

THE HISTORY OF THE ELM SKATING RINK ORGAN

ANOTHER ORGAN FEATURED
AT THE 1965 CHICAGO
ANNUAL MEETING

The Elm Skating Club was built on Roosevelt Road in Elmhurst, Illinois, a Chicago suburb, during 1956. The owner, Bill Fuchs, and Tony Tahlman, who had been engaged as organist, surveyed available electronic organs and found nothing to their satisfaction. The possibility of installing a new Wicks pipe organ was considered, but ultimately rejected in favor of the installation of a relocated theatre pipe organ. After a feverish search, a Gottfried Pipe Organ from the DuPage Theatre in Lombard, Illinois was purchased. A four-manual Geneva console was acquired from the Rockne Theatre in Chicago. The R and R Organ Co. composed of "Tex" Richter and Russell Rock installed the instrument with the help of many interested enthusiasts. A Kimball diaphone, a Wurlitzer Tuba Mirabilis and other Wurlitzer components were acquired and included in the original installation.

After the Elm rink opened, organist Tony Tahlman took over the general maintenance, tuning, and further expansion, with Russell Rock remaining awhile for help. Later, a Wurlitzer English post horn was purchased and installed, and the original blower replaced with an Orgoblo from the Southtown Theatre in Chicago. Even the Wurlitzer post horn was found to lack the necessary "bite" required for a skating rink organ, so the Wicks Organ Co. was commissioned to build a post horn voiced on 15 inches pressure. It is interesting that Wicks had to get a special blower to voice the pipes since such pressures are not common in organs that are being built today. When the pipes arrived in Chicago they were revoiced to produce the kind of sound needed in the large building. From a theatre in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, some Barton components were acquired, and then much of what remained of the Rockne Theatre Geneva Organ was purchased.

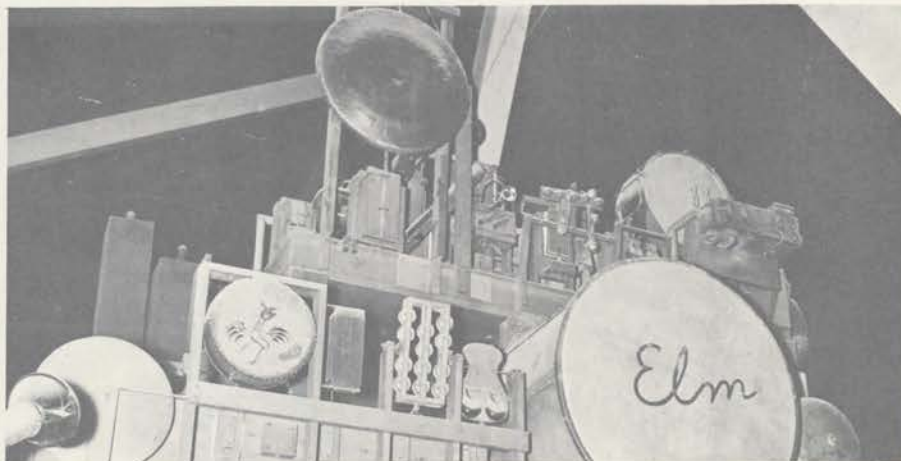
About the time the Chicago Area Chapter of ATOE was organized, Don Johnson was hired to supervise the further expansion of the Elm organ. When Don was subsequently appointed head of Gulbransen's service department and no longer had time for the Elm, Bob Montgomery was called on to replace him. The major portion of the expansion of the Elm organ has been under Bob's supervision with much of the work being done by interested members of the Chicago Area Chapter.

The Elm Organ today has twenty-four ranks -- ten ranks in the East (Main) Chamber, eight ranks in the West (Solo) Chamber, and six ranks exposed behind the console. Traps, Xylophone, and

Summer '65



Tony Tahlman at the console of the Elm Skating Rink Organ. *Bob Mueller Photo.*



The Elm Toy Counter - High above the skating floor.



An interior view of the Elm Skating Rink Elmhurst, Illinois. *Bob Mueller Photo.*

Glockenspiel are unenclosed between the main and solo chambers above the skating floor. In addition to these percussions there are two sets of chimes, glockenspiel, harp, and marimba, one at the left and one at the right of the organ console.

In addition to being an effective pipe organ for roller skating for which it was designed, the Elm organ has proven to be a versatile concert instrument on several occasions. Visiting organists have been impressed with its capabilities as an instrument for playing both classical and popular music.

ANALYSIS OF ELM PIPE ORGAN

SOLO

8 Post Horn	Wicks
16 French Trumpet	Gottfried
8 Open Diapason	Gottfried
16 Solo Tibia Clausa	WurliTzer
8 Tibia Clausa	Gottfried
16 Violin Cello	Kimball
8 Cornopean	Geneva
8 Vox Humana	WurliTzer
Bass Drum No. 2	

MAIN

8 English Horn	WurliTzer
16 Tuba Horn	Barton-WurliTzer
16 Diaphone/Diapason	Kimball
8 Tibia Clausa	Kimball
8 Kinura	Gottfried
8 Viol d'Orch.	Barton
8 Viol Celeste	
16 Bourdon/St. Flute/Diap.	Barton
	Wurl/Kimball
8 Vox Humana	Gottfried
8 Vox Humana	Barton

EXPOSED (BEHIND CONSOLE)

8 Saxophone	Kimball
8 Clarinet	Geneva
8 Oboe	Geneva
8 Viol	Geneva
4 Viol	Geneva
8 Orch. Flute	Kimball

EXPOSED (IN CENTER OF RINK)

8 Bass Tibia (14 pipes)	WurliTzer
Xylophone	Barton
Glock-Orch. Bells	Barton
Percussion Section	Barton
Crash Cymbal	Kohler/WurliTzer

EXPOSED (AT RIGHT OF CONSOLE)

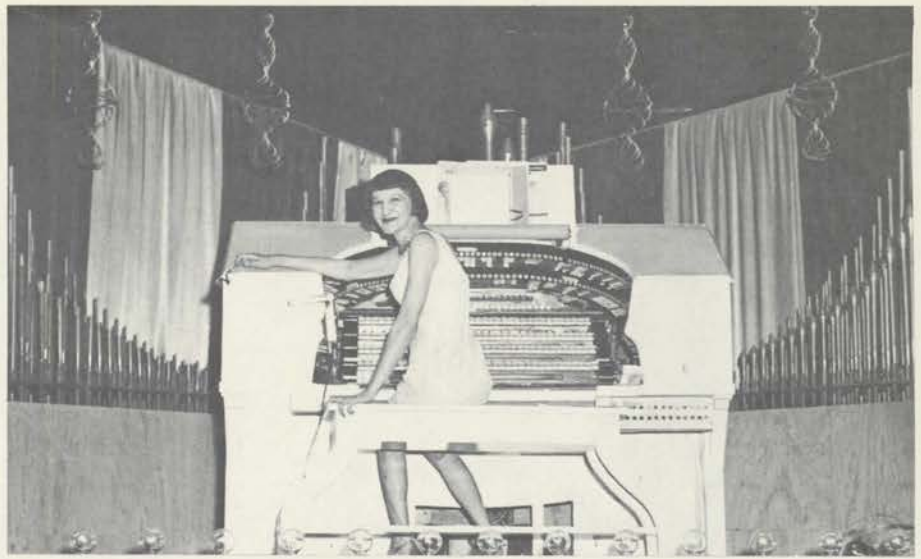
Chimes	Barton
Xylophone	Gottfried
Harp	Geneva
Marimba	Barton

EXPOSED (AT LEFT OF CONSOLE)

Chimes	Barton
Glock	Gottfried
Harp	Barton
Marimba	Geneva

EXPOSED (ABOVE RELIEF STATIONS)

Diaphone (Low 25)	Kimball
Tuba, En Chanade (Low 12)	Barton



Pearl White takes a bow at the Elm Skating Rink Concert. *Lamb Photo.*

CONSOLE

Four Manuals with Horseshoe Bolsters with Added Side Rows, and A Double Row Front-Board
Geneva (Modified)

RELAYS & SWITCHES

No. 1 3 Manual /10 Rank Gottfried (Modified)
No. 2 4 Manual /15 Rank (incl. Sustento) Geneva

BLOWER

10 H.P. Orgoblo 15" Wind



Al Schmitz asks John Muri for 'just a little more' at the Arcada Theatre. *Lamb Photo.*

Organist

John Muri

John Muri became a theatre organist at the age of 17 in 1924 at the Temple Theatre, in Hammond, Indiana. He moved to the Hoosier Theatre in Whiting, Indiana, for three years between 1924 and 1927 and then on to the Indiana Theatre, Indiana Harbor for ten years.

He commuted almost weekly to the Chicago Theatre to study the work of Jesse Crawford and Arthur Gutow and also listen to Albert Hay Malotte at the McVickers Theatre. (Editors Note: Those were the days!!)

Mr. Muri obtained his Ph. D. from the University of Chicago in 1937 and became a teacher of English in the Hammond Public School System. He received his Master's degree in 1940 from Indiana University. He became organist for Hammond Civic Center when it opened in 1937 and held the post until this year when the pressure of other work forced his

theatre organ