

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

Please be advised that as of October 1990 the name of the Mid-Florida chapter was officially changed to Orlando Area Theatre Organ Society.

We are installing the Don Baker Memorial Organ in a brand new high school auditorium in the Orlando area. The instrument is a 3/34 Wurlitzer, and the project is being overseen by Ted Campbell who did the Surf City and Panama Hilton Wurlitzers. Our goal of \$100,000 is only short \$12,000.

All of us who were friends of Don and Anne are striving to see this project become a reality. If any of our readers would like to help complete this worthy project, all donations are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to: Orlando Area Theatre Organ Society, 1207 Yates Street, Orlando, FL 32804.

Thank you,
Clifford R. Shaffer, President
Orlando Area TOS

Dear Editor:

I have a confession to make! I am a "Down-under organophile" hopelessly addicted to George Wright, the man and his music.

According to my wife, Elsie, tell-tale symptoms of this chronic disease manifest with startling rapidity whenever the magical GW is mentioned, thereby causing a dramatic metamorphosis to occur wherein my usually mild-mannered appearance instantly gives way to that of a fire-breathing cyclops with a burning desire to preach the gospel according to St. George (Wright!) with all the attendant zeal and fervour of an old-time evangelist.

Get the picture? GREAT! Could I then beg, plead, cajole, appeal to your generosity in publishing this pitiful fragment of depraved musical humanity in the rather forlorn (?) hope that another fellow addict out there possessing the complete recorded GW Collection would kindly offer to supply his "Aussie" counterpart with an additional musical "Fix" — in taped format — of previously released GW material not in our collection.

Elsie and I have planned our tour of your country to coincide with the staging by host city San Francisco of this year's convention. We'll be staying at the St. Francis and any avid GW collector willing to help can contact us there — or at the address below — and receive our enduring thanks and appreciation.

Phil and Elsie Howie
24 Cobden Street
Bayswater 6053, Western Australia

Dear Editor:

I was most interested to read Phil Yan-koschuk's recent letter where he suggests a U.S. postage stamp showing a colorful theatre organ console. I am certain this would be very welcome, indeed.

It may be of interest to my fellow members to know that, in 1981, the Canadian Postal Authority issued a seven-cent postage stamp showing a photograph of the Canadian organist and composer Healey Willan (1880-1960) seated at a four-manual organ console. I have often thought that a postage stamp of Jesse Crawford at the Wurlitzer console in the Paramount Theatre in New York would be fitting tribute to the world's most famous theatre organist.

Sincerely,
Allen Moyes
Dorset, England

Dear Editor:

As a national member of the London Chapter, I read the interesting reports in THEATRE ORGAN from all the chapters; therefore, I am concerned about the report from London Chapter regarding the concert given by Carol Williams, a report I consider in bad taste as it berates Carol's ability to play the organ.

Carol spent five years at the Royal Academy of Music where she obtained, among many awards, the Academy's Recital Diploma. She is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, a Fellow of Trinity College in London, and an Associate of the Royal College of Music. As to playing theatre organs, she was trained by Vic Hammett and Eric Spruce, has played concerts on four-manual Wurlitzers in Gaumont State Top Rank Club and in South Bank Polytechnic and has a number of classical and theatre organ recordings to her credit. She is hardly likely to find the Barry Christie organ problematical.

I am also concerned that some events we read about in THEATRE ORGAN, such as Carol's concert, are not reported on in our London newsletter.

Sincerely,
Patricia Rogers
Middlesex, England

Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN. Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.

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ATOS ELECTRONIC THEATRE ORGAN OWNERS' GROUP

During the Indianapolis Convention ATOS President John Ledwon appointed Jack Moelmann to head up a group of ATOS members interested in forming a group of electronic theatre organ owners similar to the home theatre pipe organ group. There have been several mentions of the group's formation in the Journal and the Newsletter as well as the President's message. Jack Moelmann indicates that response has been slow with only nine people writing to him indicating an interest.

The purpose of the group within ATOS is to bring together those who own electronic theatre organs such as those made by Allen, Conn, Rodgers, etc., and those who have made modifications to their instruments by either adding other electronic enhancements or real pipes and percussions. One of our members who has indicated an interest in this type of group is Robert Gates. He has suggested the following as some of the objectives for this group:

1. To exchange information on existing instruments. This would include descriptions of means for tonal enhancement, maintenance tips, suggested registrations and playing hints.
2. To provide data on new technologies so that their benefits could be understood. How many organists know, for example, that Allen's W-9 atone-production board offers (according to the manufacturer) recorded attack and decay?
3. To evaluate new instruments as they are introduced. Product reviews, done responsibly, are appropriate to the Theatre Organ, as are evaluations of tapes and CD's.
4. To maintain a list of producers of such items as:
 - a) kit organs
 - b) reverberation systems
 - c) dedicated organ speakers, for example, horn units for reed stops, and
 - d) accessories, e.g., chimes and 16' extensions
5. To provide interviews with representatives of the leaders in the field. They could tell where the technology is going.

Technology is certainly affecting the theatre pipe organ through electronic relays, combination actions, power supplies, trick effects, etc. The electronic organ has come a long way since the first Hammond.

It is not too late to get interested in being part of this group. If you are interested and have something unique in the electronic organ world or are interested in what other people may have, write to Jack Moelmann for more information or to just join this beginning group of ATOSers.

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