montana. They also went to Missoula where they tried out the 3/10 Robert-Morton in the Wilma Theatre.

The first pipe organ in Montana was the \$4000, two-manual, 7- or 8-rank Kimball with tubular pneumatic action which was installed in the Gem Theatre in 1913. The Gem opened February 22, 1913, with Professor Roscoe Kernern at the console. The following day, the permanent house organist started, 18-year-old Professor Charles Crawford, who later changed his name to Jesse.

The theatre, then known as the Empire, burned to the ground March 10, 1950. Fortunately, the pipe organ had been removed. Recently Steve Plaggemeyer found the organ in the First Church of Christ Scientist in Billings. The late Miss Myrna McNeill was a prominent theatre organist who played in many Billings theatres. She was also a devout Christian Scientist who, no doubt, was instrumental in the church's acquisition of the organ in 1948. The pipework has been changed to electro-pneumatic action, with the old Kimball pneumatic tubes left on the chests. The instrument now has a two-manual Moller rolltop console; the nameplate reads "Console by M.P. Moller, Hagerstown, Maryland 1948." Ranks are Bourdon, Clarabella, Dulciana, Flute d'Amour, Gamba, Stopped Diapason and Trumpet (which was substituted for the Vox Humana). *Ed Mullins*



Steve Plaggemeyer at console of the 2/7 Wurlitzer, Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, Montana. Ed Mullins photo

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On June 28, President Lee Maloney traveled to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to play a social for the ATOS chapter there at the Paramount Theatre. The Paramount is blessed with a 3/12 Wurlitzer that Lee turned on like a fresh Christmas tree. But when he traipsed over to the old Iowa Theatre, now a civic center, and sat down at the famed Rhinestone 3/17 Barton, Lee was in organist's heaven. This is one Barton that roars and brought repeated demands for MORE from the Cedar Rapids and Quad Cities chapters.

Fresh from the ATOS convention in Detroit, ATOS President John Ledwon played a combined JATOE/CATOE social at the Rialto Theatre in Joliet. Ledwon proved to be concert quality in both selection of material and style. His opening medley from *Phantom of The Opera* was a hit with the more than 400 in attendance. Following John and without any familiarization time, Russell Holmes, winner of his division in the Young Organist Competition, presented a fine cameo that displayed his talents and his English heritage. Edith Rawle, legendary for her promotion of young talent in England, accompanied Russell to Joliet.

JATOE President Lee Maloney and CATOE President Bill Rieger shared emcee responsibilities. Bill introduced CATOE's entrant, John DiVona, who was received warmly by the audience. The cooperation between the two clubs was

evidenced by the sumptuous spread on the Rialto stage that defied consumption. Presided over by hostess Lile Zuber, both food and graciousness were dispensed in equally charming amounts.

Hall Pritchard



LAND O'LAKES

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As far as the organizers (Curt Oliver, Gail Hanson, Mike Erie and Verna Mae Wilson) were concerned, our SUMMIT AVENUE ORGAN CRAWL on August 26 was a huge success! Seventy-one members and guests turned out for this one-of-a-kind chapter event on a what started out to be a muggy day but cleared by the time we met at 3:00 in the parking lot of the beautiful Cathedral of Saint Paul. The cornerstone for this building was laid in 1907, with the first mass on Palm Sunday in 1915. It overlooks the whole downtown of St. Paul from its lofty location on Summit and Selby Avenues.

After a slight delay for a wedding, we were invited by Roger F. Burg to enter by a back way, where he played the Ernest M. Skinner Sanctuary Organ, an Electropneumatic, built in 1927. He also used an Aeolian-Skinner Gallery Organ, another Electropneumatic, built in 1963.



Mary Downey at the Maryhill Retreat at the Aeolian, while Ken and Eugenie Hreha, and Curt Oliver look on.

Both organs are hooked together and played by remote control from the Sanctuary. There was a limited time for Roger to demonstrate his skill at the Skinner, but at least we had a taste of the magnificent full sounds from these two organs.

We were fortunate, indeed, to have such a prestigious organist play for us at the Cathedral. Roger began his musical career in high school and continued his music studies at St. Thomas College in St. Paul. His teacher was theatre organist Richard Kenney, who studied with Eddie Dunstedter. From 1964 until 1975, Roger was organist at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. In 1975 he began playing at the Cathedral of Saint Paul and is there still. Besides his musical prowess, Roger has been in charge of the Hennepin County Libraries for the last 20 years!

(continued...)

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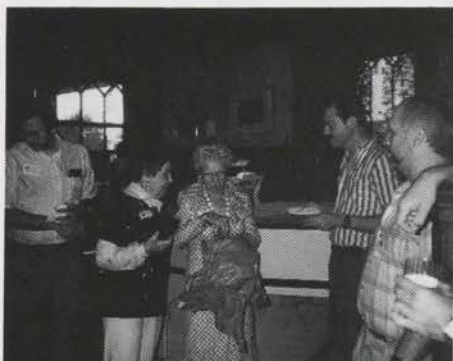
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L to R: Mike Kline, Verna Mae Wilson, Mary Downey, Curt Oliver and Gail Hanson in Oliver's home, organ in background.

A very congenial person, he was delighted to play for us. Instead of accepting an honorarium, he elected to become a member of ATOS.

After our visit to the Cathedral we crossed Summit Avenue to begin our tour of the James J. Hill Residence. Completed in 1891 at a cost of \$200,000, designed by the Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns, who found the form to fit the rugged personality of its client, the mansion became the pride of St. Paul.

When the Canadian-born James J. Hill began his career in transportation in 1856 as a 17-year old clerk on the St. Paul levee, oxcart trails were the principal roads to the sparsely populated west. His railroad was named the *Great Northern* in 1890 — and had the flattest grades, the straightest track, and the lowest rates. His locomotives were the most powerful and his trains the longest. After Hill's death in 1916, his wife Mary maintained the mansion until her own death five years later. In 1925 the Hill daughters bought the house from the estate and presented it to the Archdiocese of St. Paul, which occupied the property until the Minnesota Historical Society acquired it in 1978. The residence has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark since 1961.

The two-story art gallery of the Hill House features a double sky-light, and the handsome oak pipe organ built by



Art gallery of the James J. Hill House; George S. Hutchings pipe organ, built in 1891.

George S. Hutchings in 1891, (1,006 pipes, mechanical action) was beautiful to behold. Member Curt Oliver, described the organ briefly and then played it for us. How lucky we are to have such a talented member in our chapter!

Curt then introduced another guest artist — none other than Mary E. Downey, St. Paul's *Poel Laureate of the Keyboard* and one of St. Paul's most distinguished musicians. Her career as composer, organist, recitalist, accompanist and teacher spans more than 80 years. Undaunted by the fact that men dominated the field of music, Mary published her first composition when she was just nine years old. Later, using the name of M.E. Downey to mask her femininity, Mary wrote and published a variety of major works, many of them winning international acclaim. For her eloquent *Requiem Mass*, Mary received the National Award for Outstanding Achievement, presented to her at the White House by Bess Truman. While barely in her teens, Mary began her career as organist at the old Garrick Theatre in St. Paul, playing for silent movies. When still in her teens, Mary was urged to study in

New York under the tutelage of Pietro Yon. During this time she taught at the exclusive Bovee School in New York, where Efreim Zimbalist, Jr. was among her students. While traveling throughout the U.S. conducting master classes and performing in recitals and concerts, these engagements often brought Mary back to the Twin Cities. In the 1950s she returned to make St. Paul her home. Her daily programs of organ music, broadcast on WTCN Radio, sponsored by the Minnesota Federal Savings & Loan, are still remembered. Mary has been organist or guest organist in several area churches as well as accompanist for the South St. Paul Men's Chorus, 3M Choruses, and the St. Paul Christmas Choral Pageant, the latter held annually in the old St. Paul Auditorium where she played the huge Skinner pipe organ.

Following Curt's introduction, Mary "took over" and had our instant attention. Even in her nineties, it was like she didn't want to stop, so forceful and tuneful was she! After Mary's stint at the Hill organ our group was divided into smaller groups and brief tours through parts of

(continued ...)

November 18	Symphony Hall, San Diego, California
November 28	Olive Dale Center, Lancaster Ohio
December 1	Aveni Residence, Cleveland, Ohio
December 2	Gray's Armory, Cleveland, Ohio
December 5	Al Ringling Theatre, Baraboo, Wisconsin
December 7	Oscar Meyer Theatre, Madison Wisconsin
December 27	Ann Arbor Chamber Orchestra, Ann Arbor, Michigan
December 30	Austin Symphony, Austin, Texas
December 31	Austin Symphony, Austin, Texas
January 11, 1990	Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio
January 14	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan
January 26	Castro Theatre, San Francisco, California
February 15	Paramount Theatre, Denver, Colorado
February 17	Symphony Hall, San Diego, California
February 25	Short North, Columbus, Ohio
March 4	Shea's Theatre, Buffalo, New York
March 11	1st United Methodist Church, San Diego, California
April 7	Symphony Hall, San Diego, California
April 18	Strong Museum, Rochester, New York
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LAKE O'LAKES continued

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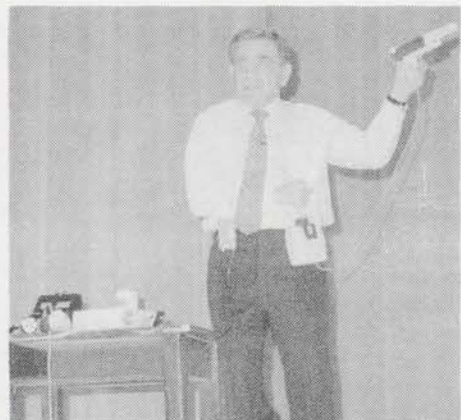
All too soon we walked next door to the MARYHILL RENEWAL CENTER, formerly Louis J. Hill's home, and now conducted by the Daughters of Mary, a worldwide religious congregation founded in France in 1790 during the French Revolution.

Sister Isabelle Wright greeted us with a warm welcome. This lovely home, which houses a three-manual Aeolian Organ #1294, built in 1912, was unlike any organ we are accustomed to. The organ is situated in the main retreat which had a beautiful lattice-like ceiling. Curt briefly described the intricate manuals and stops, and started the open console period, including Mary Downey, who played this organ steadily for two days on the occasion of Louis Hill's death in 1948. The ladies in charge at the retreat never heard such interesting and different music as on that day. Karl Eilers played a march or two — we even heard "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

After open console, we departed for Curt Oliver and Gail Hanson's home at 611 Summit Avenue, another mansion where we enjoyed refreshments and a big birthday cake for Mary who would celebrate her 94th birthday the next day. Needless to say, she was completely surprised and thrilled. Curt and Gail presented her with a bouquet of roses. Again, there was open console at Curt's 2-manual Estey Minuette pipe organ, shaped like a grand piano in creamy white. His home is filled with musical instruments — an upright piano on the first floor and a Hammond on the second floor. Song sheets were passed out and there was a Sing-along, Mary smiling and obviously enjoying every minute.

We were pleased to see members from out of town — Willmar, Stacy, White Bear Lake, Robbinsdale, Hastings, Red Wing, Minneapolis and Stillwater, Minnesota; and Siren, Prescott, and Hudson, Wisconsin.

Verna Mae Wilson



Stan Kann, organist and hilarious entertainer; regales audience with his exploration of what you get when you order from catalogs. *Zimfoto*



Los Angeles directors on stage of Sexson Auditorium: (L to R) Donn Linton, Ralph Beaudry, Irv Eilers, Maria Olivier, Vern Rodgers, Frank Rounds, Robert Kambeitz, Wayne Flottman, Frank Way. *Zimfoto*



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Our new "baby" is about to emerge in Sexson Auditorium at Pasadena City College. Of course, we are talking about the 3/24 pipe organ now known as the J. Ross Reed Wurlitzer. The scissors lift has been delivered, the swell shades are installed and the console has been rebuilt. The chests are all re-leathered and each pipe has been cleaned by eager and dedicated volunteers. By the time you are reading these chapter notes, the organ will be complete and the gala dedication and premiere concert with Lyn Larsen will be history. Many thanks to Dick Obert, Paul Gaddis, Ralph Beaudry, Sam Dickerson and Stephen Ross for their devotion to this endeavor and the donation of many hours of hard and tedious work to help Ken Crome keep the project on schedule.

The August 27 general meeting was held in Sexson Auditorium. Members were shown a video of restoration and installation work done in the shop and the auditorium up to that date and were able to see the expanded organ chamber openings and the new screens that will allow the instrument to be heard. Unfortunately, the only "working" pipe in the auditorium at that early date was one wielded by LATOS President Donn Linton to open the meeting. ATOS President John Ledwon was present and it was announced that he has been appointed to the staff at Pasadena City College to teach a theatre organ class this fall.

Wayne Flottman



Ralph Beaudry narrates the video story of the work being done on installation of the Ross Reed Wurlitzer organ as Frank Way stands by.



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The few of us who attended the convention really enjoyed being with you all again. The restoration of the Fox Theatre is something to behold, and should give incentive to all chapters to forge ahead. Motor City is to be congratulated.

We have been kept busy with a delightful concert by Nigel Ogden on the Torch Christie. It was an afternoon spent on a musical trip which kept the appreciative patrons shouting for more.

Our YTOE gave us a program on our Friday Club Night showing off their various styles. It is good to see we have a number of young artists to keep the theatre organ alive in years to come.

Sunday brought our weekend activities to a close with Simon Gledhill giving a concert at the former Granada Harrow eight-rank Wurlitzer. We had taken a chance on a summer concert, and we were not disappointed. Simon played all the old theatre organ music, and one would think it was 20 ranks, not just eight.

We are pleased to announce, on behalf of the younger generation, that they raised 400 Pounds with their efforts on a weekend of activities. This goes toward our competition expenses which seem to increase with every year. We have



London Chapter "High Jinks:" (L to R) Peter, Martin, Emma, Dena, Russell, Geoffrey, Georgina, Anika.

seven finalists this year. It is so exciting for these young people and the interest in the national competition is greater this year than ever.

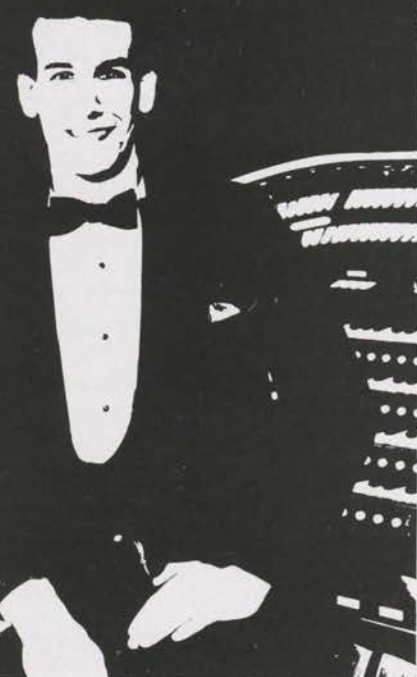
Our concert at the Top Rank Club at Kilburn was most interesting. Rob Pooley and John Barlow gave us some nice sounds, and it is good to know that both are still interested in the theatre organ since winning the ATOS and other competitions in the electronic field.

We have had the pleasure of a visit to the chapter of Searle Wright on his yearly visit to England. A quick telephone call

to members got about three dozen to come along to Wurlitzer Lodge for a get-together and a great evening of theatre organ music and fellowship. As always, another overseas visitor, Eric Gilham from Australia, telephoned and joined in with our members. We hope any others in the London area will give us a ring as there is always a member to take you to theatres and show you around.

May the London chapter extend hearty greetings during the Holiday Season to all ATOS members. Keep the wind in those pipes going!
Edith Rawle

JEFF WEILER
Organist



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With heartfelt sadness we report the passing of one of our charter members, Don Baker. Don did so much to help us get started and played several concerts for us. The last, just prior to his death, was to help us with our project of installing a theatre pipe organ at Lake Brantley High School. We are very grateful indeed to report that this project will henceforth be known as the Don Baker Memorial Organ. Don truly was one of theatre organ's all time greats; coupled with his warm personality, he was the consummate professional. Don was always willing to help a chapter and promoted theatre organ for over sixty years. We are asking every member of ATOS to help with this project. What better way to honor a great theatre organist than with a great theatre organ? Donations can be sent to MFTOS, 1216 Chelsea Place, Orlando, FL 32803. If anyone would like more information concerning this please call me at 406/870-7861.

On a much happier note I am glad to report that I have spoken directly with Rob Calcaterra on the phone, and that he is out of the hospital and recovering completely. He will be resuming his concerts this fall. Our newest member, John Smart of Lake Helen, has a 3/15 Wurlitzer. It is currently being restored and installed in his home by Matthews and Shaffer Pipe Organs of Kissimmee, Florida. The chapter was having difficulty providing instruments for our monthly meetings, which we solved with the purchase of a Baldwin Cinema II. This will provide us with something until we have a pipe installation. Our good friends at CFTOS in Tampa are progressing quite nicely with their 3/12 Wurlitzer in the Tampa Theatre. Together with them we are continuing to promote ATOS and theatre organs in the Central Florida area. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at St. Marks Lutheran Church in Winter Park.

Cliff Shaffer

**See You In
Indianapolis?**

AUGUST 4 - 8



A pretty grill is like a melody. Bob Duerr performs his rendition of "Light My Fire" in hopes of making the Hit Parade with chapter members at Motor City's annual picnic as Tom FitzGerald, son Allen and Cornell Candea look on.

Ray VanSteenkiste photo



MOTOR CITY
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Many members attended the annual picnic held this year at Murray Lake, a private preserve near Ann Arbor, on July 23. Chaired by Irene FitzGerald, a large grill was provided as was a large tent should the weather turn inclement. The day turned out to be warm and sunny and members enjoyed socializing and the usual variety of picnic activities.

Our sixteenth annual private charter moonlight cruise on the 87-year-old excursion steamer *Columbia*, America's oldest passenger steamer, attracted over a thousand people for a three-hour cruise on the Detroit River the evening of August 3. Dance organists Bill Holleman, Fred Bayne and Don Haller provided dance music at a Conn on the second deck, while vocalist Fran Carmody, accompanied by Sharron Patterson at a Yamaha (courtesy of Virg Howard and Hammell Music), entertained on the third deck and led a sing-along. Additional dance music was provided by a harmonica band and the barbershop quartet Four-of-a-Kind serenaded passengers on all four decks of the 216-foot steamer. This year's cruise was again chaired by Don Lockwood.

John Lauter was featured at the 3/16 Barton at the Royal Oak Music Theatre for our Fourth Sunday program the morning of August 27. John began organ lessons when first joining the chapter and is now staff organist at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor.

Steve Schlesing will play for our Christmas Show at the Redford Theatre on December 9.

Don Lockwood

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Don Lewis played Yamaha Electone and Baldwin concert grand for North Texas.



North Texas heard Don Lewis at Dallas family Music Center in August.

Irving Light photo



NORTH TEXAS

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While restoration work continues on our Robert-Morton in the Lakewood theatre, our chapter continues to hold our meetings in members' homes and organ marts. This necessity has afforded us the opportunity to enjoy some of these locations for the first time. Such is the case for our August meeting which was held in the Dallas Family Music Center as guests of Don Lewis, who entertained us on the Yamaha organ and the Baldwin concert grand piano.

Don is an exceptionally talented musician who gained his early musical training on the piano and has transferred his keyboard capabilities to the organ in recent years. He is not wedded to a single style or type of music and plays selec-

tions that include Big Band and other oldies as well as more recent numbers and sacred music. Don's approach to the Yamaha and its extensive imitative tonal resource is very individual. Don browses the many sounds, each reminding him of a particular song or orchestral arrangement. He then works out his own arrangement, using these sounds, reminiscent of what he hears in his mind. This "ear" for music is particularly useful to Don, I am sure, in his employment — demonstrating keyboard instruments for sale.

More importantly for us listeners, it also equips him to play a wide variety of exciting music, all beautifully orchestrated. His rousing rendition of Dolly Parton's "Nine to Five" resulted, he says, from hearing the "funky" guitar sounds of the Yamaha. Using this sound as his pedal base he built a country/western arrangement that had his audience tapping toes. In contrast, his arrangement of "America, The Beautiful" was richly symphonic, incorporating choral voices, harp, orchestral ensemble, with

tuned tympani in the pedals. A thrilling offering. From his opening medley using rich theatre organ ensemble to his closing sacred selection, a piano/organ duet (the organ part, digitally pre-recorded), Don's program was a real delight and left us wanting to hear more. I hope we have an opportunity to do so soon. Thank you, Don.

At the August meeting, President John Friedel told of the progress being made on the Robert-Morton restoration in the hands of Houston organbuilder, Keith Henderson. By leaving the tuned percussion actions until last, it is still hoped that we can have the rest of the organ playing in September. While the organ has been out of action, several chapter members have redecorated the console and bench in off-white with gold leaf trim. John thanked Irv Light, Gene Randolph, Rod Keener and Gordon Wright for their combined work on the console redecoration. It is expected that this will relieve the darkness of the stage environment and add to the theatrical excitement of our organ presentations.

Irving Light



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What makes a chapter picnic special besides ants and yellowjackets? For us it was getting to see and hear the newest pipe organ installation in our area, the one in the home of Don and Alva James. Their new "baby" started life as a 2/4 Wicks in the Granada Theatre in La Grande, Oregon, and is now in its sixth Oregon home where it has grown to seven ranks with four tuned percussions and a full toy counter (an eighth rank is on the way). We last heard this organ on March 12, 1988, when it was in the home of Nicki and Jerry Gaylord, and we were eager to get acquainted with it again at open console — which we did! It has just the right sound for the James's house, and we are all anticipating future meetings there so we can follow the growth and development of this charming "child."

Another summer delight was the return of the Gerry Gregorius-Kurt von Schakel duo for a concert at Uncle Milt's Pipe Organ Pizza in Vancouver. Gerry and Kurt have made two National Convention appearances and have performed in Chicago and California this past year. They manage to keep a fresh approach to their programs and what they did with Milt's 3/18 Wurlitzer and a Steinway grand piano left their audience clamoring for more — we'll not soon forget "Baby Shoes!"

Members Loren (Captain Kimball) and Karen Minear are busily preparing the chambers in Cleveland High School for the installation of the Kimball pipe organ from Benson. The Minears and their loyal crew of chapter volunteers spent most of August and early September carefully removing and storing the instrument. They are anticipating a spring 1990 completion, and we can hardly wait to hear the new sounds from an old friend.

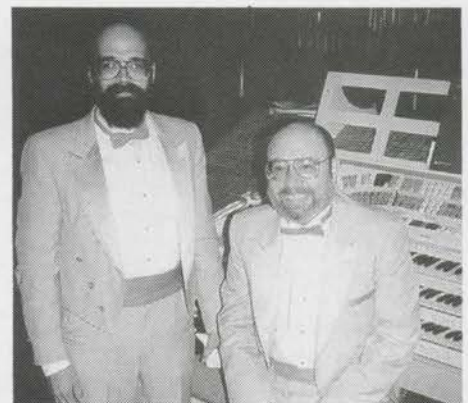


Oregonians picnic on the James' porch so they can hear the organ.

Claude Neuffer photo



Picnic on the porch.



Kurt von Schakel and Gerry Gregorius bring "A Touch of Class" to Uncle Milts.

Irv Ewen photo



Maryjo Olsen, Bob Shafter and Terry Robson relax while Paul Quarino entertains on the James' 3/7 Wicks.

Claude Neuffer photos



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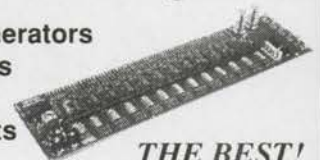
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POTOMAC VALLEY

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On August 26, about 50 persons attended a chapter cameo concert held at Hope Lutheran Church in Annandale, Virginia, mostly on a 2/14 Lewis & Hitchcock pipe organ. (That organ was described in Potomac Valley Chapter Notes in the March/April 1989 issue). Chapter Vice-Chairman Floyd E. Werle, along with members Dick Baxter, Lee Prater, and Bob Stratton, provided the entertainment on the organ and on piano, sometimes duet, sometimes solo, to the delight of those present.

Chapter Chairman Fay Marvin then provided highlights of the Detroit ATOS 1989 Convention in the form of brief video tape excerpts of many convention events, for the benefit of those who did not attend the convention.

Following those activities, a sociable pot luck supper was enhanced by another video tape of Floyd Werle at the 2/8 Wurlitzer in the Weinberg Center for the Arts, Frederick, Maryland, on May 30, accompanying the Air Force Tactical Air Command Band. A great time was had by all.

Jack Little



Potomac Valley Chairman Fay Marvin introduced the artists. (Top to Bottom): Rev. Richard Baxter, George Johnson, Floyd Werle.

Dan Swope photos

QCCATOS

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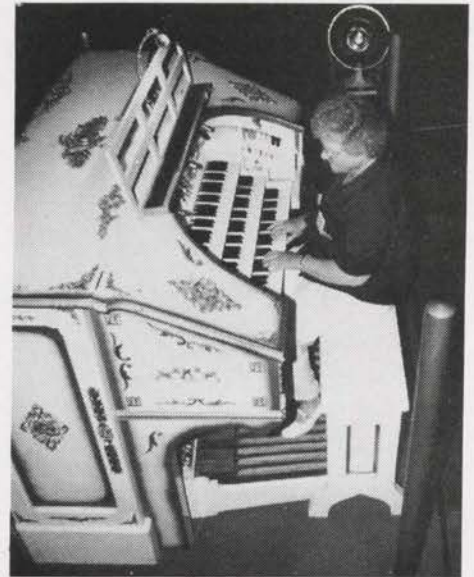
On July 16 we met at the Capitol Theatre in Davenport, Iowa. The featured guest artist was member Charlotte McCoy from Davenport. Charlotte, a native of Milton, Wisconsin, began piano lessons at the conservatory there at the age of eight. She continued her music education at Augustana College under the capable tutelage of Dean Swanson. In 1969 she started playing professionally. Currently, in addition to giving piano and organ lessons, she is the "Conference Organist" for the Royal Neighbors, a fraternal insurance company headquartered in Rock Island. Since 1975 she has played in many locales across the country. Charlotte presented an outstanding program which included "Begin the Beguine," "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." She concluded her program with an unusual arrangement of "St. Louis Blues," wherein she played part of the melody on the pedals!

After the program, light refreshments were enjoyed by members and guests, while others took advantage of the open console period.

On August 20, a very special chapter social was arranged by member Bill McFadden, who said in his advance publicity that there would be many surprises for everyone. Approximately 65 persons took to the highways to travel to the rural residence of Robert and Marcia Tuttle just east of Poplar Grove, Illinois. Their 120-acre centennial farm has been in the Tuttle family for three generations. The nine room residence, built in 1859, was remodeled in 1910. The house is furnished with the usual antiques and with many very uncommon antiques. Robert's interest in antiques began at the age of ten when he was given an Edison Gram-a-phone. Since then he has collected all kinds of mechanical and electronic musical equipment, which he has repaired and refurbished so that most are in working condition.

Surprise #1 — We had the opportunity to tour their home and to play some of the fine instruments which included a 2/4 Kilgen Organ; a 2/15, tracker, John Brown Organ; a player piano; a grand piano; and, of course, a modern three-manual Wurlitzer 950 electronic organ.

Surprise #2 — The group was directed to "Bijou" as the sign stated over the entrance to the barn. As we got near the barn, we could hear the beautiful sounds of a pipe organ filling the air. When we got in the barn, no one was seated at the organ. What was happening? Robert had



Charlotte McCoy at the Wicks organ in the Capitol Theatre.

pressed the remote control that he had in his pocket to start the player organ! Inside the barn we were thrilled to see a fully equipped mini-theatre with antique wooden seats to accommodate about sixty persons. What we heard was a 2/4, two-roll Page Player Organ and an attached "phantom" piano. The theatre included a small stage, silver screen, and floodlights. In a small room at the rear were two commercial-size movie projectors and controls for the theatre. The organ pipes and toys were located in a room to the right of the theatre and could be viewed by removing the pictures from the walls. The volume of the organ was controlled by horizontal shutters located above the piano.

Only two Page Player Organs were made, circa 1925. One was destroyed in a fire in 1937 in a theatre in Huntington, Indiana. Mr. Tuttle acquired this organ in 1972 from the Liberty Theatre in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Surprise #3 — After the tour the guests were free to roam the premises and to play any of the instruments that they desired, or to just sit in the shade and talk to friends. The afternoon passed enjoyably, but we were getting hungry. A car sped into the driveway, horns blaring. It's the food! Within minutes all of the guests were seated and enjoying this wonderful buffet. Buffet? This was a banquet: chicken, ham, casseroles, salads, beverages, and cake.

Surprise #4 — Bill McFadden had arranged for a special guest artist — and we were all anxious to know who it was. Aren't you? It was none other than . . . Father James Miller and Father Andrew Rogers from Fenton, Michigan. After dinner Father Jim entertained us at the "Bijou" for about an hour. His playing of a small organ, such as this, and making

(continued...)



Arthur Felts at the Kilgen organ in the Tuttle residence.

it sound like a large organ could only be surpassed by playing a large organ. He played some of the more popular theatre organ selections, a classic or two, and some requests, all of which was a perfect ending to a perfect day. Father Andrew and others entertained the guests during the afternoon open console period on the Page organ.

To close the program, Bill McFadden arranged to have the group sing "Thanks" (from the movie *Too Much Harmony*) to the Tuttles in appreciation of their hospitality. The organ accompaniment was played by Lee Maloney.

So if all of this sounds like a good time, maybe your chapter should contact the Tuttles for a visit to their fabulous farm.

Richard P. Withenbury



Above: Martin Leon at the "phantom" piano in the barn at the Robert Tuttle farm.



At left: Surprise guest artist Father James Miller at the Page organ in the barn at the Robert Tuttle farm.



RED RIVER
 Fargo, North Dakota

318/287-2671 or 701/232-6325

The middle of August, Greg Merrill, a new member of Land O'Lakes Chapter, came to play movie prologues and intermissions at the Fargo Theatre. It's always interesting to hear a new talent and important to provide the opportunity. Especially enjoyable were "Laura" and "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams."

Red River Chapter took part once again in the annual Arts Fair held at the West Acres Regional Shopping Center the second weekend in September. Our booth was back-to-back with AGO. The fair gives various arts organizations a lot of exposure, providing brochures and opportunities to have people sign up for mailing lists, etc.

The Fargo-Moorhead Civic Opera is using the theatre once again for a chorus production of Christmas music, and also presenting *Pirates of Penzance* next May. About 90% of all special rentals request that the Wurlitzer be a part of the events.

Sonia Carlson

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**RIVER CITY
 THEATRE
 ORGAN
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402/571-6818 or 402/453-7769

Our August 19 meeting was hosted by member Lois Thomsen in the Circus Room of the Holiday Lodge in Fremont, Nebraska, where she presides at the console of her Hammond Regent on Friday and Saturday nights. Lois entertained us with her delightful theatre stylings as we enjoyed our buffet dinner. After a brief business meeting chaired by Dick Zdan, our program continued with Jeanne Cooper accompanying our sing-along slide show, which included both old favorites and funny parodies. To round out the planned entertainment, Dick Zdan skillfully cued a well-known Laurel and Hardy comedy, *Our Navy*. Many thanks to Lois Thomsen for her fine hospitality and also to Bob Markworth, our expert projectionist. Fifty-two members and guests were in attendance, in spite of competition from John C. Fremont Days, a local celebration.

Two of our Fremont members, Lois Thomsen and Bob Tookey, were featured in an interview column in the *Fremont Tribune* affording excellent publicity for River City Chapter and for the theatre organ, in particular. Bob Tookey is a professional entertainer and teaches organ and piano locally. It was interesting to note that Bob's mother was an organist at the old Empress Theatre in Fremont.

With a lot of help from his friends, Bob Markworth has been engaged in a major rebuild job on his 3/14 Kimball theatre pipe organ, which includes the addition of an eight-foot Vox Humana, bringing the instrument up to 15 ranks. Members assisting Bob have been: Paul Kanka, who releathered all chests; Joe Hogya, who built new Kimball double-valve winker regulators and pull-out drawers for both sides of the console, which will house controls for percussions and special function stop tabs; Stan Gross, who has been rebuilding regulators, and Wendall Hall who has been rewiring stop key relays. In addition, new stop tabs have been engraved, new PVC wind lines added, and an additional 2 hp, 300 cfm blower at 30 inches of pressure and an additional phase converter have been added. We are all anxious to hear this fine instrument re-premiered.

Tom Jeffery

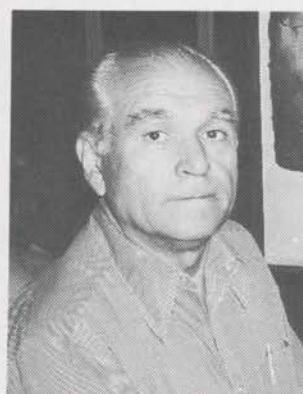


River City "regulars" enjoying an evening of good music and fellowship.

Tom Jeffery photo



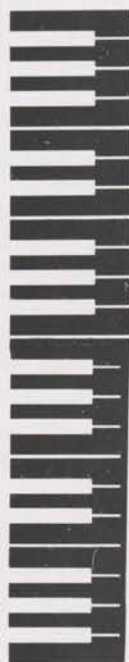
Our lovely hostess, Lois Thomsen entertained us during the dinner hour.



Chapter President Dick Zdan did a splendid job of cueing Laurel and Hardy's *Our Navy*.



Our own Jeanne Cooper did the honors for a sing-along with slides.



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ST. LOUIS

Missouri
314/343-8473

Two exciting events happened here in the month of August. First, we moved our two-manual Wurlitzer console from Joe Barnes' shop to the fabulous Fox Theatre. Joe and his helpers had installed a Peterson relay and it was ready for completion of the wiring. Our console will sit on the first level mezzanine as soon as we are sure that all is working well. Member Rick Schroeder tells quite a history about how we obtained this console from the Majestic Theatre across the Mississippi River in East St. Louis, Illinois, quite a number of years ago. He helped move the console down a filthy, littered stairway through more dirt and litter out to the waiting truck on a bitter, cold day. Many of our members, he recalls, thought we were wasting our time and money, but as all things turn out well in the end, the entire organ in the Fox Theatre did play well until it needed a new relay. Our President at that time, John Ferguson, said, "We will all be proud when this organ speaks again." Now, after nearly 19 years, it is about to do just that in its new incarnation as the Fox Lobby Organ. The console never looked better, and at least the Fox Theatre will be warm!

The second event was our annual Covered Dish Bar-B-Que at the home of Col. Jack Moelmann. His new three-manual Rodgers theatre organ with Kurzweil was unveiled and played for all of us to hear for the first time. The installer, Mark Gifford, also did his bit by letting us know just what a super organ can produce tone-wise. He and Jack took turns at the console and the piano. While dinner was being cleared away, there was open console and those who played it said it compared to the fabulous Fox Theatre 4/36 Wurlitzer — I say it has more voices and more combinations than that one. Jack showed a silent comedy made about 1925 and everyone laughed their heads off, especially the children. Last, but not least, Jack and others showed us pictures taken at the conven-

tion in Detroit and gave us a run-down on the various fine organs they either heard or played around the Detroit area. The Fox Theatre there is a sister to our Fox Theatre, and I am sure much more money was spent on our Fox and its organ back in the 1970s. It is currently being kept up in great style by Marlin Mackley who prepares it for every event.

Dale L. Boring



CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS: PLEASE NOTE

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SOONER STATE

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

We held our July meeting once again at Tulsa's Central Assembly of God Church. Phil Judkins presented the mini-concert on the 4/14 Robert-Morton, a trip down memory lane for him. He opened with "This Could Be The Start of Something Big," then Milton Schlosser's version of "Chattanooga Choo Choo." He included Ashley Miller's version of "Non Diminicar" and the theme from *Charades* (a memory of Jesse Crawford and the Chicago Theatre), and closed with "Jealousie."

Before the music began we heard reports of Phil's trip to Europe which he and his wife, Laura, had recently taken, and which included sights of several cathedral organs. We also heard from John Roberts about the Organ Safari to Great Britain in which he and his wife, Charlene, had participated. And Dorothy Smith reported on the Colorado State Organ Workshop which she and Betty Weddle had attended.

Our August meeting was also held at Central Assembly. Lorene Thomas was the mini-concertist and presented an enjoyable program that opened with "Lulu's Back in Town." She also played an abridged version of "Rhapsody In Blue," and closed with "Stompin' At The Savoy." At open console she played "My Tribute for an encore. Five others played at open console, as well.

We are on the final stages of the installation of our Robert-Morton at Vo-Tech! The crew, consisting of Harry Rasmussen, Dan Kimes, Sam Collier, Don Kimes, Phil Judkins and Lee Smith (who is chief "gofer"), are completing the wiring of the electronics and finishing up various miscellaneous chores (such as putting new drumheads on the snare drum, repairing a couple of chryosoglott hammers, and fixing some small valve guides). It won't be long, now, before we shall have music.

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Ken Butela at his Conn 650 theatre organ.



TOLEDO AREA

Ohio

419/381-6730 or 419/865-0111

On September 6, a special "Meet the Candidates Night" was held at the Cultural Center (old Ohio Theatre) to give the public a chance to meet local political figures. What better occasion for our theatre organ to be played — by Bill Yaney, house organist.

On October 17, the AGO and TATOS got together for a meeting and demonstration of our theatre organ and silent film, with Mr. Yaney in residence at the console once again.

TATOS personnel have been on the road of late — with trips to Dr. John Pol-sley's installation in Urbana, Ohio, the Akron Civic Theatre, and individual tours of some Chicago theatre organs, thanks to CATOE.

Our previous program of the year was a great success — combining rare silent film and theatre organ accompaniment — the local news media hyped the film angle, too.

Evan J. Chase

WESTERN RESERVE

Cleveland Ohio

216/521-7269 or 216/941-0572

With fond reveries, we recall the concert the Cleveland Grays sponsored May 13 at the 3/15 Wurlitzer in Grays' Armory. Because of his untimely death last June, this was to be the last theatre organ concert of Keith Chapman's career. His selections for the capacity crowd that evening included "Mary's a Grand Old Name," J.S. Bach's "Sinfonia to Cantata #29" and a rousing "Stars & Stripes Forever." This concert also marked the first use of futuristic computerized MIDI technology at the Grays' Wurlitzer, as the artist "accompanied himself" in performances of "Kit-ten on the Keys," Handel's "Royal Fire-works Music" and — to honor all mothers on the eve of Mother's Day 1989 — "The Lost Chord." Recalling that Dr. Chapman

performed the dedication concert at the Grays' Wurlitzer in 1971, we are thankful for all he shared with us throughout his lifetime.

On May 21, members and friends of Western Reserve Chapter gathered in Canton, Ohio, at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. The architectural splendors of this Victorian Gothic 1870's church, designed by the same architect famous for creating St. Patrick's in New York, were matched by the aural splendors of artist Charles Blair presiding at the console of the 4/73 E.M. Skinner. His selections, masterfully performed that afternoon, included "The Lost Chord" and an "Andante Cantabile" from Camille Saint-Saens' *Organ Symphony*. The distribution of a complete stoplist and offer of ample "open console" time were exemplary gestures that all organizers should aspire to provide their guests.

Our June gathering was a social held at the Medina County Administration Building, where chapter member George Krejci performed at the 3/6 Austin organ. One of only nine unified instruments built by Austin, this little gem packs a surprising array of tonalities with unification extending from 32' through 1-3/5'. Having suffered from vandalism and general neglect, the organ sprang to life after a six-year hiatus. Always a delightful entertainer with upbeat rhythms, George included that afternoon "Everything's Coming Up Roses," Clarke's "Trumpet Voluntary," "You Made Me Love You" and "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles."

The highlight of our summer activities came August 20, as member Joe Luckey and all of Erie Area Theatre Organ Society hosted our chapter for a concert by Father William Biebel at Gannon University's renowned "Pipe Dreams" 3/14 Robert-Morton/Tellers pipe organ. We quickly became fans of Father Bill's inimitable style as he performed such favorites as "This is All I Ask" and the "Clarinet Polka." Many members also enjoyed a special buffet dinner, featuring a "Make Your Own" sundae bar, at the University's cafeteria following the afternoon's entertainment. Thank you, again, EATOS!!

Jim Shepherd

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

Kalamazoo

616/649-2742

On August 20, some 26 members and friends of our club enjoyed a fun afternoon at the Butela residence where they enjoyed good potluck food. The program opened with a sing-along using the sound tape of Rob Richards' recent concert at the State Theatre. Ken Butela entertained on the Conn 650 theatre organ, playing some old and familiar compositions including selections from *Cats*, *Ice Castles* and *Evergreen*. Dick Barden also played several numbers on the organ, while Gerry Derhammer followed playing a composition on the piano. Ken closed the program with a few improvisations on the piano and organ.

The program committee announced plans for Christmas organ music at the State Theatre in Kalamazoo. A Christmas organ concert featuring a nationally known artist is also scheduled at the State Theatre where the Barton 3/13 will be played.

Many favorable remarks were made concerning the Afterglow II concert at the State Theatre last July 8, when Rob Richards was the featured organist.

Janet Corstange

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WOLVERINE

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Back in 1964, Wolverine Fred Bayne was one of about a dozen organ buffs who got together to form the Wolverine Chapter of what was then ATOE. Now, twenty five years later, it was fitting that charter member Fred had the opportunity to represent the chapter he had helped create at the National Convention in Detroit. He shone as the cocktail pianist at the Westin Hotel on opening day.

Later in the month, the chapter convened in the home of members Chuck and Sharron Patterson. It doesn't make any difference whether you come to the Pattersons in midwinter, mudsummer or when; there is always that same warm welcome that seems to say "We're glad you're here." So it was on July 16. The absence of a featured organist wasn't even noticed. Sharron kept us entertained without one. But, yes, she did relinquish the organ to a few guest artists. Melissa Ambrose took a turn and then introduced one of her students, Susan Lewandowski, who impressed us with her smooth playing after only one year of lessons. And, yes, it would have done Father Jim Miller's heart good to see and hear his one-time pupil, Melissa, pumping away at the little pump organ and playing "A Closer Walk With Thee."

In August once again the congenial crew of Wurlitzer House, consisting of Dave Voydanoff, Glenn Rank and "Pop" (Glenn's Dad) hosted our chapter for an annual picnic in Algonac. Due to the threat of rain, most of the picnicking was done on the porch and inside, but that didn't dampen the spirits of those how came one bit. Good music prevailed, bolstered by good food.

Charlie and Betty Baas



Susan Lewandowski at the Patterson's Hammond.
Marvin Spear photo



Fred Bayne at the Westin Grand.
Bo Hanley photo

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