

theatre organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF THEATRE ORGAN ENTHUSIASTS

THE EDITOR NOTES . . .

Don't Look Back....

Who can pass very much of a day without at some time during its hours fondly recalling events of the past? And yet the moment it is over, any event passes irretrievably into the past to take all with it but memory. What remains, then, is entirely up to each of us.

And, once in awhile, something comes up like a remnant of a bygone era to transport us all on memories' wings into an almost forgotten place in time....a moment repeated almost like reliving the past. And one of the features which makes such an event so delightful and fantastic is its completely unexpected appearance. It, surely, must not be unexpected insofar as each and everyone is concerned, for a few or many persons must work, plan, and hope that this event will be possible and will prove to have been what our memories lure us into believing.

At the San Francisco Fox Theatre, early this year, such an epic was relived by 4,700 listeners, ATOE members, theatre management, and others who turned out at midnight on a Saturday night to listen till about three o'clock in the morning Sunday. This, of course, was the return of George Wright to Ethel, the four manual 36 rank Wurlitzer. We've all heard this on HiFi Records, thanks to George and to Rich Vaughn and his staff. But to be present in person and hear music coming out of the entire proscenium arch, through the vertically stacked chambers on either side, and the 32 foot diaphone overhead, is nothing that words can tell much about. Perhaps the most significant event to indicate its importance is the fact that 4,700 persons braved the winter night to attend this concert.

But back of the scenes is an unsung crew that worked tirelessly, getting the big organ in its finest

condition in many years. And this type of work, for those of you who may not have done it, is tedious, dirty, frustrating, and endless. Even when every pipe is speaking on call, there is always something in an organ of this size that can be brought nearer to its ideal in performance. So, there is never a stopping place. These men cannot be identified by name, but the entire staff of A.T.O.E. locally, in San Francisco, as well as the rest of the Bay Area, was on hand sometime during the preparatory steps. And the time had to coincide with the idle periods of the theatre -- usually after midnight or on Saturday morning. So George Wright had the opportunity to display, not only his own magnificent talent, but the less known talents, loves, and cooperation of many men -- some of whom he does not know and will never meet.

We find in theatre organs and theatre organ music this same combination of talent and talents not identified. People who give time and effort for the sake of giving only. And make no mistake, without this, there would have been no George Wright concert, and there would have been no organ upon which to play.

In the Spring, when beauty is bursting forth all around us, we sometimes forget that last winter's storms were in requirement of this spring's flowers, brooks, and green hills. Here again, we can return to the past in our minds, if we seem to need it, or we can simply look forward to something like this again -- in the future. Without imagination and faith, we look back, trying desperately to cling to our memories -- with faith and confidence in the goodness of the world God had made for us, we do not need to look back, only remember it.

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THEATRE ORGAN is a quarterly publication devoted to the interests of theatre organ enthusiasts, and to publishing of official notes and proceedings of the American Association of Theatre Organ Enthusiasts. All communications and material should be sent to THEATRE ORGAN, P.O. Box 167, Vallejo, California. Inquires and all materials intended for A.T.O.E. should be directed to the above address and will be correctly routed to the proper office. ce.

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