



NOSTALGICALLY YOURS. Dudley Savage at the 4/24 South Bank Wurlitzer. Available from: Cinema Organ Society - Sales Officer, 105 Highview, Vigo Village, Meopham, Kent. DA13 OTQ, U.K. Price \$15.00.

This is an excellent tape. The South Bank Wurlitzer is one of England's best and best known organs.

Dudley Savage who was previously unknown to me is, as it turns out, a very competent organist. He plays a very relaxed and listenable style.

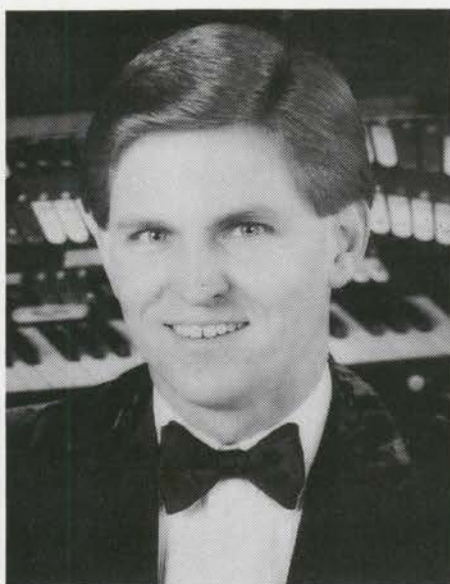
The recording engineer, John Leeming, has once again done a masterful job of capturing the organ and the room in such a way that you believe you are there in person. It is digitally mastered and dolby encoded. The recording is all-round high quality.

As is often the case with recordings from England, most of it is medleys. Since naming all of the tunes played would make for a rather long list, I'll mention selected highlights: Rodeo March /Her Name is Mary, I'm In the Mood For Love, Louise, A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square, Long Ago and Far Away, Scottish Melodies (medley), The Stars and Stripes, All I Ask of You, Autumn Leaves, We Just Couldn't Say Goodbye, Great Day, ending with a salute to Irving Berlin.

The only selection I felt wasn't up to the quality of the rest was "The Stars and Stripes." It was sort of an approximate stab at the tune and should have been left out.

This recording is recommended because of the organ, and overall listenability.

Bob Shaffer



THE BYRD SINGS. Ron Rhode at the 4/17 Wurlitzer, Byrd Theatre, Richmond. Available from: VTOS, P.O. Box 7082, Richmond, Virginia 23221. Price \$18.00 - CD, \$12.00 - cassette, postpaid.

In this recording Ron Rhode is joined by his brother, Chuck, who sings to Ron's accompaniment in five of the sixteen selections. Ron Rhode is, as everyone knows, an excellent professional organist. As such there is a certain level that he never falls below, which, of course, is a good deal better than most people could ever hope to get. The playing is good, but there is that certain spark, that certain something extra that is missing from this recording. That certain indefinable something that we usually get. Registrations seem to lack variety and interest as well.

The Byrd Wurlitzer is an incredible organ. However, I believe that it was recorded too close to the chambers in this recording. It lacks the sweetness of tone that we have all come to associate with this organ. This may also be partly due to the way it was registered as well. The addition of Chuck Rhode to this recording doesn't do much for it one way or the other, except to point out one of the many roles a theatre organ can play.

Selections are: Barcelona, A Shine On Your Shoes, Slow Poke, Bahn Frei, Every Day is Ladies Day, The Gypsy, Me Too, Slaughter on Tenth Avenue, Hello Bluebird, If You Were The Only Girl in the World, Liberty Bell March, Night and Day, Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, I'm Lookin' Over a Four Leaf Clover, Look for the Silver Lining, Light Cavalry Overture.

Taking my somewhat disparaging remarks earlier for what they're worth, this is still by anyone's standards a good recording.

Bob Shaffer



THE ALL-AMERICAN MUSIC OF IRVING BERLIN. Dwight Thomas at the 4/42 Paramount Music Palace Wurlitzer. Available from: Newport Classic, 106 Putnam St., Providence, RI 02909. Write for catalog.

Dwight Thomas has come a long way since he was last reviewed in this column. These are all believable arrangements from someone who has relaxed enough to let his personality catch up to his stunning keyboard technique. This recording is full of thoroughly enjoyable performances.

This monstrous instrument is very well known, so I'll forego any comments except to note that Mr. Thomas uses it to its best advantage.

The only disappointment is the way the organ was recorded. Since many theatre organ buffs are also audiophiles, the lack of clarity in the loud passages and the downright muffled sound in the softer passages, will probably be viewed as unacceptable. Those of you who are not so critical might not mind.

Selections are as follows: Alexander's Ragtime Band, Let's Face the Music, This is the Army, Change Partners, Always, Heat Wave, Annie Get Your Gun, Puttin' on the Ritz, With You, Me, *Top Hat* Medley, Slumming on Park Avenue, Russian Lullaby, Give Me Your Tired/God Bless America (with the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir).

In spite of the fact that I did not like the recording quality, I would still recommend this recording because of Dwight Thomas' performances.

Bob Shaffer



PIPES PLUS. Charlie Balogh at the 3/31 Wurlitzer. Available from: Good Time Charley's, 4515 28th St. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508. Price \$16.50 - CD, \$11.50 - cassette, postpaid.

As you might surmise from the title there is more here than pipe organ. Don't stop reading. It is to date the best example I've heard of pipe organ and electronics. Charlie Balogh makes a very convincing marriage between Wurlitzer and synthesizer. "Clair DeLune" is a particularly brilliant example of the usefulness of electronic keyboards in conjunction with a pipe organ.

This recording is, all in all, a very upbeat and spirited performance, played on an organ that is more than adequate to the task.

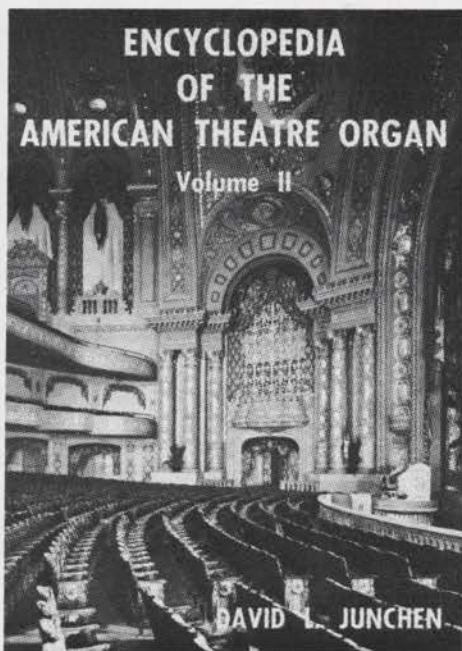
The recording engineer did a very good job of recording, mixing and mastering. There is more detailed recording information on the jacket which I'm sure many listeners will find interesting.

Selections are as follows: Strike Up the Band, Hard-Hearted Hannah, Lush Life, Theme from *St. Elsewhere*, Love Look Away, The Waltz in Swingtime, Jump Shout Boogie, Clair DeLune, In a Mellow Tone, My Romance, Hooked On Classics.

This is a well-played and entertaining recording and is highly recommended.

Bob Shafter

**See You
in
Indianapolis!**

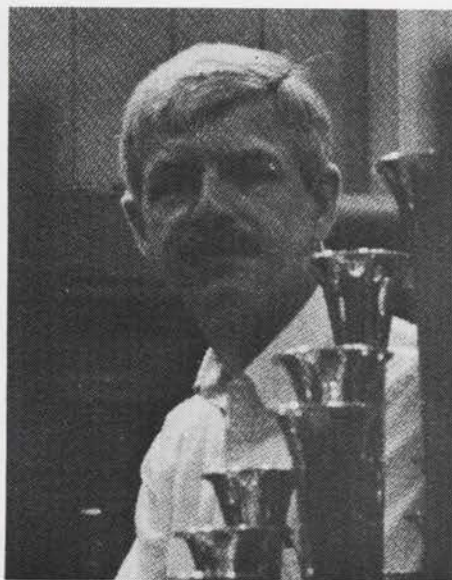


BOOK REVIEW

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN, VOLUME II, by David L. Junchen. Available from Showcase Publications, P.O. Box 40165, Pasadena, California 91114. Cost is \$65 plus \$4.25 postage and handling (California residents add tax for your district).

We who love the theatre pipe organ and its music are exceptionally fortunate that David Junchen has elected to compile the *Encyclopedia of The American Theatre Organ*. He is, without question, the foremost authority in this field for our time. His personal experience with theatre pipe organs has included designing, installing, voicing, maintaining and consulting for many of the major venues in this country. He has also been a gracious and helpful resource for anyone who has approached him with a question about an installation or an instrument or a company connected with the industry.

From the cover photograph of the elegant Philadelphia Mastbaum Theatre to the nostalgic scene of the New York City Roxy Theatre foyer on the back, Volume II is packed with fascinating and invaluable information of the same calibre that is found in Volume I. Richly illustrated and carefully indexed, the thoroughness of Junchen's research in both primary and secondary sources reveals the work of a true historian in the finest sense of the word. Readers will find the reproductions of company publicity and advertising materials very like taking a trip back in time to the mood and feeling of the original builders and suppliers. Photographs of the factories and workers add to the sense of presence that the stories convey. For those who already own Vol-



Dave Junchen

ume I, it is interesting to note that author Junchen has included, in this edition, several pages of corrections and additions to the opus lists in the first book, which mark the work as the product of excellent ongoing research and a desire on the part of the writer to present a history that is as current as possible.

Volume II covers the history of organ-builders, from the L.D. Morris & Co. to the Wm. Wood Pipe Organ Company and of some 84 firms that were providers of parts and products essential to the industry. We are now eagerly awaiting the third volume which will be devoted to the fascinating and intriguing Wurlitzer Company.

Grace E. McGinnis

Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the Record Reviewer, THEATRE ORGAN, 4633 S.E. Brookside Drive., #58, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222. Be sure to include purchasing information (postpaid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.

**35th ANNUAL
ATOS
CONVENTION
AUGUST 4-8**

NUGGETS cont. from page 38

"Master Builders," Guy deMaupasant's "The Inn" and "Artist," R.L. Stevenson's "Suicide Club" and "Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde," Dumas' "Camille," Wilde's "Importance of Being Earnest." These form the mainstay. Dished up in good adaptations, done with drama and suspense, with competent acting and directing, the series clicks. Such a platter as "The Inn," for instance, seemed highly professional with good diction as well as drama, the standout.

The program, on about a year, has an estimated \$1100 cost.

GOLD DUST . . .

10/38 DICK LEIBERT and singer Dick Todd over New York's WJZ; JESSE CRAWFORD, NBC Network; GEORGE LUNDQUIST, Jamestown, N.Y.'s WJTN; MARY FOUNTAIN, Harrisburg's WHP; "Between the Bookends with Ted Malone and organist ROSA RIO, NBC; FRANK RENAULT, York, Pa.'s WORK; TRUMAN TAYLOR, Syracuse's WSYR; TOM GRIERSON, Rochester's WHAM; HARRY SPRINGER, Elmira, NY's WESG; "Console & Keyboard," Philadelphia's KYW; CHARLES PAUL, CBS Network.

That does it for this time, sourdoughs. So long! *Jason & the Old Prospector*

CLOSING CHORD

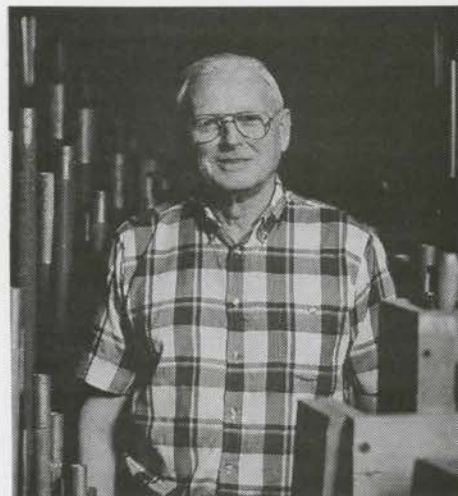
Leonard Vernon

A charter member of ATOS and of the Oregon chapter, Leonard Vernon passed away on February 16. He was 68.

A lifelong resident of Astoria, Oregon, Leonard had a Robert-Morton theatre pipe organ in his home and, on numerous occasions, hosted chapter events as well as visiting organists from all parts of the country (see January/February 1990 THEATRE ORGAN).

Leonard's interests and talents ranged far beyond theatre organs, however. His life was closely tied to the Columbia River, and he served as a volunteer at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. He was well known for his slide show presentations of Columbia River steamboats. He was also active in Boy Scouts, Kiwanis and the Association of Steam Engine Enthusiasts.

He is survived by his brother, Bill, and nephew Blaine with whom he served as volunteer crew members on the Lightship Columbia. He will be missed.



Virginia Byrd Wolfram

Virginia Byrd Wolfram, sister of ATOS Hall of Fame member Dessa Byrd, passed away suddenly on February 11, 1990, at the age of 76. Well-known in musical circles in Indianapolis, Indiana, Virginia carved herself an enviable career. Although too young to have played for silent movies, she appeared at the consoles of many local theatres in the thirties. She was the first demonstrator locally for the Hammond Organ Company.

Virginia was a lifelong entertainer in many venues including radio and TV stations. For 35 years she was Music Director at WISH-TV Channel 8, and at the time of her death she was organist at Unity Truth Center. Also active in many Indianapolis arts organizations, including the Central Indiana Chapter of ATOS, she was a member of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Women's Committee, the Indianapolis Opera Guild, Matinee Musicale, Mu Phi Epsilon, and the Indianapolis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

She had held many offices in Central Indiana Chapter and was a trustee of the Dessa Byrd Memorial Scholarship Fund that she founded to honor her sister's memory. Proceeds from this fund are used as awards for the chapter's Young Organist Competition. Winners of this local competition have gone on to win four of the five national ATOS competitions.

Her wit, charm, talent, energy, and enthusiasm will be sorely missed by us all.

Tim Needler

Chester E. Klee


Chester E. Klee, known as "The Music Man of Olean" (New York), died on February 28 after a long illness. He was 84.

A composer, teacher and performer, he was dedicated to bringing good music to Olean for 55 years. While attending the Eastman School of Music in his native Rochester, he played the organ in the Madison Theatre and several others, and led a jazz combo. He earned a Bachelors' Degree in music with emphasis on piano and theory, and a Master's Degree in composition.

For nine years he was assistant professor of music at St. Bonaventure University, then opened a private studio in 1936, teaching voice, organ, piano, theory and composition. As organist at St. Mary's in Olean, he played for more than 1,000 weddings and 2,000 funerals.

A charter member of the Olean Civic Music Association, he was responsible for bringing many greats of the concert world to the city. Mr. Klee served on the Board of Education, wrote a column for the Olean *Times-Herald* and received keys to the city in 1959 and 1974.

He is survived by his widow, a son, two daughters, two sisters and four grandchildren.



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