

ATOE Chapter News

NEW YORK CHAPTER

by Allen W. Rossiter

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Secretary - Edna E. Hunnicutt
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Phoenix, Arizona

WESTERN RESERVE CHAPTER

Chairman - Dwey Arey
10718 Johnnycake Ridge Road
Painesville, Ohio 44077

Secretary - Don Borden
5451 Wilson Drive
Mentor, Ohio

James Daugherty was elected Chairman of New York Chapter at the unit's Spring meeting last May 10th, which was held in the Wakefield Theatre, Bronx, N.Y. Other officers who will serve with Daugherty are Joseph Scuccimarrì, vice-chairman; Allen W. Rossiter, secretary-treasurer; Alvin M. Olson, program chairman; Charles Thomas, promotion director.

Following a short business meeting many of the members enjoyed playing the 3m/12r Welte, a fine instrument, but still in need of many man-hours of labor to put it in its original condition after 32 years of retirement.

The chapter plans several trips this summer to "Organ Island" down on the old New Jersey Shore to hear the 3m/14r WurliTzer installed in the Surf City Hotel. Frank Albanese will be organist during the entire summer season.

Another artist to appear during the hot spell will be Leroy Lewis who has returned to the "Organ Island" from his stint at the console of the WurliTzer in the El Panama Hilton Hotel. Lewis, always a great favorite with ATOE's, will be playing a Hammond with added Allen generators, and possibly a few more gimmicks.

POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER NEWS-

On Friday evening 26 June, the Potomac Valley Chapter held its annual meeting for the election of officers for the coming year. The meeting was held at the Vernon Theatre, in Alexandria, Va. Nominating committee chairman Frank Myers proposed the following slate of officers: Chairman, Ray Brubacher; Vice Chairman, Richard Myers; Secretary-Treasurer, Elbert Marlowe. The slate was unanimously accepted by the members present. Our thanks go to Woody Wise, past Secretary-Treasurer, who for two years has contributed more than his share of time to the chapter, and also to former Vice Chairman, Norm Ziegler. The latest convention news was discussed, and a report was heard from members owning pipe organs on the progress of their installations. Then, Ray Brubacher presented a program of recorded theatre organ music of the past, beginning with some early Crawford 78's, through the era of Quentin MacClean and Sidney Torch, to the present ultra hi fi stereo discs. After this portion, Jim Boyce who has the big 4-34 WurliTzer in the Alexandria Arena, invited the membership to come down for an impromptu jam session, the result being that it was not until 3:30 a.m. Saturday that the meeting adjourned.

Plans are in the making for our next meeting to be held in Baltimore, Md., at the Stanton Theatre which has the 3-31 Kimball recently recorded for Ralbar by Leonard MacClain. The Stanton will go legitimate on the 7th of September, so we are not sure just how much longer we will have this fine instrument available to us.

theatre organ

Another New ATOE Chapter

We are pleased to welcome the PINE TREE CHAPTER to the ATOE family, and wish them the best of luck. As can be seen by the following chapter report, they did not waste any time in getting their activities started. Keep up the good work - we hope to see continued evidence of your local activities in each issue of our publications.

PINE TREE CHAPTER

An effort last winter to organize locally those interested in theatre organ culminated in a meeting on April 14, 1964, at North Yarmouth Academy, Yarmouth, Maine. From the ten persons present the following officers were elected: Forest Perkins, Portland, Chairman; Maurice Pope, Gorham, Vice Chairman; Robert Melcher, Westbrook, Secretary; Charles Milliken, Yarmouth, Treasurer. The by-laws of the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter were accepted as a basis of government and the name, "Pine Tree Chapter," selected. We were most grateful to Mr. John H. Mitchell, Headmaster of the Academy, for opening the doors to us and allowing us to play their WurliTzer organ, the recent gift of a family formerly of California.

Our May meeting was held in the State Theatre, Portland, at the very kind invitation of its manager, Mrs. Geo. E. Francis. At this time our dues were paid and formal application for a charter submitted. After the meeting we enjoyed hearing a few selections played on the WurliTzer by several of our members.

Mrs. Francis is very interested in our organization and its purpose. She has given us the use of a room beneath the stage for a permanent meeting place and permission to restore and use the organ. We also have very fine cooperation from the stage manager, Mr. Charles Curlew.

DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER

by Edger W. Plessner

Delaware Valley Chapter members had the unusual opportunity last November of hearing Miss Barbara Fesmire, daughter of Laura T. Fesmire, Delaware's secretary, play the huge Midmer-Losh 7m/455r organ in Atlantic City Convention Hall, New Jersey. This is one of two exceptionally fine instruments in the building. The other, located in the ballroom, is the largest and most complete theatre organ ever built, having four manuals and 55 ranks — but more on this one in a future article.

Beauty and the Beast

Only a real musician and a master organist can hope to control the vast resources of this famous organ. The console is designed so that the organist finds every control within reach. From this giant "brain" the tone of over 33,000 speaking pipes is controlled.

At this fantastic console Miss Barbara Fesmire rendered a recital for the Delaware Valley chapter last November. Barbara, who is as pretty and charming as she is talented, was born May 5, 1943 and began her musical career on the piano at the age of five. At the age of 13, she began studying at the Wurlitzer Organ Studios, but her natural talent for the instrument demanded a more advanced type of instruction to fully develop her musical aptitude. So in 1957 she enrolled as a pupil of ATOE's Leonard MacClain and has been studying organ techniques with this renowned organist and teacher ever since.

At the age of 15 Barbara became assistant organist at Chambers-Wylie Memorial Presbyterian Church and the following year she was organist and accompanist to the choirs at Lower Moreland High School.

At 16 she was appointed organist for the Rotary International Conference at Atlantic City, New Jersey. Barbara is presently house organist at the Sedgwick Theater in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and teaches both organ and piano.

WESTERN RESERVE CHAPTER

Celebrating the second birthday of the unit, Western Reserve Chapter announced gala plans for a big bash at the Granada Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio, Saturday afternoon, June 6th from 2 to 5. Another big feature of the day will be election of officers; Duane Arey, present chairman, has been named to run again by the nominating committee. No information was given about the organ in the theatre.

WURLITZER OFFERED CLUB

Chicago Area Chapter ATOE has been offered the former Chicago United Artists 10-rank Wurlitzer pipe organ by member John Preszell. The board of directors of the unit has indicated positive interest in obtaining the organ and a search for suitable location is now underway.



Barbara Fesmire at the console of the Midmer-Losh organ in Atlantic City Convention Hall.

OHIO VALLEY CHAPTER

The highlight of the summer meeting of the Ohio Valley Chapter was a silent movie with organ accompaniment by the "Queen of the Theatre Organ," Johanna Grosse. Miss Grosse has played many of the theatres of Cincinnati, Detroit and Cleveland. She was also formerly staff organist for WLW Cincinnati and WTAM Cleveland.

The locale for the program was Ken and Ruth Hunt's beautiful organ auditorium in their home in Dayton, Ohio. Their organ is a 4m/17r Wurlitzer formerly in the Imperial Theatre, Chicago, Illinois.

Preceding the program, the following officers were elected to serve the chapter next year: Everard S. Pratt, Chairman; Dr. Edgar D. Wipperman, Vice Chairman; Mrs. Edgar D. Wipperman, Secretary-Treasurer.

About 100 members and guests were in attendance.

Glenn E. Merriam, Chairman

CHICAGO AREA CHAPTER

by Tony Tahlman

Chicago Area Chapter's most successful event to date was the organ concert-social and dinner, held Sunday, May 3rd at the Baker Hotel, St. Charles, Ill. There were 99 members and their guests present for the affair.

Located on the west bank of the Fox River, the hostelry has installed a 3m/10r Geneva pipe organ. Al Russell was the featured artist for the gathering. Prior to dinner, and following Russell's concert, the instrument was open to all members.

Unknown to many, the Geneva theatre-type organ has two consoles—one is an

unusually ornamented three manual key-desk with an integral player mechanism which defies adequate description. A second identical console stands unused and disconnected in the balcony of the main dining room.

A single chamber installation, the organ speaks into the dining room on one side, and the lobby on the other. A sizeable portion of the swell shutter area has been blocked off to reduce the volume of the organ, allowing it to be used as a source of dinner background music. The console is placed in the lobby to the right of the main entrance. It has recently been overhauled by Alvin Johnson, formerly an employee of the Geneva Company.

Installation of the organ was made when the hotel was built in 1928 and it was played from the opening date to 1960 by Mary Bayliss. She presided at the console two hours during luncheon and then another two hours at dinner-time, every day except Monday. Although Mrs. Bayliss is still a resident of the hotel, she no longer plays the organ. It is not being used regularly at the present time.

Basic Specification of Organ

8' Open Diapason	Amplex French
16' Tibia	Horn stop adds
16' Flute	flatted 7th above
8' Viol D'Orchestre	melody note (8'
8' Viol Celeste	& 4 1/3).
8' Dulciana	Amplex string stop
8' Unda Maris	adds 5th above
8' English Horn	melody note (8'
8' French Horn	& 5 1/3).
8' Vox Humana	Tenuto holds any
	note played until
Piano, Bells, Chimes,	released by toe
Harp, Theatre Percus-	stud. It includes
sions and Traps.	2nd touch on Acc.
	and Great.

CHAPTER NEWS - Continued

The next scheduled CATOE concert will be on Sunday afternoon, August 23, and will feature John Seng at the 4/23 Theatre Organ in the St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois. Contact Bill Barry in Glen Ellyn, Ill. for details.

CONNECTICUT VALLEY CHAPTER

Mrs. Eleanor Weaver, Secretary, advises that the 3/19 Wurlitzer in the Paramount Theatre, Lynn, Massachusetts was saved from the wreckers ball recently. The lucky purchaser was able to remove the entire organ before the theatre was demolished.

PIEDMONT CHAPTER

Piedmonters held their June meeting in the new home of Frank Netherland, near Stuart, Virginia. Frank is the owner of a very well restored 3/9 Kimball that came out of the WPTF Radio Station in Raleigh, North Carolina. Before its use on radio, the organ was housed in a theatre in North Carolina. It is rather unusual in that it is a two manual organ hooked up by Kimball to a three manual console. The top manual is called the percussion manual and plays a limited number of ranks, but all the percussions, tuned and un-tuned. After dinner at a local restaurant Frank played a "Programme for Theatre Organ" which included a history of the organ, its varied uses and its music. Following the official program, all of the chapter's playing members took their turn at the console. Future tentative plans call for a fall concert on the Center Theatre Robert Morton, in Durham, N.C.



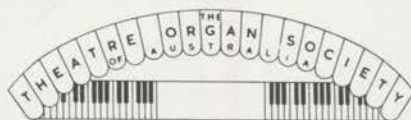
Frank Netherland seated at his 3/9 Kimball.



(Above) - Ann Leaf at the Warner Theatre, Fresno, Robert Morton. (Below) - Jim Murray plays the Fox Wilson Wurlitzer, Fresno, California. These pictures were received too late to be included with the review of the West Coast Meeting held in Fresno May 17, 1964.

-Pictures courtesy of Allen Friensehner, Tracy, California.

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