

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

CONNECTICUT

The Connecticut Chapter met on December 8, 1961, at 2:00 at George Shaskan's organ studio in Stamford, Connecticut. The organ is a 25 rank WurliTzer with a 3m Kimball and 2m WurliTzer console, and is ideal in its installation and setting.

The Chapter gathered again February 10 for a business meeting at the home of Everett Bassett, followed by a theatre party at the State Theatre in Waterbury.

As of this meeting, the Connecticut Chapter was one year old, and Everett's house was properly decorated with a large sign across the front porch reading: "Happy Birthday, Connecticut Chapter ATOE", and a fanfare of four reed pipes over the mailbox. (See photo below, right).

The business meeting included election of officers for the coming year as follows: Allen Miller, chairman; Frederick Mitchell, vice chairman, and Everett Bassett, program chairman, all reelected from last year. Secretary-Treasurer Joseph Tobin asked to be retired from his office because of his lack of time and the amount of time required by the job. The office was divided into two offices, and the electees for those were: Judy Derby, secretary, and Sam Edsall, treasurer.

We were reminded that meetings are held the second Saturday of even-numbered months, except for August,

this arrangement giving us a definitely-fixed time through the year and an easy time to remember. A motion was also passed requiring guests to become members after attendance at two meetings.

Everett is the proud owner of a two manual, 4 rank Robert Morton pit organ, in excellent condition. The organ is in two very neat oak grille cases in the basement, each with its own Swell box with the console in the living-room. The instrument speaks through a slot in the living-room floor (and up the cellar stairs). Everett has for the time being removed the Vox and put in a Trumpet, this proving to be an effective change. Now he has the problem of how to keep this and the Vox too. A judicious relocation of some percussions, plus the introduction of a new chest, will see this accomplished. The organ saw much use before and after the February 10 business meeting, and was also thoroughly toured.

Everett's wife, Eleanor, fortified us for the theatre party with a generous supply of coffee and a birthday cake decorated with "Happy Birthday ATOE" and a console pictured in colored frosting.

Reginald Evans had gone on ahead to warm up the beast, and we were greeted with WurliTzer sounds on entering the theatre. The State Theatre has a two manual, ten rank WurliTzer, which Everett and "Reg" have kept in very good condition and which Everett plays on occasion.

Several members took full advantage of this opportunity to play a good WurliTzer, and a wide variety of selections was offered. Something over 50 people appeared in the theatre, so we had an appreciative audience. The meeting finally began to break up at 2:00 o'clock Sunday morning, ending another very successful get-together.

F. L. Mitchell
Vice Chairman



Fabulous studio of George Shaskan in Stamford, Conn. (December 9 Connecticut Chapter meeting). WurliTzer, about 20 ranks; 3m Kimball console, 2m slave WurliTzer console.



Connecticut Chapter officers, left to right, are: Allen Miller, chairman; Fred Mitchell, vice chairman; Everett Bassett, program chairman; Sam Edsall, treasurer; and Judy Derby secretary (seated at 2/10 WurliTzer, State Theatre, Waterbury.)



Front porch of Everett Bassett's home for the February 10 business meeting.

theatre organ

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

The Eastern Massachusetts Chapter meets the 4th Friday each month. September was election meeting. New officers for 1962 are Al Winslow, Chairman, George Marshall, Treasurer, Clayton Stone, Asst. Treasurer and David Hartshorn, Secretary.

The October meeting was at Stoneham Town Hall with their 2/14 WurliTzer. This was an invitational meeting and resulted in 12 new members joining.

The Eastern Massachusetts January meeting was held at the home of member Joe Lavacchia. Joe has the former WMEX WurliTzer 2m/8r which he is now increasing to 11 ranks. This is the or-

gan John Kiley played for over 20 years.

Our February meeting was held at Stoneham Town Hall with Len Winters and John Kiley entertaining at the 2m/14r WurliTzer.

Our annual spring concert to be held on May 12 at the Stoneham Town Hall will feature Leonard (Melody Mac) MacClain. This will be our sixth annual meeting, and each succeeding year has seen an increase in enthusiasm and patronage. Last year Reggie Foort favored us, and we had 700 in attendance. This year we hope for a capacity house of 900.

This organ in Stoneham is a real "gasser" with Trumpet, Post Horn, Krumet and two Tibias. The hall has

excellent acoustics and the organ is professionally maintained. All of our artists have been enthusiastic about performing on this organ, and we are looking forward to a real "hep" program from "Melody Mac". There will be "silents", of course. We invite all neighboring Chapters.

Al Winslow,
Chairman

POTOMAC VALLEY

Because of so many conflicts in busy schedules, there was no meeting prior to Christmas as we had planned.

Our sincerest thanks to Captain and Mrs. Erwin Young for hosting our last meeting at their home in Alexandria. Darrell Stuckey and Ray Jenkins did the honors at Erwin's snappy 2/7 WurliTzer; all three performed admirably. The weather was tops and attendance was excellent with even a few of our Richmond members up. Recent work on the organ apparently paid off as it really sparkled. Our thanks too, to the refreshment committee who made the afternoon very complete.

Several of us met late in 1961 with Harold White in Baltimore and paid a visit to the Stanton & State Theater. Win McDonald and Jimmy Boyce took turns dusting off the keyboard while Dick Hoffer showed us around the chambers. The organ is a 3/31 Kimball and sounds amazingly good for the little bit of work which has been done in the chambers. (The console is in pretty good shape). Afterwards we went across town to the State Theater where Charlie McClelland and Dave Richards are doing a beautiful job restoring the State's 2/7 WurliTzer. Console and pedal board have been refinished, keys recovered and extensive work done in the chambers. It should be finished within a week or two.

I also had a tour of the Capital Theater's 3/13 WurliTzer in Washington last week and it looks mighty good. As soon as the blower is repaired we hope to start using it.

Woody Wise, our Vice Chairman, announces that a Rialto electronic Gulbransen organ and a whole battery of speakers has been placed in his theater, The "Virginia" in Alexandria, for the holidays, and will be featured nightly at the break before the last show with Jimmy Boyce at the console.

Jimmy Boyce is progressing nicely with his Herculean project at the Alexandria Roller Rink. The hefty 4 manual console is now in place up on the gallery, blower ready to be connected, relay completed, and many of the chests in place. The first of the 34 ranks was to go up around Christmas and shortly thereafter he hoped to hear the first sound.

Richard F. Kline, Jr.
Chairman, Potomac
Valley



Geo. Marshall, treasurer; Al Winslow, chairman; Clayton Stone, assistant treasurer (sitting left to right); Joe Lavacchia, Pat Fucchi and other Eastern Massachusetts Chapter members standing beside Lavacchia's 2/8 WurliTzer.



Joe Lavacchia (holding viol pipe) standing in chamber of his WurliTzer (former WMEX organ).

Spring, 1962

LAND-O-LAKES

The November 10th, 1961, meeting of the Land-O-Lakes Chapter, ATOE, was held at the Minneapolis - St. Paul studios of KSTP-TV. The 3/18 Wurlitzer, which was originally in the Paramount Theater, St. Paul, Minn., has been placed in special chambers where it sounds through a speaker system into the television auditorium.

A business meeting at which Chairman Al Schmitz reported the 1962 National meeting would be in Los Angeles instead of the middle West had been hoped, was followed by a series of informal concerts presented by various members and guests including R. J. Kinney, who had played this instrument in the 1930's at the Paramount Theater.

Following a TV broadcast (not involving the organ) which many were able to watch quietly, the organ was available to every one on into the night. Our thanks are expressed to Stan Hubbard and the management for their indulgence.

The first meeting of the new year was a memorable one to salute our special guest, Honorary Member Eddie Dun-



Al Schmitz, Land-O-Lakes Chapter chairman, at KSTP-TV.



General view, KSTP-TV, Minneapolis, Minn., after regular meeting of Land-O-Lakes Chapter.

stedter and his wife. Forty-two members and guests met for dinner at the Edgewater Inn, Minneapolis, Minn., January 30th., where Mr. Dunstedter is currently playing a Theatre-Style Gulbransen electronic organ. The temperature was 11 below zero outside, but inside Eddie proved with out any question of a doubt that he is as "hot" now as he was on the Minneapolis, Minnesota Theatre Wurlitzer in times gone by. His playing of Gershwin was incomparable as was his entire program. The group was so entranced that they did not break up until long after our normal bedtime and Mr. Dunstedter finally had to plead fatigue.

George A. Rice



Mrs. Rose Morley, former organist for the 2/9 Kilgen, Auditorium Theatre, Red Wing, Minn., at the KSTP-TV Wurlitzer console, Minneapolis, Minn. (The management of the Auditorium Theatre sent Mrs. Morley to the Kilgen factory to learn how to play a theatre organ "theatre-style" before the organ was installed in 1925. She learned well!)

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

The Los Angeles Chapter of ATOE met February 16th at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Simonton, Toluca Lake.

After viewing a silent movie, "The Big Brother", starring Harold Lloyd, with Gaylord Carter at the superb 4/36 Wurlitzer, the members adjourned to the living room for an important business meeting.

Don Wallace, Chapter Chairman, conducted the meeting and reports on the progress of the Wiltern Theatre Kimball rehabilitation were heard. Plans for the forthcoming annual ATOE meeting were discussed and groundwork laid to insure an unforgettable program for traveling ATOE'ers this coming July. (Ed. Note: complete details elsewhere, this issue.)

In addition to a large turnout of chapter members, many guests were present including Harold Lloyd, ATOE President 'Tiny' James, National Secretary Ida James, and Editor George Thompson.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Northern California Chapter had its first meeting of the New Year on Saturday, February 10, at the Palmer Studios in San Francisco. Guest artist for this meeting was San Francisco's popular Larry Vanucci (strange that he is not an ATOE member). This studio, used for making TV commercials, recently acquired a very late divided 6 rank Wurlitzer, complete with English Horn. This organ was removed from the Mill Valley Theatre, California, and installed by Bob Gregory in the Palmer Studios.

Larry played his usual 'tremendous' program to a standing-room-only audience. Following the regular concert many of the members present tried their hand at the console. The next meeting was to be a 'noodling' session at Oakland's Neighborhood Church on Monday, March 26. This church is the home of a 3m/10r Robert Morton that was installed just as it was in the California Theatre, Pittsburg, California.

PUGET SOUND

The first regional quarterly meeting of the ATOE Puget Sound Chapter was held in Astoria, Oregon, Saturday, February 10. The members first met at Leonard Vernon's residence to register and hear his Robert Morton theatre pipe organ. Because the English organist, Reggie Stone, who was to have been guest artist, was unable to attend, Bill Blunk filled in to get the program started, after which members took their turns. Many of the members have theatre pipe organs installed in their homes.

Some 90 people were registered at the Vernon home, where Mrs. George Vernon served refreshments, assisted by Mrs. Alta Schalk, Mrs. David Newman and Mrs. James Smith.

The afternoon meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m., and resumed again at 6:00 p.m. for a banquet dinner. A short busi-

theatre organ

ness meeting was followed by election of 1962 officers. Leonard Vernon was elected secretary-treasurer, and Bill Blunk was elected chairman, for the Pacific Northwest, which encompasses Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia.

Don Baker was the guest artist for the evening. Three short movies were shown, the last featuring Don Baker 25 years ago playing a "sing-along" movie. The Rodgers Organ Company of Hillsboro, Oregon, demonstrated a new electronic theatre organ, and Baker played a 20-minute request program on this organ.

The meeting then adjourned to the basement of Radio Service Company, where David Newman showed and played for the guests many mechanical musical instruments, calliopes, merry-go-round organs, music boxes and theatre pit organs.

At 10:00 p.m. all members converged on the Viking roller rink, where after a skating session, the huge Marr & Colton theatre pipe organ console was

rolled to the center of the floor under the spotlights, with Don Baker taking command of the five-manual instrument. He entertained approximately 125 members and guests for an hour, with the audience emotionally moved by his keyboard artistry and organ orchestrations.

After his performance, the organ was played continuously until 4:00 a.m., with light refreshments served by Mrs. Delbert Shepherd, Mrs. Bill Mattson and Mrs. James Smith.

The next meeting of the club will be held in Portland at the Oriental Theatre.

OHIO VALLEY

The second meeting of the season for the Ohio Valley Chapter, - ATOE was held January 8, 1962 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Strader.

Pat Gillick, chairman, called the meeting to order. After a reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and roll call, a discussion was held regarding delinquent dues of members, and

how long those members would be notified of meetings.

The announcement was made by Kenneth Hunt of Dayton, Ohio, that he and his wife had purchased the four manual, seventeen-rank WurliTzer from a theater in the Mid-West area. It's a 1925, 260-Special. It has a piano too. Mr. and Mrs. Hunt plan to build their house to suit the requirements of the organ. Thanks to the Hunts, another mighty WurliTzer has been rescued.

John J. Strader announced that the Chapter's next meeting (scheduled for March) would probably be held in early April, due to the fact that Richard C. Simonton of Los Angeles is expected to be a guest of the Straders in April, at which time the ATOE meeting would be slated.

It was announced, with great pleasure that Johanna Grosse had accepted the invitation of the Straders, to become a member of the local Chapter. Miss Grosse is well remembered and loved by

(please turn page)



Leonard Vernon's 2/11 Robert Morton.



Member Joyce Morrison, 17, of Everett, Wash., entertains members of Puget Sound Chapter.



Bill Blunk, owner of the Viking Roller Rink; guest artist Don Baker, and Leonard Vernon. In background, 5 manual Marr & Colton.



Members record the concert at the Viking Roller Rink on 5 manual Marr & Colton.

all those who can recall the days of the silent films, as well as early radio.

After the business portion of the meeting was concluded, Pat Gillick introduced Miss Grosse, our guest organist for the evening. She played an hour's concert, which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone present. Even after the recital was "officially" concluded, she played on for the pleasure of all.

Coffee and dessert were served to the 74 members and their guests who attended despite snow, ice and severe weather conditions. It is interesting to note that of those who arrived as guests eleven departed as new members. The last members departed at 2:25 a.m.

Mrs. John Strader
Secretary

DELAWARE VALLEY

The Delaware Valley Chapter met in the studio of Dick Loderhose in February to elect new officers and see and hear the gigantic theatre organ there. Despite icy roads and cold weather, an almost entire membership and friends from the Massachusetts Chapter, and the Detroit Theatre Organ Club, arrived at 2:00 p.m. and found the "start" button turned on for open house at the console.

At 3:00 p.m., Mr. Loderhose called the meeting to order. The nominating committee submitted a list of candidates and the following were elected: Mrs. Dottie MacClain, chairman; S. Daughterty, vice chairman; R. Bloom; treasurer; Mrs. R. Bloom, secretary; and Garrett Paul, program chairman.

After the usual announcements and questions answered, the group was given a preview of the soon-to-be-released "Renwick" record of Bob Mack at the Loderhose WurliTzer. The small portion we heard was very pleasant and well played, with the registrations utilized to their fullest.

Mr. Loderhose, aided by Mr. Reginald Watson, gave a lecture-demonstration of the various types of metal and wood pipes found in the 4/39 organ (36 ranks playing). This organ was originally designed by Jesse Crawford as a 4/21, and was used in the Paramount Theatre studio.

Ben Hall wrote of this organ as "The Crown Prince of North Tonawanda" (THEATRE ORGAN, Fall, 1960), but the organ is no longer the "Crown Prince". It is, indeed, a "King" of organs, and is comparable to the 4/36 Crawford special now slumbering in the New York Paramount Theatre.

Also in the Loderhose studio is the former Roxy Theatre console (5 manual) which will be incorporated as a second console for the WurliTzer.

The treat of the day was an informal concert with Leonard MacClain at the console. "Melody Mac" did his usual excellent job.

With all business over, it was "open house" again at the organ. Mr. Loderhose is a considerate host, and our

thanks go out to him for his hospitality and for having the organ in excellent condition for the meeting.

Roy H. Caruth

NIAGARA FRONTIER

The new Executive Board met on January 5, and discussed plans for the coming year, with the first meeting planned for February 11, at the home of John Spaulding in Kenmore, N.Y. John has a fine 3m/9r Marr-Colton with full percussions and toy counter. An all electric universal player attachment has been added.

The February 11 meeting lured 60 persons to the Spaulding home. Three organists were heard by members and guests, with some of the members also playing.

Spaulding, who built the console himself, had moved it to a different part of his average-size living-room. He had done this to install regulation swell shutters. The organ now also has a crescendo pedal. Spaulding hasn't added any more pipes recently. Those he found in a theatre in Renova, Pa., together with others he located elsewhere, already give him nine different ranks of sound.

Harold Jolles of Cattaraugus led off at the February 11 meeting, until he had to leave. On Sundays, Jolles plays interludes at the Roosevelt Theatre, the only place in Buffalo offering a theatre organ to the public.

Bill Miller of Buffalo then played a big electric organ with a special speaker system, and did a very fair job of imitating the pipe organ. Then he played duets with the Chapter's president, Irving Toner of East Aurora. Electric amplification seemed for awhile to conquer the air-blown organ, but Toner had the final "word". He found two drums, a cymbal, a glockenspiel, a xylophone, and horse blocks in the pipe chamber, controlled from the console.

Finally, Spaulding's pipes played without a human player. He has assembled a device which plays the organ in the manner of a player-piano. Paper rolls pass over a roller; a wire brush transmits current through the holes. The notes play, the shutters open and close. "Look Ma! No hands!"

As flashbulbs popped, and coffee and doughnuts were served, and Messrs. Toner and Miller called "What key is it in?", the 60 enchanted listeners refused to admit that the Mighty Organ's day is over!

"THE DIAPHONE"

"The Diaphone", newsletter of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia, covers organ activities 'down under'. Annual Subscription from the U.S. Foreign Money Order from the post-office for \$1.50 (Australia pound.) Please, no checks or cash. Send to either Mr. V. J. Arnold, 67 New St., Brighton Beach, S5 Melbourne, Australia, or John W. Clancy, 10 Caloola Road, Wentworthville, N.S.W. Australia.

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Head your ads: "WANTED", "SWAP" "FOR SALE", etc. Send your ad to: Theatre Organ, Adv. Mgr, P. O. Box 248 Alameda, California
SPECIAL OFFER to ATOE MEMBERS: No charge for your first ten words.

WANTED

ROTOGRAVURE NEWSPAPER sections going back to 1920, featuring theatre pipe organ installations in movie palaces civic auditoriums, radio broadcasting studios, residences; also clippings from newspapers, magazines, catalogues, advertisements, encyclopedias, books, etc. on orchestral unit pipe organs and Hope-Jones history. Information on T. O. dispositions. Alden Miller, 3212 34th Avenue South, Minneapolis 6, Minn., USA.

Link organ player rolls. Any type. John Spaulding, 289 Fayette, Kenmore, New York.

Theatre Organ complete or parts. A. W. Winterborne, 217 Post Avenue, San Antonio 15, Texas.

Will pay cash for 2 Manual WurliTzer Console and Relay. Console does not have to be in excellent condition, but must be complete. S. Joseph Restivo, 1983 San Luis Avenue, Mountain View, California.

FOR SALE

Kimball pipe organ, with Kimball grand piano attachment. Large music library. Mrs. Charles C. Hard, 2000 West McKinney Avenue, Houston 19, Texas.

3m WurliTzer in Paramount Theatre, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Complete-Good condition. E. H. Kilbourne, Lincoln Bank Tower, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

IT IS SURPRISING HOW MANY THEATRES are beginning to consider the organ again as an attraction. We have received information from several sources indicating that pipe organs are being or have been used recently at the Saenger Theatre, New Orleans; The Oriental, Portland, Oregon; and Paramount, San Francisco. Gene Myers, new member from Belfair, Washington, has promised us a story on the reopening of the organ at the Oriental. Joseph Damery of Bedford, Massachusetts, another member, says there are at least six organs still intact in theatres around Boston. He doesn't say how many of these are playable. How about someone in Boston giving us a run down. . . ?