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November/December 1983

ISSN 0040-5531



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Cover Photo

The console of The Kirk of Dunedin's 4/43 unusual organ sits in front of the beautiful facade of gold-finished display pipes. See story starting on page five.

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American Theatre Organ Society



Dear Fellow Members:

How fast this year has flown by! It seems like only weeks ago that we had taken down the Christmas tree and were once again packing away all the ornaments. Already we have had our first trace of snow on our Foresthill countryside to remind us that another Yuletide holiday season is almost upon us, to be followed by another brand new year. 1984 will present us with new challenges and frustrations to be sure, but it will also have it's accomplishments and satisfactions!

Certainly 1983 has been a good year for ATOS. We have shown a modest increase in membership in spite of losing some members because of the increase in National dues. However, with this in mind, I personally have to feel that our recent drive for new members was indeed a positive step forward.

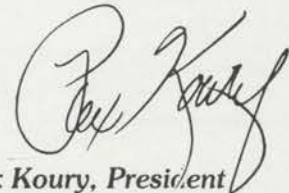
I am pleased to be able to tell you that a temporary home has been found for our National Archives material, which is now being completely catalogued under the direction of Vern Bickel in Chula Vista, California. Efforts are also still being made to find permanent headquarters. At present we have one or two fairly promising possibilities.

Studies are currently being made concerning such subjects as convention concert fees for artists, our proposed National "Young Artist Awards," finding a permanent solution in the matter of operational chapter boundaries and other fairly pressing matters, and we are constantly striving for better liaison between your National officers, directors and our general membership.

It is our firm intention to arrive at positive and affirmative resolutions to all these considerations at our Executive Committee meeting to be held in early January.

For the present from our National officers and directors, including myself, very best wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,



Rex Koury, President



We regret the lateness of the September/October issue of THEATRE ORGAN, as we know that almost every member was anxious to read about the convention.

The convention issue is a particularly difficult one to produce, because of the volume of material which must be dealt with (reviews to be written and edited; photos to be selected, printed and captioned; laying out the format so as to get everything in without using too many pages; etc.). As we progress with THEATRE ORGAN we are striving not only to make it a better journal, but to adhere to a regular publication schedule. Whether

we will succeed or not remains to be seen, but we thank you for your patience.

Bob Gilbert, Editor



the kirk of dunedin

and its unusual organ

Photos by Austin Gilbert

Resounding within the modern Gothic arches of The Kirk of Dunedin Community Church in Dunedin, Florida, is an unusual organ — an instrument designed to meet both the needs of the worship service and the demands of an annual theatre organ concert series.

Terry Charles at the console of The Kirk organ.



The Kirk, as a community church, has no denominational affiliation. Its ministry is focussed on senior adults and community outreach, with an extensive music program. Its theatre organ concert series, begun in 1968, is noteworthy in several respects. The programs are presented monthly, October through May, each repeated on three evenings, with the first two evenings sold out to season ticket holders months in advance. The third evening is generally sold out well in advance on an individual ticket basis. In addition to the series, there is a special summer program in July which is given twice. The highlight of the season is the December program, "A Christmas Fantasy," which is presented *seven* times to full houses.

Each year three well-known artists are invited to participate in the series, with Terry Charles, curator and resident artist, playing four of the concerts and the special summer program. For the 1983-1984 season the guest artists are Eddie Weaver, Donna Parker and Rex Koury. Among those who have played at The Kirk in past seasons are Mildred Alexander, Raymond Bohr, Helen Dell, Larry Ferrari, Reginald Foort, Virgil Fox, Ann Leaf, Richard Leibert, Ashley Miller, Billy Nalle, Rosa Rio and George Wright.

The Sanctuary of the church was

designed with proper acoustics for the organ in mind. The two chambers, each 15' square and 17' high, are located behind the chancel platform, with the openings facing the audience. Constructed of concrete with coved corners, the chambers are finished with Keen's Cement to give a hard, smooth surface. Each chamber has an opening approximately ten feet square, into which are fitted double sets of Wurlitzer swell shades.

A facade of two rows of gold-finished display pipes (which were hand made by a member of the church) is placed four feet in front of the chamber openings, with each end of the facade returning to the wall at an angle. The pipes in the facade are mounted very close together. This arrangement effectively conceals the chamber openings, but more importantly, the sound is deflected upward toward the arched ceiling. The unenclosed percussions are located between the facade and the wall behind.

A room behind the two chambers houses the relays and switches. The relay room and the chambers are air-conditioned. The two 7½ hp blowers are located in another room.

The organ contains portions of two Wurlitzers, a Style H three-manual Special and a Style 235 Special, plus ranks of pipes from Ernest M. Skinner and M. P. Möller, and specially-

THE KIRK

A Community Church
WORSHIP 11:00 A.M.

MINISTER—TED J. WEHLING
ASSOCIATE—EARL R. SIDLER

HOME OF KIRK ORGAN SERIES
TERRY CHARLES, CURATOR & ARTIST

Pastor Ted Wehling of The Kirk of Dunedin.

voiced reeds by Jack Steinkampf of New York.

As Opus 1066, the Style H was originally installed in 1925 in the Palace Theatre, Lockport, New York. It was subsequently repossessed by the factory. In 1941, as Opus 2236, it was installed at radio station WMCA in New York City. Later it was sold to station WGR in Buffalo, then to Dick Loderhose of Jamaica Estates, New York, in 1950. He sold it in 1954 to Gary McDonald of Sarasota, Florida. Upon his death, Mrs. McDonald donated the organ to the University of Tampa. Terry Charles purchased the organ from the university in 1956 and donated it to the church.

The Style 235 (Opus 1384) was originally installed in 1926 in the Paramount Theatre, St. Petersburg, Florida. When the theatre (by then called the "Florida") was demolished to make way for a parking lot Terry Charles purchased the organ and donated it to the church, also.

The Kirk of Dunedin organ was dedicated in a recital by Mr. Charles on Easter Sunday in 1968, and he inaugurated the concert series in October of that year.

For the first two years the organ was controlled from a three-manual Wurlitzer console, which was then replaced with a four-manual Möller console. The Möller had been rebuilt from a three-manual shell, with new manuals, pedalboard, Reisner stop actions and Hesco replica stop tabs.

Early on Sunday morning, March 6, 1977, disaster struck the church in the form of an arson-caused fire, which did extensive damage to the

church. Except for the organ piano, which was destroyed by the fire, and the facade, one side of which was scorched, the organ and its unenclosed percussions were damaged by smoke, soot and steam generated by the fire. The heavy swell shades, which were closed, protected the chambers from greater damage. The interior mechanisms of the console were a total loss.

Terry Charles and church volunteers completely dismantled the organ and started the work of restoration. The console was rebuilt with all new mechanisms. Windchests, regulators, tremulants, unenclosed percussions and some ranks of pipes were cleaned and restored by the Junchen-Collins firm. Bob Arndt and his firm also assisted substantially in the restoration. The pneumatic relay and combination action were replaced with new

Reisner equipment. After nine months of work and the expenditure of more than \$100,000, the organ was rededicated.

Finished at last? No, for Terry is planning to expand the existing unification and add several new voices of an ethereal and softer nature, as well as a Solo Fife, Viola d'Amore and Celeste, and a Tuba Mirabilis. A Dulciana and Vox Angelica are being tonally finished at the time of this writing. A spectacular Imperial Festival Trumpet en Chamade with brass resonators will be installed within a few months, as will a 32' Contra Bombarde and a 32' Contra Violone. Bob Arndt will construct a larger horseshoe to accommodate the new specification, which requires more than 260 stop tabs, and Terry will assemble the horseshoe and install it in the console.

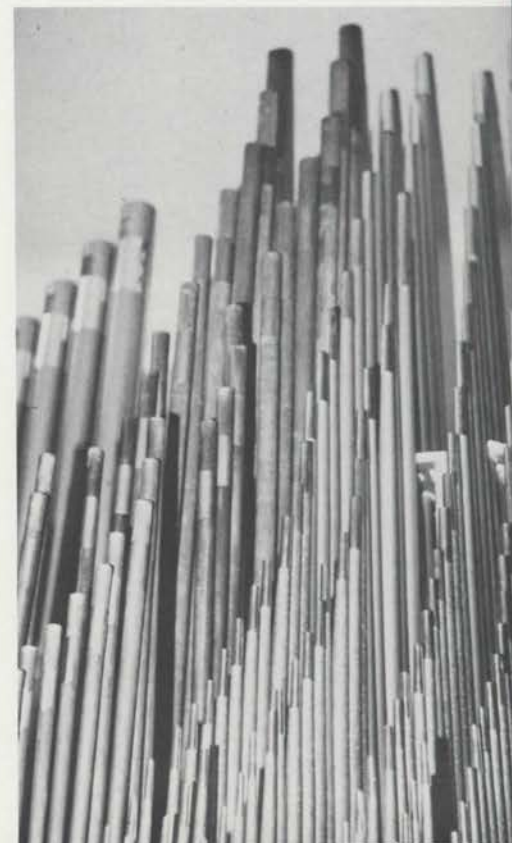
THE KIRK OF DUNEDIN ORGAN

Four Manuals, 43 Ranks

Main Chamber	Pitches	Notes	Unenclosed		
Bourdon-Concert Flute	16'-2'	97	Upright Piano	16-8-4	85
Metal Diaphone-Open Diapason	16'-2'	97	Chrysoglott I		49
Viol d'Orchestre	8'-2'	85	Chrysoglott II		49
Viol Celeste	8'-4'	73	Glockenspiel		30
Dulciana	8'-4'	73	Xylophone		37
French Trumpet	8'-4'	73	Wood Harp		49
Salicional	8'-4'	73	Chimes II		25
Violin	8'-4'	73	*Imperial Festival Trumpet en Chamade	8'	61
Erzähler	8'-4'	73			
Erzähler Celeste	8'-4'	73			
Violin Diapason	8'-4'	73			
Vox Angelica	8'	61			
Principal	4'-2'	73			
String Mixture III	3 ranks	183			
Grand Fourniture	4 ranks	244			
Mixture IV					
*Viola d'Amore	8'	61			
*Viola d'Amore Celeste	8'	61			
Main Independent Pedal					
Wooden Diaphone	32'-16'	29			
Subbass	32'-16'	44			
Bourdon	32'	32			
Solo Chamber					
Oboe Horn	16'-8'	73			
English Post Horn	8'	61			
Harmonic Tuba Horn	16'-4'	85			
Tibia Clausa I	16'-2'	97			
Orchestral Oboe	8'	61			
Clarinet	8'	61			
Vox Humana I	8'	61			
Vox Humana II	8'	61			
Solo Vox Humana III	8'	61			
Solo Tibia Clausa II	16'-2'	97			
*Tuba Mirabilis	8'	61			
Viola Pomposa	16'-2'	97			
Viola Pomposa Celeste	16'-4'	85			
*Solo Fife	2'-1'	73			
Chimes I					
Solo Independent Pedal					
*Contra Bombarde	32'	32			
*Contra Violone	32'	32			
*Contra Bassoon	32'	32			

*Ranks on order

Large string section of The Kirk organ.



The Inside Story . . .

SYRACUSE'S ORGAN TRANSPLANT

by Lloyd E. Klos

On February 20, 1983, as part of the monthly theatre organ program at the New York State Fairgrounds near Syracuse, New York, Charles Schubert, former Director of Restoration and Maintenance for ESTMIM, presented a slide show, showing how the ex-RKO Keith's 3/11 Wurlitzer was transplanted from its original home to the fairgrounds. Following is a synopsis of that story.

In 1962, a group of organ buffs were working to restore the 4/20 Wurlitzer in Loew's State Theatre in Syracuse. It was in reasonably good condition, but an enthusiast, Paul

Fleming, reasoned that Syracuse could use a second organ for public concerts. He and Frank Plante talked to Dave Levin, manager of Keith's, and secured permission to look at the organ there. They were told to "look, but not tinker."

After thoroughly appraising the instrument's condition, they determined that even though it needed plenty of work, it was worth the effort to get it playing again. Returning to Mr. Levin with his proposal, Paul secured permission through RKO District Manager Jay Golden in Rochester to proceed with the project. They

worked on it, off and on, for the next couple of years until a shocking event occurred during 1964 which changed everything.

The Loew's State Wurlitzer was suddenly sold, practically overnight, to a California organ broker and hastily removed from the building. Those who had so faithfully worked to restore it were not even told of this development in advance, hence no effort could be initiated to keep the organ in Syracuse. (It was re-sold to a pizza parlor owner and has been in storage ever since. Asking price at last report was \$85,000.)

The departure of the Loew's organ left Keith's with the only theatre organ in a public place in the Salt City. This showed the wisdom of Paul Fleming's thinking earlier. While most of the Loew's restoration crew were incensed and bitter to the point of not wanting any part of theatre organs again, a few joined the Keith's restoration crew.

In the fall of 1964, Paul Fleming, upon learning that Charlie Schubert was repairing pump organs and was interested in player pianos, asked him to help at Keith's. Busy at the time, he was forced to decline. Came March 1965 and Charlie learned of the concert to be sponsored by the newly-formed Syracuse Theatre Organ Society on March 28 with the 74-year-old local theatre organist, Luella Wickham.

Never having attended a theatre organ concert, Charlie went. A total of 2000 almost filled the house. "The atmosphere was electrifying," he said. "The organ, though not fully operational, sounded great. Right there, I became forever hooked on that beautiful sound we all know so well! In June 1965, there was another concert, featuring Dean Robinson. Several concerts were held in the coming months, though no major repairs were done — just enough work to keep the organ playable. Still too busy, I just lacked the time to help."

In January 1966, Paul Fleming's world crumbled! Up to this point, he (and so many of the enthusiasts) thought RKO Keith's and its Wurlitzer would go on indefinitely. He had returned from a concert at Rochester's RKO Palace where he learned from Jay Golden that Syracuse's Keith's Theatre was part of the site of an urban renewal project and was

Console of the ESTMIM 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Art & Home Center, State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, New York. Now on the stage, the console has been restored to its original mahogany finish. (Tom Anderson photo)





Charlie Schubert at work in 1967.

scheduled to be razed in 1967. Paul panicked. He told Charlie Schubert he just had to save the last theatre organ in the city for future generations. "Asking me to help, I told him I would in whatever little ways I could. Having not even seen the workings of the organ, I didn't know what I'd be getting into later!

"During one of Karl Cole's practice sessions, Paul took me through the chambers. He impressed me with his technical knowledge. I also was overwhelmed by the organ's complexity."

Over the next several months, Paul Fleming continued to look for a new home for the Wurlitzer. In the meantime, several Sunday morning con-

certs helped raise money necessary for purchase, removal and reinstallation. In the spring of 1966, Ed Patrick, of the State Fair Committee of the Greater Syracuse Chamber of Commerce, told Paul of the committee's proposal to have year-round activities at the Fairgrounds, and thought that the organ might fit into the Harriet May Mills Building, designated as the Art & Home Center.

Paul looked the place over, engaged Charlie Schubert to make layouts to ascertain if the instrument would fit. It would! After that, things started to move fast. The museum idea was born. Paul elected to head the public relations aspect, involving fund-raising, workers and media publicity.

Charlie was given the task of removal, rebuilding and reinstallation. "Paul told me that he didn't know anything about moving an organ, and wouldn't know where to start. He said I was the logical choice since I was in the player-piano, pump-organ rebuilding hobby. And I always thought he was the expert and knew everything! He told me that I would learn as I went along. To put it mildly, this put me into a state of shock!

"I really wanted to save the organ

as much as he did, but this was such a large project, I wasn't sure I could handle it. I talked it over with my wife, who knew how I felt about saving the last theatre organ in Syracuse, and she said it was OK with her if it was really what I wanted to do. Paul was ecstatic when he learned of my affirmative decision."

On June 14, 1966, a huge money-raising program was held, entitled "Glimpse of the Past." The theatre was sold out and \$1000 was realized. That month, the Museum was chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. The RKO office set the organ's price at \$6000. Secretly, the dismantling began in July because of fear that after the sale, only a couple of weeks would be allowed for the organ's removal.

The enthusiasts worked until November when they ran out of room in the chambers where the parts were being stored. Also, the settlement was held up because the theatre's owners and the urban renewal officials couldn't agree on the price for the theatre.

Arrangements for a loan to complete the organ's purchase were made through the Metropolitan Bank, after museum trustees co-signed for \$1000

The Art & Home Center which houses the ex'Keith's 3/11 Wurlitzer.

(Tom Anderson photo)





Paul Fleming working on the organ in 1967.

each to cover the loan in case of default. During Christmas week, final papers were signed and the Museum owned the organ. The theatre gave the group until January 20 to remove the instrument. Charlie Schubert's hunch was correct.

Part of the deal was that the organ had to be playing by Fair Week 1967, a dubious prospect, to say the least. Paul secured a truck and crew, and on two Saturdays, five loads of Wurlitzer were moved. Sorting followed, and work schedules were set up for four days or nights a week. After falling behind, the schedule was enlarged until by the end of July, the organ was in and playing. About 5000 man-hours were expended, with some workers putting in seven days a week in the final push.

On August 13, 1967, the organ was dedicated and, shortly after, it made a big hit during Fair Week. It has been featured every year at Fair time since, with name stars at the console. The first concert season began in March 1968, after two months of console rebuilding. There have been ten-concert seasons ever since.

On a plaque in the rear of the auditorium are the names of 13 dedicated faithful who rebuilt and installed the organ: Charlie Schubert, Chief, Tom Anderson, Arnold Briggs, Mary Caverlery, Paul Fleming, Dick Johnson, Ren Johnson, Ron Johnson, Frank Plante, Charlie Rich, Lloyd Stevens, Bob Vanderhoek and Charlie Wainwright. □

Concert Bureau Started

by Ralph Beaudry

"Good idea!" — Mike Ohman, ATOS Vice President.

"The Concert Bureau is a very good idea; it's something that has been needed for a long time." — Lee Erwin.

"It will help all of us, producers and artists alike." — Gordon Madison, owner, Capitol Theatre (Chambersburg, Pennsylvania).

After years of debating about whether or not it might work, Tom B'hend, Editor of *The Console* and Ralph Beaudry, Contributing Editor, decided to do something about it!

In September, letters and questionnaires were mailed to almost 200 organists and nearly 100 ATOS chapters and concert-producing locations. The remarks quoted above are a few of the very positive statements coming in indicating the time has come to issue a directory of concert artists and locations which produce theatre organ programs.

Along with the directory a complete calendar of where the artists are playing during 1984 will be available. Both the directory and calendar will be periodically updated (at intervals yet to be determined).

Briefly, the artist directory will be INclusive, not EXclusive! The criteria for who should be listed is simple — anyone who performs in public! No representations will be made as to quality; you, the concert-going public, decide by your attendance and requests for return engagements.

While we have combed our files, ATOS chapter newsletters, THEATRE ORGAN and *The Console*, we know we have accidentally missed some artists. In fact, we have about 50 names for whom we have no addresses. If you think you should be included, or know of an artist who has not as yet been contacted, please send the name and address to "Console Concert Bureau," 12931 Haynes Street, North Hollywood, California 91606.

The artist directory will include artist's addresses and, where available, telephone numbers, as well as information about recordings or audition

tapes available, photos and publicity material, if they play silent movies and if they will play electronic instruments if that is what is available, and information about willingness to travel.

It must be emphasized that nothing about fees will appear, nor will the Bureau attempt to engage in negotiations between an artist and a concert-producing organization. The fee is, of course, a major concern for the artist and that is one of the important reasons the Bureau has been established. An East Coast artist must charge a high fee to play a single date on the West Coast. But if other West Coast chapters know an artist will be in their area at a certain time of the year it is then possible to spread the travel expense over several performances, thus reducing the cost to the local producers and also giving the artist an opportunity to increase his income.

Concert producers will be listed so artists will be able to set up their own "concert circuit" once they know whom to contact. This listing will give the Program Director's name, address and telephone, as well as information about auditorium size, the instrument and ticket pricing policy. We are not overlooking the fact that many concert locations do not have pipe organs but rely on electronic organs. Any reader who knows of electronic organ concert producers in their area please write to the address given above.

The cost of setting up and operating the Bureau is being paid by several anonymous donors who believe the future of theatre organ depends, in large part, on a more professional approach to concert production. We wish to thank Rex Koury, ATOS President, for his encouragement and assistance and for the excellent "Concert Producing Letters" his ATOS committee has been sending to the chapters.

THEATRE ORGAN will publish the Concert Bureau directory in a forthcoming issue to help give it the widest possible distribution. □

A PERSONAL IMPRESSION

by Rodney Bambrick

In one of my more sententious moments it once occurred to me that decisions determine the quality of one's life. And for me, two of the happiest decisions I made a few years ago were first, to join the American Theatre Organ Society, and second, to attend their Annual Convention in 1979. That year it was held in Los Angeles and included two marvellous concerts with that great patriarch of the American theatre organ scene — George Wright.

This year the Convention took place in San Francisco and I was again the sole Irish representative present. Now even without an organ of any kind, San Francisco is a wonderful place to be — it's my favorite American city. But for the theatre organ fan it would be hard to beat, for in and around the city are no less than six in-theatre installations and all six

were included in the Convention program. Of these, two are outstanding. The Oakland Paramount is an impressive example of the exuberant, brash Art Deco style of the 1920's, recently restored at considerable cost to its pristine prime. It houses a superb 4/27 Wurlitzer which pours out that rich, all enveloping, sensuous sound that only a big Wurlitzer in a big theatre can produce. Of the three concerts given here by Lyn Larsen, Bill Thomson and Jim Roseveare, I particularly enjoyed Lyn Larsen's — clean, precise playing with well varied registration, combined for a few numbers with an excellent solo trumpeter.

The other outstanding in-theatre installation in San Francisco is the Castro — a delightful theatre in mock-classical style which still regularly features its 4/26 Wurlitzer for between-film interludes. The organ itself was probably the best we heard — beautifully voiced, well balanced and with enough guts to sound well when played straight. At the Castro we enjoyed what I would rate as the best concert of the convention given by Walt Strony — a young organist who combines a formidable technique with excellent taste. His well planned program concluded with a stunning transcription of the "1812 Overture."

Another memorable evening was spent watching a hilarious Harold Lloyd silent movie adeptly accompanied by Bob Vaughn, himself a veteran of the silent movie era. That was at the small neighborhood Avenue Theatre where silent films with organ accompaniment are still featured once a

week. The organ is a 3/20 Wurlitzer.

Of the three other theatres visited, Cinema 21 contained much the smallest organ we heard — a 2/6 Robert-Morton. Its limitations, however, were completely belied by Larry Vanucci who gave an admirable demonstration of what can be done with six ranks carefully and imaginatively used.

In addition to the in-theatre installations visits were also made to three pizza parlors all housing immaculately maintained Wurlitzers. I especially liked Jonas Nordwall's program at Redwood City — good arrangements neatly played which well displayed the resources of the 4/23 organ.

The only disappointing features of an otherwise well-planned and thoroughly enjoyable convention were minor things. I think everyone agreed that the Banquet fare was singularly uninspired and certainly not worth the \$25 charged. (Many a school canteen could have produced a better meal.) Then at one of the two seminars I attended, a young lady whose self-assurance knew no bounds demonstrated the incredible art of talking for 60 minutes without actually saying anything. However, she looked nice. And, finally, for the record, I must admit that one (just one) of the pizza parlor players, bashed away with such appalling lack of taste and sensitivity that I could hardly believe it. Especially when he had the effrontery to refer to Debussy's "Clair de lune" as "that old standby" — and then proceeded to strangle it! Horrible!

All in all, however, this year's convention (it's the fourth I've attended) was a delight and I must pay tribute to the members of the ATOS Nor-Cal Chapter who had obviously done so much preparatory work to ensure that everything ran smoothly.

In closing may I urge COS members in Britain to join our sister organization across the Atlantic. Its magazine in itself makes membership worthwhile, and its annual conventions are a sheer delight for any organ enthusiast. I am certain that like me you will not regret your decision.

Rodney S. Bambrick, member ATOS and COS (UK). Honorary Secretary, Ulster Society of Organists & Choirmasters. Head of History Department, Boys' High School, Bangor, North Ireland (in which he rebuilt the 3/8 Compton from Tonic Theatre, Bangor). □

Have an
Aloha Christmas



in
Hawaii! Enjoy the
Robert Morton
(Hawaii ATOS Chapter)

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DON THOMPSON

Transcribed and edited by
Lloyd E. Klos

Most of the writer's biographies have been about those whose careers graced the first big era of the theatre organ — the exciting teens and twenties. We now bring you, largely in his own words, the story of Don Thompson, a man whose pipe organ activities date from the forties to the present. This does not mean that his life has been less colorful than the others. Far from it! He has been a friend of many theatre organists who were established stars when Don met them.

"I was born in Kendal in northern England in 1934. There were no musicians in the family; no musical background at all. At the age of four, my parents took me to the seaside resort of Blackpool, which became a family tradition for 18 years.

"On my first trip I was taken to the Tower Ballroom to see the children's ballet, accompanied by the Tower Band and the organ. After the performance, we stayed while Reginald Dixon played the 3/13 Wurlitzer for dancing. I was enthralled, my parents told me, and I declared that I wanted to do this when I grew up. No one thought any more of it, considering it a childish whim. However, on subsequent visits, my sole desire was not to ride the attractions on the fairground with the others but to hear Reginald Dixon play the organ. It cost sixpence in those days.

"I also discovered the Empress Ballroom, situated a few hundred yards away. Admittance was also sixpence, which enabled me to spend the

whole evening listening to Horace Finch on that 3/13 Wurlitzer, Ted Heath and his great band, plus singers and other acts.

"I became utterly fascinated with Dixon's playing and discovered one of his records at home: 'Blackpool Song Mixture 2.' This record was played a great deal and among the numbers was 'Shuffle Off to Buffalo' with train effect, which I used at Toronto's Organ Grinder quite often.

"At the age of seven I decided to learn to play. Pipe organs were not available, and home organs were out of range for our modest working-class family. Therefore, I bought a piano which cost 45 pounds with money I'd saved from christening, gifts and so on. My first teacher, a Miss James, 80 years of age, gave a lesson a week for half a crown. I took for two years, but didn't get very far as she was rather decrepit. I was also a boy soprano with the school choir and gave my first broadcast at the age of nine, singing 'Jerusalem.'

"The same year, I engaged another teacher, Margaret Hine, who was more experienced and well known in town. However, she didn't have much interest in me because I didn't care to take examinations and get my name in the papers as a student of hers. I wanted to learn, not have to prove it! So, at ten, I terminated lessons and studied on my own. At 12 I made my first recording, a private release on 78 rpm playing 'Meditation' from *Thaïs* and the first movement of Rubinstein's concerto on piano.

"At 16, I asked the vicar of a little church near home if I could practice on its pipe organ. He gave me permission and I'd go in during the after-

The earliest photo of Don Thompson in existence shows him in 1935 attacking a piano. (Thompson collection)





Kentmere Church in the English Lake District, where Don Thompson had his first job as organist in 1950.
(Thompson collection)

noons, lock the door and play such things as 'The Desert Song,' which is very unliturgical. Little did I know that the church janitor often sneaked in to listen with her friends. She told me this 25 years later!

"My family and I used to visit friends in a farm house in one of the remote lakeland villages. They knew of my organ practicing and, as their church organist was in need of a vacation, it was suggested that I might substitute. I played a service in her presence, followed by a month while she was away. This was my first job.

"Shortly after, the organist at Stricklandgate Methodist Church in

Kendal became pregnant and I was recommended to the choir director by a friend. The organ was a three-manual Blakett & Howden, as I recall, and had stop tabs instead of drawknobs. I played such numbers as 'Ave Maria' with all the tremos on, which is not in keeping with the Methodist Church, but the congregation seemed to like it.

"In 1952 I went on vacation to Germany with a church youth group and had opportunity to play some rare organs in churches and cathedrals. In Bad-Kreuznach was a U.S. Army base with a large chapel and theatre combined, in which was a Hammond

organ, the first one I'd seen. I was asked to do a concert, and I played classical numbers exclusively, using the left hand for the difficult pedal passages. This was my first solo concert.

"I tried for Oxford and Cambridge and much to the surprise of everyone was admitted to the latter, no one from my school having been accepted for generations. Within a few days of my arrival in Cambridge in October, 1953, I discovered an eight-rank Christie in the Victoria Cinema in Market Square, the first theatre-type instrument I'd seen other than those in Blackpool. Gilbert Handy was the organist, and I was disappointed in him as he didn't get good results. He was a touring organist and on in years. However, the following week I heard Reginald New there, one of the great names on the British theatre organ scene, and I was absolutely dazzled by his performance! I got to know this kind, simple man with a strong cockney accent. He let me have a go at the Christie and was most helpful.

"I mentioned to the organist of the college chapel that I played, and he was grateful to have me subbing for him every six weeks at services.

"I listened to radio broadcasts of organ music a lot, basically Dixon who was on three or four times a week. Another whom I thoroughly enjoyed was Stanley Tudor, playing in the Gaumont, Manchester. He had a lively style like Dixon, and I loved the sound of that Wurlitzer. Most of the other broadcasts were done on the BBC Möller and I found the sound of the organ as well as most of the playing very boring. A lot of British organists played delicate novelty pieces and tried to educate their audiences. But Dixon and Tudor played lively, danceable music. That is what I liked.

"Shortly after my appearance at the Victoria, I discovered the Cinema Organ Society, a very small group in Cambridge which came to hear Reg New. Upon meeting them, I became a member of this good-hearted bunch. From then on, I attended many meetings of the COS and the Theatre Organ Club. The procedure was to feature several organists at a concert, then afterwards have open console for the noodlers. By 1957, I had worked up to feature artist. At these programs I was privileged to play all the great cinema organs in the Lon-



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The Cinema Organ Society at the Trocadero Elephant and Castle in 1953. A. General Secretary Tony Moss; B. Chairman Douglas Badham. Organists 1. Nelson Elms, 2. John Howlett, 3. Bryan Rodwell, 4. Jack Banbury, 5. Eric Spruce, 6. Reginald New, 7. Robin Richmond, 8. Don Thompson. (Thompson collection)

don area. It was an education to hear the great artists and to pick up some of the things they did.

"I practiced a technique of Dixon's where he played the melody with his left hand while his right hand improvised. I found this difficult to do, and when I mentioned to him how easily he did it he replied, 'Yes, but I'm left-handed!'

"About 1954 I had been appointed

senior college organist. Without a degree or formal training, I got away with it — except the time the chorus and I did different pieces of music at the same time! The college head was upset over this, and in the future I made sure of every selection to be used.

"It was encouraging to see how many of the big names went out of their way to be kind and encouraging to me. Reg New, of course, was good fun, considerate and helpful. Another good friend was Clifford Birchall who worked the ABC circuit, a highly literate and witty man. A master of puns, he still writes me funny letters 25 years later. After his stint at the New Cinema, Fred Emney with co-star Robin Richmond came in. Robin and I made the rounds, playing the college instruments about the city. When he played a night club, he always saw that I got a good seat to hear him.

"I had purchased a goodly number of records by this time: everything Dixon ever did, some Torch, Stanley Tudor, Bryan Rodwell and Robin Richmond. Listening to these was beneficial, as I could pick up many of their nuances.

"In 1956 I got my degree in literature specializing in Shakespeare, and went to Oxford to get a degree in educational psychology. During summer vacation, I took a job at Morecambe, a seaside resort only 20 miles from my home in Kendal. It was a six-night-a-week job, with some matinees, for dancing in the ballroom, and it lasted five months. I played a B-2 Hammond for weekly talent shows. Trans-

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posing in many keys for the vocalists gave me invaluable experience.

"In the fall I returned to college. If you've a degree from Cambridge and go to Oxford, doing a prescribed course in residence, you automatically get your degree. That's the arrogance of the English! Being there is sufficient education!

"I was itching to get back into show business so I quit school and got a job at the Trocadero Ballroom in Derby, a large building with a Compton Melotone and illuminated console. Derby was an industrial town, I knew no one, and the ten pounds weekly wasn't sufficient to keep me there after three weeks. I heard of a Compton in the Regal and one in the Gaumont. I tried each and I opened the Christmas show each night for two weeks, my first job as a resident cinema organist. I believe this was at the Regal.

"After Derby I went to London to be a professional organist and practically starved there! I lived for a while by stealing bottles of milk from doorsteps, the only dishonest thing I ever did. Finally, I landed a pub job in the east end as a pianist, collecting my wages by shaking a box under the noses of the patrons.

"In the fifties, 'Minors Matinées' (Saturday morning kids' shows) were the only things the theatre organs were used for in Britain. In early 1957 I applied for and got a job for two weeks playing an MM at the Odeon Astoria, Brixton. The organ was a three-manual Compton with two consoles; one on stage, the other in the pit. After the show one day Ray Baines, who was at the Granada Edmonton, Cyril Elliott, who played at the King's Cross Gaumont, and I

Don Thompson's first London appearance, on the 3/8 Christie in the Elephant & Castle cinema, 1953.
(Thompson collection)



were having coffee. I mentioned that while I was playing someone hit me on the head with an apple. Cyril said, 'That's nothing. William Tell had one shot off his head!' Ray said, 'Yes, that WAS an overture, wasn't it?'

"I had resumed playing for COS meetings and at the Gaumont Chelsea. Gerald Shaw, whom I had long admired, was the star. I at last had the chance to meet him.

"An organist was needed at the Granada Kennington. This had a Hammond surrounded with superstructure and on a lift. I was there for the better part of a year. During the winter, I got a daytime job and moved my residence to Cumberland Place, next door to the Odeon Marble Arch. This had the largest theatre organ in Europe, the famous Christie. Though I could not hear the music, I could feel the vibration of the pedal notes in my flat. Gerald Shaw was in residence and when he started his program I'd dash down the fire escape, cross the courtyard, enter a little doorway, run through a maze of passages and wind up in the pit to catch most of Gerald's performance. He and I became close friends and it offered me a rare opportunity to hear a true master at work.

"In May 1957 I returned to Morecambe for the water shows, serving as music director for the city. I also did shows and other functions on the Compton Melotone on a revolving stage at the Floral Hall Ballroom, and played in Kendal where a friend had a group, utilizing a Jennings electric organ.

"Back in London in the fall, I managed a restaurant for a while and then went to an east-end pub playing an Everett Orgatron, a weird instrument which included a grand piano having a bar beneath for controlling an organ sound.

"I spotted an ad in *Melody Maker* for an organist to appear in Belgium for the International Exhibition in 1958. I got the job and played with two other musicians at a fashionable nightspot called 'The Penguin' on a Hammond C-3 with percussion and vibrato, the only one in Europe. We did broadcasts, some records and guest spots at the exhibition. The group broke up when an unemployed Belgian organist protested my employment.

"Returning to England, I had two weeks of free time during which I saw

Judy Garland perform at the Dominion Theatre. I was spellbound, of course, and that evening shortly after going to bed I got a call from a friend at the theatre inviting me to the on-stage party. The phone was grabbed out of his hand and Judy called, 'I don't know who you are, but if you're a friend of Jaffney you're a friend of mine. Come on over, but be careful when you open the door because I have my crystal earrings on tonight!' I went down and was pushed into playing the piano, accompanying Judy Garland in 'Over the Rainbow.'

"After this two weeks in London, I went back to Morecambe for another summer season, this time at the Ice-Drome. The two-month show was extremely demanding as the musical director in Blackpool picked all classical music. It was good training in sight-reading and changes in tempos however, as well as playing for the absolutely strict tempos the skaters demanded."

Don's next job was with a brewery playing Hammond for dancing and vaudeville in a chain of Yorkshire pubs. In 1959 he returned to the Swimming Stadium in Morecambe for the summer and then moved to Newcastle for a season at the Majestic Ballroom. The next year he was back at the Stadium during the day and played the show *Let's Go* at the Alhambra in the evenings. That fall he opened the Newton Heath Sporting Club in Manchester, playing a Riegg organ for dancing and the variety show. More club dates followed that winter and it was back to another season at the water show in 1961, two shows a day, with two shows each night at Blackpool's South Pier, an hour away. He had by this time bought his own instrument, a Price Silvertone, and was constantly in demand for concerts throughout Britain.

At the end of the 1961 summer season he moved to the Continental Theatre in Middlesbrough. "After three months, the owner sold the property and I became resident organist at a large club. Using my degree, I taught grammar school during the day. Did my first solo broadcast at Middlesbrough's Empire Theatre for the BBC show *Northeast Roundabout*. I bought a house on the seacoast and settled down. At this time (1962) I made my first LP, on an electric organ. It was called *Rhythm Classics*.

“Getting the wanderlust after five years, I took off on a Mediterranean cruise and upon reaching Beirut decided it would be a lovely place in which to live the year ’round. Taxes were low and the climate excellent. After inquiries, I gave up everything in England in 1967 — house, teaching, engagements, TV and clubs, and settled in Beirut.

“The only theatre in the Middle East was the Byblos, a Cinerama house which showed first-run movies. I played five minutes a day there on a Hammond which came out on rails from the side to a center position, sometimes with sparks flying! The Western music I played for two weeks didn’t go over, so I bought some records and learned Arab music. When I presented this, the audience went absolutely wild! I did this for a year, and also taught Shakespeare (in French) in a college there until the strain caused me to quit. English is spoken very little in this college. So I just played at the Byblos and lounged on the beach during the day. I had supper at the same restaurant every night with ambassadors, foreign ministers and other officials. They suggested an organ be purchased, and after it was I played nightly at the ‘Rhenania.’ Had the time of my life!

“About this time I met Jack Languth, the *New York Times* bureau chief in Saigon, who was passing through the area to check on the Middle East situation. He reasoned that although I had the best job in the country, there were no more heights

to climb, no more money, plus the threat of trouble in the area. ‘The only place to go is the States,’ he concluded. He convinced me to apply for a teacher’s job as the American musicians union would not permit me to work as an alien, and gave me the name of the headmaster of the Harvard School in Hollywood whom I wrote and got an immediate acceptance. I applied for my visa and got it at the American Embassy.

“However, I made the mistake of going to England first to visit my father and to my horror learned that I couldn’t take more than 25 pounds out of the country! I arrived in New York City on September 8, 1968, and was short two dollars for my air ticket to California. The clerk said, ‘We’ll fiddle it somehow,’ and I arrived in Los Angeles with but a dime in my pocket. It was used to phone the school, they picked me up, and with an advance on my first week’s salary I began a two-year tenure.

“Of course, I was unable to play the organ professionally for some time until I could join the union, but after visiting the Organ Center on Hollywood Boulevard one day and trying out a Gulbransen, they asked me to give a concert there. I made some friends as a result, my popularity began to rise and offers for me to play came from several area clubs. I joined the union, and discovered the ATOS at the Wiltern Theatre.

“My first pipe organ appearance in the States was at the Elks’ Club Robert-Morton. I made over 40 appear-



Don Thompson (in University garb) with BBC’s Robin Richmond in Cambridge, 1964. They had been trying various college organs. (Thompson collection)

ances the first year in the States, and by the second year I was doing about 20 electronic organ concerts a month. Pipe organ concerts were not easy to come by. My first formal concert on pipes came at the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco in August 1969, thanks to Ralph Ehat. Several concerts followed.

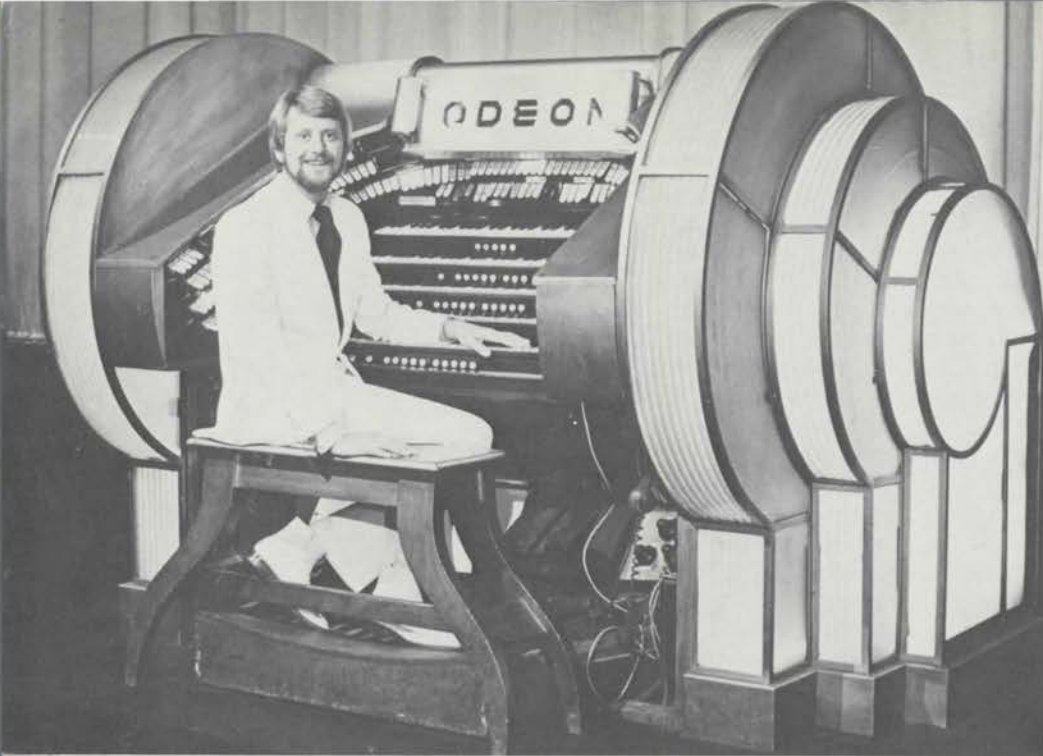
“About this time at one of the Los Angeles Organists Breakfast Club meetings, I was introduced to Bill Johnson, president of Concert Recording. He liked my rhythmic style and suggested an LP record of music of the twenties. We recorded this disc in October 1969 in three hours. It was entitled *The Roaring Twenties* and was a success.

“Still, I wasn’t a performer on the ‘circuit.’ I’ve found that chapter chairmen and secretaries are, on the whole, very lax in replying to inquiries. The bulk of my concerts on the road have been before non-ATOS clubs — Rochester, Toronto, Syracuse, Binghamton, Detroit, etc., and private theatres such as Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo, California, where I played 15 concerts.

“Before leaving Beirut, a friend gave me the name of organist Bob Mitchell in Hollywood, director of the Mitchell Boys Choir, and he secured some church engagements for me. An opening for an organist at the First Church of Religious Science in Glendale beckoned and I was there

After playing background music for the Miss Great Britain contest for five years, Don was chairman of the judging panel in 1962. The winner (girl in center) was the daughter of organist Horace Finch. Don says that this had nothing to do with the decision! (Thompson collection)





Don at the Odeon, Leicester Square Compton. This is a superb example of the illuminated surround, hallmark of many English theatre organ consoles. Lights in the surround change color. (Thompson collection)

three years.”

Don’s engagements came thick and fast, and to list them all would require pages of copy. Suffice to say, he was acquiring a big following and his popularity increased manyfold. Stu Green gave initial recognition in his “Vox Pops” column in THEATRE ORGAN.

“I did a concert at the San Diego Fox which was a horrible experience, as the chambers are behind the organist and the sound comes back in delayed fashion. I couldn’t hear a thing I was doing and had to use couplers like crazy. The reviews were great, but I disagreed!

“Between concert engagements I

appeared at the Louisiana State Fair at Baton Rouge, playing a Hammond. I recorded *A Date With Don* on Joe Koons’ 3/22 Wurlitzer, and then went on my first American tour. My first Wiltern Theatre appearance followed. Since I was doing so well with concerts, I quit teaching and took a job for a time at Bradley’s Restaurant in Huntington Park, California, on a Hammond X-77. This allowed me to concertize frequently. After several guest appearances at Bill Breuer’s pizza parlors in Redwood City and Santa Clara, I was offered a position at Redwood City which I readily accepted. Jack Gustafson and Tom Hazleton were my colleagues.

“In 1972 I was asked to play the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria for the ATOS Convention. It turned out to be a most miserable experience. The hot, muggy weather caused the pipes to go out of tune in unison and the tremulants started to sound like a nanny goat. The experience set my career back ten years because a lot of chapter representatives assumed that the disaster was caused by my playing, rather than by the organ’s shortcomings.”

Early in 1973, after “playing the pizza” for two years, Don was approached with a generous offer by some Boston people who had ambitions to open the first organ-equipped pizza parlor on the East Coast. He quit his California job, loaded his belonging into a truck and drove east.

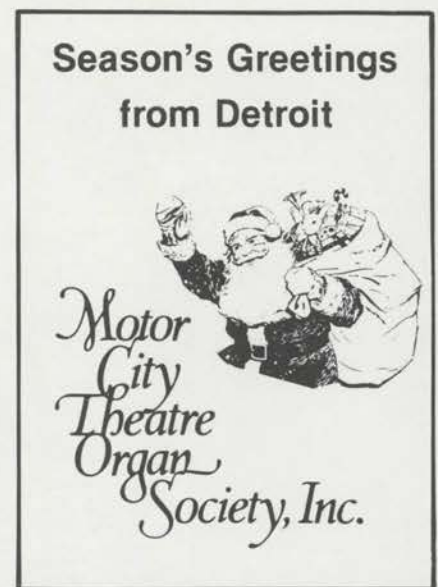
The deal fell through after three months and, having lost a lot of money in the process, Don was very low in funds. Hearing of another pizza parlor to open in the Los Angeles area, Don contacted the owner and was offered the job. Once more he loaded everything into a truck and headed west.

“I stayed in the place three days! The organ was dreadful and the location was adjacent to a low-class housing project. As a result the patrons were rough, made a lot of noise and couldn’t have cared less about the organ.

“Previously I had been in contact with Sandy Fleet about a job in his San Diego pizza parlor organization. He was amenable to my joining the outfit, and I did so as vice president and music director. However, a mistake had been made in the choice of building, which was lost to them. So, I practiced and lay on the beach for a year while on salary, until a building was secured. I enjoyed that year!

“For the first time in my career I took organ lessons, in Bach interpretation. My teacher was John Kuzma of St. Paul’s Church in San Diego. Then I took a tour in the fall of 1974 followed by a trip to England, my first time back there since 1968. The climax of the tour was a concert at the Odeon Leicester Square, where I had sat in the pit enthralled all those years earlier. I felt very satisfied to be on the bench, playing at last in England’s top theatre.

“Returning to the States, I opened on Halloween at the Organ Power Pizza in San Diego (with the *Phantom*





Don Thompson at the Organ Grinder in Toronto.

of the Opera), playing the 3/11 Wurlitzer for a six-month engagement. A disagreement with an official — on my interpretation of a Bach Toccata and Fugue, of all things! — resulted in my quitting. Immediately after, I became organist at Ken's Melody Inn in Los Altos, where I opened in June, 1975. However, I wasn't overly enthused at my situation and upon hearing that the new Organ Grinder Restaurant in Toronto was looking for an organist, I made it known via the grapevine that I was available. They waved a most lucrative contract under my nose which I signed. Once more, my possessions were loaded into a truck and in November, 1975, I arrived in the Queen City."

Don played in Toronto until this past spring (1983), developing over

the years a devoted following of Organ Grinder "regulars." During this time he studied Bach again, with John Tuttle of St. Paul's Church, made several trips to England playing concerts and broadcasts and worked on his degree at the Royal Conservatory of Music in any spare time that was left. At the time he said, "I would imagine that sooner or later I'll retire to a nice, quiet church and play Bach for the rest of my life!"

When he left the Organ Grinder, Don had originally intended to give up regular playing in order to concentrate on a concert career, but he soon decided that this was out of the question. When asked to elaborate, he put it this way: "It is a problem that others before me have stumbled over, and has to do with the interpretation of theatre organ playing. Many fans, mostly general public, think of theatre organ as entertainment and want their favorite organists to entertain them. Other fans, most of whom are ATOS members, think of theatre organ playing as an art form and require their organists to recreate as closely as possible the best of the bygone days. The former, as it happens, are generally the people who attend theatre organ concerts. The latter tend often to be those who organize and present theatre organ concerts, devotees who like to gather round the console in the dim light of a work light, listening to recreations of Jesse Crawford arrangements.

"Herein lies the problem. If an organist plays to *entertain*, he is likely to fill the house and receive standing

ovations and sell hundreds of recordings. However, what he does won't please the 'work lamp brigade' and so he probably won't be invited back. If he slants his program to appeal to *them*, he will certainly be invited back again and again, but will play to rapidly diminishing audiences and will sell no records.

"Since the vast majority of concert locations in the U.S. are associated with one chapter or another, making a career out of concertizing is out of the question. I return again and again to entertainment-oriented venues, private organ groups generally, but they are few in number. I have discovered over the years that it is a complete waste of time even attempting to organize a concert tour of chapters."


The pizza parlor provides the perfect outlet for an exuberant entertainer such as Don who needs an enthusiastic audience, so his future for now is "more of the same." He is now resident at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward, California, and intends to stay there for the foreseeable future, until the day he throws in the towel and retires to his nice, quiet church to play Bach. □

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BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF THEATRE ORGANISTS

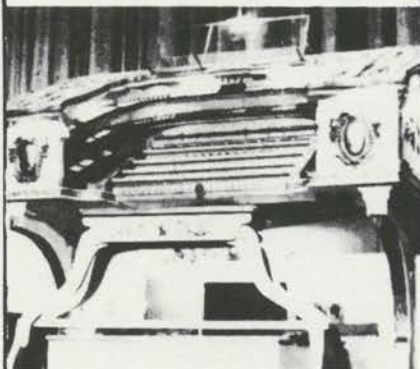
by Dr. John W. Landon

The history of the theatre pipe organ is more than just the history of the companies that manufactured them. It is also the history of people, especially the artists who played the instruments. This issue begins an extensive list of all theatre organists about whom we have biographical information. It will be pictorial whenever possible, including photographs of organists when available. Information is drawn from many sources, but chiefly from the files of Dr. John W. Landon who has assembled close to 3000 biographical sketches, most of which, because of space limitations, will *not* appear in his new book, *Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer: The History of the Theatre Pipe Organ*.

Although the author has exercised the greatest of care in handling the biographical data presented here, errors may occur. These, called to our attention, will be corrected in succeeding issues of this Dictionary. Persons having biographical information about theatre organists may submit

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

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the same to Dr. John W. Landon, 809 Celia Lane, Lexington, Kentucky 40504.

AARONS, ALEX

Played the Earle Theatre in Washington, D.C. in 1926 and 1927.

ABEL, EARL

Born Chicago, Illinois, May 26, 1899. His parents were Ada B. Inden and John T. Abel. He attended Lane Technical High School and the University of Chicago. Served as solo organist at the California Theatre in Los Angeles; the Tivoli in San Francisco; the Majestic in Tulsa, Oklahoma; the Auditorium Theatre in Berwyn, Illinois; the Belmont Theatre in Chicago; the Congress Theatre in Chicago; and the Texas Theatre in San Antonio, Texas. Organist Cornelius Maffie followed Abel at the Paramount Theatre in Los Angeles and Abel took organist Leo Weber's place at the Texas Theatre. The Texas Theatre was part of the Publix chain and featured a 3/15 Wurlitzer. He also played such theatres as the Southtown Theatre in Chicago, the Brooklyn Paramount, the Majestic and Aztec Theatres in San Antonio, and the RKO Theatre in Boston (Wurlitzer). He was one of several organists credited with originating organ sing-alongs. He was heard over San Antonio radio station KABC in 1931.

Earl Abel retired from theatre organ work as organists were being replaced in the mid-thirties and went into the restaurant business. He passed away February 9, 1973 in San Antonio, Texas.

ABRAMS, VIOLA

Played the Metropolitan Theatre in Washington, D.C. in 1928.

ADAMS, ESTHER

Recorded some religious selections on the organ in the studio of NBC,

Hollywood, California for the Sacred label (78 rpm).

ADAMS, FRANK STUART

In 1925 *Jacobs Orchestra Monthly* said the following about this organist, "one of the great players in our notable family (of organists) is the tall Mr. Frank Stuart Adams, humorist, scholar, musician, psychologist. His playing is scholarly. The seven day grind rarely damages his accuracy or his apparent freshness to the job. Mr. Adams is an academic organist and he prefers the finest genuine organ he can get. He was first in the Rialto, New York City, then he left the Wurlitzer there and went to the Austin in the Rivoli. The Wurlitzer followed there, too. In the Rialto, this sober academic organist saw Mr. Minor in his Original Organ Novelty, scratched his left ear with his right hand, and by the third attempt so far beat Mr. Minor on the Novelty game that a Broadway audience gave him more applause for his efforts that it had given Mr. Minor. Novelties are distasteful to him as to every schooled musician. His whole training works in favor of creditable scholarly photoplaying with true psychological interpretation of every screened mood.

"Mr. Adams is a humorist deep down under the surface. The public cannot get it at all, but the musician never misses the typical Adams stroke, whether it be wit, humor, or irony — and he uses all three. He could start a theatre school and be the whole faculty himself. If the picture is good, the visitor will be highly paid

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for his trip to hear and observe Mr. Adams at the Rivoli at 50th Street on Broadway. If the picture is poor, send up a prayer for Mr. Adams, too, for he is having a miserable time."

ADAMS, MRS. FRANK STUART (Maiden name Anne E. Frank)

In 1925 played Loew's State Theatre, New York City, then moved to the American Theatre in New York City where she was playing in 1927, and in 1928 on to Loew's 83rd Street Theatre in New York City.

ADAMS, R. LLOYD

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 17, 1896, Adams studied piano and organ with local instructors. In 1914 he took his first theatre job as pianist with the orchestra in the Best Theatre in Little Rock, Arkansas. In 1917 he moved to the Palace Theatre in the same city where a Kilgen pipe organ had just been installed. He played the concert-style instrument in addition to continuing as a pianist with the theatre orchestra. At the same time he served as organist of the Scott Street Methodist Church in Little Rock.

In 1918 Adams moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where he took the job of organist and pianist with the orchestra in the Strand Theatre (Robert-Morton organ). On June 22, 1921, he moved farther west to become pianist in the Belvedere Theatre orchestra, in Pomona, California. When the management later installed a Robert-Morton organ, Adams became the organist. Five years later Adams moved to the California Theatre in the same city, as pianist. A Wurlitzer theatre organ was installed and he became the organist. When sound films arrived, the orchestra was discontinued but Adams remained as organist.

In 1933 the Pomona Fox Theatre was built and the Wurlitzer was moved to it from the California Theatre. Adams continued as organist of the Fox through World War II until April 1946. When Kay Kyser and his band played the Fox Theatre in the early forties, Kyser remarked that Adams must be the last full time theatre organist on the Pacific Coast.

After leaving the Fox (because the organ needed major repair and the management considered it too costly) Adams played occasional theatre presentations and became organist of the Trinity Methodist Church in Pomo-

na, a post he was to hold for 21 years.

During his years as organist of the Fox, Pomona, Adams played the Wurlitzer at the Los Angeles County Fair, the largest county fair in the United States. He also served, at the same time, as official accompanist for the acts appearing on the stage in front of the grandstand.

Adams has had a career as a composer and arranger as well as performer. In 1945 he arranged music for the *Merry Widow* by Franz Lehár, presented at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium starring Jan Kiepura. In 1950 he composed and arranged music for *Guachoma*, a pageant which celebrated the Mormon trek to Utah. The pageant featured the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. In 1952 Adams won first place in a nationwide competition sponsored by the W. W. Kimball Company for his song "In June," subsequently published by Carl Fischer. In 1955 he composed and arranged music for the Santa Barbara Fiesta and for the California State Fair at Sacramento, where such stars as Jeanette MacDonald, Gordon McCrea and Margaret Whiting were featured. In addition, he arranged the song, "Summer Time," from *Porgy and Bess* for solo, chorus and 45-piece orchestra conducted by Paul Whiteman.

From 1957 to 1958 Adams served as president of the Musicians Club of Pomona Valley. At present he is pianist for the Lions, Rotary and Optimist Clubs in Pomona. For 22 years he served as pianist with the Host Lions Club Band made up of professional musicians. This band played for 18 international Lions Club conventions. Adams was made an honorary member of Rotary in 1978 and received the Paul Harris Fellow Award in 1979 in recognition of his 47 years of service as pianist for the Pomona Rotary Club.

Dr. John W. Landon is Professor of Social Work, University of Kentucky, Pastor of a Community Church in Indiana and has been organist of the Paramount Theatre, Anderson, Indiana (3/7 Page) since 1955. He authored the book, Jesse Crawford, Poet of the Organ; Wizard of the Mighty Wurlitzer, published by Vestal Press in 1974. His latest book, Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer: The History of the Theatre Pipe Organ, has just been published. □

For The Records



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address,) if applicable, and a black and white photo of the artist which need not be returned.

CHRISTMAS! Don Thompson playing the Ye Olde Pizza Joynt Wurlitzer. Available on cassette only at \$7.50 postpaid from Pipe Organ Presentations, 3678 Arcadian Way, Castro Valley, California 94546.

This is Don Thompson's first release (note it's a cassette) played on the grand daddy of all pizza organs, the Wurlitzer in Carsten Henningsen's "Ye Olde Pizza Joynt" in Hayward/San Lorenzo, California. There has been some promotional misrepresentation about the origin of this organ, so let's try to clear it up. It started life as a 2/9 Wurlitzer in the Fresno State Theatre. After the usual hiatus and neglect caused by "talkies" it was removed and installed in the residence of Bob Kates in the '50s. Bob, a church organist, cut two outstanding pop records on it played in theatre style ("Pipe Dreams" was one). Both are no longer available, regrettably, because they were brilliantly executed.

Then Carsten Henningsen got the bright idea of presenting "pipes and pizza." The 2/9 was available and the Pizza Joynt opened in Hayward/San

Lorenzo in the '60s. Many organists have played the Joynt organ for pizza chompers but the name most closely associated with it is organist-entertainer Bill Langford, whose "Gangbusters and Lollipops" record is still a best seller although Bill has been long gone from the Joynt. Over the years the organ was enlarged to 13 ranks and the three-deck former San Francisco Warfield Theatre Wurlitzer console replaced the 2/9 console. We repeat: only the console came from the Warfield Theatre.

Don, of course, is back home after a lengthy stint playing in Toronto's Organ Grinder (no relation to the one in Portland, Oregon) where he built up a large audience of loyal fans who became "regulars" at the Grinder. During this period Don busied himself with concerts and many records played on the Grinder organ in addition to his almost nightly appearances at the console there. No one could claim that there is a lazy hair on Don's well-endowed pate.

This time Don has produced an album of Christmas music. Registration includes lots of percussions, both pitched and monotone, in accordance with the mood projected. At no time are they overdone. There are 29 titles and none is truncated for time reasons. We won't list all titles because they are exactly what we expect of a Christmas album, a pleasant mix of the traditional standard and popular. Yes, "Frosty" is on hand, as is "Good King Wenceslas" and he of the rose tinted proboscis, "Rudolph." There are two "Sleigh Rides," one by Russia's Prokofiev, the other by the USA's Leroy Anderson (minus whip snaps but with a good manual-produced horselaff). Then come "Silver Bells," "O Holy Night" and "Jingle Bells" — all the fine old chestnuts. But there is more. One of Don's attributes is a very wide and varied repertoire.

Victor Herbert's "March of the Toys" gets a generous playing, although Don omitted a part of the verse. Succeeding choruses become ever more dramatic, the last verse being appropriate to accompany the doughboys tramping across no man's land, should the listener recall *The Big Parade*. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" is not the familiar tune, but rather a Richard Purvis arrangement of an old English melody, "Pastorale on Forest Green." Purvis also did the



Don Thompson.

arrangement of "What Child is This?", an offbeat treatment of "Greensleeves" with interesting melodic and harmonic diversions. Don uses some strange registration to add atmosphere.

There is also a very good rendition of Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy." Don closes with "I'll be Home for Christmas." Very appropriate because he recently returned after seven years of engagements beyond USA borders. It is embellished with an attractive counter tune in places.

This one should please Don Thompson's many fans. It is a generous serving of yuletide music plus some of the specials for which Don is noted. Except for the special selections, Don doesn't alter the traditional moods and harmonies, although he sometimes tends to be a little speedy.

Recording is good and the Joynt organ provides plenty of registration variety. We don't know about Don's plans for an informative enclosure because we reviewed the cassette before its release. A list of titles would be helpful but who needs a commentary on familiar Christmas music? It's a lot of organ for the price.

HO HO HO, JONAS NORDWALL AT THE ORGAN GRINDER (Portland, Oregon) JN-107 (stereo) \$8.95 postpaid from Dennis Hedburg, 1303 SW 16th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201 (\$13.50 postpaid in the U.K.)

As mentioned previously, we have observed the progress of Jonas Nordwall since he was 16, playing a Rodgers electronic during a long-ago

Portland-based ATOS convention. He was good then, and he is now a seasoned organist with a flair for arranging. It's the latter, plus Jonas' playing skill, which lifts this platter from the realm of the ordinary to the exceptional. There's further good news: if the cost of Jonas' *Bits, Bytes & Pipes* (\$12.00) was a little steep (as a digital recording), here's the same organ and organist recorded conventionally for \$8.95! Not too many auditions have the playback equipment (if they have the ear) to notice much difference.

Jonas lets his imagination soar as he plays these familiar Christmas selections, yet he never throws them out of focus.

"Sleigh Ride" (Anderson), is a well-orchestrated version played with spirit and a very wide dynamic range. One can almost feel the cold snowflakes landing on one's face. Lots of Glock, Xylophone, Bells and registration changes. Final chorus is real jazzy. There are not whipcracks nor closing horselaffs as prescribed by the composer.

"Christmas Song" (Tormé) is one of the most recent additions to the Christmas repertoire. Jonas gives it the charming ballad treatment it requires for full realization, soloing the Brass Trumpet which alternates with well-quoted Flutes.

"Jingle Bells" naturally calls on the percussers. Jonas makes it interesting via his bag of tricks, especially an energetic "Grunt" chorus plus some dramatic stabs. The low end of the pedal register is really something.

"O Holy Night" rates a Tibia/Vox first chorus. Jonas plays it reverently on full theatre organ combinations (they change constantly).

"Santa Claus is Coming to Town" is played in bouncy swingband style with appropriate between-phrase riffs and plenty of bell passages.

"Silent Night" gets the reverent treatment while we are still recovering from the previous tune's gusto. Jonas takes some interesting liberties with the melody in spots (mostly for key changes). Again it's full theatre organ registration, which includes some lovely Celeste voices and a sea of Voxes.

Side 2 — "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" becomes a little "churchie" in the instrumentation department, an interesting diversion. Jonas plays it rather like a César

Franck *Piece Heroïque* with fugue overtones. Some of the bells are not quite in tune with the organ — or vice versa. But what an improvisation!

"Our Lady of December" is a new one to us. It has the proper spirit and shows off some thumpy percussions as well as some ethereal combinations. Rather like "Coventry Carol."

"Rudolph" sticks his highly-tinted schnozz into the doings via a long ago George Wright technique: playing an octave lower and recording it at a slower speed. When played back at normal speed the organ takes on a hurdy gurdy aspect, a special superficial brilliance which fits "Rudolph" perfectly. Incidentally, Wright didn't like the effect, but his Hi-Fi Records boss did.

"White Christmas" includes the rarely heard verse and a Tibia/Vox chorus (the combination is especially appealing on this instrument). To add to the realism we are allowed to hear a combination button thump between phrases.

"Winter Wonderland." Jonas goes into the chorus after an exquisite intro on a Vox-heavy combination followed by some well-quoted phrases relieved by a solo brass voice. Lots of Tibia, too.

"The First Noel" features Chimes and Tibia the first time around, then pure theatre organ combinations to the close.

The organ, of course, is the 4/44 composite Wurlitzer assembled by Dennis Hedburg in the Portland "Organ Grinder" pizzeria. It's truly a beauty.

The recording is good but we have a reservation; on some of the loud passages there was a hint of the kind of distortion associated with over-modulation (note "Jingle Bells," "God Rest Ye" and "Christmas Song"). The recording has a very wide dynamic range, from a whisper to near thunder. We review such a recording after playing it on at least three playback systems of varying power, sensitivity and cost. This recording sounded best on the lowest-priced playback, from the distortion viewpoint. Note we said "a hint . . . of distortion." Your playback may choose to ignore it. There was a slight side-to-side movement of the cartridge when Side 2 of the review pressing was played but not enough to result in "wow." Both surfaces were glassy smooth.

Jacket notes are mostly about the



Jonas Nordwall at 16.

organ and recording technique plus a good in-chamber photo of the organist. It's a fine package.

DON SIMMONS PLAYS THE ORGAN GRINDER. \$8.00 postpaid from Don Simmons Recordings, 1610 SE Glenwood Street, Portland, Oregon 97202.

This one is a reissue; originally released in 1976. It is timeless in content and well worth a second time around. It is exactly the same platter released previously, with no changes in balance or frequency emphasis.

The organ was a 4/38 composite Wurlitzer when this recording was taped (it is now a 4/44). But that would not explain the vast differences in sound and emphasis between recent Jonas Nordwall recordings and this one by Don Simmons, all played on the same instrument. These organists have entirely different approaches to music which are worthy of comparison.

Those who file their copies of this publication may want to reread our original review in the December '76/January '77 issue. We liked it then and we like it now. Yet our comments which follow were written before we located the aforementioned back issue.

Don Simmons is one of the few organists with the gift of playing jazz on pipes. It isn't usually the improvisational type of jazz as "Fats" Waller played it, but rather jazz riffs, effects and endings to embellish the standards. He keeps the melodic line intact. Don's experience includes over 20 years playing the four-deck Wurlitzer in Portland's Oak Park Roller Rink (an 18-ranker last we heard, un-

enclosed) plus three years playing for Organ Grinder patrons. He's an original; his stylings are his own. He plays happy music. It has a "lift." Let's examine the tunelist.

Side 1 — "Mama Don't Want No Music Played Around Here" is a rowdy jazz opener with lots of automatic traps and a bouncy "bull fiddle" interlude. Wild!

"Thou Swell" is played at a lively clip on well-quoted voices plus Xylophone answers. It's styled as a show tune, which it is (*Connecticut Yankee*), but with plenty of interesting melodic injections and percussive registration.

"Winchester Cathedral" brings back the traps and jazz effects. Definitely not church music but ear-catching.

"Night Train" is given a boogie-woogie treatment with lots of sharp stings and brassy melody while that insistent boogie pattern dominates the accompaniment.

"Love Will Keep Us Together" is rife with jazz effects and automatic traps against a usually brass or percussive lead. It bounces nicely.

In contrast, "You" is performed as a show tune, and at a speedy pace. The bright brass and Xylophone are prominent; so are the smooth flutes, often with Quint and other mutation coloration.

Don hands out the coconuts with a cheery "Pass Me By" (remember Cary Grant singing it in that movie about a tropical island-bound hermit invaded by adolescent female!). Brief, but exciting.

Side 2 — "Old Man River" is first

*We Hope Y'all Have
An Extra Nice
Holiday Season*



**NORTH
TEXAS
CHAPTER**

given a broad ballad treatment then a fast staccato chorus with the percussors doing their stuff. But it's back to the "father of waters" mood for the closer. This one is no "lazy stream of dreams."

Not many listeners will recall that "Bidin' My Time" is from a long ago Broadway musical entitled *Three Men on a Horse*, one of whom was comic Jimmy Savvo who actually sang it mounted on a bangtail on stage while his two cronies chimed in. Don plays it with due respect to its show tune origin, a rhythm-ballad.

"A Foggy Day" alternates between mutation coloring and burnished brass registration. It's an ear-catching tune which many organists have recorded (e.g. Al Bollington, Jim Melander). Don takes a much different approach but he makes his point.

"Watch What Happens" gets a well-quoted beguine treatment, with a later Tuba solo (in the Trombone range). A goody.

"That's All" is the slow fox closer with intriguing jazz progressions.

Dennis Hedburg supervised the miking. He has captured the sound of the big Wurlitzer with the expertise we have come to expect of him. The surface of the review pressing was smooth and pop-free. The front cover of the jacket bears the original photo



Don Simmons at the Portland Organ Grinder 4/38 console (in 1976).



Mail to:
ATOS Secretary
5440 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MARCH 1, 1984

of Don (see cut) at the then-4/38 console (from the Boston Metropolitan Theatre where it controlled 26 ranks). The tunes are listed on the back and the jacket notes consist of five lines of Don Simmons biog. He deserves more.

Don puts on a good show in his very individual style.

It is time to nominate candidates for the National ATOS Board of Directors for a one-year term, July 1984 through June 1985; and three three-year terms from July 1984 through June 1987. (See special notice below.)

All regular ATOS members are eligible for nomination, and may nominate themselves or be nominated by others. Written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received before the nominee's name can be placed on the ballot. In addition, each nominee shall furnish a small black-and-white photo of him/herself, together with a statement not exceeding 100 words in length which should include personal data, work and theatre organ experience, and a short platform statement.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The new Bylaws approved in 1982 increase the Board of Directors from eight (8) to nine (9) members and increase their term in office from two (2) to three (3) years and also limits their stay in office to two consecutive terms. The following excerpts from the Bylaws will be in effect:

Section 4.4 ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

a. Elected Directors. Each Elected Director shall serve for a three-year term, except that in order to achieve staggered terms, the terms the first Board of Directors shall serve after the adoption of these Bylaws shall be staggered as follows:

(i) At the first election following adoption of these Bylaws, the three (3) Directors receiving the highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of three (3) years; and the two (2) Directors receiving the fourth and fifth highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of two (2) years; and

(ii) At the second election following adoption of these Bylaws, the three (3) Directors receiving the highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of three (3) years; and the one (1) Director receiving the fourth highest number of votes who is elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall hold office for an initial term of one (1) year.

b. Subsequent Elections. Thereafter three (3) Elected Directors each, shall be elected each year by the members as provided in these Bylaws.

A TRIBUTE TO EDDIE ZOLLMAN

by Christine Pride

The other day I drove over to Eddie and Bertha Zollman's home in Seattle's University district. Eddie will celebrate his eightieth birthday December 29, and as I have admired his long career in music I wanted to hear more about his life.

He was born in Virginia but his family moved to Tacoma when he was still a baby. His father was a professor, church organist and choir-master and his mother played the piano. His father gave him lessons and he studied piano until the age of

12 or so. His father was playing a Kimball organ in the Methodist Church and Eddie would go with him to listen and learn, and he began to practice in the afternoons.

About age 15, he had the opportunity to play the 15-rank Wurlitzer at the Rialto Theatre in Tacoma. He said "that was what set me afire." He really wanted to play an instrument like that one, and the console was so beautiful, too. About this time Edward Benedict was his organ teacher and he studied piano with Coralee Flaskett.

While still in high school he got his first position playing for the "silents" at the Victory Theatre in Tacoma. He told me it was a 4/31 Möller which came from Seattle's Coliseum Theatre. His memory is fantastic! He played songs like "Whispering," and "The Russian Rag" was one of his favorites. He said "playing for the silent movies just came naturally" and he adapted easily to improvisation. Organists were paid about \$225 per week, and he received \$90 per week as a relief organist.

In 1914 a pipe organ was installed in the Liberty Theatre in Seattle (3/18 Wurlitzer) but it wasn't until 1920 that Eddie was able to hear it. He was greatly inspired hearing Albert Hay Malotte, the composer, play this instrument. He described Mr. Malotte as being very modest at his appearances. He played the most difficult music with what seemed little effort. Malotte was the most flawless performer one could imagine, whether

Eddie Zollman at the Aeolian organ in Rhodes department store, Seattle, in the late 1940's. (Zollman collection)





Eddie Zollman at the Bellevue Pizza & Pipes 3/14 Wurlitzer during a Puget Sound Chapter concert. (Ken Gallwey photo)



Eddie at the piano during a recent organ club concert. (Betty McFarlane photo)

classical or popular. During the many hours Eddie listened to him play he never heard him play a bad show. He also was impressed by Oliver Wallace, a natural at playing for "silents," but he took his bows with great exuberance.

Eddie's next job was operating a Photoplayer with pipes for a neighborhood theatre. Sometimes he would sit down and play himself; he felt he learned a lot watching the keyboard and, of course, listening. Then he had a position at the Grand Theatre in Centralia on a 2/6 Morton. That instrument, plus more, is now in

Zollman at Big Bob's Pipe Dream 4/39 Wurlitzer. The restaurant was located in Burien, Washington, but has closed. (Eddie Zollman, Jr. photo)



Tom and Fran Solberg's home in Olympia. He worked at the Grand for three years and enjoyed it very much.

One time (before ATOS) Eddie played a private concert at Seattle's Liberty Theatre for a special group of people that included Dick Simonton. He especially enjoyed playing there because the organ was installed over the proscenium arch.

Eddie bought his first tuxedo when he was 20, and then really became an entertainer. He played piano in vaudeville shows and created a three-piano act. Sometimes he would play for song slides, and he said people enjoyed them most at the late show.

Zollman married Bertha in 1926 and moved to Seattle where they raised four children, all of whom play piano and organ. Most well known is Eddie Zollman, Jr., who maintains the organ at the Organ Grinder in Denver. Eddie and Bertha have 27 grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Other theatres where he played were the Madrona Garden, Embassy (ten-rank Kimball), Columbia, Winter Garden and Arabian. In the 1940's Eddie made appearances on radio and played piano or led bands at the Trianon Ballroom, the Moore Hotel, the Olympic Hotel and the Showbox. At the Showbox he had a ten-piece band and some of the entertainers he worked with were Paul Whiteman, Jimmy Durante, Sophie Tucker, Ted Lewis, Sally Rand and Duke Ellington. In the early '50s Zollman had an hour-long show on television.

For three years he played the noon-hour concerts on an Aeolian in the Rhodes department store. I remember how I wanted to do that when I heard that magnificent instrument. Also, he appeared frequently at the


Roller Bowl and the Seattle Ice Arena.

He spent a year playing for burlesque at the old Rivoli Theatre, and he played on "Show Street" for the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle. Additionally, he spent five years playing concerts and for "silents" at the Granada Theatre for the Organ Loft Club, playing on a 4/32 Wurlitzer which came out of the Liberty Theatre, Portland.

Eddie Zollman's many students over the years have had the advantage of his teaching, and have absorbed his dedication to organ music. His arrangements are solid and excellent in technique. He has created artists, as he is one. After a lifetime of bringing music to us he still maintains a spirited enthusiasm.

For the inspiration and interest in music he has given so many, I take this opportunity to salute Edward Zollman, Sr., a great performer, as well as teacher and friend. □

SEASON'S GREETINGS
from your



*South
Florida Chapter*

Questions and Answers on the Technical Side

by Lance Johnson



Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

QUIZMASTER
and Organbuilder
LANCE JOHNSON
Box 1228
Fargo, North Dakota 58102

ATOS member Ken Ladner passes on this tip: Wurlitzer swell shade ball bearings are still available from the Nice Bearing Company. Specify No. 602; cost is about \$2.50 each. (Check your local bearings dealer, but don't ask for closed precision bearings or you will spend about \$7.00 each instead! — Editor)

Q. Can you explain how Wurlitzer wired their couplers so there would be no back feed?

A. Your key contacts are divided so that each contact has a function. One contact could fire the relay primary but others must be used in order to have couplers. In other words, one contact per coupler of any kind. Others would be used for second touch, etc.

Q. Do I understand correctly that the valve increments on a Wurlitzer regulator are to be such that the small valve has 1/2" of play and the large valve 1" play? In other words, the regulator top must fall 1" before the large valve is to open?

A. The first valve is the cone which breaks the seal. The second is the small book valve which opens 1/2" farther down as the top falls. The

third valve, the large book valve, opens 1/2" later, so that it actually will not open until the top falls 1 1/2".

Q. I was interested in your answer to the question concerning chamber sizes (THEATRE ORGAN May/June '83) that the swell opening could occupy the full size of the listening room wall. I am sure you will agree that it would be unwise for most amateur enthusiasts to attempt revoicing of theatre-oriented pipes, so would not such an opening in a domestic environment make listening, with all but minimal registration, a dreadful, ear-splitting experience? An approach to this problem adopted in several instances here in England is to mount the swell shade assemblies on sub-frames within the chamber and allow only a restricted opening of about 1'x4' into the listening room, at a height of six or seven feet above floor level, with up to one opening for each swell shade frame. Such an approach means that listeners are not blown out of their seats in the listening room. Perhaps you would agree with me that some theatre organs, when reinstalled in domestic or even restaurant surroundings, produce a sound which can be just too coarse and loud for enjoyment. I appreciate that we cannot all have the luxury of extensive basements and living rooms with cathedral ceilings. But the artifice described above will help a lot toward establishing a reasonable listening level, even though the domestic sound is still deficient in the auditorium acoustic.

A. No two organ builders will agree as to the exact size of tone opening a given organ should have. I prefer to have a maximum opening, so that when the family is out of the house I can just cut loose and not worry about

offending anyone. This also allows the *maximum* differential between loud and soft, which I desire. When you are playing for guests you will naturally keep most of the shades closed to save their ears. I can well remember a few years ago when we had an ATOS jam session at my house with piano, accordion and what not, and I had to open the shades on the organ completely to compete! I have heard residence theatre organs with the small tone opening you have recommended and found them to be anemic and lackluster. To each his own, I guess. □

Closing Chord

Ann C. Reiling, widely known musician and ATOS member, was born in Kansas City, Kansas, in 1904 and began piano lessons at age five. There was a neighborhood nickelodeon at 13th and Quindaro in Kansas City, where little Annie watched, listened, and became acquainted with the lady who accompanied films on piano. The lady showed her the tricks of the trade on cueing the silent pictures. By 1915 she was relief pianist once or twice a week, and chose movie accompaniment as her career.

She studied piano with Wiktor Labunski and Esther Shaw Gibson, and organ at the Kansas City Conservatory of Music with such great Kansas City organists as Edna Scotten Billings and Powell Weaver. After her graduation from high school, she worked briefly for Jenkins Music Co. playing and selling sheet music.

Her first organ job was in 1928 at the New Center Theatre at 15th and Troost (now Truman Road) in Kansas City, Missouri, playing a two-manual Style D Wurlitzer accompanying *Wild Oats* with Colleen Moore. The job lasted one year.

In 1929 she became a radio organist, having her own "Little Organ Annie" program over KMBC, Kansas City's CBS outlet, playing a three-manual Robert-Morton. Miss Reiling also played solos and with ensembles over the Kansas City Star station WDAF and over WHB during the thirties.

Ann moved to Chicago in the 1940's and accompanied silents once again at the Nickelodeon in the Museum of



Miss Ann Reiling as she played a Baldwin organ, Meuhlbach Hotel, Kansas City, 1982.
(Ed Mullins photo)

Science and Industry. In 1947 she played the two-manual Moller organ in the Marine Dining Room of the Edgewater Beach Hotel. She later played the 3/11 Wurlitzer at the Trianon Ballroom in Chicago, frequently with Lawrence Welk's orchestra.

During her 18 years in Chicago Miss Reiling was associate organist at St. Vincent De Paul Church, where she was assistant to Dr. Arthur Becker, Dean of De Paul University Music School. In the 1950's she returned to Kansas City, where she was organist for the Kansas City Blues baseball team at Blues Stadium. Ann also played in the Drum Room of the Hotel President for six years.

While in Chicago she was organist at many of the supper clubs, including Math Iglar's German Restaurant where she played a Hammond. She left Chicago for the Missouri Ozarks in 1977, but returned to Kansas City in 1979.

In 1980 she resumed her silent film career providing the musical accompaniment for *The Art of the American Silents* film series at the Fine Arts Theatre in Mission, Kansas, a Kansas City suburb. The series was extremely popular and continued yearly up to the time of her death.

During the 1981 Labor Day weekend Ann not only accompanied several films on piano for the Society of Cinephiles' Cinecon 17 convention, but also played the organ interlude on a Wurlitzer electronic at the Midland Theatre, before Bob Vaughn cued the feature. As Vaughn



Miss Ann Reiling, "Little Organ Annie," when she played the three-manual Robert-Morton organ over KMBC, CBS outlet in Kansas City, Missouri in 1929.

remembers, "She was one of the best movie players."

Ann Reiling was also organist at the Marlborough United Methodist Church and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. She died April 1, 1983, at Trinity Lutheran Hospital, Kansas City, after a brief illness. She was 79. Funeral services were held April 4 at the Cathedral. She is survived by three brothers: A. L. Reiling, Jr. and Gill Reiling of Kansas City, Kansas, and Robert Reiling of Chula Vista, California.

DR. EDWARD J. MULLINS

Luella Edwards Wickham, "The Sweetheart of the Console," died November 1 at the Loretto Geriatric Center in Syracuse, New York. She was 91.

Luella was born in Port Gibson, New York, and was only 14 when she performed her first church organ program. In 1911, the same year as her marriage, she subbed at the Savoy Theatre in Syracuse. She was graduated from the Eastman School of Music in 1920. After pit work with vaudeville, she returned to the theatre

organ playing guest engagements in several eastern cities and the Crescent, Eckel, Empire, Regent, Rivoli, Strand and Temple Theatres in Syracuse.

After those days, she had odd jobs to support her family until electronic organs came in and she worked for several dealers as a demonstrator. When the second era of theatre organ dawned, Luella became a part of it, playing concerts for clubs and ATOS chapters, including a benefit for the saving of the Syracuse RKO Keith's organ, now on the NYS Fairgrounds. In 1973, she went on a six-week nationwide road tour. One of her last recitals was for the Rochester Theater Organ Society's 10th anniversary program in 1974. She taught organ and piano to senior citizens into her eighties, until she broke her hip in 1975 and was forced to retire. A biography of Luella appeared in the October, 1973, **THEATRE ORGAN**.

Noted **THEATRE ORGAN** writer Stu Green has known Luella since the '20s, and the following is from a letter he wrote to the editor: "I first discovered Luella before starting my rather brief career as a theatre organ-

ist, sometime around 1925, when I went to the Rivoli Theatre to see *Metropolis*, the Fritz Lang futuristic masterpiece. The Rivoli was on the wrong side of the tracks, but it played off-beat movies. I was very impressed and after that went many times to the Rivoli to observe her picture cueing. She finally took notice of me and there started a friendship which continued intermittently (time out for WWII) until now. I soon determined that she was one of the best-schooled theatre organists in the Syracuse area, and it showed in her picture scoring. Her emphasis was always on musical values rather than showmanship, a characteristic which probably barred her from the 'big time' that depended on lots of 'flash.'

"After the war when the TO hobby started, I would receive letters from Syracuse friends telling me about a remarkable woman who was actively engaged as a salesperson/demonstrator in a Syracuse store which sold electronic organs. At the time, I didn't connect her with the Luella I knew because she had married and her name had changed from Edwards to Wickham. But we soon established communication, and over the years we have exchanged a minimum of two letters each year. Better yet, I was able to see her at several ATOS conventions. We had a great time talking about the past, about the late '20s when we both looked forward to an end to talking pictures followed by a revived normalcy (meaning silent movies). Alas, that dream never came about.

"Luella was most helpful to this fledgling silent movie accompanist in the late '20s. She had been playing for movies since about 1915, and her experience plus her excellent schooling made her a superior teacher in that field. She had little patience with the 'glamour boys' who played the spotlight solos with lots of 'flash' and much less musicianship. Our discussions centered around both registration and the appropriate choice of music for scenes. Once I heard her play 'Blue Skies' during a torrid desert drama complete with sheiks, bedouins and camels. I could hardly wait to question her about that choice! She looked at me, half smiling, with the patience of an experienced teacher, and explained that the first eight measures of 'Blue Skies' had been lifted from an ancient Arabian melody

which was quite appropriate for the scene shown. I learned much from Luella Edwards.

"Needless to say, I will miss the letter exchanges with Luella. I hope she is now enjoying her sojourn in that great Solo Chamber in the sky with so many colleagues who have gone before her. Hers was a most productive life."

LLOYD E. KLOS

C. Raymond Allan, 58, of Knysna, South Africa, died suddenly at his home on September 8. A memorial service was held a week later at the Knysna High School Hall, where the Wurlitzer theatre organ was installed which he and Eric Schröder owned. Raymond and Eric had returned to their home only a few days earlier after attending the San Francisco ATOS Convention and subsequently touring in many parts of the continental U.S. and Hawaii.

Raymond Allan was born in Cape Town in 1925 but spent most of his youth in Knysna. He is remembered by many in his home area for his strength of character when, at the age of 21, he returned to Knysna High School among all the younger boys and completed his high school work.

He then trained as a nurse at the Johannesburg General Hospital and did several special advanced nursing courses. For years he worked for the Chamber of Mines in Johannesburg.

Eight years ago, he and Eric came



C. Raymond Allan

to Knysna and brought with them their two theatre organs, one of which was later sold to a church in Johannesburg.

Raymond Allan and Eric Schröder had been close friends and business partners for 33 years, and were the co-owners of Shangri Lodge Boarding House in Knysna.



Luella (Edwards) Wickham doing what she loved to do most. The photo was made during a concert held in the Syracuse RKO Keith's Theatre, circa 1965. The instrument is the 3/11 Wurlitzer later moved to a permanent home at the New York State Fairgrounds.



Letters to the Editors

Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN magazine.

Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.

Address:
Editor, THEATRE ORGAN
3448 Cowper Court
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Dear Bob:

After much soul-searching, I've decided to devote most of my time to raising a family. Therefore, I won't be able to contribute to "Konsole Kapers" for a while. Deadlines are difficult to make with a young baby in the house!

It's been a lot of fun writing the articles, and I hope that at least a few of the ATOS membership may have learned and grown in their musician-ship as a result of the series.

Thank you for the privilege of writing for such a professional magazine. It's been a joy.

Sincerely,
Shirley Hannum Keiter

Dear Sir:

Something which seems to endlessly occur in stories about theatres and pipe organs is the repeating of rumors, falsehoods and incorrect statistics, even those having their origins over 50 years ago. Billy Nalle in the July/August 1983 THEATRE ORGAN interestingly brings up several areas of misinformation in his article "Sacred Cows and Foxes." However, even the sources he has relied upon for his "facts" aren't necessarily correct.

After spending over ten years attempting to ferret out the facts from the fiction on the San Francisco Fox Theatre, for a book I wrote on that long-since demolished house, I have learned a great deal about the "facts."

Nalle's details on the five 4/36's (an extra rank for the Brooklyn Fox) that were built by Wurlitzer as "specials" puts matters pretty well into perspective. Yet, in my discussions with the

late Richard Simonton about this subject, my interpretation was written as follows in *FOX — The Last Word*: "During construction of the Paramount, Jesse Crawford was lured away from the Chicago Theatre and hired to play the soon-to-be-opened New York house. Crawford made suggestions to Wurlitzer on specifications for the instrument. The organ builder officially referred to this particular model as a 'Special.' However, the unofficial and most commonly used title, 'Crawford Special,' was apparently bestowed by an employee in the factory."

Probably all the facts on this particular model instrument will never be fully known. People tend to affix labels that reflect an association not based on official records — "Fox Special" because four of the five "Specials" were installed in Fox Theatres.

More importantly, Nalle's remarks about the "largest and most expensive" theatre are somewhat easier to ascertain. Tracing history back to the early days of New York's Roxy Theatre reveals a much different picture than either Nalle or one of his sources, Ben Hall's *Best Remaining Seats*, gives.

When Hall was assembling his impressive book, he also was the unsuspecting victim of a fair amount of fiction. He states William Fox signed papers for purchase of the theatre after perhaps only one visit to the structure about a week before it opened in March, 1927. Trade publications reported on the matter of its purchase by Fox in the beginning of April, 1927, noting that the deal had

been consummated a short time earlier and no dollar amounts were released at that time. They also noted that purchase by Fox had been the culmination of some six months of negotiations. Study of the matter further suggests it is doubtful Fox signed paperwork in the theatre; rather it all appears to be a reporter's scenario — may sound good, but not necessarily accurate.

Until court records or other documents can be studied, I doubt the figures cast about on the Roxy's cost are correct. Trade magazines noted an \$8,000,000 figure; newspaper ads tossed out ten million, while Ben Hall (and Billy Nalle) thought it to be twelve million. There are many factors involved in the cost of a theatre — actual construction, equipment and land. Possibly the total might be the latter figure, if you combine all of these elements or maybe even throw in a land lease or such other cost.

The "trades" have also reported that the first mortgage was \$4,250,000. Ownership or lease of the land has not been fully detailed. In any event, until concrete evidence is gathered, the actual cost will not be known, but it probably is not the excessive \$12,000,000 so far reported.

An example of building cost was assembled on the Fox, San Francisco. Although complete information on this house is also lacking, merging facts and careful estimating revealed a building, furnishings and land costing under \$5,000,000. Adding in the lease covering 25 years, one can come up with nearly \$11,000,000.

In Nalle's story, he also touches upon the area of seating capacities, a subject usually very difficult to state in accurate terms. However, blueprints reproduced in an architectural book, *American Theatres of Today*, show the Roxy seating at 5920 in 1927, which rounded equals 6000, but to give the effect of being factual, the theatre's publicity department it might be assumed, came up with 6214 (even with breakdowns for each level). Other records show Radio City Music Hall closer to 5960, which means the Roxy was not the "world's largest theatre" for very long, but *one of the largest*.

And the statement that "... never has there been such a theatre of its expense and with all its features and decor..." leaves plenty of space for discussion. Maybe no one movie pal-

ace had all that was outstanding as a whole, when reviewing some 20,000 theatres in existence in 1929; it is true the Roxy was one of the most famous, with many wonders.

So whenever one does research on which future generations must rely, it is necessary to assemble such materials so that fact and fiction can be separated. Unfortunately, even Billy Nalle hadn't done his homework, thus falling victim to that against which he also cautioned.

Preston J. Kaufman
Pasadena

Billy Nalle responds:

Dear Sir:

Pres Kaufmann is liberal in his allegations, claiming my article in the July/August 1983 issue of THEATRE ORGAN contains "several areas of misinformation." He defines these as "rumors, falsehoods and incorrect statistics." Without knowing all my sources, he states further that "even the sources he [Billy] has relied upon for his 'facts' aren't necessarily correct." I'll begin by saying that neither are my sources necessarily incorrect. In addition to research done personally through the years from 1950 to 1972, I consulted many times four highly knowledgeable people of equally high integrity, historian Ben Hall, organ technician Dan Papp, businessman Dick Simonton and, through the latter, Jess Crawford. Simonton and Crawford had an exceptionally close friendship and such afforded me direct answers to questions I submitted to Simonton. Dick and I had many long talks during his stops in New York on business trips. I was living there during those years with many opportunities to talk with, and pour over documents and letters of, both Papp and Hall. There never has arisen any reason to doubt the validity of what I was shown and told.

Crawford said emphatically that he did *not* prepare the specifications for the New York Paramount Wurlitzer. Simonton quoted him as saying that "some genius at the factory was responsible; I never learned the person's identity. All I did was ask for a few more soft ranks on the accompaniment." Dick indicated such as being a third diapason (Horn), the Liebhlich Flute and the Krumet. It matters not who coined the phrase "Crawford Special" as the point,

stated in my article, is that Wurlitzer *itself*, officially, never called it that.

Regarding William Fox signing a five million dollar agreement to finish the Roxy Theatre and gain control of it, if my words are read for themselves, and nothing read into them, what was written did not preclude the usual period of negotiation prior to signing. Does anyone think it logical that a man like Fox would come inside off the street and on a lark sign such a document *without* having reached at least a tentative decision through negotiation? Hall told me he had had several talks with Roxy, Jr. (last manager of the theatre) who provided the account of Fox coming to the theatre to check it directly before making a firm commitment. The *point* is that, had Fox *not* been as impressed with the theatre as Roxy, Jr. reported, Fox would not have consummated the deal. After all, he already was well along in planning for the Fox Theatre in an area of Brooklyn close enough to Manhattan to draw patronage fully as much from the latter as from Brooklyn.

As to the twelve million cost of the Roxy, such was noted more than once from some of the documents Ben had collected through at least 15 years for his famous book. There was no indication, either yea or nay, whether that figure included land cost. However, if you take any other theatre, add its land cost to its total construction cost and then compare the total with the Roxy's cost *minus* its land price, the Roxy still will be by a fat margin the most expensive motion picture theatre to have been built. Various letters and memoranda from Roxy revealed clearly his intention to have the most expensive materials and features. In view of all this, it does not strain credulity in believing the figure of twelve million was not "excessive." In projection, lighting, sound and stage equipment, etc., it was far advanced and the Radio City Music Hall alone today is comparable. Through the years, beginning in the summer of 1950, I've toured the highest nooks and lowest crannies in all the major Fox theatres, among numerous others. I say categorically to anyone that even a one-eyed pirate could have discerned the Roxy being in a class by itself. (Its lone "weak sister" feature was the auditorium organ with its bland voicing and understage installation.) Now, saying this infers nothing

unkind and unfair about any of the other great theatres, Fox-owned or not.

As to the Roxy seating total, Ben Hall showed me letters and memoranda from Roxy to the architect and the seating supply company with clear indication that the theatre opened with 6214 seats. A letter from the seating company to Roxy, with a carbon copy indicated to the architect, offered to supply somewhat smaller seats for most of the balcony so Roxy's desire for a record capacity could be satisfied. Roxy's initials were in the margin with indication of approval. This was at a time later than the blueprints to which Pres refers. This is bolstered further with what occurred barely three years later, as my article stated, management deciding the balcony seats were too confining and replacing them with larger ones. That reduced the house total to approximately 6100. At that figure, it still retained the largest capacity of any regular, commercial, motion picture theatre.

There was one error in my article and corrected information from my Associated Press source did not reach me before the printer's deadline. The correct seating number of the Music Hall remains as it was on its opening, 5960. My AP friend had written an article about the *Porgy and Bess* show early in 1983 and his story point turned on seating capacity. He told me what management had told him, that there were 5800 seats. Subsequently, my source learned that the theatre's office withholds about 150+ for complimentary purposes. That cleared the matter and, surely, not for the world would I do injustice to the Music Hall's seating "calories!"

In all the foregoing, I submit that clearly my "homework" indeed *was* done, that fact was separated from fiction, through 22 years of research with the aid of respected, trustworthy sources. It suits me fine to have readers now play judge and jury and draw their own conclusions.

Billy Nalle
Wichita

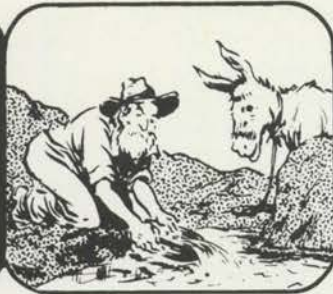
Indianapolis

Sat., July 7 thru Thurs., July 12, 1984

**ATOS 29th
Annual Convention**

NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



With our season's greetings go some accounts of what the big-name organists were doing way back then. References were *American Organist (AO)*, *Local Press (LP)*, *Around the Town (ATT)*, *Exhibitors Herald World (EHW)*, *Variety (V)* and *Motion Picture Herald (MPH)*.

July 1923 (AO) A native of New London, Wisconsin and a student of Frank Van Dusen, ETHWELL "EDDIE" HANSON has been playing Chicago theatres the past five years and is at the Crystal Theatre where he plays a Bartola. He has been a demonstrator for the Barton Organ Co. His first composition, "Golden Glow," was published by Forster when he was 13. At 14, he had "My Love For You" published, which drew a commendatory note of appreciation from Geraldine Farrar. During the war, he was with Sousa's Band which toured the country for the War Bond drives.

June 19, 1927 (LP) HAROLD RAMSAY was at the 3/17 Barton console when the 3133-seat Indiana Theatre in Indianapolis opened today. (Dessa Byrd and Dale Young were organists later).

September 15, 1927 (LP) Indianapolis' 1032-seat Rivoli Theatre opened today. TIM CRAWFORD was at the Robert-Morton.

September 4, 1927 (LP) Some ten million have passed through the doors of Rochester's Eastman Theatre in the five years since its grand opening. HAROLD OSBORN SMITH and ROBERT BERENTSEN are the house organists, while Victor Wagner, Guy Fraser Harrison and Paul White share conductor's chores.

December 1928 (ATT) A graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music in 1916 with several published picture compositions to his credit, and a following worthy of the son of organ builder L. H. Frazee, is ROY FRAZEE. The management of the Granada Theatre in Malden, Massachusetts may be congratulated upon its choice of a solo organist, as Roy is very well liked and is doing exceedingly well. He was previously at Loew's State in Boston.

March 15, 1930 (EHW) TED MEYN at Jersey City's Loew's, presented a beautifully played spotlight solo which featured a number of "rose" songs. His fine playing, augmented with clever variations and pleasing lighting effects, earned him a tremendous ovation. The selections were "Honeysuckle Rose," "A Red, Red Rose," and "Roses of Picardy." A slide, bearing the words "Everybody Sing" then appeared and Meyn played "Rosecolored Glasses," "Cryin' for Caroline" and "Sunny Side Up" to which the audience sang very well.

Circa 1930 (V) That's some gag JESSE CRAWFORD has thought up for his New York Paramount organ. Whether it is a human voice singing, or the organ playing the portion with the human semblance, Crawford just plays around with exactly enough. It's really difficult to tell for any audi-

ence and that little bit will probably create plenty of discussion. A slide suggests the guess. "A Novelty Concert," Crawford bills it this week, and it is that. His applause was noisy and sincere.

Circa 1930 (V) EDDIE DUNSTEDTER at the State Theatre in Minneapolis, gives his organ interpretation of a number while the words are flashed on a scrim. The selection is tantalizingly catchy as played by Dunstedter. Scrim ascends to reveal a girl, sitting on a cobweb-streaked half moon, suspended in mid-air. A youth in white Pierrette costume, strums a mandolin-like instrument, attached to a broom handle and sings the verses of the song to the girl who later warbles one of the choruses herself. At the end of the song, six State Theatre ballet girls, wearing tight-fitting, colorful Pierrette suits, are on for a clever broom dance to the same melody. Dunstedter, of course, furnishes the musical accompaniment for the singers as well as the dancers. A toe dance by a pair of girls in regulation ballet attire follows.

October 24, 1931 (MPH) LLOYD "WILD OSCAR" HILL's first solo at the Brooklyn Albee Theatre worked out as smoothly as if he had been featured here for a long time. The audience, when told to sing, responded without the least hesitancy and the singing increased in volume, right up to the last number.

The solo opened with the orchestra playing "The Voice of the RKO" as Oscar at the console ascended. Comedy slides with words introducing the solo were shown as the organist played incidental music. Oscar then turned toward the audience and through the mike introduced his "School of Broadcasting," speaking supposedly to the radio audience. His entire announcing was a burlesque on a real broadcast and the audience got many laughs. He first announced the station as JOY, and the Albee Square Mixed Chorus (audience) would do the singing as he accompanied them on the organ. Two choruses of "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain" were first sung, then two of "Through With Love" and the final close-harmony singing of "Sweet Adeline." The applause at the finish was tremendous.

December 5, 1931 (MPH) JOHN HAMMOND at the Brooklyn Strand, is the new organist here and is featuring an original and topical novelty called "Singing the News Away" for his opening solo. Heretofore, the organ console was in the pit; now it is on rollers on the stage, which really seems to be the place for this particular console. Not only does it look better, but it gives the organist a chance to be seen by his audience. Hammond answers some of the questions asked in the "agony" columns of a newspaper by playing tunes with special lyrics. The first is "Million Dollar Baby," followed by "Many Happy Returns." As an interlude, Hammond offers his own arrangement of "Waters of the Minnetonka" which he plays beautifully in concert style. Following this, he surprises the audience by singing in a distinctly novel conversation and whispering style, a popular number entitled "Right Across the Way." For closing, the audience sang "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

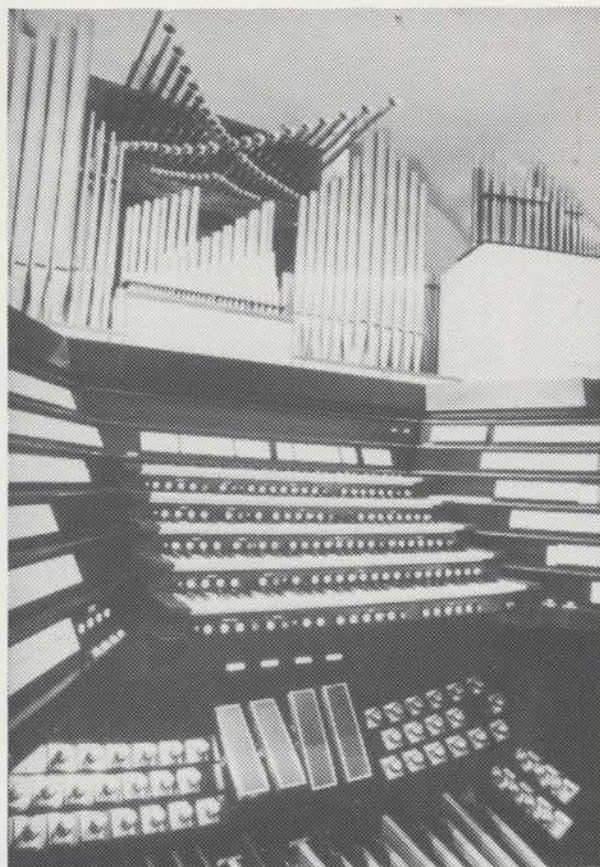
February 1942 (V) ADOLPH GOEBEL, musical director of WWRL in Woodside, Long Island, is doubling as organist at the Park Terrace Cafe in Brooklyn.

See you next time with some nuggets about lady organists. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

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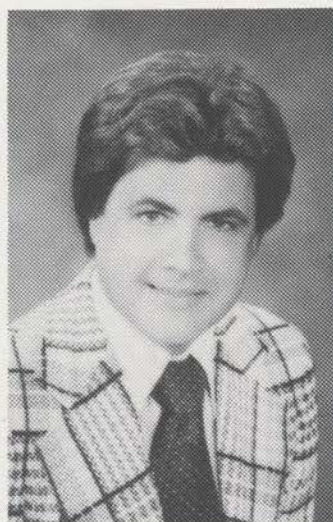


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THEATRE ORGAN PROGRAM



TERRY CHARLES

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2. Let There Be Peace On Earth
3. Tribute to "Old Glory"
4. Serenade (Richard Drigo)
5. Scenario on "A Quiet Village"
6. March of the Repasz Band

SIDE TWO

1. Variation on "Hernando's Hideaway"
2. Russian Lullaby and
Theme from "Doctor Zhivago"
3. The Entertainer Rag
4. Selections from "The Vagabond King"
5. Softly, As In A Morning Sunrise
6. Climb Every Mountain
7. How Great Thou Art!

Terry Charles has produced sheer magic from the lofty perch in the sky of the Saint Paul Lutheran Church over Orlando, Florida. Few organists could take this immense ninety rank classically voiced instrument and make it purr, coo and sting all in the same concert! It certainly was an evening long to be remembered by the audience as Terry Charles illustrated over and over again his uncanny ability to create gorgeous combinations of sounds heard for the first time from this magnificent instrument. Wow! What a combination . . . Terry Charles and the Fratelli Ruffatti. Listen, revel, and enjoy what is indeed "Magic In The Sky".

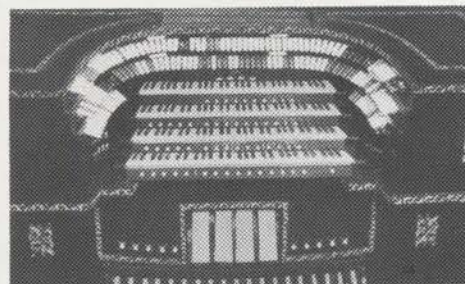
TERRY CHARLES PLAYS THE GRANDE ORGAN OF THE KIRK OF DUNEDIN "THE SOUND OF A GREAT AMEN"

SIDE ONE

1. The Lost Chord
2. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring
3. Fairest Lord Jesus
4. When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
5. A Mighty Fortress is Our God

SIDE TWO

1. The Holy City
2. The Old Rugged Cross
3. What a Friend We Have in Jesus
4. O God Our Help in Ages Past
5. The Lord's Prayer



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FROM: Terry Charles, c/o The Kirk of Dunedin,
Causeway at Bayshore Blvd., Dunedin, Florida 33528 U.S.A.

While Looking For an Organ . . .

KESWICK UN-MODERNIZES

The facade of the Keswick Theatre. The modern marquee will be replaced by a duplicate of the original.
(Photo by Randall Wolf, courtesy of Today's Spirit newspaper, Hatboro, Pennsylvania.)



After saving the Keswick Theatre (Glenside, Pennsylvania) from the wrecker's ball, the Glenside Landmarks Society which now owns it is looking for a theatre pipe organ to fill the empty chambers.

The Keswick was originally equipped with a 3/11 Aeolian-Votey organ, one of five unit organs built by that firm for theatres. The console and some pipework were damaged beyond salvage by water used to fight a fire in the theatre. The remainder of the instrument was removed and stored in New Jersey, subsequently being sold for parts.

On Christmas night 55 years ago, the Keswick Theatre opened its doors for the first show. It was designed originally as a vaudeville and movie house. Such stars as the Marx Brothers, Mae West, Stepin Fetchit and Fannie Brice appeared on its stage. After the demise of vaudeville, the theatre continued to operate as a film house until early 1980, when it was purchased, along with the rest of the block, by a savings and loan firm located a few doors from the Keswick.

The new owner planned to demolish the theatre to provide the parking space required for a new building. At this point, ATOS member W. Charles "Chuck" Schrader stepped in. He formed the nonprofit Glenside Landmarks Society, collected signatures

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1983

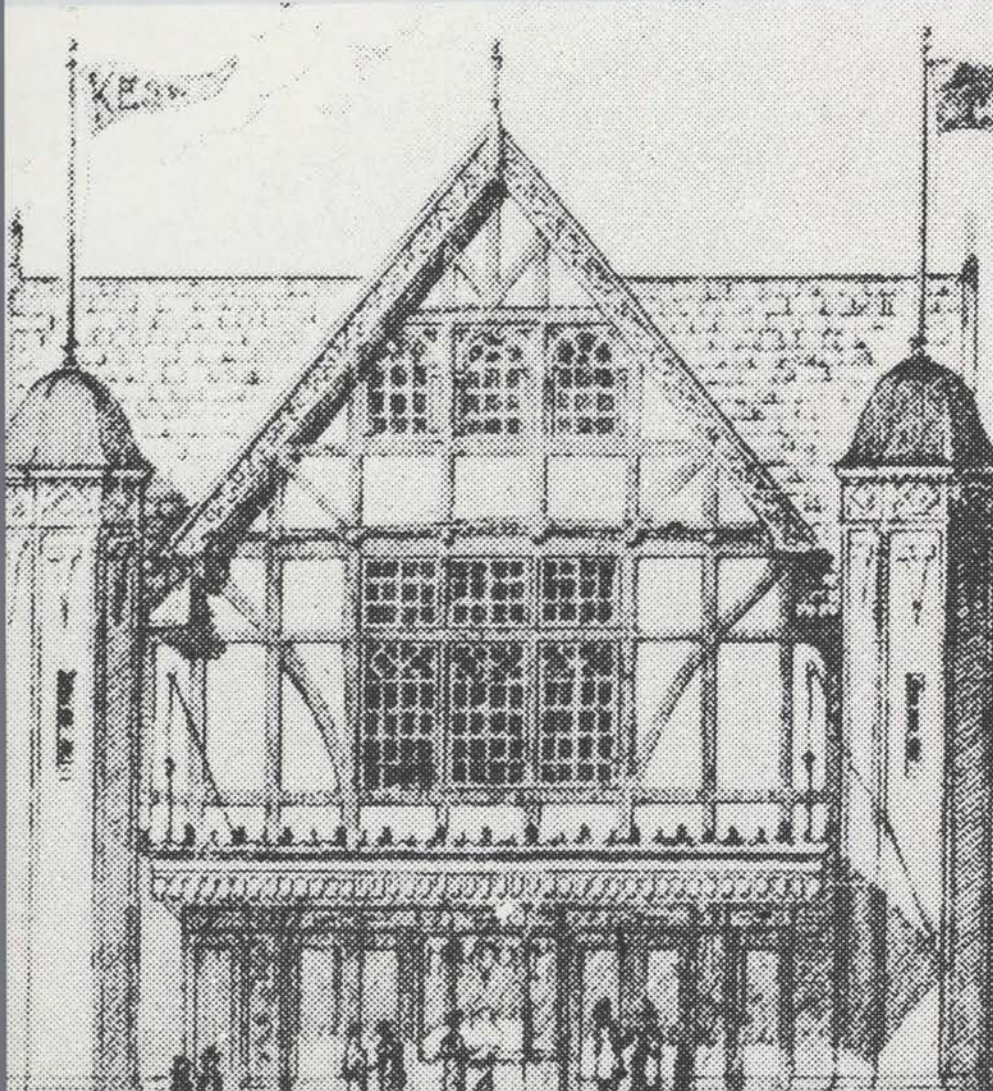
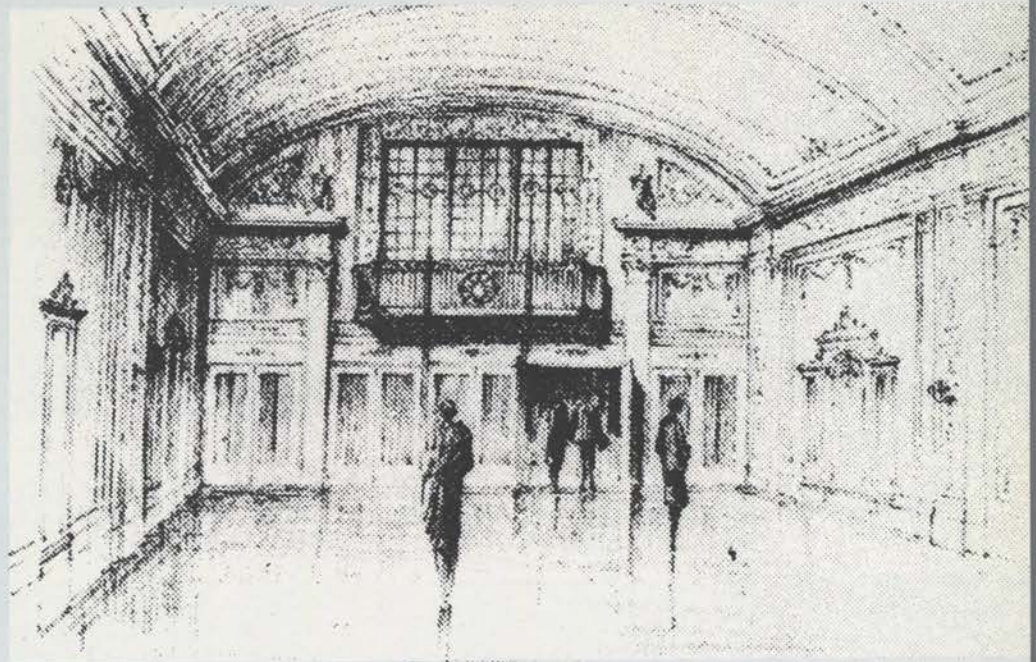


The lobby as it is today (left), and as it will be when restored (below). (Photo by Geoffrey Patton; Sketch by Horace Trumbauer, architect.)

on a petition to save the structure, and appeared before the township commissioners to plead his case. Ultimately, the commissioners granted a variance so that the savings and loan building could be built without the additional parking.

Glenside Landmarks Society leased the Keswick until June 30, 1982, at which time a bank loan enabled the Society to purchase the theatre. The

Architect's sketch of the facade of the theatre. The marquee in this sketch is to be restored.



Keswick is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Work is now underway to raise funds for restoration, which will include a new heating and air conditioning system (the present one is installed on the stage!), new stage rigging and curtains, and new lighting and sound equipment, as well as the renovation and restoring of the auditorium, lobbies and facade to their original splendor. It is estimated that the project will cost \$3.5 million. Two designated grants have been received so far. Plans call for completion by the end of 1985.

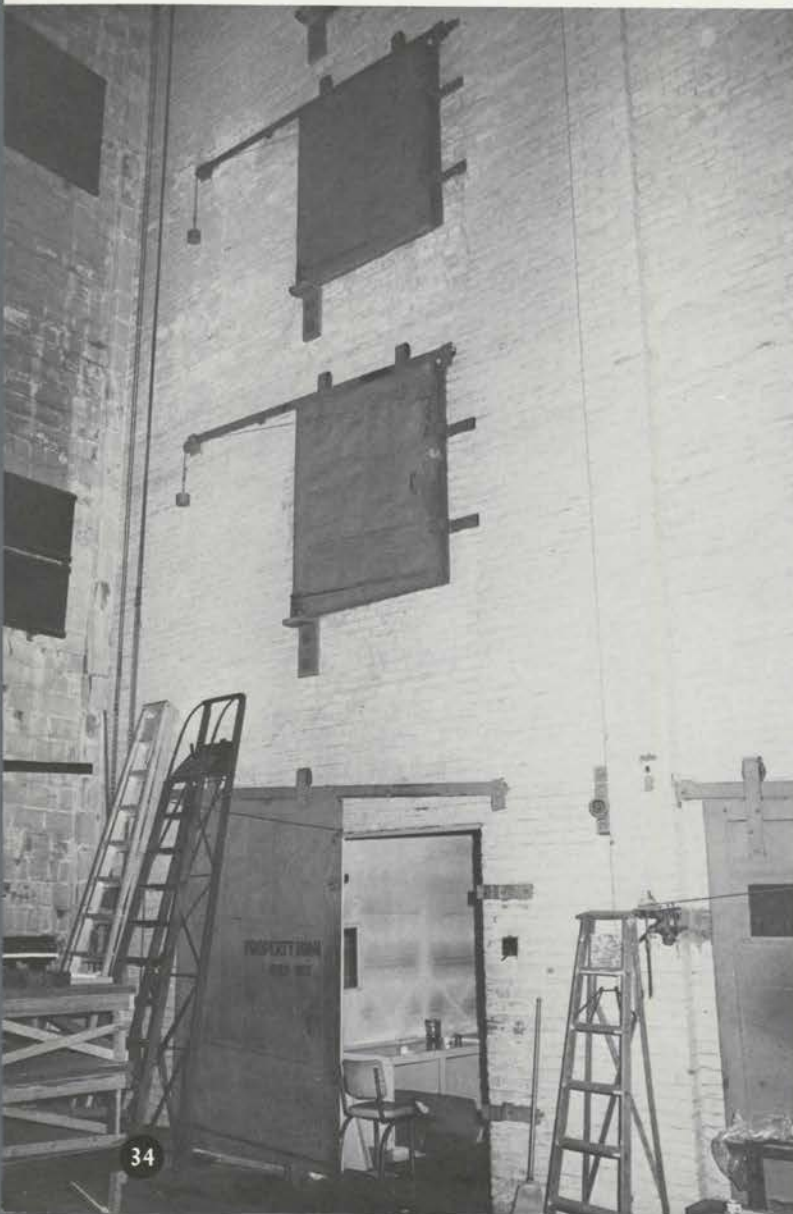
An entirely separate drive is underway to raise funds for the purchase and installation of a theatre organ. A three-manual, 11- or 12-rank instrument would fill the bill nicely. Of course, donation of an instrument would be most welcome. Persons caring to contribute should make their checks payable to Glenside Landmarks Society, and mail them to 510 Central Avenue, North Hills, Pennsylvania 19038. Checks should be marked "Organ Fund." All donations are fully tax-deductible.

The Keswick is the only theatre designed by Horace Trumbauer, the architect who planned the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Philadel-



Chuck Schrader, standing, who helped save the historic Keswick Theatre, talks with Livingston Taylor in his dressing room prior to the singer's performance. (Geoffrey Patton photo)

View backstage of two of the three doors to corridors in the dressing room areas. A pulley and rope allowed performer's trunks to be lifted to the appropriate level. (Robert Lee photo)



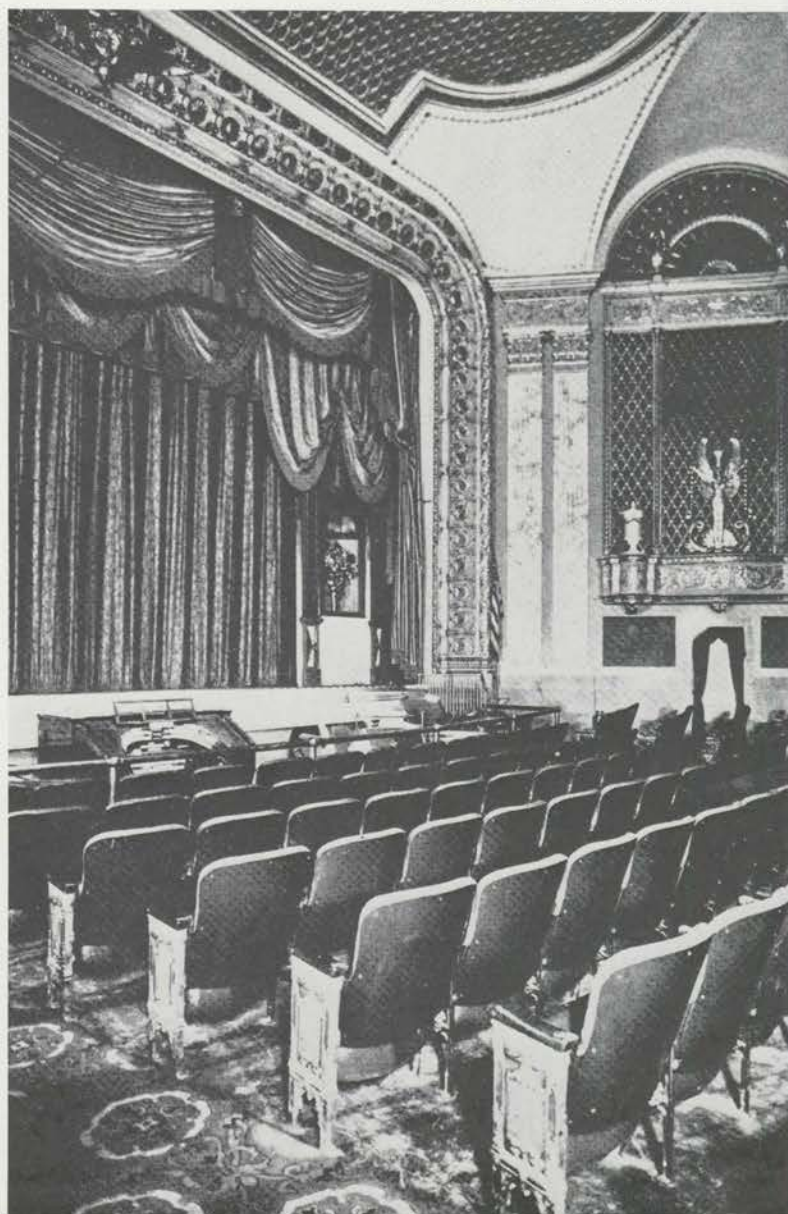
phia Free Library. The exterior is finished in stucco with Elizabethan half-timbering, and with octagonal towers at each side of the facade and a gable roof suggests such historic theatres as the Globe of Shakespeare's London.

The beautiful lobby, decorated with intricate ornamental plasterwork, was buff-colored with blue and gold trim. Concealed lighting, located inside wide cornices, illuminated the barrel-vaulted ceiling. A double grand staircase of marble, with railings of iron and bronze, leads to an upstairs lounge.

At present, the auditorium contains 1329 seats, but plans call for expanding seating to 1500 during restoration of the theatre. Each seat provides an excellent view of the stage, and the auditorium has superb acoustics.

The theatre ceiling was extremely

In this view the original Aeolian-Votey organ console can be seen in the center of the orchestra pit, and the details of the proscenium and organ grille are visible. (Photo courtesy of The Console.)





View toward stage as it was when the Keswick opened in 1928.

(Photo courtesy of The Console.)

View toward stage as it is today, with wide screen set-up partially masking organ chambers.

(Robert Lee photo)



elaborate, with back-lighted stained glass designs. Although these were removed, they are all stored in the building and are in good condition. A huge ceiling dome, cove-lighted in various colors, was also removed, but the basic steel structure is still intact.

Columns, arches and ornamental plasterwork adorned the side walls of the auditorium, which recessed tapestries and concealed lighting. The color scheme of the auditorium was peacock blue and old gold with brighter highlights.

The stage is 60 feet wide and 30 feet deep with a 68-foot-high fly gallery. The proscenium arch is 20 feet high and 40 feet wide. The beautiful hand-painted asbestos fire curtain is still in excellent condition. Three tiers of dressing rooms adjacent to the stage can accommodate 50 performers.

Considerable community support for the Keswick Theatre of the Performing Arts has been developed by the Glenside Landmarks Society. This support has come from clubs, organizations and businesses, as well as from individuals. A wide variety of attractions have been presented in the Keswick — plays, big bands, jazz groups, solo concerts, dance companies and children's shows. A fine theatre organ will complete the restoration and permit an even greater range of programs, including film festivals.

Some material for this article was drawn from an article by Paula H. Goff which appeared in *The Reporter*, March 19, 1982, and is used by permission. Photos credited to Geoffrey Patton are also taken from *The Reporter* with permission. □

PEACE

Floyd and Doris Mumm

Designers and Typesetters
of
THEATRE ORGAN

DAN BARTON vs. THE EDITOR

... some interesting correspondence

Dear Bob:

Dan Barton once wrote an article for the *Bombarde* concerning the Hope-Jones failures. When it arrived I noted that he stated that H-J put his ideas re unification to work while he was in England. Something in that assumption got my curiosity up, and I gave the article to Lee Haggart for checking. Like me, he caught the alleged error — that while H-J worked out the principles of unification in England, he never had an opportunity to put these ideas into effect until he opened his Elmira factory in 1907, which was after he had worked for the Austin company (straight organ builders, and no nonsense about that newfangled unification). When I questioned Dan he became vitriolic, as the letter indicates. In fact, he and I maintained a friendly adversary relationship as long as we corresponded; I made him come through with facts, and he resented it. After all, he was DAN BARTON, famous organ-builder, and a whippersnapper like me had no right to question his statements. Yet, he defended his claims, but often with circumstantial evidence rather than facts. I wrote to several people in Britain who knew the H-J story and I found no evidence that he ever unified one rank of pipes while there. Dick Simonton said he ran across one rank in an H-J organ which had a 4' Flute "extension," which indicates that H-J might have experimented but he did not build any complete instruments based on the unification principle. That left me with a diplomacy problem; one does not tell one of the patriarchs of the theatre organ world that he is dead wrong. The story about H-J's failures appeared in *Bombarde*. I must have done a lot of hedging but I never received any complaints about the story. After all, who but a fool would challenge Dan Barton, as — up! — I did?

STU GREEN

December 9, 1965

Dear Stu:

I enclose an article on Robert Hope-Jones written from a new

angle. Many articles and a few books have been written describing Hope-Jones' many inventions and creations. He is credited with selling many organs and some very prestigious installations, but he failed three times, twice in England and once in the United States.

I have collected over the years much of the Hope-Jones material and in only once instance is there any direct reference to the reason for his failure and that is in George L. Miller's book *The Recent Revolution in Organ Building*, written in 1909, one year before Wurlitzer took over. Miller was a personal friend of Hope-Jones and a member of the church in Birkenhead, England, where Hope-Jones taught Sunday school and played the organ. He followed Hope-Jones to the United States and knew him for thirty years. Miller describes the damage that was done to a number of Hope-Jones' organs and just touches on the opposition to Hope-Jones and his organ ideas. He does it in one sentence. I quote: "For nearly fifteen years he has met concerted opposition that would have crushed any ordinary man, attacks in turn against his electrical knowledge, musical taste, voicing ability, financial standing and personal character."

I think pretty well of Hope-Jones and I should, for I did pretty well using his inventions and creations. I also know about the opposition to unit organs by classic organ builders and church organists, for after the theatre business blew up I tried to sell unit organs to churches, and I did sell a few — very few! The lack of explanation for Hope-Jones' failure in most of the written material, combined with my personal experience, gave me the idea for the article.

I have used an explanation of Hope-Jones' electro-pneumatic action so I can describe the earlier actions such as the tracker, Barker lever and tubular pneumatic. I am sure many enthusiasts know little about them. Hope-Jones is generally credited with being a poor businessman — an endless inventor with no ability to op-

erate factory production so it would show a profit — and I presume much of this is true, but at Elmira, Robert Elliott was with him and Elliott was a sharp organ man who had already proven what he could do. He was with the Welte Mignon Company, then picked up an organ man in Hartford, Connecticut, John Austin, who was also a great organ technician and inventor and credited with being so busy inventing and building that he forgot to run his operation on a businesslike basis. Elliott organized a company with Austin doing the work and Elliott running the business, and the Austin Company became one of the biggest in the country. So, I say Hope-Jones did not lack business management at Elmira and it was the classic builders and organists who gave him the "business."

Regards,
DAN BARTON

February 17, 1966

Dear Stu:

In your letter of February 4 I note you have referred my "WHY" article to Lee Haggart for appraisal and improvement in the accuracy of the article. Judging from the frequency with which you have referred to Mr. Haggart in your past correspondence I conclude you have referred most of my articles to him for such appraisal. I have no objection, as I am not above making mistakes, and I don't think Mr. Haggart is, either.

I refer to Item 3. The statement, quoting from your letter, that "Hope-Jones did not make any public installations which were unified in England; he did that in the U.S.A. just before he opened his Elmira factory." So you took Haggart's statement for solid fact and rearranged the paragraphs on the invention of unification to fall after Hope-Jones left England. I also note that "Lee is aware that there are books which tell about unification before that time." I do not buy any of that — the change in the paragraphs takes the guts right out of my story.

If Mr. Haggart's statement that Hope-Jones built no unit organs in England can be made to stand up, then I am looking pretty damned foolish and the "WHY" article isn't worth the paper it is typed on. The entire premise of my article is the fact that when H-J showed up with his unit organ and started taking business away from the English builders they became so incensed that they did everything possible to stop H-J, even to burning churches and doing great damage to his organs. As I say in the article, H-J changed the entire form of the organ, the unified form against the traditional chest organ. H-J's unified organ was an exact contradiction to all the rules of organ building existing through four centuries.

Now, if H-J made no unit organs in England then I am way out in left field making such statements and you had better dispose of the article in the nearest waste basket.

But I am entitled to a bit of rebuttal. It is my opinion that Mr. Haggart is a bit mixed up on his facts, or that James Nuttall was pulling his leg in return for Haggart's pumping him mercilessly for H-J information right up to the time of Nuttall's death — this being a quote from your letter.

There is no denying that H-J built and sold organs to churches and auditoriums in England. If he did not build unified organs then he must have built chest organs. *There was no other kind!* Why would the English builders give a new builder the treatment H-J received if he was building traditional chest organs, the same as the other builders? It would not be because of his new electro-pneumatic action, for the English builders had been trying since 1868 to perfect an electric action, documented in William L. Sumner's book, *The Organ*. Would it not seem reasonable to suppose that a new and entirely different type of organ — unit construction, high wind pressure, new voices and pipe scales — that was losing the English builders business would be more apt to arouse great resentment?

Let's check the books. *The Recent Revolution in Organ Building*, by George L. Miller; *The Contemporary American Organ*, by William H. Barnes; *The Organ of the Twentieth Century*, by George A. Audsley; *The Organ*, by William L. Sumner. Four well-known and highly respected

authors, Miller and Sumner both Englishmen. All referring to H-J's plan of unification or transference of stops, or treating the entire organ as a unit and making it possible to draw any or all stops on all of the keyboards at any reasonable pitch. Announced by H-J at a lecture before the Royal College of Organists on May 5, 1891. Is it not a reasonable conclusion that after making such an announcement H-J built the type of organ he had described to the Royal College and that he did not build chest organs, and that he must have invented such an organ before that time or he could not have described it, and that the invention of unification did not fall after his exodus from England, but certainly before 1891? The records show that H-J came to the United States in the spring of 1903. No book or article I have ever read states that H-J did not build any unit organs in England or that he did build chest organs. I do not buy the fact that Lee Haggart has more accurate information on H-J's history than the combined statements of these four eminent authors, regardless of what Haggart says James Nuttall told him.

Let's try a little circumstantial evidence. When Wurlitzer began moving in on the California theatre business the California Organ Co. started to develop an H-J-type unit organ. And who had charge of the work? Stanley Williams, because of his knowledge of H-J's unit system, was the man they put in charge. I quote: "Head voicer Stanley Williams was well qualified to build a fully unified theatre organ. He had learned the unit organ building business as an apprentice to the famed organ building genius, Robert Hope-Jones." Stanley Williams started working for H-J at age 18 and worked in all departments. He came to the United States in 1905 after several years with H-J. I am now quoting Stanley Williams' own words from a tape recording made in 1962: "Hope-Jones was a very controversial figure, either loved or hated. The old standard organ builders all frowned on him and his work as being amateurish. Hope-Jones was building organs along quite different lines. Some people loved his work because it was different. I was the one man on the West Coast who could put this sort of instrument into production (meaning unified organs)." Sounds like H-J was building units in Eng-

land, doesn't it, and if he was not building units where did Williams gain the knowledge that enabled him to build the first units produced by the California Organ Co.? That he did so is undeniable.

Mr. Williams was 81 years old in 1962 and I sincerely hope he is still alive and active. He lives in your locality and I suggest you contact him and verify whether or not H-J was building unified organs in England.

Here is another one. William H. Barnes states in his book, *The Contemporary American Organ*, third edition, page 200: "Mr. John Compton, the eminent English organ builder has been the only one in England to follow along the lines of Hope-Jones." It is a well known fact that Compton built unit organs. How could Compton "follow along the lines of Hope-Jones" with a unit organ if H-J was not also building unit organs?

When R. P. Elliott organized the H-J factory in Elmira, New York, in 1907 he needed men who knew unit organ construction. Elliott brought over from England a number of H-J's former employees. Among them James Nuttall, the head voicer, Earl Beach, Dave Marr, John Colton, Joe and Harry Carruthers and others. Why did Elliott bring these men (paying the expenses of their families) to the United States to build unit organs in Elmira if they had not learned the unit business from Hope-Jones in England? If H-J built only chest organs in England they would not be of great value to Elliott building unit organs in Elmira. He could have re-

**HOLIDAY
GREETINGS
FROM**

CATOE

**HEALTH
AND
HAPPINESS
IN 1984**

cruited plenty of chest organ mechanics in this country. Why all this trouble and expense unless they were all unit organ specialists? Especially Nuttall, with his experience in voicing on high pressure — 15-, 25-, 35- and up to 50-inch wind. High pressure H-J-type voicing is entirely different from low pressure chest-type voicing. Incidentally, the high pressures used by H-J are indicative of unit construction. I question that 35- or 50-inch wind was ever used on a straight organ chest as a common practice.

Wurlitzer took over in 1910 and gave H-J the management of the organ department. With his propensities for tearing organs down and making changes and delaying promised shipments, and his total lack of business and factory management ability, Wurlitzer planned to ease H-J out of the picture, but they needed an experienced unit man to take his place, a man highly experienced in unit construction and management. Whom did they secure? Meakam Jones from England. Why Meakam Jones? Because he was experienced in unit construction and management from his association with H-J building units in England. Meakam Jones arrived in the United States from England in 1912. Documented in Farney Wurlitzer's speech at the 1964 ATOS convention. You have recently met with Edward Jones and a letter of inquiry to him will quickly decide whether his father was a unit or a chest organ specialist.

Now to your other accuracy points. No. 1. The use of the generator is controversial. I know that batteries were used on organs at one time, but I am going to stand on my statement on generators. H-J was an electrical engineer, and with his inventive mind and electrical engineering knowledge he invented the hairpin magnet which revolutionized organ actions. He lengthened the magnet and figured out a winding, the factor being the length and size of the copper wire. As early as 1868, English builders were working on an electric action operated with a generator. William L. Sumner, the English author of the book, *The Organ*, names the companies and describes the equipment — large and crude magnets attached directly to the pallet valve inside the chest, compelling the magnet to work against the air pressure in the chest and using such an amount of electri-

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city that the contacts burned off. He describes the generators as stock models that could not maintain a steady voltage with the variable load created in playing an organ. Sumner states that, had the builders consulted an electrical engineer and had the generators been equipped with the proper winding to keep the voltage constant, the English builder's generator trouble would have been over. I am using the assumption that H-J, with his ability to perfect the proper winding for his hairpin magnet, would also have been able to perfect a proper winding for a generator.

Accuracy Item No. 2. I had the names of the short partnerships in the first writing. There are two other items I had in the first writing. Items that anyone acquainted with H-J history should have known. Despite Haggart's "mercilessly pumping Nuttall for H-J information right up to the time of Nuttall's death," Haggart failed to come with this information. (1) After H-J finished the work on the Birkenhead organ and before he started with the unified organ he invented duplexing, which allows a single stop on an organ chest to be played on either of two manuals. (The M. P. Möller company has duplexed straight organ chests for many years.) H-J spent little time on duplexing, for he had advanced to the unit form and dropped the duplex idea. (2) H-J had patents on his construction, whether it was on the action and unification and duplexing or only on one or two is not clear. H-J licensed several English builders to use his inventions under a royalty arrangement. This arrangement did not work out and his next move was to start his own factory. I had all three items, short partnerships, duplexing and patent licensing in my first draft of the "WHY" article. The article was getting very long and I did not want you to run it as a two-part article. To shorten the article and because I did not consider any of the three items very pertinent to the theme of the article, the persecution of H-J, I dropped them out on a rewrite. This will give Mr. Haggart some H-J information he evidently

did not get from his pumping of Mr. Nuttall.

Accuracy Item No. 4. Just change the word "shallots" to "lips" (on big Flutes and Diapasons) and see if Haggart agrees with that.

You make note that H-J's insistence on perfection as being too expensive, and that this trait may have led to his failure. I did not use it in the article because I did not want to cover two subjects in the same article. I am using the persecution of H-J by classic builders as my point and did not want to confuse the issue.

I agree that this trait caused his downfall with Wurlitzer and probably was a factor in his failing in England, but it is my opinion it was not a factor at Elmira, based on conversations I had with R. P. Elliott when he spent a short time with Kimball in Chicago after Wurlitzer took over in 1910 and Elliott was dropped. The Elmira company was headed by Jervis Langdon, head of the Elmira Chamber of Commerce and a prominent businessman. There were some prominent stockholders and the company was well financed. H-J worked under the supervision of R. P. Elliott, who was not only a good businessman but a very sharp organ man. He had successfully put over the Austin company. H-J was with Elliott at Austin and Elliott knew all about his nutty traits and was alert for them. Hope-Jones had nothing to do with the finances — they were handled by Langdon, and Elliott had Hope-Jones under his orders. It is my opinion that Hope-Jones' traits had nothing to do with his failure at Elmira. The American failure was caused solely by the persecution of classic organ builders and the opposition of organists. Farney Wurlitzer stated in his speech at the 1964 convention that one of the reasons they quit building organs when the theatres folded was because the unit organ had the antagonism of 99% of the church organists of the United States, and no one knows that better than I do.

One thing I do not understand. You state that Haggart was a lifelong friend of James Nuttall. This puts Haggart in England for the early part of his life. Nuttall was H-J's head voicer in England, which would put Haggart close to Hope-Jones. Nuttall did not leave England until 1912, when Elliott brought him to the

United States. How come Haggart did not know what type of organ Hope-Jones was building in England, and why did Haggart have to press Nuttall so hard late in Nuttall's life and in the United States to gain this information as to when Hope-Jones invented unification?

Perhaps I should apologize for writing you a book instead of a letter, but I spent more time researching, writing and rewriting on the "WHY" article than on any article I have ever done for you, and thought it was a damn good one, and, judging from the comment on the card you sent me at Christmas, you had the same idea. It is a bit rugged to accept the evaluation Mr. Haggart has put on the article, and I am surprised that before referring the Haggart accuracy report to me you changed the paragraphs to make the invention of unification fall after H-J left England in 1903, instead of around 1889 in England. With your background you surely realized the change in the paragraphs would destroy the article, which is based on hatred for H-J because he invented and sold unit organs in England, production starting around 1892. You apparently accept Haggart's clarifications, opinions and statements as infallible. He was 100% wrong when he stated that small reeds should be curved on a block and just as wrong when he changed "condensers" to "capacitors" in the Bartola article, and seems unable to answer my inquiry about R. P. Elliott's involvement with the Morton company. Instead, he offers a list of names — Carlsted, Ferris, Kingsley, Eaton, Marsh — and states that Leo Schoenstein was the man who put across the Morton company. I have considerable material on the Morton company, and some is other than Tom B'hend's account. I find only one name mentioned, Marsh, as a voicer. There is no mention of Schoenstein as a top man or otherwise, or of Haggart either, for that matter.

He is also wrong in listing the Diaphone as being the invention of James Nuttall. Neither H-J nor Nuttall invented the Diaphone. Two Englishmen, Blackett and Howden, invented the Diaphone for use as a fog horn. Haggart is also wrong about the Tuba Mirabilis. Neither H-J nor Nuttall invented it. It is a very large-scale Tuba with resonators of thick metal which has been called both Tuba Mirabilis

and Contra Tuba, and was used in organs before either H-J or Nuttall were born. I believe Haggart is wrong again when he says the invention and use of unification falls after H-J's exodus from England, and I think this rebuttal will prove it.

The theme of Haggart's proposed book (*The Men Who Were Hope-Jones*, never written -ed.) seems a bit petty, perhaps a sour grape. No question H-J received assistance from Nuttall and others. So did I from my "disciples." I built Bartolas and Barton organs for 21 years, and some of the best improvements were made by employees. It happens in every manufacturing organization. If Haggart can make Hope-Jones out to be a faker, then old Hope will have had it all.

Now for the last chapter in this "book" of rebuttal. I do indeed have objections to the changes proposed by Mr. Haggart. Clarification numbers 1, 2 and 3 I do not accept, number 4 change shallots to lips. As to your "full organ" summation, I agree to its use if it is added to my summation and is not used in place of mine. It was

not my intention to show what a helluva guy H-J turned out to be, but to make the point that his failures were caused by a campaign of hatred from classic organ builders and classic organists.

Now you are the judge in this matter and I respectfully await your decision. Does the "WHY" article go into *Bombarde* as I wrote it with your closer added, or into the waste basket as decreed by Mr. Haggart?

It's pretty rugged to spend the time and research to write and rewrite what one considers a very good article and then have to spend even more time and research and writing defending the article from a criticism which one does not believe has any basis in fact.

Your slightly exasperated friend . . .

Wan Barton

□

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News from the
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Lloyd E. Klos



*Lockport
 Theatre
 Organ
 Society*

**(LTOS) — Lockport, New York
 716/439-6643**

Continuing its artists series at the Lockport Senior Citizens Center, LTOS presented veteran theatre organist Lorraine A. Madriska on August 18. During the first great era, Lorraine received a weekly \$15 for pounding a piano at the Savoy Theatre in Ford City, Pennsylvania. She became a church organist after exit of the silents, but now the circuit is complete as the Amsterdam, New York resident does considerable silent film accompaniment in the Mohawk Valley area.

For her Lockport program, she ac-



Beatrice Fraser gives the Wurlitzer at the Center a workout during her August visit to Lockport.
(LeValley photo)

companied her favorite silent film comedian, Buster Keaton, in *The Navigator*. A sing-along, followed by an encore medley of popular tunes, wound up the delightful program. Publicity for the event was profuse as the Lockport Union-Sun columnist, Wally Soderholm, did a super job as always.

To correct a previous error, the 2/8 Wurlitzer in the Center was not from the Palace Theatre in Lockport, but was originally installed in the studios of Buffalo's WKBW in the Rand Building. Harold LeValley tells us that the ex-Palace instrument was shipped to Florida where it was acquired by Dunedin's Terry Charles for his Kirk installation. After the Kirk fire a few years ago, it went to Tampa where it is being restored.

A visitor to Lockport in August was native musician, Beatrice Ryan Fraser, former theatre and church organist. The effervescent Bea stayed with friends and gave the Senior Citizens Wurlitzer a work-out by playing a unique arrangement of Handel's *Messiah*.

LLOYDE E. KLOS



**(ESTMIM) — Syracuse, New York
 315/492-0465**

With no concerts scheduled for July, this gave Ray Linnertz and Dave Conway time to effect some organ repairs. Bob Cogswell rebuilt the pump on the Wurlitzer's piano. In August, however, the 3/11 got much use through rehearsals and concerts during the ten-day New York State Fair, beginning on August 27. Five organists were employed.

Tim Schramm, Rochester native, and student at the Simmons School of Mortuary Science, played five 50-minute concerts, each consisting of a

wide variety of selections and sing-alongs using slides.

John Fisco, a New York State Police sergeant, performed in nine programs which included a Laurel & Hardy short, some marches, and sing-alongs. Dave Conway accompanied *Teddy at the Throttle* for three performances, provided background music for fashion shows, and mini-concerts between stage shows.

Catherine Thomas did a concert of Broadway show tunes, and Karl Moser played mini-concerts between stage programs.

The Disneyworld calliope was at the Fair. Built in 1907, it no longer plays by steam, even though the boiler is still present. Compressed air, automatic or manual, is the medium. If one looked at the rear wheels, he saw disc brakes. With boiler and whistles shined to mirror brilliance, and a hitch of stunning black horses pulling it, the sound brought back memories of the annual circus parade of years ago.

During the past year, Fred Vaeth took many pictures at our concerts and work sessions. He worked up a fine pictorial exhibit which was displayed at the museum during the Fair.

Nancy Schamu, daughter of our program chairman, played some pre-show entrance music on the 4/24 Robert-Morton in Binghamton's Broome Center for the Performing Arts during its summer film series.

CHARLIE RICH



**2211 Woodward Avenue
 Detroit, Michigan 48201
 313/962-0045**

Considerable progress has been made this summer in the continual effort to restore Detroit's Fabulous Fox Theatre by our small, but extremely devoted group. Several coves and niches have been rewired and re-bulbed, basement lighting restored, light boards repaired, and facade lighting installed on the marquee. The front panels of the huge "incense burner" hanging from the prosceni-

um have been restored, a speaker system and accent lights installed inside. It once again appears as it did 55 years ago. Brasswork is gradually regaining its former brilliance, as are chandeliers, mirrors and stained glass. Showcases in front of the theatre have received new glass and trim and will soon be proudly announcing coming events.

The giant Wurlitzer (one of only five of this kind) is also getting attention. The tedious task of releathering the combination action has been undertaken, the Bombarde cheek repaired, and tuning is in progress.

It should be noted that, while work continues, the theatre is available for rental. In September there was a birthday party for which John Steele provided an afternoon of delightful music on the great Wurlitzer, as well as on the 3/12 Möller organ in the Grand Lobby. Motor City hosted

Central Indiana Chapter to a fine concert by Roaring Twenties organist, Charlie Balogh of Grand Rapids, Michigan, on September 18.

Events in October included the Detroit Metro Times annual party featuring three live bands on October 15; God's World Gospel Show on October 29, and a Halloween party for another group that evening.

Friends of Central Methodist Church, assisted by Downtown Theatre Enthusiasts, presented Hector Olivera at the console of the Mighty 4/36 Wurlitzer theatre organ on Sunday, November 6.

Those interested in booking their event at the Fabulous Fox Theatre should write Greg Bellamy at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48201, or call (313) 962-0045 for rental information.

JAMES C. RITCHIE □



BOOK REVIEW

STAGEFRIGHT: LETTING IT WORK FOR YOU by Robert Triplett. Hardbound, 195 pages, 5½" x 8½", \$16.95. Nelson-Hall Publishers, 111 North Canal Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

If you have forgotten the time when you were ten years old and "lost it" at your first recital, or you never were sick to your stomach when you had to give an oral report in front of your sixth grade social studies class, or you felt no pain when you auditioned for your high school choir, then this book may not be of interest to you. However, the other 99 percent of us who understand how agonizing these experiences can be, and how difficult panic is to overcome, will find in *Stagefright* a powerful message.

Stagefright, according to Robert Triplett, is essentially the "fear of losing face in public." Performers, because of their specialized roles, are most likely to experience the threat of

humiliation and its concomitant disabling effects. Triplett feels that individuals can learn to move through this block so its nervous tension can be used for productive energy to enhance the performance. He maintains that a person must first enter into the phenomenon and image its effect before it can be understood.

Using Roberto Assagioli's descriptive "psychosynthesis," Triplett cites six facets of the self which define the functional personality. He calls the center, or pivotal, personality "The Observing I," around which numerous subpersonalities manifest. Stagefright, he claims, is a manifestation of the Critic, the Doubter and the Weakling in polar relationships with the Believer, the Commander and the Risker, each being a characteristic, or subpersonality, which is a semi-autonomous facet of The Observing I. If the reader can follow these rather complex interrelations, he may find that stagefright actually amounts to overexpectation, both of himself and of his audience.

"Finding the right answers," says Triplett, "depends in part on our knowing where the *wrong* answers are coming from." Apparently, the *wrong* answers come from the various subpersonalities. For example, the Critic represents the Perfectionist, the Doubter seeks a guarantee represented by the Dogmatist, and the Weakling craves the Protector's shield. These subpersonalities repre-

sent the desires of the stagefright group. The Protector's voice, according to Triplett, seeks to defend the Weakling by subtle tactics and sly tricks and by traps of faulty preparation. Confusing?

This rather elaborate paradigm will probably confuse most readers, but, if they are willing to bear with him, Triplett does explicate his theory in subsequent chapters. He says, for instance, that "emotions tend to pull the performer off-center from the position of 'The Observing I.' Yet, feelings carry the answer." He then discusses how anger, expressed, leads to tranquility and compassion; how fear as trapped energy leads to confusion, and how confusion possesses vast amounts of energy all wasted in the effort to cover fear and hold back anger. Feelings, he claims, must be experienced, validated and acknowledged to reveal their core essences: "Confusion reveals clarity, anger embraces compassion, and fear bursts into joy."

Avoiding feelings is not the answer, Triplett suggests, but moving into them is the solution. Masking feelings also leads to a dead end as does the projection of our feelings onto something outside ourselves.

There are voices from the other side of stagefright which, when we pay attention to them, can successfully transform the Critic, the Weakling and the Doubter into the Mentor, the Discoverer and the Truster who will work together to lead the performer to contact the Higher Self via a leap of faith in which he will let go of his conscious control and become the performance:

With trust we become a vessel of the performance — to play as well as to be played upon. The vessel shapes the performance and the performance determines the vessel. Both become indistinguishable: the performer is the message, he *is* the music, he *is* the game. Performer and performance are one entity. This is the union that sparks those magic moments . . . the magic we all hope to find. Such moments are like little glimpses of bliss, where time stands still and we are caught for an instant in eternity. (p. 101)

The Higher Self, according to Triplett, is an observing force which incorporates universality as well as individuality, is transpersonal in nature, and is the spiritual seat (soul) in all persons. This Higher Self is a superior

understanding which enables us to have direct comprehension of the world about us, and allows supreme insight into matters pertaining to performance. Triplett states that when our Higher Self speaks, all of our faculties come together, functioning in a cohesion of purpose and intent. "With it, we become a willing instrument for our performance." He continues, "Achieving the fusion of forces as revealed by the Higher Self is the goal toward which all of us are directed."

Stagefright and self-assurance contain a natural polarity, their elements are contradictory. They do, however, form a unity in their intent; both arise from a commitment to a purpose, and commitment is their common energy. Commitment, he avers, leads to self-fulfillment.

In Part Two, "The Practice," Triplett suggests ways to navigate the stagefright block, to neutralize the physical effects of stagefright and to have fun with the process. He proposes ways that the performer may learn to actualize the power he possesses and create the specific energy needed for performance.

Two contrasting designs are included to neutralize symptoms or intensify them; these involve breathing

and exercise. "Almost any effect of stagefright," he says, "can be changed by first exaggerating the symptom, whatever it may be, then moving to the opposite stance, and finally going back and forth between the opposite states until they either begin to fuse, or the desired quality emerges."

These exercises are based on the interdependence of body, mind and emotions and are preparation for the higher integration of these elements. An outline for the use of guided imagery is included which gives the performer some specific steps to follow to achieve this integration.

Triplett has also included an Appendix of various nutritional elements and suggestions which will enable the performer to enhance his diet to achieve his best potential.

The message in *Stagefright* is appropriate for any individual who fears appearing in public or who is seeking to develop his own awareness and self-confidence. Although do-it-yourself psychology books are found in abundance in most bookstores, *Stagefright* has a unique approach to a specific phenomenon that could be effectively adapted by group leaders, performers, teachers and any other individuals who fall in the 99 percent.

GRACE E. MCGINNIS □

He plays a 50-minute organlogue before each concert, and the house is nearly full when he starts! In addition, he usually does some playing with the orchestra at each concert. The conductor likes using the organ, and Wright's selections have ranged from the complete *G Minor Organ Concerto* of Poulenc to mere supportive parts and pedal points. The audience reaction has been most encouraging, Wright says, and a complete listing of his organ numbers appears in each printed program.

He has also done Saint-Saëns *Symphony No. 3 in C, Op. 78* (Organ) with the Binghamton Symphony — the first time the symphony has made use of the instrument in its concert series.

New Landon Book Out

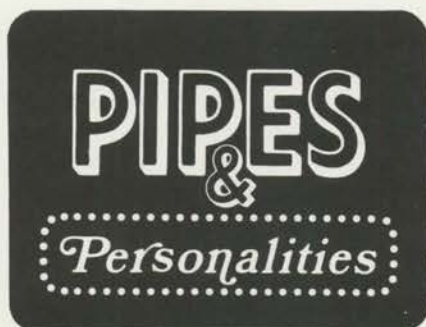
Dr. John Landon's latest book, *Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer: The History of the Theatre Pipe Organ*, is now available at booksellers. List price is \$29.95. It can also be ordered from the publisher, Greenwood Press, P.O. Box 5007, Westport, Connecticut 06881.

John Landon, himself a theatre organist and very well known in ATOS, has written the first history of the theatre pipe organ. He traces its transformation from church organ to a theatrical instrument that took the place of a piano. He also discusses the pipe organ's later emergence as a solo instrument, its use in radio broadcasting, phonograph recordings, and its present uses. The book also includes a history of those companies that built theatre organs and biographical sketches of some of the leading theatre organists. The appendixes list theatre organ installations around the world. The book will be reviewed in a later issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

Leon Berry Plays Theatre Organ For Classicists And Wows 'Em!

Quoting from *The Stopt Diapason*, June 1983, a publication of the Organ Historical Society:

"It was a long and thrilling evening at the Patio Theatre in Chicago on May 18, when a few of us were treated to quite a show. The slides of old theatres were great, the movies of River-view Amusement Park brought back fond memories, and the Laurel &



Recording Equipment Used At The '83 Convention

We who like to record wish to express our appreciation and thanks to Nor-Cal Chapter for the privilege of recording the 1983 ATOS Convention concerts, allowing us to return home with wonderful souvenirs.

In years past the Sony TC-152SD model was very evident. Recently, the TCC-5 (or 5M) and TCM-310 were being used. This year the new Sony Walkman Pro WMD-6 joined the crowd in force. Although a little larger and heavy, the famous Naka-

michi 550 was still present.

Microphones of many different brands were used. Once again, Sony was well represented with the ECM-929LTC, ECM-939T and ECM-949T, plus older quality Sony microphones. AKG microphones were also evident, along with several other brands. Basically, quality equipment was the most common.

What seemed out of place were the oversize portable stereo recorders with two large speakers. It is impossible to use such a large unit without disturbing people nearby.

LEN CLARKE

Binghamton's Forum Morton Used Regularly With Pops Orchestra

In a recent note, Searle Wright, ATOS member and a past president of the American Guild of Organists, said that he has been playing the 4/24 Robert-Morton in the Forum Theatre at every concert of the BC (Broome County) Pops orchestra.

Hardy silent film with organ accompaniment gave lots of laughs. But the *pièce de résistance* of the night was Leon Berry's stunning virtuoso performance on the Barton organ. Two other popular theatre organists played earlier in the program, and the audience was pleased, but the whistles and stomps were reserved for Leon, who showed us all what musicality and musicianship is all about. He explored stops that probably haven't been heard there in years, and brought the crowd to its feet in appreciation and respect. As the Master of Ceremonies said, 'There's a lot of love for Leon here tonight.' Those of us who could attend will never forget it, and we're real proud of you, Leon!"

Leon had suffered a stroke in August 1972, the night before he was to play a concert at the Riviera Theatre for the Niagara Frontier Chapter. After a long period of therapy under the capable guidance of his wife, Mildred, he was able to present the program described above.

* * *

Organist Bill Floyd sends us a variety of news from Richmond this time — some good, some bad. The bad news is that Tommy Landrum, custodian of the Mosque Wurlitzer, discovered water damage to the renowned instrument on July 19. An air-conditioning pipe had ruptured, spilling water into the main chamber. Damage was confined to the Diapason bass chest and offset. Tom and assistant, Dick Barlow, have removed the chests for reconditioning.

"Because of top-priority work at the Mosque, Byrd and Virginia Center (ex-Loew's), Barlow's Wurlitzer project in his Hanover County home has been delayed. Thanks to Tom and Dick, 11 regulators for the Virginia organ have been re-covered, among other chores. Work on that organ has been slowed because of rehearsals, performances and unmerciful heat build-up. Also, entrance by the organ restorers has been by appointment only.

"However, the solid-state relays are nearly completed, the work done in the shops of the telephone company. Two engineers from that utility are working on the new solid-state combinations in the console. All musical percussions are connected to



Win McDonnell Davis.

the horseshoe tabs, but non-tuned percussions are sectionalized on the straight jamb over the top manual. Hesco made the new tablets with the Wurlitzer colors, except gray percussion tabs which look nice."

Win McDonnell Davis At The Ball Game

The lovely lady at the console is Win McDonnell Davis, organist at the Baltimore Civic Centre for the Baltimore Blast Soccer Team. Before playing for soccer, she played for ice hockey for twelve years and for the Bullets basketball team. Win has been a member of the Potomac Valley Chapter since 1962 where she served as treasurer for two years. She was also recording secretary of ATOS for a year. She is a life member of the American Federation of Musicians.

* * *

Charles Fletcher of Ogden, Utah, tells us that the 5/38 Wurlitzer in Larry Bray's Organ Loft in Salt Lake City underwent a period of rebuilding and refinement in August. After 20,000 hours of playing time, the owners thought the time had come to "rebuild the console (affectionately named 'Tess') and put everything in its proper place." A total of 376 new stop tabs, 600 new contact wires, 500 newly-releathered preset pneumatics, and the installation of a complete new

combination action were among the projects. An electronic organ substituted for "Tess" during the renovation. The Loft's organ staff includes Scott Gillespie, Steve Killebrew, Jo Ann Harmon and Linda Carlisle.

* * *

What has to be one of the largest collections of pictures of theatre organs and organists is the property of an English member of ATOS. On the roster of the London and South of England Chapter, Allan Moyes' hobby is collecting photos, which he's done for the past 16 years. His files include photos of British and American instruments and artists. He says that he joined the ATOS in January 1983 and "I'm enjoying the THEATRE ORGAN Journal so much that I wish I had joined the ATOS many years ago."

* * *

The Westchester, New York, County Center's Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ, vintage 1900, will probably be disposed of, either by sale or outright gift, according to County Executive Andrew P. O'Rourke. Groups from England, Canada and the United States have made their wishes known to save the instrument. Extensive renovation would be necessary, including releathering, as the organ has not been used of late.

Jack Skelly says that he played the organ more than anyone else. "When I lived in White Plains, I'd practice on



State Theatre, Coalinga, California, after the earthquake.



Rear view of the State Theatre, Coalinga, California, showing the stage house collapsed but the concrete proscenium arch still standing. (DeLay photo)

it with the manager's permission. The console is on an elevator, there is a floating fanfare section, but the Tibias and tremolos are weak."

* * *

In 1908, Robert Hope-Jones installed his 3/11 Opus 2 in the Rochester, New York, First Universalist Church. On the eve before its dedication, jealous competitors sabotaged pipes and workmen were rushed to the church from the Elmira factory. Repairs were effected in time for the dedicatory recital by Edwin Lemare.

This September, the church marked its 75th anniversary with a series of lectures and demonstrations. One was given by RTOS member Roland Bramlet, aided by the church's organist, Howard Weiss. The subject was the installation of the instrument, the first with an electro-magnetic action in a Rochester church.

* * *

The veteran "Queen of the Soaps," organist Rosa Rio, has continued to stay busy with traveling and concerts. During July, she interrupted her tour of the Alps to play the esteemed Bosendorfer piano in Austria for an appreciative audience. Upon her return to the States, she performed on the new Xando model of the Kimball Organ Company in New Windsor, Connecticut, for the Farmington Organ Club. On October 9, at the Ohio Theatre in Columbus, she played a program entitled "Celebration of the Thirties." Rosa and Ted Malone

("Between the Bookends") repeated their highly successful Christmas show at the Thomaston Opera House on December 3 and 4.

Coalinga Earthquake Update

The May 2, 1983, earthquake that rumbled through most of California did major damage to a vintage theatre and damaged a former theatre organ.

The temblor (6.7 on the Richter Scale) totally destroyed the State Theatre in Coalinga. The house had been closed for well over ten years, yet was still relatively intact until that day.

Built around 1919 by a Belgian immigrant, it was the sole movie theatre in the town. It is unknown at this time how substantial an organ was installed in the house, but it was long gone at the time of the destruction. A long-time area ATOS member, W. Howard Martin, recalls there being at least some sort of a photoplayer or pit organ, but even this is a bit hazy.

The temblor leveled the four-story stage house in seconds and dropped the theatre facade and marquee into the street, exposing the projection room and wooden (!) balcony floor joists for all the world to see. It was possible to stand in the alley behind the theatre, peer through the wrecked stage and auditorium, and see daylight streaming through the projection ports at the front! This allowed a fairly detailed inspection of the auditorium. The house had obviously been redecorated in a 1930's-style Art Deco mode and actually appeared to be quite tasteful. Pleasing Moderne light fixtures could plainly be seen precariously dangling from the ceiling.

The theatre, as well as 75% of the downtown area, was demolished by bulldozers starting June 6, with the theatre having the dubious honor of being the first to go.

Located some 60 miles from the quake epicenter, in a Methodist church in the small town of Dinuba, a 2/8 Robert-Morton residence/theatre organ suffered some moderate damage. A large-scale 20-note set of chimes was shaken from the wall where it had been installed for forty-odd years. In falling, the chime action knocked out a chest bearer, leaving two ranks supported only by a wooden wind trunk. This, while en route to a violent contact with the relay, wiping out an octave of relays. In this case, fortunately, none of the damage is irreparable and the organ should be well restored by the time this reaches print.

The 2/8 Morton is a special residence organ built in 1921 for the Ruth Andersen residence in Hollywood, California.

TOM DELAY

* * *

Occasionally, a sad story concerning the hobby and one of its members crosses our desk. An item in several papers back in August is a case in point. It concerned the fire which all but destroyed the console of Wurlitzer Opus 1308, once in Los Angeles' Carthay Circle Theatre. Sam Willey (Wy'-lee), of Antelope Valley, California, a long-time ATOS member, had spent over 10,000 hours restoring and enlarging the organ since he purchased it in 1958. He had

another year of effort before it would sound forth in a concert Willey was planning.

Absent from the back-lot workshop for a few hours, Willey returned home to find the console in shambles. Cause was labeled a short circuit, which probably resulted from leaving the organ on when the owner was absent. Willey said, "That's a third of my life sitting there, and being 76, I don't have the time left to do another one."

Sam Willey was a small-town boy from a large family in Willard, Missouri. He left there in 1926 and settled in Salt Lake City, where he worked at repairing radios and got hooked on organs while hearing concerts at the Mormon Tabernacle. Later he moved to Hollywood and operated a radio repair business on Sunset Boulevard, expanding into repairing large musical instruments. Eventually, he moved to Redondo Beach and owned a club called the 488 Keys, which featured his wife, Madeline, at three Hammonds plus traps.

* * *

A novel public seminar was held in Rochester, New York, on July 19. It was a program devoted to organists who play in baseball stadia, and attracted an audience of about 500. Taking part at Silver Stadium, home of the Rochester Red Wings, were Red Wing organist, Fred Costello; Pittsburgh Pirate pedalthumper, Vince Lascheid; and White Sox musician, Nancy Faust. An electronic organ was installed in a striped tent behind first base.

The gist of the symposium was that a stadium organist must be prepared for any oddity. For example, when streakers ran onto the Comiskey Park field, Faust promptly went into "Is That All There Is?" A disputed call at Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium was greeted by Lascheid's playing of "Blinded by the Light." However, Costello believes that the most important contribution a stadium organist can make is to help ignite a rally by establishing a hand-clapping beat to stir up the players. The evening ended by the entire house singing "Take Me Out to the Ballgame." The idea for the event originated with Eastman School of Music director, Robert Freeman, an avowed baseball buff, who acted as moderator.

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CHAPTER NOTES

Edited by Grace E. McGinnis

CEDAR RAPIDS AREA

Iowa

319/362-9815 or 319/363-9769

We are sorry to advise that the Closing Chord sounded June 19 for Dorothy L. Burton, wife of chapter charter member Howard Burton. She, too, was a long-time supporter of many chapter activities as well as a strong right arm for Howard in his projects. Our sympathy goes to Howard and his family.

In view of the summer just over, it is hard to remember that the June 26 meeting, a picnic at Margaret and Kyle Mills' home, was driven indoors by a storm, thereby converting a picnic into a buffet in the rec room. Wonderful hosts!

The 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Cedar Rapids Paramount Theatre has been silent for the last half of the summer for rejuvenation of the regulators in the Solo chamber. Our hats are off to Jim Olver, Paul Montague, Jeff Weiler, Leonard Santon, Bob Anders and John Hochaday for being able to accomplish anything in the dead confines of a closed building in the murderous grasp of the hottest Iowa summer in recent memory. (Yes, it is difficult to imagine 100-degree weather while brushing up on Christmas carols.) But the project had to be completed with enough time to spare so that we could play it enough to insure that the wind lines were blown clean. The pressure (no pun intended) resulted from scheduling our Fall Silent Movie Night for September 24 with Jerry Nagano as the featured artist. As a happy P.S. to the original copy, may we state that the program was a tremendous success with Jerry putting on a well-received show for a good-sized crowd, both main floor and balcony. And the Mighty Wurlitzer performed flawlessly.

We are glad to report the return home of Owen Strickel's wife following two strokes this summer. Owen is custodian of the Paramount Theatre and an active supporter of all activities pertaining to the organ in that house.

Our thoughts are with Dorothy Longstaff and her family with the death of her husband on September 16. Fred was a past member of the board in the chapter and was one of the most active supporters, physically and mentally, of any CRATOS project up to the onset of his illness. We shall miss his counsel and ready smile.

Installation has resumed with the chapter Barton organ in the Englert Theatre in Iowa City, about twenty miles south of Cedar Rapids. The chapter also owns a two-manual Wurlitzer which has been installed in Kirkwood College on the south side of Cedar Rapids. The college has made the setting available for chapter meetings.

LOREN H. FRINK

CENTRAL FLORIDA THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



Tampa

813/685-8707 or 813/863-2264

In June our meeting was held at the Tampa Theatre. A progress report was given on the organ installation. We had hoped to have it playing, but there are several air leaks plus ciphers and considerable electronic and electrical work to be done. Following the meeting, the blower was turned on and a tour conducted through the chambers to see that a lot of work remains.

We dispensed with our meetings for July and August since the weather was hot and many members were away on vacation. On July 31 our radio program on WMNF-FM was broadcast with Bill Dudley, of the station, acting as host to three members of CFTOS. The program consisted of a question and answer discussion plus a good representation of theatre organs and organists. The publicity was helpful since CFTOS and our project at the Tampa Theatre were mentioned. Several favorable calls regarding the show were received.

In September we journeyed to J. Burns' Pizza & Pipes in Winter Haven. Following the business meeting, Tom Hoehn, the resident organ-



Tom Hoehn at the console of J. Burns' Pizza & Pipes' Wurlitzer in Winter Haven.

(Earl Wiltse photo)

ist, played a short concert for us. The opener was "Roller Coaster," a good lively number, then a few other well-known tunes. The concert was most enjoyable and we wished it could have been longer. Tom was giving us time for open console which, of course, we all enjoyed. After open console, we stayed for lunch and were treated to some more fine music by Tom Hoehn. We thank J. Burns for a delightful afternoon.

With sadness we announce the passing of our Vice-Chairman, Everett Bassett. Ev was a fine theatre organist and was a Past President and founder of the Connecticut Valley Chapter of ATOS. He will be greatly missed. Eleanor Bassett will fill out his term until elections in December.

SANDRA SHOOK



CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER

Indianapolis

317/255-8056 or 317/786-2160

The chapter held its August meeting at the Hedback Theatre in Indianapolis on August 14. At the usual business meeting the club decided to forego the usual Christmas concert at Manual High School because of the pressure of the upcoming National Convention. Convention committees have been appointed and work is underway in many areas.

Kurt Von Schakel, CIC member and organist for Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, presented a variety program including a medley of Hoagy Carmichael songs. Brian Holland led off open console period.

Events previously programmed are rapidly coming to pass. The Lee Erwin Silent Film Festival is taking place as this is written, and the Walt Strony concert is fast approaching. Donna Parker and Bill Vlasek have a thirteen-week program on WIAN-FM which started October 7. It is expected to be broadcast, through syndication, over many other stations.

Dr. Jack Elleman and wife, Carrie, were gracious hosts at their Pipe Dream Pizza Restaurant in Kokomo for the September 11 meeting. Neil Copley provided a delightful program

for the meeting. The new membership brochure is working as the club has now passed its goal of 200 members by the end of the year.

On September 17 and 18, two busloads of chapter enthusiasts toured the Motor City area organs with the gracious guidance, assistance and cooperation of Motor City Chapter, Wolverine Chapter and the DTOC. The tour included the St. Clare Roman Catholic Church in Windsor, Ontario, the Detroit Theater Organ Club, the Redford Theatre, the Pizza and Pipes at Pontiac, the Royal Oak Theatre in Royal Oak, and the majestic Fox Theatre. On the return trip to Indianapolis, the busses stopped at the Cardinal Music Palace in Fort Wayne. A great trip made doubly pleasurable by our gracious hosts, Gerald and Marjorie Muethel, and so many others who worked hard and stayed up late to make sure things came off in perfect shape.

On September 24 and 25, Western Reserve Theatre Organ Club of

Cleveland, Ohio, visited Indianapolis. Points of interest were the Paramount Music Palace, Hedback Theatre and Manual High School. Dwight Thomas, of the Paramount staff, gave a concert at Manual High School, and Brian Holland closed out the late night jam session at the Paramount.

WAYNE PIPHER



GRACE E. MCGINNIS.



CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS PLEASE NOTE

To help ease the burden on the editorial staff of THEATRE ORGAN, please observe the following:

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Send Chapter Notes and photos to:

Grace E. McGinnis, Associate Editor
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Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

DEADLINES

December 1 for January/February	June 1 for July/August
February 1 for March/April	August 1 for September/October
April 1 for May/June	October 1 for November/December

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Indianapolis

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Annual Convention**

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It was a long hot summer, but this didn't blunt the enthusiasm at our August meeting at the home of Bob and Yoshiko Matumoto where we were privileged to hear, for openers, several delightful numbers on their Conn 651 by Ohio Theatre organist Dennis James. There followed a business meeting conducted by President Mark Williams who detailed problems our chapter was having getting several of our ATOS dues-paying members recognized by National. At open console we were regaled with a variety of music featuring several organ and piano duets by members Betsy Richards, Ruth Shaw and Mark Williams.

On September 11 we enjoyed the hospitality of the Victory Theatre organ crew in Dayton, who had extended invitations to several chapters on the occasion of the debut of their renovated organ. After some 4000 hours of dedicated work, the crew has rebuilt NCR's 4/44 Estey into a 4/14 stage-mounted instrument that is superbly voiced. We listened in awe as the talented crew played at open console and then extended this privilege to members of other chapters. The introductory mini-concert by Bob Cowley, and the melodic renditions by long-time favorite Henry Garcia, were especially noteworthy. Our plaudits for restoration of a beautiful instrument go to a very knowledgeable bunch.

The September meeting was held at the home of Joan and Ed Lougher whose hospitable dwelling sports a Baldwin Studio II. Some twenty-five members were in attendance and

heard, perhaps, the most free-spirited open console yet with some of the more bashful members at the keyboard for the first time in front of the group.

We witnessed the curtain descend on the last of the Ohio Theatre's summer movie series, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, on September 25, but not before we heard guest organist Dave Peckham, resident organist at the Samuel L. Clemens Performing Arts Center in Elmira, New York. This young man not only proved to be a competent organist, completely at home at the 4/20 Robert-Morton, but we understand he's also well qualified in pipe organ maintenance.



**CONNECTICUT VALLEY
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, INC.**



Thomaston

203/378-9192 or 203/583-8334

Our August meeting was held in Plymouth at Gen Roberg's home wherein sits a fine pipe organ built by her late husband, Jack. Outside are spacious lawns ideally suited for picnicking, of which there was much evidence. Inside was much open consoling.

Gen's home is but a short way from the Thomaston Opera House, so, after the picnic we convened there for the usual business meeting followed by a fine concert by member Ed Holbrook. Ed played a nicely varied program which, along with some popular tunes, included some semi-classical and classical numbers, a mix that, thankfully, we are hearing more often these days. We had a fine day for which our sincere thanks go to Gen Roberg, Ed Holbrook and program chairman Bob Bailey.

Again in September, we were invited to Cape Cod for a wonderful afternoon and evening at the gorgeous residence of members Joe Calliano and Bill Hastings. These hospitable chaps are most generous in sharing their great pipe organ and beautiful house and grounds with us for what is always a long-remembered event. At four o'clock in the afternoon, after much open consoling, we

took seats to listen to a concert by Steve Schlesing. Mr. Schlesing is a professional organist currently engaged at the Pizza, Pipes & Pandemonium in Groton. To say that we heard a professional concert by a talented professional organist would be an injustice. We heard beautiful music in a tastefully programmed offering that was enhanced by unusually fine arrangements skillfully played. Our thanks go to Steve and to Bob Ayrton, manager of Pizza, Pipes & Pandemonium, for making possible this memorable musical event.

Following Steve's concert, we patronized some of the Cape Cod restaurants for fare that included everything from Cape scallops to Texas beef. Well fed, we returned to Jobi's, as Bill and Joe refer to their plantation, for an evening with Bill at the console and Joe at the keyboard in a mini-version of their highly popular summer concerts which they have offered for several years for the benefit of the North Truro Historical Society.

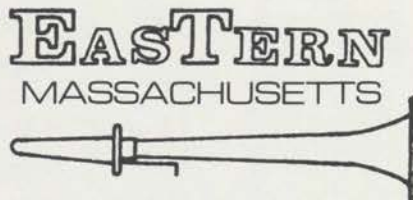
Before turning their attention to the art world, both of these gentlemen entertained professionally at console and keyboard. They maintain their interest in music and, on this occasion, we were the beneficiaries. Being able to play together whenever they wish, they create some really great musical arrangements for organ and piano in addition to their solo offerings.

At the console, Bill began with a "Salute to Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire" and, three numbers later, a "Flying Down to Rio" medley. Then Joe at the piano joined Bill at the console for a lively "Salute to New York City," a "Salute to Paris," and an arrangement of "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" that had the audience cheering mightily. Finally, the unique Jobi arrangements for piano and organ of "Misty," "Laura," and "Tenderly" brought the audience to its feet. No "Thanks" to Bill and Joe would be adequate, but we do thank them most wholeheartedly, together with friends from afar and neighbors who did so much for refreshments, serving, etc., for a day of great organ music, conviviality, and the best of weather!

Great concerts at the Thomaston Opera House most assuredly include the December 3, 4 appearances of Rosa Rio and Ted Malone. For tickets or information send self-

addressed envelope to: Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Connecticut 06483-0426. Telephone 203/888-9696.

W.F. POWERS



**Babson College, Wellesley
617/244-4136 or 617/757-9793**

While no formal meetings were held this summer, the expanded Concert Committee convened for several sessions at Babson under the able direction of Chairman Erle Renwick. The board voted unanimously to hire Ms. Liz Linderman of Wesley Associates, a public relations firm in Newton, to assist us in promoting our upcoming concerts and our organization. Additionally, a greater recognition by the general public of TO as a legitimate art form is to be explored.

Our new season opened at Knight Auditorium on September 18 with President Lupo presiding. The nominating committee's 1984 slate of officers was read with some new, some incumbent, to be considered. Erle Renwick then, in TV's Ralph Edwards' style of "This Is Your Life," introduced our own Leonard Winter as he revealed some fifty years of playing theatre organ, both pipes and electronic. Lenny was the last paid organist at the Lynn Paramount Wurlitzer, playing for matinees and children's shows. Among other theatres on the North Shore, he played the Wurlitzer at the Salem Paramount. This genuine theatre organist has had a career on instruments in churches, supper clubs, night clubs and skating rinks — he has done it all. Until recently, Len has not been in the best of health and all present were pleased to see and hear him at the spotlighted console.

In good form, Len opened with a bright "That's Entertainment," after announcing that his program would be mostly his often-requested numbers. Before closing, Len dedicated two numbers to the late Humberto Cardinal Medeiros of the Boston Archdiocese, "God Bless America" and "How Great Thou Art," requesting all to participate in singing. The always welcome "Battle Hymn

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and Mexico \$20.00 per year

of The Republic" was the finale which brought a standing "O." Yes, Len was back!

Mr. Renwick had a memorable field trip arranged for the club on September 25. We went to hear the organ in Christ Episcopal Church in Needham. This church houses not just another fine organ, however, as it was the "World's largest radio broadcast organ," as always announced from Boston's WNAC studio. The late talented Francis J. Cronin wrote its specifications and played it for many years with several programs aired daily. His was the first program of the Yankee Network mornings called "Sunrise Melodies," with Francis frequently doing his own announcing, time checks and performing on that wonderful Aeolian-Skinner organ. He and that organ made great music, and the writer and his folks were devoted regulars to this program for years — a live pleasurable start to the day. Francis was also a theatre organist and his orchestral transcriptions were tops, tastefully using certain traps and percussions which, fortunately, are still fully operable!

Erle introduced the church organist, Richard F. Roberts, who had studiously given much time to faithfully recreating the F.J.C. sound for the Cronin family present and for us. Even though the instrument had certain tonal changes and additions in 1970, to better suit its environment, Dick Roberts played an amazing concert of Cronin compositions. At one point, a selection entitled "The Cathedral" was played as a Cronin son read the moving words. At another one of Francis' daughters announced an organ scholarship fund the family started for worthy stu-

dents, and all immediate members were duly recognized. We were also privileged to hear two organ rolls F.J.C. had cut for Aeolian-Skinner played back on a rare, unaltered 3/38 Skinner pipe organ with Skinner roll-playing mechanism. Our friend, Bill Hansen, located these in the roll collection of the Milwaukee Area Technical College and kindly taped them in the reverberant Cooley Auditorium. Almost no one knew of the existence of these rolls, and their discovery brought Mr. Cronin right back among us as we listened in awe.

Mr. Roberts received a well-deserved big hand when his program ended and was the perfect host as he invited all to open console. During this period, as several tried their skills at this impressive console while others engaged in animated conversation, particularly with the Cronin family, we spotted in the gathering one Dennis James! Yes, it was him, not only mingling, but like a sailor on holiday, naturally joining in open console with four numbers rendered with such apparent ease as if practiced for days!

This unusual F.J.C. memorial concert will truly be remembered by those present, along with its wonderful surprises. We owe special thanks to our hosts, the Rector, Harold D. Chase and Dick Roberts, organist and choir director, who made it all possible, and to Erle Renwick who coordinated arrangements.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

JOLIET AREA

Illinois

312/393-9201 or 815/726-7665

Our April/May social/business meeting was held in the home of Taylor Trimby on May 1. Taylor showed off his newly purchased 2/6 Marr & Colton pipe organ by playing a variety of tunes from current hits to Golden Oldies. JATOE President Lee Rajala and former Rialto Theatre organist Fran Wood Irving also played the Marr & Colton.

On May 22 the Rialto Theatre was officially dedicated as a center for the performing arts. Taylor Trimby played the Barton for JATOE, and several other local groups also performed.

In July, JATOE co-sponsored a pipe organ concert with the Rialto Theatre starring Bill Tandy, Jr. Bill played some great selections featuring

our new Kinura and the newly rebuilt Piano. Bill asked for requests and received over 200! The crowd was very enthusiastic and really enjoyed Bill's concert. Bill can really get the audience involved in his show. We hope to have him back again in the near future.

September 18 we had our quarterly business meeting at the Hillside Restaurant in Lemont. Twenty members and guests were in attendance. We adjourned to the First United Methodist Church of Lockport where Kim Eldred played a short program on the Allen Digital organ; among her selections were "Ave Maria," "And There Was Love" and "Brazil." After her recital, members Donald M. Walker, Taylor Trimby and Lee Rajala tried their hands at the organ. Then soloist Rosaline Reed sang a couple of songs for us with Kim accompanying her. This put a nice touch on the end of a great day!

The Golden-Voiced 4/21 Barton in the Rialto is being used more often now than it was in the past. Most tours get to hear a mini-concert, and some performers have the organ played before their shows start. This is great publicity for the organ and JATOE.

TAYLOR TRIMBY

**KIWI
Auckland, New Zealand
540-919**

Winter is now over and it's time for this Kiwi to spring to life and report on some events down this way. With Opus 1475 completed at the Hollywood Theatre, the owners of the organ, Les Stenersen and John Parker, are planning a very interesting series of concerts. Forerunner of these was a program by Tony Felon which was of his usual high standard. Another Australian to visit us was Neil Jensen who was passing through on his way to America. By the time this reaches publication, many of you will have heard him in concert. Later this year we are looking forward to a visit by Warren Lubich from San Francisco, well-known to ATOS conventioners.

In March we were delighted to meet and entertain Harry Koenig and his wife, Cathie, well-known to ATOSers in America for their tireless efforts raising funds, through concerts and recordings, for the Koenig Cancer Research Foundation.

Several organ buffs went on a 400-mile safari for a reunion with Opus 2075, a 3/16 260 Special Wurlitzer which was originally installed in the Civic Theatre in Auckland in October, 1929. This instrument is owned by Kiwi member Len Southward and has been housed in a specially built theatre which adjoins a magnificent vintage car museum. Resident organists of the past at the Civic presented two concerts to capacity audiences. A visit to this wonderful museum is a must for all tourists.

Visits are made during the year to members' homes, and recently several gathered at the Duke of Wellington, a popular tavern, to wine, dine and dance to the music of Ian Johnson and his Baldwin.

Oh! Gosh. Golly. Very late to mention last year's Christmas party, a washed-out garden party in the morning, but a happy ending when the sun decided to shine and Ian wheeled his traveling music box out into the garden where he entertained us and the neighbors for blocks around.

Kiwi Chapter sends greetings to all chapters for the coming festive season and 1984. KIA ORA.

NORMAN DAWE

**LONDON & SOUTH
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8956-32369 or 1-788-8791**

When we said in our last chapter report that our newly acquired Wurlitzer (from the Granada Welling in Kent) had been removed and stored, this was not, in fact, quite true at the time of writing — although it certainly became so only a few days later. More than 20 eager pairs of hands gathered at the rear of the already shuttered theatre at 7:00 a.m. on an August morning and enjoyed a most memorable, if very hot and dirty, day together in an extremely rewarding experience, thus engendering a surprisingly compelling allegiance to the project right from the start.

Under the admirable direction of our veteran technical-team leader Les Rawle, who has been involved in the removal of well over 40 instruments from British theatres during the past 25 years, the whole process of removal and storage of the bulk of the instrument was completed by late afternoon. This is not to say that a miracle had been achieved, for, although only an eight-rank instrument, our



Nicholas Martin, 19, at ex-Regal Edmonton Christie, September 11, 1983. (John Sharp photo)

day's toil had been prefaced by three weeks of judicious dismantling by Les and a small team. All of the actual pipework, off-note chests and similar readily detachable items had already been taken to members' homes for temporary storage and cleaning, and the main and piano cables were coiled back to the console. All that was left was to remove a few strategically placed supporting screws. An altogether happy day, such an opportunity should not be missed if it ever arises as it is certainly a great generator of chapter camaraderie.

Before we can begin renovation and re-installation, however, our energies continue to be expended on the flood-damaged 4/14 Wurlitzer in the Granada Tooting in Southwest London. Now nearing completion, but still awaiting sanction of the necessary structural work to enable the presently entombed console and understage pipework sounds to be brought back into the auditorium, we are anxiously looking forward to recreating the worldwide renowned "Tooting Sound," and eventually featuring Stateside artists there.

Meanwhile, our September concert featured brilliant 19-year-old Nicholas Martin at the 4/15 Torch Christie in the Top Rank Club (formerly Regal) Edmonton in Northeast London. This was a significant occasion for our chapter because it epitomized our central objective of the encouragement of new young talent in theatre

organ performance. Moreover, to associate his exceptional capability at such a young age with this famous organ in his first major solo concert in London was due recognition of both his impressive progress and his evident potential. Although we do not make great claim for his rapid ascendance in the organ world, we are quietly proud to have helped to further his initial interest in the theatre organ by featuring him in our second "Young Theatre Organist of the Year" competition at the Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn, in November, 1978.

Already greatly inspired by the legendary Reginald Dixon and the "Blackpool Style," young Martin quickly and deservedly won a place, which he held for two seasons, in the Blackpool Tower team of young organists now playing the world-famous Wurlitzer pipe organ and the several electronic organs in various parts of the modern-day Tower entertainment complex. Then, with the establishment of the exciting new Turner's Musical Merry-Go-Round at Northampton near his family home in the Midlands earlier this year, he was appointed star staff organist at the newly-transplanted 3/19 Balaban & Katz Style 4 Wurlitzer, originally installed more than fifty years ago in the Paramount Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the northeast of England (where, in 1933, it was played and highly acclaimed by Jesse Crawford during his visit to the UK), and more recently in the Kitchen Brothers' garage in Diss, Norfolk.

Already highly regarded and popular at this fascinating new musical emporium, and having cut his first lively LP record on this distinctive Wurlitzer, Nicholas certainly delighted his enthusiastic audience as unquestionably a rising theatre organ star of today and tomorrow.

Our much-loved member Stan Whittington entertained us in typical Club Night style at the ever-popular 3/19 Wurlitzer at Les and Edith Rawle's delightful home at Northolt in Northwest London, which is also the venue for our increasingly successful series of Masterclasses under the expert tutelage of veteran cinema organist Ron Rogers.

DR. NORMAN BARFIELD

Note from Edith Rawle: Lowell Ayars and his wife, Reba, have been



Lowell Ayars at the BBC Compton organ in Broadcasting House, October 1, 1983.

our house guests. Lowell has just come down to earth as, the day after he arrived, he played for our monthly Club Night. The next day we were at the BBC by 2:30 p.m. for practice for an evening concert which was arranged in conjunction with the BBC Organ Club and which seventy-five of our members attended. The next day he was rushed over to Hornchurch for a farewell concert on Father Kerr's favorite Compton. Father Kerr has now taken up another parish and, no doubt, before long another Compton will be installed. Thank you, Lowell, for three lovely concerts.



LOS ANGELES
THEATRE ORGAN
SOCIETY
California
213/792-7084

Dan Bellomy made his Los Angeles debut at the Orpheum Theatre on September 18 and proved that, although he is best known as an electronic organist, he has a master's understanding of pipes. Opening with an exquisite arrangement of Eddie Dunstetter's theme, "Open Your Eyes," he then went on to play his planned opening selection, Billy Nalle's "Show Business." In several selections he showed that the Orpheum Wurlitzer plays jazz as well as ballads. "C Jam Blues" was not rehearsed nor planned for the show, but his earlier version of a jazzy "Lullaby of The Leaves" was so well received that he showed just how fast and ap-

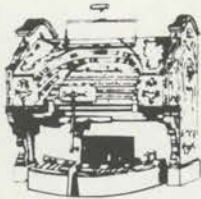
propriate the organ can be for "pure" jazz.

At our September Membership Meeting at San Gabriel, the chapter learned about the proposed LATOS By-laws which, to bring them into conformance with the California Code, are being completely rewritten by Chairman Ralph Sargent and the By-laws Committee. Gaylord Carter was the surprise guest at the meeting and, having completed sixty years of "chasing," received a plaque with the inscription, "Gaylord Carter . . . Congratulations on 60 years of silent movie accompaniment, with love and best wishes from the officers and members of the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society." Also, former chairman Bill Exner, for his years of dedication to LATOS as a frequent member of the board of directors, and for having spent years working on the various organs we have maintained and rebuilt, was awarded an Honorary Lifetime Membership in LATOS and ATOS. Also honored was one of the original members of LATOS when it was founded and who, for many years, produced its monthly newspaper which developed into *The Console* magazine which now is read worldwide. Tom B'hend also became a Lifetime Member.

Progress on our Barton continues as the organ console is now being rebuilt by Ken Crome. Although we don't expect to have the installation completed until early in '84, we expect the Wilshire-Ebell Theatre will become one of the country's prime theatre organ locations in 1984!

RALPH BEAUDRY

Motor City Theatre Organ Society, Inc.



Detroit
313/537-1133

Members and friends enjoyed our tenth annual private charter moonlight cruise on the historic 81-year-old excursion steamer Columbia on July 20. The three-hour cruise on the 968-ton vessel took us out into Lake St. Clair and down the Detroit River under the Ambassador Bridge. Music for continuous dancing was provided by dance organists Gus Borman, John Lauter, Dennis Minear and Stan Zimmerman. An Allen organ was

provided through the courtesy of Stan Zimmerman and Smiley Bros. Music Company.

Our annual picnic was held at Murray Lake, a private preserve near Ann Arbor, on Sunday, July 31, and was coordinated by Audrey Candea and Helen Vogel. A Kimball organ was provided through the courtesy of Dale Caplin and LaPrima Music Company.

An informative series of organ-related workshops for members was held during the year at the Redford Theatre and was coordinated by Gil and Penny Francis. Topics included familiarization with the console, registration, tape recording techniques, playing for sing-alongs, use of chords, self-help tips for playing, a review of teaching and learning techniques and a question and answer session. Among those who conducted, or participated in the workshops were Lou Behm, Willard Crissman, Gil Francis, Mike Kwitt, Dave Lau, John



Jennifer Candea at the console of the Barton organ in the Royal Oak Theatre in July.
(Dick Hunt photo; Courtesy of the Daily Tribune)

Lauter and Wilma Steslick.

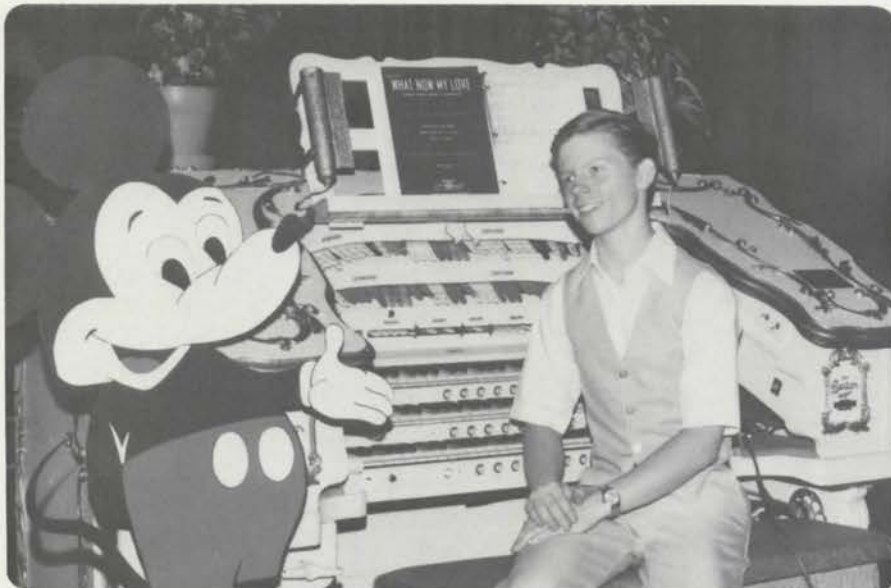
Jennifer Candea, currently a student at Clawson High School, played the Barton organ for the Fourth Sunday program at the Royal Oak Theatre in July.

The August Fourth Sunday show at the Royal Oak Theatre also featured one of our younger artists, Mark Smith, at the console of the 3/16 Barton. Mark also played a Hammond organ, courtesy of The Organ Exchange, on stage to show his appreciation for electronic organs and the organ clubs they have created which he feels are a source of talent to perpetuate the theatre pipe organ.

The annual Christmas program at the Redford Theatre on December 10 will feature Lew Williams at the Barton organ and the Fairlane Ballet Company on stage performing excerpts from *Sleeping Beauty*.

For more information, write the Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219, or phone (313) 537-1133.

DON LOCKWOOD



Mutual appreciation. Mark Smith played a medley from Walt Disney's films with a cutout of Mickey beside him at the Royal Oak Barton in August.
(Fred Page photo)

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Don Thompson played a concert for us on Sunday afternoon, September 18, at the Granddaddy of all pizza-organ restaurants, Ye Olde Pizza Joyn't in San Lorenzo. Owner Carsten Henningsen originated the idea of combining a theatre pipe organ with a pizzeria 25 years ago. The core of the organ is the 2/9 Wurlitzer from the State Theatre in Fresno, enlarged in 1962, with the three-manual console from San Francisco's Warfield Theatre. The latest addition is Thompson's British-style Wurlitzer music rack with hand-carved scrollwork, a rarity in America. The white and gold 3/13 console is in a very intimate setting giving Don a good rapport with his audience.

After his signature tune, "Don's Theme," he opened with "The Phantom Brigade." His program was a well-balanced olio of Richard Rod-

gers, Sigmund Romberg, classical and popular music. Don dedicated "Jerusalem" to his and our dear friend, the late Frank Olsen of Port Colborne, Ontario. Frank collapsed and died during an organ concert in London, England, on September 4. Olsen had played two concerts for Nor-Cal and was planning another American tour at the time of his death. He will be sorely missed.

Thompson's venue prior to moving to California was at the Organ Grinder in Toronto, Ontario. He was born in Kendal in the north of England. At the age of two he began playing on the linoleum. He started piano lessons at eight; by 16, he was resident organist at his local church. The bearded virtuoso has degrees in psychology and literature. His career has taken him to Paris, Rome, Athens and, in 1965, he was playing in the Byblos Cinema in Beirut, Lebanon. Fortunately, Don got out of Lebanon before the shooting started.

Don ragged the French Celeste Accordion when he played "Dill Pickles" and "Russian Rag." A crowd-pleaser was his Bach-Nalle Trio, "Alles Was Du Bist," with

apologies to Jerome Kern. He played "Samum" as interpreted by Reginald Dixon, giving it a "Blackpool" registration. This German piece's composer, Carl Robrecht, described it as a "symphonic foxtrot," which is the way Don played it. His final number was Liszt's "Second Hungarian Rhapsody," followed by an encore, "Boogie-Woogie."

Nor-Cal thanks Don Thompson for giving us such an enjoyable and listenable concert. We also tip our hats to Carsten Henningsen and his lovely wife, Joyce, for their kindness and hospitality. The pizza was delicious, too.

ED MULLINS

OREGON
Portland

503/244-2141 or 503/253-6874

What happens when a group of ATOSers get together and one asks, "I wonder if George Wright will ever come back and play in Portland?"

And Dennis Hedberg answers, "I don't know. I'll call him and find out."

This dialogue between Dennis Hed-



Don Thompson at Ye Olde Pizza Joyn't.



George Wright and Paul Quarino after the concert at Vollum's. (Claude Neuffer photo)



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berg and Oregon Chapter Chairman Joe Gray led to a once-in-a-lifetime experience for our chapter and guests on October 2 when George Wright did come and play in Portland on Mr. and Mrs. Howard Vollum's 4/49 Wurlitzer.

Once Dennis had confirmed the arrangements with the Vollums and the artist, the chapter's board took the ball and ran, and preparations for this gala event began with the mailing of formal invitations to members of Oregon and Puget Sound Chapters. Paul Quarino was given the responsibility for ticket sales which were by mail order only as seating was limited. On Labor Day, Dennis Hedberg and Mike DeSart undertook the task of bringing the organ up to prime condition for the celebrated artist.

The organ is housed in a specially-built studio with the chambers con-

Indianapolis
Sat., July 7 thru Thurs., July 12, 1984
ATOS 29th
Annual Convention

taining the 49 ranks at one end and the four-manual console at the opposite end on a level above the main floor. The 132 eager guests were seated comfortably on the main floor where each had a clear view of the console and the artist above.

To open the program, Chairman Joe Gray welcomed the guests who came from as far away as Vancouver, British Columbia, and San Francisco, California. Dennis Hedberg then presented a brief history of the organ which had been originally installed in the San Francisco Paramount Theatre (for detailed story, see THE-

ATRE ORGAN, February, 1973).

Dennis introduced George Wright, who immediately made all of the guests feel at home by descending the open staircase while chatting informally with them for a few minutes. When he returned to the upper level and began to play, the atmosphere remained relaxed and informal, a feeling which was sustained throughout the concert. Every person who attended was able to meet and talk with George afterward, a rare and unforgettable pleasure.

PAUL QUARINO

PUGET SOUND
Seattle

206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669

Once again the annual picnic was held in August at Bert and Georgia Lobberegts' home in Issaquah, a little east of Seattle. It was a gorgeous day and there was a large attendance. Open console went on all afternoon while many folks enjoyed Mr. Lobberegts' antique car collection, old time music machines and player pianos.

We were pleased to have Eric Schröder and Ray Allan visit us from Kynsna, South Africa, as part of their trip here to attend the National Convention in San Francisco. Several of us, including Don Myers, Ken Gallwey, Alice and Andy Anderson, Dianne Whipple, Clyde and Adeline Hook and Chris and Al Pride entertained the guests with our Hammond and Wurlitzer electronics. Myers arranged for them to see, hear and play the Paramount organ. Our visitors are fortunate to have a pipe organ near their home in South Africa that they can play.

In September, Andy Crow gave a fine concert at the Paramount Theatre on the 4/20 Wurlitzer. There



George Wright gives an informal talk to Oregon Chapter members and guests before his concert on the Howard Vollum Wurlitzer. (Claude Neuffer photo)

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were nearly 150 attending. Outstanding was his arrangement of "One Morning in May," and he played exceptionally well on his classical choices. We understand that Andy's own pipe organ has been temporarily removed from the Olympic Theatre in Olympia. The theatre is to be converted to a performing arts center and the organ will be reinstalled later. We shall look forward to hearing it again after the remodeling.

CHRISTINE PRIDE



PINE TREE

Old Orchard Beach, Maine
207/967-2452 or 207/846-5756

Our chapter met on October 8 in Loranger Auditorium of Old Orchard Junior High School. The ex-Proctor Theatre (New York City) 3/13 Wurlitzer performed very well. Guests included John Arnlow and

Cliff Lind, ex-theatre organist in the New England states. During open console Bob Johnson, Cliff Lind and Bob Legon played.

Chairman Bob Johnson presided during the business meeting. He and Bob Legon presented reports on the San Francisco National Convention. A new member asked for help on a recently-discovered theatre organ in

northern New Hampshire. Several members volunteered. This organ is to remain in its present location. We'll report further on it later.

We extend an invitation to members of neighboring chapters and theatre organ organizations to attend our meetings on the second Saturday of each month, usually at Old Orchard Junior High. Sunday sessions at the



Bob Legon at the console, with Bob Johnson standing by. Loranger Auditorium also serves as a gymnasium, and has excellent acoustics for the organ. (Bill Langton photo)

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Bob Legon at the 3/13 Wurlitzer at Old Orchard Beach Junior High Loranger Auditorium during centennial program in May 1983. Note shutters on chambers backstage. (Bill Langton photo)

organ can be arranged by calling Bob Johnson (first number in logo above).

Unfortunately, our planned summer concerts this year had to be abandoned because of low patronage. We have found it very difficult to get radio and TV coverage in our area for theatre organ events. But, theatre organ is still alive in northern New England.

ROBERT K. LEGON

RED RIVER

Fargo

218/287-2671 or 218/236-9217

Now that Red River Chapter is operating the Fargo Theatre, there's no end to the list of things that need attention. The board of directors of our newly formed corporation, the Fargo Theatre Management Corporation, met often this summer to handle the job of getting underway. In the capable hands of manager Dave Knudtson, the theatre is doing even better than was projected. The brochure we designed to promote use of the theatre by other groups is now ready. We've

ordered a plaque for a lobby display, listing businesses and public-spirited individuals who have generously donated labor and materials toward renovation.

Our immediate projects are in preparation for winter: roof repairs, storm windows, a new steel threshold for the stage doors, re-installing the double sets of exit doors, and a massive insulation job for the attic. We also have a basement full of basic junk and hundreds of old theatre seats to dispose of. Then there is the never-ending task of tracking down and repairing old wiring, and much relamping to do. At the first fall chapter meeting, lists of projects were passed around for sign-up. The Wurlitzer is on the work list, too. We expect to be releathering primaries for about a year, as take-home projects. The ultimate plan is to enlarge the 3/9 Wurlitzer to 15 ranks and to add a third chamber just for percussions.

The grand opening of the Fargo Theatre under our management took place November 4 and 5 when we presented *Wings*, starring Clara Bow,

with organ scoring by Lance Johnson. This was the 55th Anniversary of *Wings* being shown at the Fargo as it opened November 4, 1928, with our own Hildegard Kraus as accompanist. It was the first feature film to win an Academy Award for best picture.

SONIA CARLSON

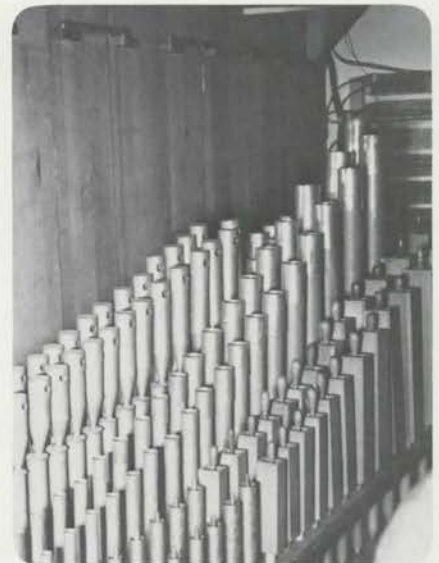
ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver

303/343-3930 or 303/233-4716

Another epoch in our coverage of home pipe installations out in the Great West has to deal with a lovable gent by name of Richard V. Lewis. Mr. Lewis, affectionately known as Dick to the Rocky Mountain Chapter folks, has installed in his three-car garage a prize 3/8 Marr & Colton theatre style organ built circa 1928.

This instrument came from the Uptown Theatre in Racine, Wisconsin. Dick has a poster showing the inside of the theatre with the console down in front advertising some gala event



Solo chamber of Dick Lewis' Marr & Colton. (F. R. Gandy photo)



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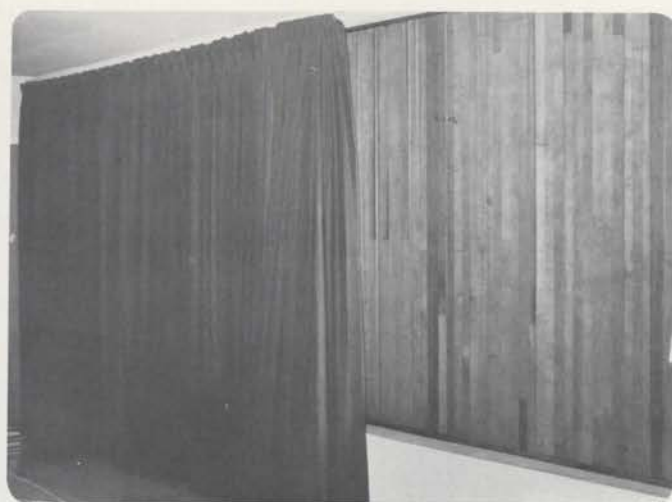
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Dick Lewis' 3/8 Marr & Colton.

(F. R. Gandy photo)



Dick Lewis' organ installation, showing shutters and red velvet curtain.

(F. R. Gandy photo)

of the period. After hearing of the availability of the organ, Dick and some of his family went to Racine, looked it over and decided then and there that it was the one he wanted.

The console has been overhauled; the finish is a beautiful cherrywood-type red with a glossy finish. The keys and stop tabs look as though they just came from the factory. The chests were cleaned and refurbished. Dick did some partial releathering as some of it was in good shape. The percussions were completely rebuilt and tuned. The reservoirs were all recovered, and new cables were installed on about one-third of the organ. Five ranks were tonally re-regulated over the years, and Dick has added a Clarinet rank. Clear in the back of the garage is the blower/relay room with tremis. There are two chambers divided down the center, each with its own separate set of shades which have also been scraped and sanded and re-finished to perfection. The chambers stretch clear across the width of the garage with the exception of the entry way which is a combination hallway leading to the blower and chambers

and the console room which is rather large.

The front of the chambers are covered when not in use with a red plush curtain hung on a traveler, making it easy to expose the shutters when needed. The acoustics are good. However, with full organ and the shades wide open, it could blow the audience right out through the overhead doors. This has not happened, as yet. We have had several chapter meetings at Dick's, and have had some wonderful organists entertain us. Our thanks to Dick and his family for their hospitality.

And now to a slightly sadder portion of the column. As most of our readers know, we have been repairing the cable break on the 3/12 Wicks at the Aladdin Theatre in Denver. The theatre has been up and down with productions since the movie end of it went out a year or so ago. Last week, while returning from the airport, we discovered the theatre boarded up with "For Sale" signs on it. We cannot get in to work on the organ, as they don't know what is to become of the theatre. Some of the parking lots

across the street have been sold. They are hoping that someone interested in theatre will buy it and continue using it as such. Then the organ can be worked on again and brought back into playing condition. The insurance investment company that owns it now says that if all does not go as expected, the furnishings will all be sold at auction, including the organ.

FRANK R. GANDY

SAN DIEGO California

619/279-2867 or 619/561-2269

Recently our chapter members and friends were treated to an exhilarating afternoon of music by four of our talented and exceptional members. This was the first in a series of matinee concerts produced by our chapter under the auspices of Galen Piepenburg solely for the enjoyment of our members, friends and their guests (hopefully, prospective members). The four members, Galen Piepenburg, Harry Jenkins, Russ Peck and Herb Chiu, each volunteered his time and effort to present his musical forte to

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— Citizen Journal, Columbus, Ohio

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It is amazing that anyone, on a hot evening in San Diego, could play so magnificently and look so calm and cool doing it, as San Diego's local artist, Chris Gorsuch, did on September 10. Not for quite awhile has San Diego been treated to a more well-rounded and versatile program. As designer of our solid-state system and

our tonal consultant, no one knows the Wurlitzer and its capabilities as well as Chris demonstrated that evening.

From pop to jazz, with a "One O'Clock Jump" into the classical, Chris dazzled us as he demonstrated the wide spectrum of the organ. To finally expose the orchestral value of the organ, Chris scored highly with medleys from *Carmen*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Porgy and Bess*. With this,



Chris Gorsuch at San Diego's California Theatre 3/15 Wurlitzer.



San Diego Chapter matinee concert artists, l to r: Harry Jenkins, Galen Piepenburg, Russ Peck and Herb Chiu.

San Diego's audience demanded an encore and was kindly obliged with the first movement of Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. It is great to see such a young artist with the versatility and knowledge of music who has the ability to put it all together.

A new concept that San Diego Chapter is experimenting with is area socials. Members open their homes for an afternoon or evening to entertain other members located in their zip code area. We are having great success with this, and members are creating new friendships as well as

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volunteering to help in our growing organization. Participation has been great, and the members are excited about the program.

December will again feature our Wurlitzer as the "star" of the San Diego Repertory Theatre production of *A Christmas Carol*.

SIERRA Sacramento

916/726-5132 or 916/332-2837

June 12 marked the second annual appearance of Emil Martin & Friends. With the long-time Sacramento theatre and radio organist was a combo of piano, drums, trumpet and woodwind. Our chapter has found that having shows combining other instruments, including electronic organs, with pipes has worked to broaden the appeal of the theatre organ and demonstrate the variety of musical styles that it can be worked into and sound right. In this instance, Emil's group played '20s, '30s and '40s material, most of it in a decidedly Dixieland style (possibly because Sacramento hosted the world's largest Dixieland Jazz Festival just two weeks earlier).

With our geographic proximity to San Francisco, Sierra was well represented by 31 members at the National Convention. Our members' feelings were unanimous: great instruments, terrific performances, and a most thorough and competent job by Nor-Cal Chapter.

Sierra Chapter was grateful to be able to ride on the shirrtail of Nor-Cal's effort for our River City Encore the day after the convention. We hope the 300+ who came to Sacramento enjoyed themselves as much as our nearly 50 participating chapter members enjoyed hosting the event. Special mention must go to Dale Mendenhall, Encore Chairman, and Kay

Ruland, organizer of the barbecue operation. These two people, especially Dale, put in a tremendous number of hours, starting in September, 1982, all so that one day would be the best we could offer with no possibility for a hitch and with all contingencies covered.

August 7 was Sierra's annual picnic. This year we made a special effort to invite Nor-Cal members, many of whom did not attend our River City Encore in order to make room for those from distant chapters. Held in the park surrounding the Fair Oaks Community Club House location of our 2/11 Wurlitzer, the picnic was followed by an informal open console session.

Our concert-meeting on September 11 included two members at the chapter Wurlitzer. For Dave Reitz, it was his first time playing before an ATOS audience, but he conquered the jitters and played some nice theatre organ. The afternoon wrapped up with Jim Brown, who likes to play bravado theatre organ, so our augmented Style E was given a workout that had it sounding bigger than its 11 ranks.

RANDY WARWICK

SOONER STATE Tulsa

918/742-8693 or 918/437-2146

August found members of Sooner State Chapter once again in Tulsa's Central Assembly of God Church for open console on the 4/14 Robert-Morton theatre pipe organ. Although our turnout was small (was it summer heat? or vacation time?), we did enjoy music from Joe Crutchfield, Lynda Burns, Gary Schaum, John Barhydt, Phil Judkins and Dorothy Smith.

Also in August, an abbreviated Pipe Packers Platoon consisting of Oz Redding, Phil Judkins, Gary

Schaum and Lee Smith journeyed to Pryor to help Hervey Barbour move the heavier chests and pipes of his organ from storage to his new home. Hervey and Janice have a beautiful installation, from all reports, and we are looking forward to seeing it.

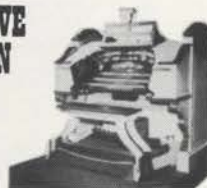
For our September meeting, we returned again to Central Assembly of God Church where we began with an important business meeting. The discussion centered on our proposed contract with the Tulsa Vo-Tech High School. We feel fortunate to have such excellent cooperation with the school officials — everything we've asked for has been "no problem." We're looking forward to a long and satisfying relationship, with many opportunities to display our 3/10 Robert-Morton. They are even interested in including a course in Organ Maintenance in their curriculum! Open console followed with music by Lynda Burns, Phil Judkins, Joe Crutchfield, Jim Routsong and Lorene Thomas. We also enjoyed the impromptu duets with Lorene at the organ and Joe at the grand piano.

We owe a vote of thanks to Phil Judkins for making our meetings at Central Assembly possible. His maintenance of the organ makes it available for us to play. He, together with Harry Rassmussen and Lee Smith, recently repaired ten blown switchstack pouches on the instrument.

DOROTHY SMITH

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Our program for June was held at the Grays' Armory where we were entertained by member Bill Taber at the



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console of the 3/13 Wurlitzer. His selections included "Song of The Wanderer," "My Love Song," "Memory" and "Soldiers on The Shelf." Claude Hawks, our concert chairman and member of the Grays, led a group through the Grays' Armory Museum. This was a very worthwhile tour as there are many interesting things to see and facts to learn about the history of the Grays. Open console followed with members enjoying a last fling at the console as the organ will be unplayable while the regulators are being rehabilitated.

On August 21 we met at the lovely home of members Clare and Victoria Ullman for a buffet picnic. We enjoyed walking on the spacious grounds and watching the fish jump in their lake. Members enjoyed the opportunity to play and hear the Ullmans' Baldwin organ.

Our September meeting was at the home of Joe and Lanette Kurpan, the proud owners of a Wicks 2/6. Our guest organist was George Krejci. Trying to cool us off from the hot weather, he started by playing "Winter Wonderland" and "Let It Snow." He continued with "When You Wish Upon A Star," "Sonny Boy" and "In A Persian Market," a challenging piece to perform on a two-manual organ.

JIM SHEPHERD



WOLVERINE CHAPTER

of the American Theatre Organ Society

Central & Lower Michigan
517/793-5418 or 616/364-0354

In August, Wolverine Chapter met at the Redford Theatre for a concert by our own Barry Rindhage on the 3/10 Barton. Barry has played a number of organ concerts in the area and is well-known in theatre organ circles

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in Southeast Michigan. A graphic artist by profession, Barry has done a variety of art work around organ themes, including the note cards and paper which were on sale at the last two National Conventions.

Barry's creativity shone through in many of his musical ideas and arrangements that day. One of his special features was a sing-along using slides of his own making, and it was refreshing to hear his different selection of sing-along songs, too! Barry displayed the true colors of his talent, as well as the true colors of our nation, by giving us a patriotic number complete with the showing of a huge American flag! It was a fine program, and to show our appreciation for Barry's having served Wolverine Chapter in every official capacity during his 15 years as a member, a cake and punch reception was provided following his program. Other members participated in open console afterwards.

On September 17, Wolverine Chapter hosted Central Indiana and Motor City Chapters for a concert at St. Clare's Roman Catholic Church in Windsor, Ontario. The organ there is a beautiful-sounding 2/7 Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ which was installed in 1934. It apparently was formerly in a theatre in Florida, but was repossessed by Wurlitzer and later sold to the church. Recently, Motor City Chapter has had a crew servicing and maintaining that instrument. It was a real delight for those playing it that day, as well as for those listening. Don Jenks, our chapter vice chairman, played a lovely program which


really showed off the tonal resources and capabilities of the organ. Don is well-known locally, having played theatre organ programs all over the area. While he was classically trained by Dr. Cyril Barker, his real love is theatre organ and has been since he was a child. Don, of course, has been very active on the theatre organ scene for many years.

This September weekend was an extremely busy one with a full schedule planned for the Central Indiana guests co-hosted by Motor City and Wolverine Chapters. The Central Indiana folks were treated to a tremendously exciting concert by Australian organist Neil Jensen at the Detroit Theater Organ Club as guests of Gerald Muethel. Afterwards, members of all three chapters congregated at the Redford Theatre for a late-night concert by Tony O'Brien.

Tony O'Brien is a young organist who is definitely a rising star. He is extremely talented and plays a wide variety of music, including frequent classical selections. Tony's program was well-executed showing good dexterity, fine pedal work and great technique. A reception with refreshments was provided by Motor City members for their guests preceding Tony's program. Following the program, open console time gave Central Indiana guests a chance to play the Barton.

After a short night of rest, everyone gathered for breakfast at Theatre Organ Pizza & Pipes in Pontiac where owners Gary Montgomery and H.C. Scott graciously hosted. While eating, we were treated to the artistry of John Lauter who did a great job of waking us up with his up-tempo and toe-tapping music, well-played.

From there we proceeded to the Royal Oak Theatre where Motor City Chapter presented a delightful program featuring various young members! Ron Moore (Morocco) was the



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Barry Rindhage at the console of the Lady Barton.



(Max Brown photo) Don Jenks at the 2/7 Wurlitzer in St. Clare's R.C. Church in Windsor, Ontario.

(Max Brown photo)

first to play followed by his students, Melissa Ambrose and Mark Smith. Jennifer Candea, who is a student of Mark Smith, followed him on the program. The two Sunman sisters, who are still so young and small that they can barely reach the pedals, concluded the program. They all did well, and it was really a thrill to hear these young people playing theatre pipe organs. It is reassuring to know that theatre organ will be carried on and preserved by the younger generation!

The future of ATOS depends on them! Central Indiana's young sensation, Brian Holland, played during open console, as did other older members.

To conclude a terrific weekend, Motor City and Wolverine Chapters provided their Central Indiana guests with the rare treat of a visit to the Detroit Fox Theatre. The special artist for the occasion was Charlie Balogh, who played an excellent program in his great style which often reflects the

superb coaching he received while working with Lyn Larsen. Open console followed Charlie's program. The Fox's lobby Möller pipe organ was also played by Lawrie Mallett during the course of the day.

Our Indiana guests seemed tired, but happy, as they headed "Back Home Again (to) Indiana." It was a satisfying weekend for our Wolverine Chapter as well. We thank Motor City for being great hosts, too.

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