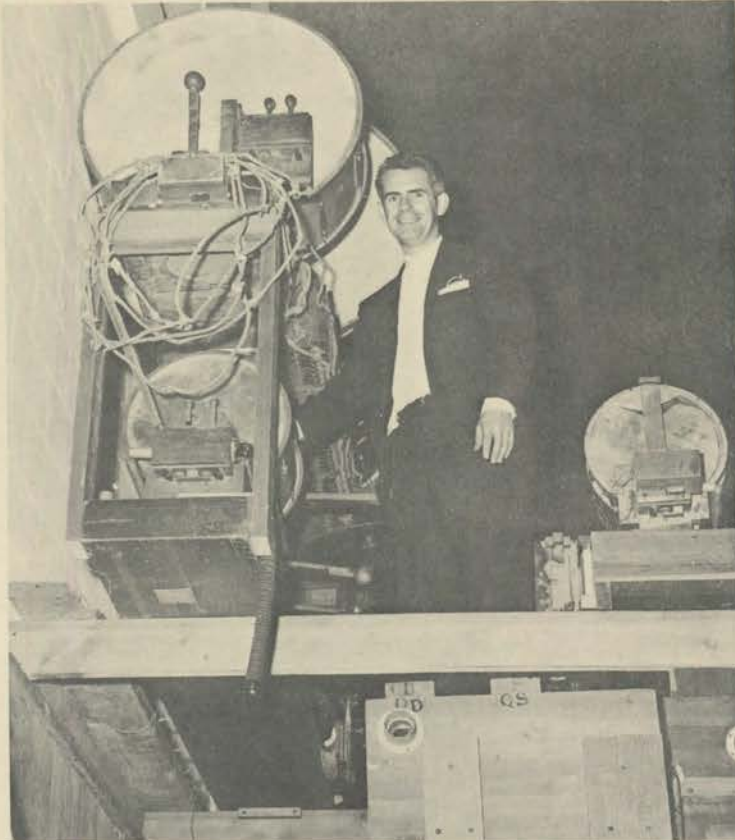


REPORT from ALEXANDRIA ARENA

Story and Photos by
Ray Brubacher



Jim Boyce beams enthusiastically from drum platform at Alexandria, Va., skating rink. Visible are two of the large bass drums, the band and orchestral snare drum, and some of the cymbals.

ROCHESTER (continued)

to their hobby, and it was an honor to have them as guests. We trust that the visit will be repeated.

Another delightful concert for theatre organ enthusiasts of the area was presented on October 28, with Dr. Edward Bebko presiding over the console of the 4m/18r Marr & Colton in Buffalo's Roosevelt Theatre. Here is one organist who isn't afraid to use every conceivable rank in the instrument, plus the assorted sounds which emanate from the organ's "hardware department". In the absence of any of the organ-recording companies making offers to record this instrument, plans are under way to issue a disk, showing off the superb qualities of the organ. This would mark the first time that a Marr & Colton organ has been recorded.

Another theatre to get the axe by the end of the year is the Seneca. Its WurliTzer 3m/15r opus no. 2085 is to be installed in the Skate Haven Roller Rink in Lackawanna, according to recent plans.

The Haven Theatre in Olean is to get the axe by the end of the year also. It once housed Style D WurliTzer no. 566.

About 4 other theatres in downtown

Buffalo are rumored to be closing within a year.

Word from Elmira from David Teeter tells that the player action, built by Lauren Peckham, is now working, an absolute success. It will pick up Solo, Accompaniment or Orchestral, or any combination of them. Pedal is also partly wired in. The couplers are all working, and the combination action is being tackled. The organ is featured in a couple programs over the local station on week-ends, with Dave taping several hours in advance. The public is most receptive to this kind of music.

Danny Schultz, Rochester's no. 1 organ restorer, is scheduled home before the end of the year. Before leaving Europe, he has arranged, financially and otherwise, to bring out a recording of Tom Grierson playing the RKO Palace organ. The record will be made by a firm headed by Derrick Marsh, and will be made available to ATOE's through a system to be set up later. It will not be sold in stores.

Editor's Note:

Thru an oversight we neglected to give Sam Daugherty credit for the photos

Jim Boyce, organist for the American-Wheels Alexandria, Va. Skating Arena, is happy to report that at long last, after innumerable delays in construction details ad infinitum, work is finally progressing smoothly on the installation in the arena of his pride and joy, the 4/34 WurliTzer, originally in the Center Theatre, New York City, and one of the quartet of the Rockefeller Centre WurliTzers.

In order to install the instrument, Jim has had a concrete and steel extension added to one end of an already existing platform some fifteen feet above the rink floor which is attached to the west wall of the building. A separate concrete platform to hold the console was poured near the northwest corner of the arena and the chambers. The chambers when completed will be on two levels. The entire percussion and trap division has been set up, but before installation is complete, some parts of this may be moved around to experiment as to their best possible placement.

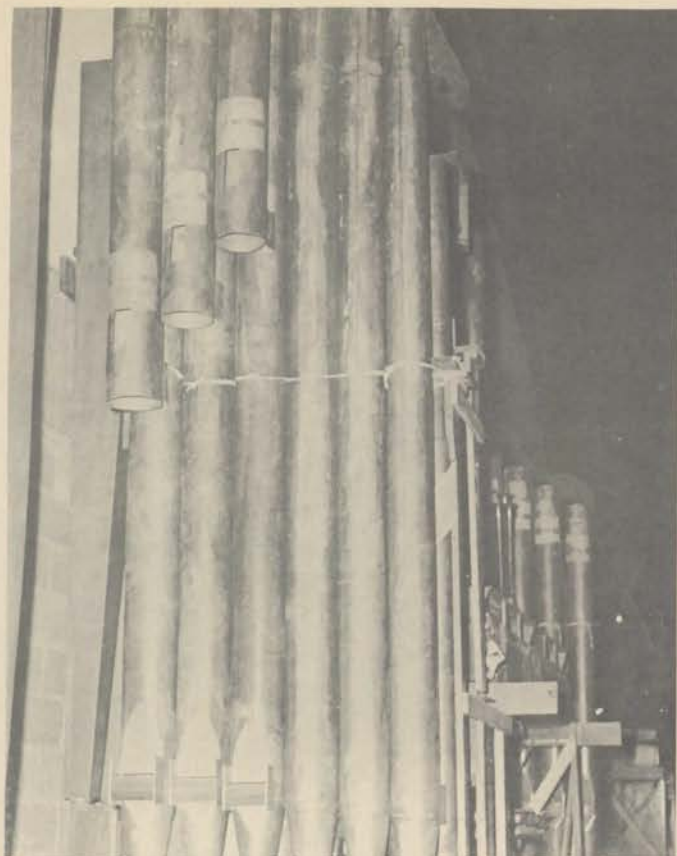
Among the outstanding features of this section are three bass drums; two bass drums and thunder drum, two snare drums, a battery of cymbals, large scale chimes, 37 note glockenspiel, 49 note marimba harp, to name just a few. The 16 foot diaphone extension has been installed and tested, the 16 foot viola diapason and 16 foot Tibia major are also in. Three chests are in place for manual pipes, and a fourth was to be set up soon, giving a total of twenty-one ranks on one level.

Jim hopes to have this much playing by early Spring. The combination action machine is near the console making the changing of piston combinations somewhat easier for Jim. Downstairs in a room behind the candy counter, the four relay stacks and switchboards have been set up and partially wired. The Spencer Turbine Orgoblo with 25 hp. motor is ready to be attached to the power mains. Since a city ordinance states that the upper chambers of the organ will have to be supported by steel girders, Jim plans to install these when he gets the time to do so in between his very heavy teaching schedules and nightly sessions with the rink's Hammond.

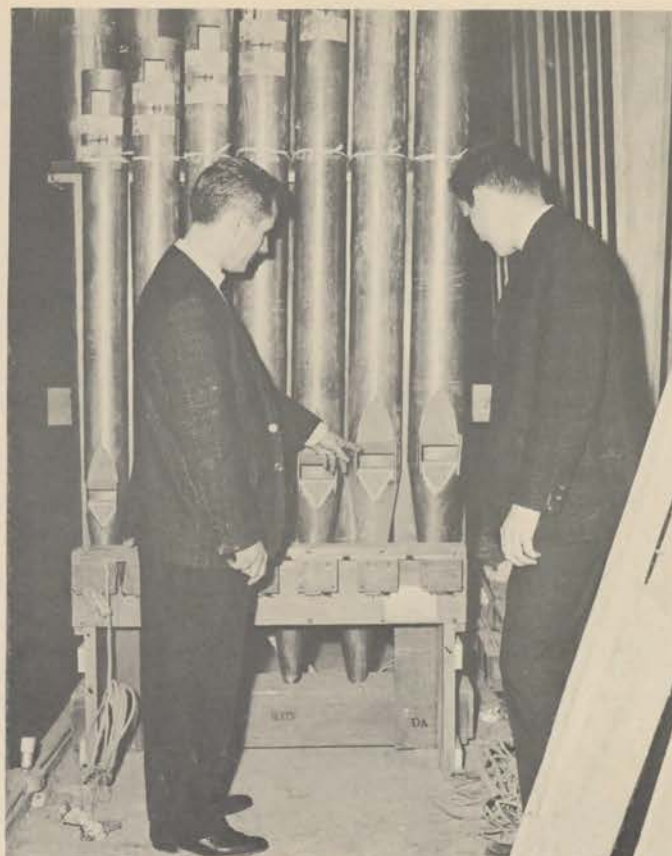
This WurliTzer is not the first organ in the rink, the former one being a 2/7 WurliTzer which Jim installed several years ago. This organ is now the proud possession of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey

used in conjunction with the Leonard MacClain story. We are sorry Sam, that cover photo was especially nice!!!!

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The largest pipes of the 16-foot viola diapason extension.



Boyce points out classic (unnicked!) viola diapason pipes to one of his organ students. This is part of 16-foot extension of the rank. Pipes on far right are Diaphones.

Bartlett, of Oakton, Va., who have it installed in their home.

Thanks to the help and advice of organ enthusiasts and friends, the big organ has progressed at a fantastic speed over a period of the last month. Since the building can accommodate an organ twice the size of the one being installed, and has a reverberation time of several seconds, the instrument

when completed should compare or surpass some of the largest theatre installations in sound. After all, how many WurliTzers have ten 16 foot pedal stops, four of them being 16 foot reeds: Post Horn, Tuba Sonora, Trombone, and Contra Fagotto?

Jim extends a cordial welcome to

anyone wishing to see the instrument (bring a pair of overalls too, and perhaps an extra screwdriver). All kidding aside, this will be one of the truly great theatre organ installations in the country. A full report with specifications will follow upon completion.



Theatre Organ Society of Australia member IAN DAVIS, seated at the console of the 260 WurliTzer Special in the Capitol Theatre, Melbourne, Australia. Ian has delighted organ lovers all over Australia with his many broadcasts on this wonderful organ. (Photo courtesy T.O.S.A.)

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