



SHORT SHOTS FROM EVERYWHERE

Organist Milton Charles, whose very name conjures memories of the Mighty Mastbaum Theatre in Philly and a school for theatre organists bearing his name in Chicago, is showing another facet of his personality with his latest sideline, an art studio he has opened very near the King's Arms restaurant in Toluca Lake, Calif. (between Burbank and North Hollywood) where he plays a Hammond spinet for evening guzzlers.

Organist Johnny Ledwon, who is in the throes of getting started on a building for his circa 24-ranker (when completed), has a tip for those about to do battle with the single-minded authorities who control the issuance of building permits. As in far too many branches of government, the permit issuers tend to go "by book," and the book states that there must be a window every few feet if it's listed as a room or be added to a house. No windows—no permit. Now, even Elmer Fubb knows that a window is needed in an organ chamber about as much as a hole in the wind conductor. So, Johnny and his Dad, Ray, decided on a little camouflage; they described the windowless room where the chamber will go as a "storage area." The permit was issued without question. We heard of a similar case where the chamber area was referred to as a "closet" on the application. That got the desired effect, too. Bureaucracy, it's wonderful!



John Ledwon

When it was decided to scuttle the Seattle Orpheum Theatre, the wrecking company submitted an estimate of five days to level the building. But they failed to take into consideration the solid construction of the venerable movie palace and seven weeks later they were still hacking away and swinging wildly with the steel ball. The 3/13 Wurli? It's safe; removed and stored some time ago by Puget Sound Chapter members. Harry Dost owns it now.

From Woodbury, New Jersey, Warren Clark reports that Bob Figlio is playing the pipes in the Broadway Theatre, Pitman, N.J. for intermissions every Saturday night, sometimes oftener. Warren sent along a snapshot of a very slow method of moving a pipe organ but hastened to add that his organ was not moved by Volkswagen alone. His wife helped, too.



Moving Day—The hard way!

New Jersey appears to be a fountainhead of organ activity, judging from the numerous theatre stints undertaken by Eric Zeliff, the 16-year-old who designed such subtleties as "Jet Exhaust" and "Tuned Beer Bottles" into his specification of an organ suitable for the ubiquitous Martha Lake (VOX POPS, June 1967 issue). Eric has been doing his bit to keep organ music alive in his home area theaters (Madison, New Jersey) with pre-movie and intermission organludes at the Stanley Warner Milburn and Sanford (N. J.) Theatres, playing a Baldwin plug-in (the original



Eric Zeliff—He gets around.

pipes being long gone). The hour-long pre-feature concerts were well-received at the often full houses (1250 seats at the Sanford), especially during the "Sound of Music" run, claims our reporter. Just as we went to press we learned that Eric was set for a similar chore at the 2-4 Wurli piper in the Brook Theatre, Boundbrook, N. J., an instrument maintained by local ATOErs and played before audiences on week-ends.

Speaking of Martha Lake, those who were disappointed by her failure to make an appearance at the ATOE convention in Detroit will be interested in this bit of gossip we picked up from ATOE Prez. Dick Schrum (who seems to have an amazingly



Martha! Stood up again.

accurate source of information about that Hippie from the '20s). It seems that "boyfriend Bensie" Hall promised to meet her in Canada for a fling at "Expo 67" if she just wouldn't embarrass him by cavorting about at the Detroit bash. Blushing Martha complied but Bensie never showed, leaving her once more jilted by the fickle finger of fate—among other things. The reason is that the "best remaining MC" for organ events has acquired an interest in developing gadgets for pipe organs (see LETTERS).

Back at Expo 67, those who visited the Japanese pavilion report seeing and hearing a Japanese-made electronic organ with a fairly normal specification except for one stop labelled "Adorable Gedeckt." The export-minded builders probably selected what seemed the most likely translation from the choice given in the translating dictionary for "Lieblich (lovely), but couldn't find "Gedeckt" even listed.

Our recent request for information about the elusive "Wild Oscar" resulted in a number of leads from kind readers, among them Laura Thomas in Buffalo, N.Y., and also Ken Richards who sent a clipping from an Akron newspaper, a column which informed us that Oscar had played a Loew's there in the old days. We traced Oscar, whose correct name was Lloyd Hill, to Dallas where he had gone into the appliance business with his brother, Dexter. But there our search ended: Lloyd Hill is dead.

Just about everything that George Wright does is of interest to organ buffs. Although it has to do with a plug-in, albeit a good one, we couldn't resist passing it on. The scene was the Crystal Ballroom of the Hotel Whitcomb in San Francisco. Rodgers dealer Kay Chenoweth had planned an open house-style party, as organ dealers are wont to do, and a flock of top talent showed up to play, share the camaraderie



GEORGE BUSSES KAY! Lovely Kay Chenoweth appears luminous on being bussed by George Wright.

and partake of the free grape punch. Among those who entertained the 250 present were Scott Gillespie (once of the Salt Lake City "Organ Loft"), Jim Roseveare, Van Welch, June Melendy, Larry Vannucci, Tiny James, Richard Purvis (of Grace Cathedral) and Lyn Larsen. A man with silver-streaked hair had come in with Larsen and he looked familiar to many present. Then Lyn introduced him, "... George Wright." George took his turn at the big horseshoe Rodgers and had a won-



HAVING A BALL—George obviously enjoys the company and the instrument. The part of the audience pictured reflects the happy mood of the gathering. —Bob Churchill photo

derful time providing a wonderful time for those present. It was a perfect frosting for a wonderful evening of music, and later, after she had recovered from the effects of a kiss George planted on her lovely

cheek, Kay wondered aloud, "What can I do to top this!" Kay wouldn't have much time to worry about it because she was in the final stages of preparing for the late September Annual Home Organ Festival at Hoberg's (Calif.), which she co-chairs with Dewey Cagle.

Kay was busier even than anticipated when Co-Chairman Cagle suffered a heart attack early in the Festival proceedings and was rushed to a hospital for treatment. Dewey is now recuperating satisfactorily, according to latest telephone reports.

We haven't heard much of Gaylord Carter's activities lately, mainly because his motor is always running and he rarely lights anywhere long enough for a report to headquarters. So we must depend on fleeting glimpses. One such "happening" occurred at the Seattle Pacific University, and it resulted in the discovery of a "lost" pipe organ by the Puget Sounders. While casting about looking for a hall in which to show off Gaylord playing an electronic, they discovered the 3-14 Kimball long ago removed from the Seattle Neptune theatre. It was remembered as one of the finest-sounding theatre jobs in the Northwest. So Chapter Chairman Russ Evans, Dan Adamson (remember that wild banquet show MC at the 1966 Portland ATOE convention?), Bob Jones and Dick Schrum (he was there, too) gave the Kimball a going-over to return it to theatre sounds. Gaylord was delighted and played a fine program for the Pugeteers on it.

More on Gaylord. On November 14 he played a concert on the 2-8 Wurlitzer in the Bell Friends Church, Bell, Calif. (South of L.A.). This is the organ normally presided over by that fine pops and church organist Dean McNickols whose record on it is reviewed in this issue.

In Santa Fe, N. M., O. G. Betancourt at last knew what it was like to own pipes. He latched onto a four-rank Wicks (Diapason, Bourdon/Flute, Salicional and Oboe) in excellent condition. It has a horseshoe console and "O. G." has written to Wicks to see if its genealogy can be traced. Meanwhile he's making plans to give up considerable space in his pad to the instrument.

While we are contemplating Santa Fe, there's an item which is a little ancient now but it's worth the telling. It happened at the Spring Conference of the El Paso (Tex.) and Santa Fe Toastmasters club, whose Governor is the same O. G. Betancourt mentioned above. Being an organ fan he figured that the

meeting would profit from a dose of organ music. So, he asked his teacher, Mark Davis, director of the Santa Fe Conservatory of Music, to play. Davis is known for his classical and generally "longhair" approach to music, and few of his present day colleagues knew that he once warmed the bench of a theatre organ. Davis agreed—if he could play "theatre style". So, an Allen Deluxe theatre model was wheeled into the Santa Fe Desert Inn for the confab and Davis made a solid hit with a nostalgic program which started with "Valencia." Theatre music from the silent era was well represented by Fletcher's "Demoiselle Chic" (1914), "When the Midnight Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabam'" (1912), Nora Bayes' "Just Like a Gypsy" (1920) and Walter Blaufuss' lovely melody, "My Isle of Golden Dreams" (1919). From the Toastmasters' reactions there was reason for "O. G.'s" post-concert enthusiasm. "Perhaps I've sown some seeds in fertile ground," he chortled.

Lots of good reaction to our new column, "Nuggets from the Golden Days." It was started as a result of requests for more nostalgia and its initiator, Lloyd Klos did a lot of research to determine whether such a column could be maintained. Seems like it can but even so, Lloyd is soliciting material. So, if you have an ancient periodical with an interesting item from "the golden days," copy it off giving name, year and issue of the publication, and send it to "The Old Prospector", 104 Long Acre Road, Rochester, New York 14621.



The Old Prospector (Klos-shaven).

From Dallas, Texas, there was good news for those who fondly remember the wonderful nightly "Moon River" organ program which once emanated from radio station WLW in Cincinnati, Ohio. The 3-14 Wurlitzer, long gone from the station, turned up in Dallas, purchased by ATOEr Charles Evans. It is being installed under the direction of a young man whom Evans describes as "a perfectionist," Rod Yarbrough. Evans was full of praise for Yarbrough during the Detroit convention and paid tribute

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VOX POPS, contd.

to the young man in a brief speech at the banquet. Those who have heard a tape of only a portion of the partly-installed instrument were inclined to agree that Rod "has the touch" needed to transform a pile of pipes into a thing of beauty. Perhaps "that" lazy stream of dreams" will flow again.

For about a year the BOMBARDE has been receiving letters from a correspondent who signs "Lew Williams." From the maturity reflected in his writing and his knowledge of organs, we assumed Mr. Williams to be between 25 and 35 years of age. Imagine our surprise and delight when Lew showed up at the Detroit convention—a lad of 14. Since then Lew has visited the Saenger Theatre in New Orleans and reports

that the big Morton is in pretty fair shape, except for a few reeds out of tune and the usual ciphers which develop in a little-used instrument. He adds that it has a



Lew Williams

"crazy" bird effect which chirps once "then lets out with a sick "deeyyooooo!" trailing upward. He has heard from Don May in Baton Rouge and Don reports that he is installing a pedal Diaphone to beef up the bass end of the little Morton, and the two-deck console will soon ride on its own elevator. All of which should be of interest to Randy Sauls, who played it in the "early talkie" era.

Overheard outside the Pick-Fort Shelby Hotel during the Convention: Man viewing the camera-laden conventioners heading for a concert, "Gosh, it must be some kind of a photographers' meeting!"



The BOMBARDE reviews organ recordings for official ATOE publications. Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send copies (Monaural, if possible) to the BOMBARDE, Box 5013, Bendix Station, N. Hollywood, Calif. 91605. Be sure to include purchasing information, if applicable.

Sounds of the Sanctuary:

Dean McNichols at the Wurlitzer organ in the Bell Friends Church, Bell, Calif. Available by mail only for \$4.00 (check or money order) sent to Organ Record, California Yearly Meeting, Box 389, Whittier, Calif. 90608. Stereo only. Allow three weeks for delivery.

True, it's a collection of hymns played on a theatre organ, and it was compiled to appeal mainly to Protestant Christians (which it will). But that isn't the whole story. While the Christian will recognize "In the Garden," "The Old Rugged Cross," "Lead Kindly Light" and "Whispering Hope" (among many others), the pure musicality of the treatments would appeal to a Buddhist, a Zoroastrian, an Ahura-Mazdan—all unaware of the religious connotations—or a plain heathen. Most of the tunes are given full theatre organ registration, but even when Dean

turns off the tremos briefly for a "pseudo-churchie" effect, one is still aware that he's playing a Wurlitzer. Of course, it has been done before by Paul Mickelson, Brad Braley, Paul Carson, Jim Orcutt and Lorin Whitney, but never with more appeal to the theatre-oriented listener than here. Despite the size (eight ranks) the organ sounds expansive and full and there is never a lack of variety. The playing is simple and clean, always with a welcome transparency. There is lots of contrast. The organ may be small, but it has some fine ranks, notably a lovely Vox Humana and a lush Tibia. The front of the jacket is covered by a color photo of the Sanctuary, showing the console location and the chamber grilles. The backliner tells about the instrument and the organist. But there's more. Purchase of the album can amount to a healthy slap at communism. All proceeds go toward supporting an agricultural mission with a destitute tribe of Guatemalan Indians (including what would normally be the organist's royalties). The Redfinks are reported to be making gains in Guatemala, appealing to just such people as the usually hungry Indians. But "redthink" doesn't get very far where there's plenty of food and the church mission is teaching modern agricultural methods so the Indians can grow their own food.

The whole encouraging story is told on the album jacket. But even without the political angle, it's a worthwhile album. The theatre organ sound abounds.

EDDIE DUNSTEDTER WANTS READER HELP CHOOSING TUNES TO RECORD

Organist Eddie Dunstedter has announced that his next recording will be something of a "request program." The famed organist wants BOMBARDE readers to send him lists of the tunes they would most like to hear him play on a coming recording. Of course, he can't guarantee that all tunes submitted will be selected but all who participate will have helped set the trend as to the type of music and style to be employed. He will base his selection on the ten most-requested tunes. The requests may include any type of music—pops, standard or classics. Those wishing to help Eddie Dunstedter choose his tunes may address him as follows: E. Dunstedter, Box 5013, Bendix Station, No. Hollywood, Calif. 91604.

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